



LENT

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The Newsletter of St. Mark's Episcopal Church

March 2015

CHRISTIAN & VEGAN

by Jack Sawyer



As a Christian, I endeavor to let my thoughts and actions flow from love (the topic of my M.Div. thesis at Harvard thirty years ago). I do my best to love God and God's creation with all my heart, all my soul, all my strength, and all my mind, and to love my neighbor as myself. To love the stranger, to love my enemies. As long as I can remember, I have found myself intuitively sympathetic to those who were shunned, feared, or oppressed. As Rabbi Hillel said, "If I am not for myself, who will be? If I am for myself, alone, what am I? If not now, when?"

What does this desire to express love call me to do? First, to be aware. Then to do God's will, as I see it, as best I can, with God's help. When I am not clear, I pray one or more (sometimes all) of the seven forms of prayer (BCP, p. 856-7): "Dear God" (adoration), "Praise God" (praise), "Thank God" (thanks), "God forgive me" (forgiveness), "God's will be done" (ablution), "God help me" (petition), "God

help them" (intercession). I say and pray these words, silently or aloud. I pray and take what I get. I pray a lot. It is a blessing to be poor in spirit—to know my need of God.

I call myself Christian because the particular words and ideals that move me are in the Christian scriptures and hymns that express the love of Jesus, some quite simply: ("What a friend we have in Jesus;" "Jesus calls us, o'er the tumult of our life's wild restless sea;" "I love to tell the story...of Jesus and his love"), as I sang in the Disciples of Christ choir during high school. More recently, and fervently, in the Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir: ("In the good times, praise his name, in the bad times, do-oo the same!") Other, more formal words move me, too. It was the Church Teaching Series, which I encountered browsing in the GTU then-bookstore, that brought me to the



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Episcopal Church and St. Mark's, 33 years ago. It is the words of devotion in the liturgy, the hymns, the psalms, the Creed, the Eucharist, that for me encourage transcendence when we say them together.

I have studied and practiced other religions. I subscribe to the four noble truths of Buddhism and admire the eightfold path, practice yoga, studied the Bhagavad Gita (at the Pacific School of Religion), meditate in both Hindu and Buddhist traditions, recite Tao Te Ching verses, Rumi, Wordsworth, and Kipling[!]. I pray that "my days may be, bound each to each by natural piety."



When I was teaching at the University of Chicago, where no topic was taboo, except God, there was secular humanism and social action. Many Sunday mornings now, I share Ecstatic Dance at Sweet's Ballroom in downtown Oakland with two or three hundred other souls, moving freely as the spirit beckons. Still, I am undeniably Christian. How and why, God only knows, but it is Jesus and Christianity that touch me most deeply. I love this life God has given me, all of it, all the people in it, all the natural world.

So how do my Christianity and my veganism relate? I was led into vegetarianism more than forty years ago, in a previous stay at Harvard, as a visiting scholar, officially exploring social science and social responsibility (and so publishing *Men and Masculinity*, documenting how men seek achievement and suppress emotion). More important and more transformative, though, was not the academic, but taking up meditation, yoga, communal living, and (coincidentally) vegetarian eating. (Not all in our communal house were vegetarian, but some were, and it was simpler to cook that way.) I tried eating vegetarian. It felt good. I felt lighter, clearer. I never gave up eating meat, it fell away. As years went on, I continued comfortably eating fruits and vegetables, grains, nuts, seeds, and legumes, dropping dairy about

eighteen years ago and becoming vegan. I started studying and thinking about how what we eat affects ourselves, our planet, and our fellow beings.

I am steward of my body, mind, soul, and heart. These were given me, and it is up to me to honor this gift of life and be as kind as possible to myself--to eat, to move, to sleep, above all to think, in ways that are helpful, not abusive, to this one precious life. After breathing air and drinking water, the most important (and enjoyable) thing I do is eating food. (Touching, seeing, hearing, good conversation, making love are right up there, too.) Food sustains me. As to what kind of food sustains me, and what kind compromises my body, the evidence is in. Consuming saturated animal fat, as in meat or dairy, substantially increases the risk of heart disease, cancer, and other life-threatening illnesses. Avoiding saturated fat is good stewardship of this body.

