

## A Note from Rev. Jeri

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your prayers and expressions of compassion to me and my family in the death of my mom, Norma Newell. Some of you had a chance to meet her or follow her on social media. You knew her to be a loving, funny, compassionate, and sassy woman. She was that and so much more. She was a ceiling-breaking administrative professional, a world traveler, avid reader, and life-long learner. Yet, nothing gave her more joy than her family and I will miss her deeply.

I will carry in my heart the memory of having the chance to be with her just hours before her passing. I received the call at 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 13 and by 12:30 a.m. Wednesday morning, my sister, Kim, and our husbands were in Pasadena and able to talk with her, make sure she knew what was happening, and share a great deal of love. Her illness was sudden and so was her passing. There was nothing but grace for her and for us. We give thanks to God for this blessing.

As you gather together this week with family and friends, our family wishes you a Happy Thanksgiving filled with love.

## Stewardship Campaign Update

What an amazing response we have had so far to the stewardship campaign!!! We especially had a touching culmination this past Sunday. Thank you all for your commitment to strengthening the ministries of St. Mark's. We have not calculated our grand total but if you forgot to submit your pledge card, it is not too late! You can mail it into the office to be included in our final budgetary analysis for supporting our 2019 budget.

## CCSA Christmas Gift Baskets

The Community Christian Service Agency has issued their annual request for gift baskets and bags. Packets with details are available on-line at [www.ccsasandiego.org](http://www.ccsasandiego.org) or in the church office. Please note the following deadlines: **SIGN-UP by November 30** and **BASKETS DELIVERED TO ST. MARK'S on December 12.**

## Worship Bulletins and Attendance Cards Update

Many of you have noticed that we used to offer two sizes of bulletins and now we offer just the one, bigger bulletin. This was done for multiple reasons, including: 1) Easier streamlined process for the administrative team and the new usher/greeter team, 2) More visually appealing to newcomers, and 3) More information able to be included in the bulletins to have our ministries and activities be accessible to every single person. Contrary to what you would assume, we end up using less paper overall! We know that this has not been an easy change and we are so appreciative of your flexibility.

In addition, we are no longer asking people to fill out attendance cards during worship unless you are new, your address has changed or you have a prayer request. We noticed that some people were submitting attendance cards and others resisted being tracked. Do not hesitate to reach out to any of the pastoral staff if you have any questions.

## Church Book Club Meeting Fri. Dec. 7, 10:00 a.m.

We are taking a lighter tone for the month's selection: [A Walk in the Woods](#) by Bill Bryson. Join us for fellowship even if you haven't had a chance to read the book. The meeting is at Joy Lewis' house at 4904 Mt. Hay Drive.

## Sunday School Advent Giving Project

Two weeks ago, the mid-grade Sunday School kids were introduced to this year's Advent Giving Project by going shopping at the Alternative Christmas Market. They used buttons for coins, each button worth one dollar. Seven crocheted baby hats and two soft blankets were bartered for. When each child was down to one or two buttons, too few for an infant purchase, they reasoned to put their coins together to secure more goods. Clever consumers!

We hope you will go shopping for infant items, too. Swaddling blankets, digital thermometers, diapers, shampoo/lotion, small board books, and hats are needed to help young mothers with new babies. (The dollar stores carry all of these items, but better not try buying with buttons!) Your purchases will be gifted to the help agency called Birthline. When we give to babies through Birthline, we give to Jesus. *Matthew 25:40*

## Special Offering: United Methodist Student Day, November 25

A request of the United Methodist Churches in the U.S., our gifts this Sunday go to scholarships and financial aid for UM students in local congregations. What no one person or congregation can do alone, we can do together. Take Ricky Blue: the son of two addicted parents, Ricky grew up without much hope for a future. But when Ricky's church family—Louisiana's Luling UMC—raised \$4000 for him to begin college, hope was born. Then, the Gift of Hope Scholarship, made possible only by your generous giving to United Methodist Student Day, allowed Ricky to continue. Today Ricky is a certified candidate for ministry in the Illinois-Great Rivers Annual Conference.

Together, let's help support gifted future Christian leaders like Ricky by donating generously.

## Are You College Bound?

In 1979 a College Scholarship Fund was established at St. Mark's to aid students at our church with some of the costs of an undergraduate or graduate education. [This year we will again be giving yearly scholarships, instead of scholarships each semester.](#) In January we will do awards for the 2019 school year. If you are enrolled for this school year, St. Mark's Scholarship forms are available in the church office. The deadline is [December 31.](#)

## And the Stars Shall Be as Signs: Living Nativity, Sat. Dec. 15, 5:30 p.m.

Did you know that biblical Daniel was a scholar who studied the stars? God sent His messenger, Gabriel, to report that a star would be the sign of an infant savior to be born.

