



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.”**

September 4, 2016

From the Associate Rector

Dear St. Mark’s family,

Most of you know that I will be on sabbatical this fall, from September 12th through November 26th. You may recall from Fr John’s 2010 sabbatical that congregations in our diocese are encouraged to offer their clergy a sabbatical every five to seven years, during which time the priest is completely relieved of his or her duties, and is encouraged to rest and renew their own spirits and calling. The goal is to allow time for reflection and inspiration so that clergy return ready to serve more ably and fully.

I’ve begun to call this time “My Clean-Out-the-Clutter Pilgrimage.” Why do I call it this? First, my father has been begging me for years to come and help him clean out his closets. It’s not that he’s a pack rat. It’s that after my mother’s death, we just didn’t know what we wanted to do with everything. But now it’s time to declutter, to take stock of what dad has, what he needs, and what he wants to hang onto.

I feel as if this describes my “pilgrimage” well. During this time I will be taking stock of my own life – examining what I have, what I need, and what I will (and won’t) hang on to. I will be assessing three things: my own household, now that we are empty nesters; my health, now that I am five years cancer free; and my relationship with God, and the vision he has for me and for those to whom I minister.

As for the pilgrimage part, my 145 mile walk on the ancient pilgrim way, the Camino de Santiago, is but one part of my sabbatical journey. Along with visiting my father and our three children, I’m looking forward to a nice vacation with Doug - away from even the cat and the dogs!

Because sabbatical time requires withdrawing from my parish family, as sad as this makes me, I will be unavailable by phone, email or Facebook (although you can follow my Camino progress via Facebook beginning Oct. 14th). Fr John will keep me informed of major events, but otherwise my plan is to truly step away so that I can return to you refreshed, renewed and inspired to help carry on with God's call to St. Mark's in new and energized ways.

I will miss you terribly! But be assured that my duties will be fully covered. Fr John will continue to have the support of Mother Donna as well as incoming two seminarians. Ashley Bryda, our Vestry Representative for Children's Formation, will manage the Sunday School. Yuris Guzman and Bill Baker, both of San Marcos, will be organizing youth events and bible studies. Trust me when I say that you are all in good hands!

I would not be able to take advantage of this opportunity without your support and the support of our Vestry. You will be in my prayers every day, as I hope I will be in yours. My greatest prayer being that God will use this time apart to recast his vision – so that we might be able to continue to share his love in new and better ways, in Alexandria and throughout the Kingdom.

May God bless and keep you and always remind you how much you are loved,

Rev. Meredith

Welcome Newcomers and Visitors

The members, staff, and Vestry of St. Mark's Episcopal Church welcome you to our services. If you are looking for a church home, or want more information about St. Mark's, please make use of one of our visitor's cards and give to our clergy or place in the offertory plate.

Please pray for those who are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness or any other adversity, especially in the St. Mark's Parish: Beth Oakes, Richard Sparks, Phil Brown, Shirley Hunter, Betty Hughes, Lindsay Drabick, Dick Stockstill, Juliana, Albie, Lou, Janet, Judy, Sarah Derringer, Muriel Hughes, Mary, Caroline Bradford, Jeannette Parris and Cheryl L.

Also for our Extended Family: Elizabeth Jenkins, Bill, Martise Williams, LaVonne T., Joan Chatmon, the Fullerton family, Julie Stockstill, Karen Mendonca, family and friends of Rosalie Duncan, Corinne Dumont, Susan, Scott Taylor, Isaiah Long, Kimberly Earle, the Magruder family, Emmett S., Cordelia S. Warren S., Shirley and Marva Alums, Abdulazeen W., Liz S., Phyllis Nezat-Biggs, Sylvia and Rev. E. Valverde, John R., D. Crumel, the Lease family and the Mader/Daugherty families.

For all military and civilian personnel and those serving in harm's way, we lift up Andrew Kley, Colin Maloney, Patrick Bates, Tim, Emily and family and Walter Smiley. We pray for those of every generation who live with the wounds of war or who have given their lives for this nation.