What I eat affects not only myself, but many other people, animals, plants, and the environment generally. Animal agriculture, according to a 2006 UN Food and Agriculture Organization study, contributes 18% of greenhouse gas emissions--more than all forms of transportation combined. A 2010 UN Environmental Program study concludes that the present level of meat and dairy consumption is not sustainable. Being vegan is a contribution to a livable planet. It is a way for me to love and help sustain God's creation.

Being vegan also means not contributing to the deaths each year of ten billion mammals and birds (mainly chickens) in this country. That's about three each month per person. Over 99% of these animals live and suffer short and miserable lives on factory farms. Showing kindness, and trying to avoid causing harm and suffering to others, human and nonhuman, helps me to experience the world as a place that is sacred, to be cherished and enjoyed.



Thanks be to God for this life, and to you for letting me share some of it with you. ✕

TOP VESTRY ACTIONS



by Bruce Alexander

Getting to know you

Since this was the first meeting of the new Vestry, we spent time getting to know each other in this context. The Vestry members shared something about why they felt called to be on the Vestry, and about what they hoped to accomplish. I would like to take this opportunity to thank both the new members (Bryan Garcia, Donn Morgan, Julia Shaver, and Margo Wesley) and the continuing members (Jeff Ambruster, Betsy Hada, Lisa Key, Patrick Mitten, Jeff Pace, Wayne Ritchie, and Devon Thromston) for taking on this important ministry.

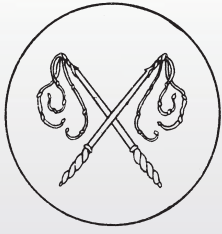


Solar Panels

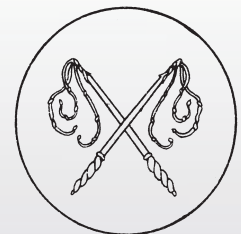
At the previous meeting, the Vestry asked the Finance Committee to look at the fine print in American Solar's proposal for installing solar panels on the upper roof of St. Mark's. Under the proposal American Solar would install the panels at no cost to us, and sell the electricity to us at savings over what we would pay PG&E. The Finance

Committee examined the economic impact of various possible scenarios for rate increases by PG&E, and found the alternative of entering into a 20-year lease with American Solar the most attractive of their options. At the end of the 20-year lease, the solar panels would belong to St. Mark's. The only way that St. Mark's might lose money during the lease would be if the church installed a system that generated more electricity than needed. Since the electricity consumption over the past couple of years has been affected by a number of factors, including the replacement of the electrical heating and the construction project, the Vestry decided that it would be wise to monitor the electricity consumption for a few more months before deciding how large a system to install. ✕





LENT



3 TRANSFORMING DAYS

by the Rev. Coryl Lassen



The three days at the end of Holy Week each have their own name, proper liturgy and theme, but together they represent all of Christ's work among us. They are called the Triduum, the Three Days.

Maundy Thursday is when we remember and celebrate the Last Supper of Jesus and his disciples. These events are written about in some detail by each of the four gospel writers. Unfortunately, the details they offer are not always the same. The synoptic gospels focus on the Passover meal and Jesus' institution of the Eucharist. The words, "This is my Body... This is my Blood..." are central to those gospels. John tells us the Passover happened the next day, and Jesus and his disciples were gathered for a normal meal, when Jesus stripped off his clothing and washed his disciples' feet to demonstrate that love and service were at the heart of his life and teachings. In John, Jesus makes a long farewell speech to prepare his disciples for what was coming.

So Maundy Thursday has two intertwined themes: the commandment (mandatum) to love

one another, and the beginning of Holy Communion. We are joined together in love through the Eucharist, which also makes ordinary food holy with the presence of Christ. Jesus was arrested that night, questioned and judged. He was turned over to Pilate and the Roman system the next day. Another hearing, a brutal beating, a parade through the streets, crucifixion, death, and burial followed.

