

Birthdays

November 26 – Sarah Heffner, Zenani Dacosta, Kwabena Marfo
November 28 – Clara Bottner, Rev. Cherian Pulimootil, November 30 – Terry Tienken

Anniversaries

November 21 – Donna and Geoffrey Anderson
November 27 – Nihal and Niranjana Masih



This Week at St. Mark's

Today	Dedication Sunday 8 a.m. HE, 9:10 a.m. Adult Forum, 10 a.m. HE, 10 a.m. Sunday School, 11:15 a.m. Choir rehearsal, 1 – 3 p.m. Eucaristia - San Marcos (Sanctuary, Patience Hall and Gibson Hall), 3:30 – 5:45 p.m. Amazing Grace Ghanaian Fellowship (Patience Hall), 5– 8:30 p.m. Pan de Vida (Sanctuary)
Monday 11/25	7 – 8:30 p.m. BSA Troop #4077 (Patience Hall)
Tuesday 11/26	9:30 – 10:30 a.m. Round the Block Fitness (Patience Hall), 6:30 – 9 p.m. GS Troop #4841 (Patience Hall), 7 - 9 p.m. Pan de Vida Bible study (Library)
Wednesday 11/27	10 a.m. HE at The Fairfax, 7 p.m. Thanksgiving Eve Service with San Marcos
Thursday 11/28	Thanksgiving Day – church office closed
Friday 11/29	7 – 9:30 p.m. Pan de Vida (Sanctuary)
Saturday 11/30	3 – 5 p.m. Amazing Grace Ghanaian Fellowship Bible study (Lg. classroom), 6 – 9:30 p.m. Pan de Vida (Sanctuary), 7 – 9 p.m. San Marcos Bible study (Lg. classroom)

Church contact information:

Address: 6744 S. King's Hwy., Alexandria, VA 22306 ♦ **Phone:** 703-765-3949; fax: 703-765-3981 ♦ **E-mails:** Office: stmarksalex@netzero.net; Rev. John Weatherly: jweathe951@aol.com; Rev. Meredith Heffner: revmeredith@cox.net; Rev. Cherian Pulimootil: cheriapp@hotmail.com ♦ **Internet:** Website: www.stmarksalex.org; Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/stmarksalex>. ♦ **Office Hours:** Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Clergy are usually in the office until 4 p.m. The office is closed on Fridays and national holidays.



ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

**“Opening the doors of Christ’s love:
an inviting, embracing and serving community offering
Good News in the midst of a confusing world.”**

From the Rector

Fred Craddock, Preacher to Preachers, tells about a family that was taking a lovely Sunday afternoon drive, when the children began shouting, "Stop the car! There's a kitten by the road!" The father kept on driving, but his children wouldn't quiet down. He tried to reason with them. The kitten was probably someone's pet. It might have a disease. The family already had too many pets. It did no good. The children insisted that a loving father would stop the car for a stray cat. So finally the father drove back to the spot and reached for the scraggly kitten. The ungrateful little beast scratched him! Fighting an instinct to leave the kitten behind, the father packed it into the car and took it home. Once at home, the children created a bed for the kitten out of their softest blankets. They fed the kitten droppers full of milk. They petted and fussed over the kitten. Soon, the kitten was purring and rubbing on family members, especially the father, as if he were its best friend.

The father looked at the scars on his hand left by the frightened and ungrateful kitten. Then he looked at the comfortable, well-fed kitten rubbing against his leg. Had he suddenly become more worthy of love? No. His intentions toward the cat had always been to do it good, not harm. Something had happened to the kitten that made it feel secure, loved, accepted. How often does God try to bless us? And how often do we respond by scratching God's hand? Yet God continues to prepare a home for us.

It's the last Sunday of the church year. If there were one last Gospel to preach, one last time to tell the story, what would you choose? What hymns of thanksgiving might you use when the story ends? Some that we find in our 1982 Hymnal include;

Crown him with many crowns, The Lamb upon his throne; Hark how the heavenly anthem drowns All music but its own.	Awake, my soul, and sing Of him who died for thee, And hail him as thy matchless king Through all eternity.
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On St. Mark's Dedication Sunday, we are reminded that the reason we gather together is to continue to explore the great mystery of why such a God, would continue to reach through each generation, to teach us the true meaning of the gift of love. Thank you for your prayers and support during these past four weeks, and continue to pray for our parish as it prepares to enter a new year, Advent.

November 24, 2013

Adult Forum

- **Today**
Critical Issues: Stewardship and Budget at St. Mark's
- **December 1**
Advent Series: Infancy Narratives
with Russell Bradley
- **December 8**
Advent Series: Infancy Narratives
with Russell Bradley
- **December 15**
Advent Series: Infancy Narratives
with Russell Bradley
- **December 22**
Advent Series: Infancy Narratives
with Russell Bradley

Important Upcoming Dates

- **November 27**
7:00 p.m. Thanksgiving Eve Service with San Marcos
- **December 22**
8 a.m. Baptism of Matthew Spans
10 a.m. Christmas Pageant with animals

Welcome Newcomers and Visitors

The members, staff, and Vestry of St. Mark's Episcopal Church welcome you to our services during this Pentecost season. If you are looking for a church home, or want more information about St. Mark's, please introduce yourself to the Vestry Person of the Day or to the Clergy. We hope you will fill out the newcomer's card that you will find in the church pew and put it in the offering plate or give it to one of the ushers. We are glad you are here! If you would like to receive our weekly announcements and other parish news by e-mail, please contact the church office at stmarksalex@netzero.net.

