

Members and Friends of St. Mark's, Advent blessings and peace to each of you.

Each year, a new Church-year begins with the season of Advent. So, I guess it's appropriate to say, "Happy New Year!"



With the season of Advent, we begin a journey, following the prophecies, the birth, the teachings, and life of Jesus. The year reaches its peak on Resurrection Sunday, and then comes the season of Pentecost, when we discover more deeply the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The last Sunday of the Church-year is Christ the King Sunday; a great day of celebration within the Church, when we recognize that Jesus is KING, and bring him honor and worship, as such.



Advent often becomes a time of focus on the coming of Christmas. That would be a natural result, given the fact that we live in a society which has commercialized so much of our Christian Heritage.

But, while Advent leads up to Christmas, the time is actually to be used to think about, and prepare for Jesus' second coming. Jesus first came, humble, weak and homeless. When he comes again, when he returns, he'll come in Glory, Majesty and Power.

Advent means "coming" or "arrival". John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus, by preaching and teaching repentance, renewal and commitment. We are called to do the same; prepare the way for Jesus to come again, by sharing his name, sharing his life, sharing his death, with those around us.

May you all be blessed beyond measure this Advent and Christmas Season. And may each of us seek ways to bless others out of our abundant blessings from God.

In Christ, Pastor Ron



Every now and then it's fun to stop and appreciate what is good. That's not hard to do at St Mark's. Everywhere I turn there are people sacrificing time, money and effort to bolster our congregation. Sometimes the work is obvious, and sometimes it's not.

Nothing has made me happier this fall than seeing the participation of our young children in the various activities offered at St. Mark's. How amazing is it to walk around campus and see kids everywhere enjoying themselves? And nobody enjoys themselves like kids.



I have no idea where they tap the boundless energy necessary to talk, run, sing, laugh and jump like a bunch of little inmates that just busted out of prison. It is awesome and exhausting to behold and nobody knows that more than the parents, which brings me to my point.

Being the parent of young children is a job—a job that doesn't have standard hours or weekends off. Just making sure these little balls of energy are properly educated, bathed, fed and provided enough sleep is a victory. Getting them to a handbell practice on Sunday morning or play practice on a weekday evening can feel like one act too many. Every parent (and grandparent) I talk to during these church activities has met a unique set of challenges in getting their child delivered. They leave work early, make arrangements with other adults, have siblings do homework at church, make a border crossing, or on Sunday mornings, deliver kids that spent the night elsewhere or stayed up too late.

Today, I'm appreciating those many folks that go out of their way to make sure young children spend time at church, learning about the Bible and offering music to heaven. We each tell our kids how important God is, but it's our actions that they will always remember.

Brett Perkins
Family Ministries Director
Bperk05@yahoo.com
619-479-9669



CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE



Pastor and Penny would like to invite you to their home for a Christmas Open House on December 14th, from 2-6 pm.

Come as you are, have some hot cider, some Christmas goodies, and enjoy the fellowship with others.



We live at 452 Avenida Antonio, and we will have directions when it gets closer.

Put it on your calendars, and we hope to see you there.

(Parking is limited; car pooling is advised!)

Using the ELCA "Model Constitution" format, our St. Mark's Constitution has been updated to bring it into alignment with the other churches of the ELCA and to up-date our own By-Laws.

Members will be asked to approve the 2008 Constitution at our January 2009 Annual Meeting.

The revised Constitution has been sent to the Pacifica Synod Constitution Review Committee for their approval. The Council has voted to approve the 2008 Constitution.

I also want to notify you of a proposed deletion of one of the By-laws of our previous Constitution. It has come to our attention that the By-Law establishing a General Endowment Fund in January 2001 requires that the earned income can only be expended if the Fund balance is over \$100,000. At this time, there is \$5,000 in #31150 "Endowment" Designated Fund. With our current Repayment debt and our budget needs, it will take us many years before we have \$100,000 in the fund and can begin to utilize the funds for ministry.

Therefore, the Council has approved deleting the General Endowment Fund By-Law from the Constitution. We are convening a Special Congregational Meeting to be held immediately prior to the Annual Meeting in January to vote on the General Endowment Fund By-Law Deletion.

****Please Note:** This deletion does NOT affect the Memorial Endowment Fund By-Law in any way.

Copies of the proposed Constitution will be available for your review at our Website, www.stmarkschulavista.org In December paper copies will be available in the Narthex/Entry area of the church.

Southern California Fires – How You Can Help

With the level of devastation that we have seen in the last few days, many in our congregations want to reach out to fire survivors. Where so many have lost everything, it is natural for us to reach out by collecting clothing and other perceived needs. However, at this point, that is not the best thing to do. We do not know the real need because we don't know the personal resources of the fire survivors. The best way to assist is to make monetary donations to Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), a joint ministry of the ELCA and LCMS or to Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest (LSS-SW, the LDR affiliate responsible for disaster response in Southern California. This can be done directly on line at www.ldr.org or www.lss-sw.org. These donations will allow us to provide fire survivors with what they truly need such as emergency financial assistance and case management. As assessments are made and the recovery phase begins, there may be other opportunities to assist. Please be patient. We will need you. If your congregation members or their families have been impacted by this disaster, please provide full contact information to your synod or district office.