Generations of wise men from the East studied the stars according to Daniel's records. Something in the night sky caught the attention of astrologers, some 1500 miles from Bethlehem.

Don't miss this year's Living Nativity where celestial enterprise is taking shape. All children are invited to participate as shepherds and angels. Costumes are provided. No rehearsal necessary. Simply show up at the church office by 5:00 the evening of the event.

Following the telling of the nativity story, head to the courtyard for a spectacular meal, the ever-popular cookie and hot cocoa dessert, and the ringing of bells. Welcome to Christmas!

## What's New in New Ministries

By Rev. Lydia Sohn, Senior Minister in Transition

Diana Starnes told me the best story this past week: a man stopped going to church and went to the local bar on Sunday mornings instead because he felt more welcomed and free to be himself there. We laughed about it, but I realized how true this is in many churches today as much as we want to believe we are welcoming.

My mom friends told me that they don't go to church anymore because they don't like leaving their babies and toddlers in the childcare, but when they would bring their kids to the service, people would shoot dirty looks at them whenever their children would make any noise.

A poorer friend of mine visited a church and told me how awful he felt because he could see that other, more cleaned up visitors got treated better.

At our usher and greeting training this past week, I shared that their ministry is so powerful. They are the first faces visitors see when they make this big step to come to church. It can be so intimidating to come to a new place, especially a religious space! We want to show them that this is the one place in society where all people can feel welcome and accepted as they are: poor folks, crying babies and all.

As we move into our season of Advent, we focus on the four gifts that Christ brings us: hope, love, peace and joy. Let all of us be vigilant in bringing those gifts to others. As Christians, we are Christ's hands and feet in this world. Advent is a season that usually brings in a lot of visitors, so let's all do our part to make sure everybody who comes through our doors feels the hope, love, peace and joy of Christ.

## Holiday Parsonage Open House

In gratitude and celebration of the efforts made by the St. Mark's family to create a lovely home for them, Rev. Lydia, James and Hugh welcome you to visit on **Dec. 9 from 4:00-6:00 p.m.** Christmas treats and yummy drinks will be plentiful along with a Christmas cookie decoration table for kids. The address of the parsonage is 3536 Clairemont Drive.

## Christmas Week: Focus on Gratitude

**Mon., Dec. 17 through Thurs., Dec. 20 from 1 to 2:15 p.m.** in the New Room—Rev. Craig will lead a searching daily conversation about the meaning of gratitude, guided by Diana Butler Bass' book *Grateful*. Reading the book is NOT required. Just come on by!

# St. Mark's Messenger

November 20, 2018

3502 CLAIREMONT DRIVE, SAN DIEGO, CA 92117

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## Keeping In Touch

"Gratitude is happiness doubled by wonder." —G. K. Chesterton

The St. Mark's "Season of Gratitude" officially ends this Sunday. Time to stop being grateful. Enough gratitude, already! I mean, Christmas is coming and I have a lot of things to do. Hmmm, let me think. Does gratitude have anything to do with Christmas? Hmmm.

This year, we are just not going to let go of gratitude. As I write this, I'm grateful for the generosity of so many of you—preliminary results from the stewardship campaign look very good!

I am immensely grateful to work with visionary, passionate, and hard-working people. Evidence of this passion and hard work is all around us. I think of the success of Kris Nieder's successful programs for youth, children, and parents.

The Family Advent Gatherings, which Kris is co-leading with Rev. Lydia, are already full, with 50 registered participants from St. Mark's and the community. Those gatherings begin next week, and promise to be informative, joyful, and inspiring. They are using the Advent themes of Hope, Peace, Love, and Joy—which we will also lift up in church during the Sundays of Advent.

I am grateful to our office administrator Michelle Herman for this attractive, news-packed edition of "St. Mark's Messenger." Inside you'll find a note of gratitude from Rev. Jeri saying thanks for all the love and support in the wake of the sudden passing of her mother.

You might also notice the opportunity to get together in a book club to read and discuss the hilarious book A Walk in the Woods by Bill Bryson. Or to assemble a Christmas gift basket for the Community Christian Service Agency. Or to participate in "And the Stars Shall Be as Signs: Living Nativity" on Saturday, December 15. The Living Nativity will move inside this year and will be followed by delicious catered food!

If you want to get serious about gratitude this Christmas, join me **Monday, December 17 through Thursday, December 20** for a daily study of Diana Butler Bass's new book Grateful: The Transformative Power of Giving Thanks. She is a thoughtful, insightful, and clear writer on a subject that is central to our lives as Christians. **Our daily conversations will be in the New Room (behind the church office) from 1 to 2:15 each day.** I encourage you to buy and read the book—I know you will be glad you did. But it's not necessary to come join in! For some of us, the week before Christmas is one of the busiest of the year. Imagine what it would be like to stop each day to consider all we have to be grateful for.