Notes about Worship at St. Mark's

All baptized Christians are welcome to receive the Holy Eucharist in the Episcopal Church. For those who are not familiar with how to receive communion, the following may be helpful. The ushers will let you know when it is time to go to the altar rail. At the altar rail, place one outstretched hand over the other to receive the host, or bread. To receive the wine or blood of our Lord, either hold on to the host and dip the edge into the wine (edge only!), or consume the host first and then guide the chalice to your lips. If you are unable to kneel at the rail, feel free to remain standing. If you cannot come to the altar rail, please tell an usher and communion will be brought to you. If you do not wish to receive communion, you may come to the altar rail for a blessing. Cross your arms over your chest to indicate you wish to receive a blessing by the Priest. Come down the center aisle to the altar rail and return to your seat using the side aisles.

During the school year, Sunday School is normally provided from 10 to 10:40 a.m. The third Sunday of the month is our Joyful Noise Family Service, when the children remain in church. On other Sundays, the children will join us at the Peace. Children below age four can use the nursery, where they will receive care from professional nursery attendants. See Rev. Meredith if you have any questions.

Join us for Morning Prayer on Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. in the chapel. Healing service is provided through Advent and the first Thursday of the month.

Photo Policy

Time to time, we may include pictures of our parishioners in our publications. It is our policy to never include someone's name. If you would prefer for us not to use photos of yourself or others in your family, please contact Emily in the church office.

Prayer List

Please pray for those who are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness or any other adversity, especially:

In the St. Mark's Parish: Jean Auldridge, Shirley Hunter, Phil Brown, Juliana, Albie, Lou, Janet, Judy and John.

Our Extended Family: Peggy Byers, Donna Mayne, Elizabeth Jenkins, Bob and Nancy DeLay, Summer Ostanato, Margo Digan, Phyllis Nezart-Biggs, Daniel Gold, Wendy Wills, Shelby Henry, Sylvia Beauchamp, Cathy Sears, Karen Allen, Lou Pinto, Betty Waites, The Pritchett Family, Mary Kay Young, Ann Zubia, Sally Beavers, Carol Bogan, Sherry Embrey, Dee, Natalie, Kaitlyn, Pat, Christina, Ray, Silvia and Helen.

For all military and civilian personnel and those serving in harm's way: Brian Hobin, Andrew Kley, Ryan Kiggans, Tyler Miller, Austin Graine, Justin Rodriguez, Robert Payne, Eric Martindell - civilian in Afghanistan, Jeff, Carl, Kevin, and Dale. We pray for those of every generation who live with the wounds of war or who have given their lives for this nation.

If you would like someone who is sick or in need added to the prayer list, please write their name in the blue book on the table in the Narthex, or give the name to Father John or Rev. Meredith. Names will be kept in our intercessions for four weeks, unless notified otherwise.

Every Member Canvass Update (as of 11/20/2013)

	Amount pledged:	No. of pledges:
<i>Operating Fund</i>	\$152,765	43
<i>Mortgage Fund</i>	\$6,600	4

Last year's pledge results:

84 pledges for a total of \$255,796. Our goal this year is 100 pledges. Please help us meet our goal.

Announcements

Mission Team: Our next meeting is on December 8th.

Christmas Pageant Christmas pageant rehearsal – December 15th. Join us at 10 a.m. on the 22nd for this great event!

A few weeks ago we were asked to pray, dream and vision. This is our response thus far. What would you add?



Angel Tree Gifts. Thanks to your wonderful generosity, all 50 of the Salvation Army Angel Tree children on our list have been adopted. Please bring your gifts to the church or to Bonnie's house as soon as possible. Bonnie needs them by next Sunday, December 1. During the first week of December, the Salvation Army Alexandria Citadel Corps starts setting up their gymnasium with 2 or 3 cardboard boxes on top of each other with walkways in-between. Each box has the family's ID# on it. As the gifts are received, they check them off and put them in the appropriate box. If any of the kids don't get adopted, they put together bags of new toys that they receive from toy drives or they use money that is donated to the Angel Tree program to buy something so each child has a gift (this money is not from the Red Kettle collections). The gifts you bought will only go to your child—they do not open your bag and are very careful to keep tags on everything. During

the second week of December, they start distributing the gifts to the parents. They have specific hours for a certain number of parents to come to get the gifts. The parents line up and are given the bags with their children's gifts in them. The parents are very appreciative and excited over having these gifts to give their children.

Thank you for your generous contributions to UTO at the recent Fall Ingathering. Over \$600 was collected. We would also like to thank you for your contributions to the Rector's Discretionary Fund, which totaled \$900.

UCM Notes: *The Food Pantry* always needs canned goods. Please put your non-perishable donations in the wicker basket at the rear of the Sanctuary. For information on how you can help with their *holiday food drives and holiday gift room*, please see the flyers on the bulletin board in the Narthex or contact Marcos Castillo at UCM at 571/255-8979 or Marcos.castillo@ucmagency.org.

The Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program needs volunteer advocates for residents in assisted living and nursing facilities throughout the area. Call 703-324-5861, TTY 711 or email Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov.

There will be an information session on healthcare reform on Wednesday, December 4th at 7 p.m. at the Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane in Alexandria. To register, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library or call 703-765-3645.