** Names are kept on the prayer list for four weeks unless requested otherwise. If you would like to add or remove someone, please call the Church office Tuesday-Thursday between 9:00 and 3:00. Thank you. **

Announcements

Cherubs Music Program starts in the fall with Jan and Larry Moyer as the teachers. It is a music program for children in K or first grade so if you have a rising K or first grader, register in the Narthex. If you have any questions, please contact Ashlye Bryda at 571-435-0676 or ashpearson@aol.com.

Area rug needed for Cherubs Music Program. If you have a 9x12 rug to donate, please contact the church office at 703-765-3949.

Sunday School Meeting today at 11:30 am in the large classroom.

Sunday School begins on September 11th! Register children ages 4+ in the Narthex. See Rev. Meredith with any questions.

Food Basket at Altar: We return to God for sharing as we are able. Many good canned good sales in our stores. Please remember the poor and hungry as you shop! Our community is experiencing many needy folks and there will be many good drives this fall.

Confirmation and reception classes begin in October for those in seventh grade and above. Bishop Gulick joins us on December 4th.

Homecoming lunch is September 11th. A-L bring salad; M-Z bring dessert.

On September 6, VTS is offering a lecture by The Rev. Dr. Gayle Fisher-Stewart entitled, "Faithful Leadership in the Face of Social Unrest and Racial Division." Please RSVP at <http://bit.ly/Taste-Evening-9-06> and it will be livestreamed at www.vts.edu/

Please join Daughters of the King's celebration of the installation of Estela Escobar on September 11.

Nurturing Families returns September 21st with a cook-out. We will need help October 5 and 19, November 2, 16 and 30 and December 14.

Upcoming Birthdays

9/4 – Margo Chisholm, 9/6 – Jeff Gray, 9/8 – Delta Youngquist,
9/10 – John Weatherly, 9/13 – Reginald Johnson, Andrew Kley and Frank
Cavanaugh, 9/6 – Chloe Lewis, 9/17 – Raymond Johnston-Taylor, James
Martin, Justin Petrick and Megan Murchie-Beyma, 9/18 – Matthew Foster,
9/19 – Steve Mitchell, 9/20 – Vicky Johnson, 9/21 – David Winsor and Janet
Davis, 9/22 Amelie Cagle, Sara Dillich and Nanah Janneh, 9/24 – Carol Farley
and Kwabena Amponsah, 9/26 – Shannan Cole, 9/28 – Ed Kley,
9/29 – Charlotte Brown

This Week at St. Mark's

- Today** 8:00 am HE and Healing, 9:15 am Adult Forum (PH), 10
am HE and Healing, 11:30 am Sunday School meeting
(large classroom), 1:00-4:00 pm San Marcos (Sanctuary,
PH, GH), 4:00-5:00 pm – Cherubs Music Meeting (PH),
4:00-6:00 pm Pan de Vida (Sanctuary)
- Monday, 9/5** 7:00-8:30 pm BSA Troop #4077 (PH)
- Tuesday, 9/6** 8:45-10:00 am - workout class, if raining (PH), 7:00-9:00
pm – Girl Scout Troop 4841 (PH), 7:00-9:00 pm – Pan de
Vida Bible Study (Sanctuary)
- Wednesday, 9/7** 10:00 am HE and Healing, The Fairfax, 12:30 pm HE
and Healing, The Pentagon, 7-9:30 pm -San Marcos (PH)
- Thursday, 9/8** 8:45-10:00 am – workout class, if raining (PH), 9:30 am –
Morning Prayer, 10:00 am – Holy Folders, 7:00-9:00 pm
– Girl Scout Troop 4841 meeting (PH), 7:00-9:30 pm –
San Marcos (large classroom)
- Friday, 9/9** 7:00-9:30 pm – Pan de Vida (S)
- Saturday, 9/10** 6:00-9:00 pm – Pan de Vida (S, PH)

Adult Forum

- Today The Propers of the Day
- September 11 The Rev. Meredith T. Heffner and fellow El Camino
walkers
- September 18 Meet The Rev. Cornelia Eaton, Seminarian
- September 25 Meet Ms. Michaelene Miller, Seminarian