And I know many of you make it a point each year to give a Thanksgiving gift to the church. I am deeply grateful for that as well!

See you at St. Mark's! Remember that the annual "Christmas at St. Mark's" concert featuring all our choirs will be on Sunday, December 2 at 4:30!

Craig



Rev. Craig Dorval  
Senior Minister

Sunday, November 25, 2018  
9:30 AM Service  
Rev. Craig Dorval

Child Care, Room 1

Sunday School  
Rooms 6, 8 & 10



WORSHIP ATTENDANCE  
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11:  
160  
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 18:  
155



## Monthly Finance Report

Pledge/Envelope Giving for October 2018  
October                      Year-to-Date  
\$28,452.96                      \$289,446.65

Required to Meet Budget  
4 Sunday Month                      Year-to-Date  
\$29,230.76                      \$314,230.67

If you would like to check to see if you are behind on your pledge, please call our wonderful finance secretary, Arlene Dempster, at 858-273-9938.

## Never Miss a Sermon

Missed Sunday's sermon? You can watch Sunday morning sermons on video at: [stmarksumcsd.org/sermons](http://stmarksumcsd.org/sermons). They can also be found on the St. Mark's Facebook page.



## Office Volunteer Needed

Do you have some free time during the week? If so, please consider becoming an office volunteer. We currently need help on Monday mornings from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. For more information contact the office at 858-273-1480.

## Pastor's Sunday School

In Pastor's Sunday School we study the lectionary texts which follow the church calendar. For Sunday, November 25:

- 2 Samuel 23:1-7
- Psalm 132:1-12
- Revelation 1:4b-8
- John 18:33-37

It's an informal study, **always open to all**, at 8:30 AM in the New Room.

## Next Week @ A Glance

### Sunday, November 25, 2018

8:30AM Pastor's Sunday School/NR  
9:30AM Service /Sanc  
11:00AM Blood Pressure Scrn/NR  
12:00PM Tongan Fellowship/Sanc

### Monday, November 26, 2018

6:00PM Carillon Bells/SH  
6:45PM AA Meeting-Wmn/RM 9

### Tuesday, November 27, 2018

6:00PM Family Advent/SH  
7:15PM AA Meeting/RM 9  
7:30PM Trustee Mtg/Lib

### Wednesday, November 28, 2018

3:30PM UMW Exec. Mtg/Lib  
5:30PM Bible Study/NR  
6:00PM Glory Ringers/TBD  
6:30PM Charge Conference/SH

### Thursday, November 29, 2018

12:00PM Midday Mindfulness/NR  
4:00PM Cherub Choir/CR  
5:20PM Hallelujah Chimes/SH  
7:00PM Boy Scouts/SH  
7:00PM Choir Rehearsal/CR  
7:15PM AA Meeting-Wmn/RM 9

### Sunday, December 2, 2018

8:30AM Pastor's Sunday School/NR  
9:30AM Service & Communion /Sanc  
4:30PM Christmas Concert/Sanc&SH

CR=Choir Room    Sanc=Sanctuary  
Lib=Library        SH=Social Hall  
NR=New Room

**\*If you have any questions about or would like to add an event to the church calendar, please contact the church office at 858-**



## In Our Prayers

- ♥ Forrest Sedgwick
- ♥ Rose Marie Pierce
- ♥ Phyllis Drewett
- ♥ Sherry Forrest
- ♥ Vera Morrison
- ♥ Al Johannesen
- ♥ Hope Coleman
- ♥ Brad Cannon

## Our military personnel:

- ♥ Kris Brendal, Army
- ♥ Robert S. Chisholm, Navy
- ♥ Craig Clemans, Marines
- ♥ Paul Clemans, Air Force
- ♥ Blake Cross, Navy
- ♥ Samuel England, Navy
- ♥ Lenny Hezelett, Navy
- ♥ Amanda Hoadley, Navy
- ♥ Michael Hunter, Navy
- ♥ Brady Jackson, Army
- ♥ Jeremy Munson, Navy
- ♥ Milo Riegle, Marines
- ♥ Casper Stalnaker, Navy
- ♥ Nathan Streeter, Army
- ♥ Robert Tarango, Navy



You are invited to participate in the St Mark's prayer chain via email. Prayer requests will be sent to you via an email account you provide; you will not be asked to do anything other than offer your private prayers for requests you receive. To participate, please email Donna Newby at [dnewby@san.rr.com](mailto:dnewby@san.rr.com).

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