Things you can do:

- Pray for the survivors and disaster services volunteers and staff
- When the information becomes available, please post FEMA registration phone numbers and disaster assistance center locations for survivors.
- Encourage all who need assistance to register with FEMA. It is important and is the first step in getting assistance.
- If you have a regular food distribution program, expect and prepare for more people.
- If you don't have a food distribution program, contribute to a sister congregation that does

God's Peace,
Tempie D. Beaman
LDR Coordinator

Lutheran Social Services of the and Southwest
5820 West Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90043
323.299.0729 voice/fax
323.376.7597 cell

"God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble." Ps 46:1

PRAYER QUILT MINISTRY

Please call **Roz Nelson** at (619) 422-5463 or e-mail at roznelson@att.net to request a prayer quilt for a friend or loved one who is in need of being wrapped in our prayers.

We are all part of this ministry - each "Blessed to be a Blessing."

The Prayer Quilters will not meet in December, quilters may call, see, or e-mail Roz for a quilt kit to sew together.

We will meet again in January 2009.

ANGEL TREE REMINDER

Wrapped gifts need to be returned by **Sunday, December 7th**.

When you take an angel from the tree, please give your name, phone number and the child's code to the person at the table. You may also donate money; others will do the shopping. Sign-up sheets will be on the table for shoppers and for those wanting to help sort gifts or deliver the gifts to the families. **Questions:** please contact Karin or Alma in the church office or Dorothy Geier at (619) 479-9975; or Diane Nissen at (619) 427-0982.

HOMEBOUND MEMBERS

Pastor Sieber is our Visitation Pastor, currently calling on the following home-bound members.

If you or someone you know has a need and would like a visit from Pastor John, please call the church office at
(619) 427-5515.

Please keep these people in your prayers and remember that most of them would appreciate visits from you as well.

Betty Burgess	Kaho Chester
Reuben Haas	Peter Honrud
Florence Harris	Esther Kort
Gene & Olive Kramp	Joe Wingo
Verna Werstlein	Nora West
Helen Dearmin	Ken Hultenius
Bob Whittier	Elinor Scavo
Jack Walquist	

DON'T FORGET TO RENEW your Vons e-scrip account by going to www.escrip.com and clicking on "Yes-Renew."

If you have never registered for a Vons card, go to the same place and click on "Register." Just type in "St. Mark's Lutheran Church" and pick our church from the list.

If you have any questions, see Chuck Cole.

"Care for Returning Veterans"

This workshop will be presented by the ELCA and supported by grants from Thrivent

Friday, January 23, 2009 at
Tierrasanta Lutheran in San Diego,
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Lunch will be provided.
Please register no later than one week
prior to the event.

Contact Terry Viscardo
at (202) 822-6414 for information
and to register.

Family of the month

Each month we will select five families from the directory to pray for in turn, as well as those families who have a special need at this time.

Please pray for these families:

Mark, Stacy, Matthew, Amanda, & Erik Becerra
John & Janet Beck
Dee Belknap
Bill & Sheri Bengtson
Karen Bennett.

Church Attendance

	Oct. 2008	Oct. 2007
Week 1—	240	201
Week 2—	235	214
Week 3—	243	215
Week 4—	270	237
Week 5—	n/a	n/a
Total—	1174	867
YTD—	10885	9690

PLEASE CONTACT PASTOR RON DIRECTLY if you anticipate an upcoming hospital stay. His phone number is **(619) 632-7709**, and his email address is **rhovick@cox.net**.

Prayer Request
rhultenius@cox.net
joanharsh@cox.net

St. mark's Lutheran Church CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14TH

9:00 a.m. Choir Cantata

There will be no Communion this Sunday

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17TH

7:00 p.m. Praise Band Service

SUNDAY DECEMBER 21ST

9:00 a.m. Sunday School Christmas Program

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24TH

CHRISTMAS EVE

4:00 p.m. Family/Children's Service,
featuring the Praise Band

7:00 p.m. Traditional Candlelight Service



DEADLINE:

is 15th of the previous month to submit articles for the next issue of The Marksman.

Treasurer's Report

As of October 31st, 2008, donations received through Envelopes and Loose Offerings continued to increase. As a result, we are now slightly ahead of the donations for the same period last year. However, we remain short of the budget goals (excluding the Loan Repayment Fund). With 83% of the year elapsed, we have received 73% of the budgeted donations. Some of this is expected to be made up in November & December. Expenses exceeded income for the ten months year to date by \$8,052.

Again, we expect part or all of this to be made up in the next two months.

Donations received for the Loan Repayment Fund in October totaled over \$11,600, another example of the generosity of St. Mark's members. Year to date we have exceeded our budgeted income for the Loan Repayment Fund by almost \$10,000. Thank you very much for your strong support to the effort to repay our loan at the earliest possible date.

In Christ,
Diane Flint Wages