We remember Jesus' death day as Good Friday, not because its events are positive, but because this is the day the Son of God participated in the extremes of human suffering and death for love of us. Many Christians through the years have seen his death, itself, as salvific. For others, it is part of his unconditional gift of his whole life. In either case, it is a day to remember with solemnity and gratitude. Because we offer three hours of worship at noon and the Proper liturgy in the evening, there is room for many theologies of Jesus' death.

According to the gospels, the risen Jesus was witnessed before dawn on Sunday. That means he was raised sometime during the night.

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MOURNING: A LENTEN REFLECTION



by the Rev. Stephen Trever

Jesus says, “Blessed are those who mourn.” So often Jesus’ teachings seem counter-intuitive. Why is mourning blessed? After all, mourning can be one of the most painful experiences we face in this life.

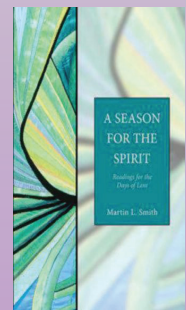
When I am being perfectly honest with myself, I’d say I spend the better part of my time trying to avoid mourning! How often I fear that if I went down the path of mourning I might get “stuck in the past,” and I may not have the energy to get through that never-ending list of mundane, yet necessary, tasks of daily living. Who possibly has time to mourn? Of course, occasionally situations arise and we are thrust into

mourning whether we would choose it or not. One such moment in my life was when my mother passed away on Maundy Thursday in 2004. During the weeks that followed that event, as I sat with an intense pain burning in my chest, I began to understand why Jesus blesses those who mourn. I began to recognize that the intensity of the pain was the other side of a love that refuses to quit. It was in that time that so much of the language of our tradition began to make sense in new ways. I experienced the Holy Spirit simultaneously like a burning flame and the soothing

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LENTEN BOOK GROUP

by the Rev. Stephen Trever



*A Season for the Spirit:
Readings for the Days of Lent*

by Martin Smith

If you are looking for a discipline for the forty days of Lent, perhaps you will consider joining us in reading Martin Smith’s *A Season for the Spirit*. This work, originally commissioned by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1991, has become something of a contemporary classic on Christ-centered Spirituality. It consists of forty daily meditations, each of which is deeply thoughtful yet accessibly written. This a great book for anyone looking to deepen

their relationship with God during Lent. Each week we will meet to discuss the week’s readings. Meeting times will be between services on Sunday at 9:00am and Wednesday evenings at 6:45PM in order to accommodate as many schedules as possible. If you are interested in getting a copy of the book and joining the discussion, please email me (Stephen Trever) at stephen@stmarksberkeley.org. ✠

LENT MADNESS

Forwarded by
Nigel Renton



What follows has been adapted from the website.

Although Lent will have already begun by the time you read this, it will not be too late for you to join in the fun of “Lent Madness”. The name is clearly a play upon the NCAA basketball contest, popularly known as “March Madness”.

Lent Madness 2015: Which saint will win the Golden Halo?

For the sixth year running, people worldwide are gearing up for Lent Madness, the “saintly smackdown” in which thirty-two saints do battle to win the coveted Golden Halo. Calling itself the world’s most popular on-line Lenten devotion, Lent Madness brings together cut-throat competition, the lives of the saints, humor, and the chance to see how God works in the lives of women and men across all walks of life.

The creator of Lent Madness, the Rev. Tim Schenck, says, “People might think Lent is all about eating dirt and giving up chocolate, but it’s really about getting closer to Jesus.” Schenck, who is rector of St. John’s Church in Hingham, Massachusetts, adds, “The saints aren’t just remote images in stained glass windows or pious-looking statues. They were real people God just



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POEISIS

from Lewis Brown



To Keep a True Lent

Is this a fast, to keep
The larder lean ?
And clean
From fat of veals and sheep ?

Is it to quit the dish
Of flesh, yet still
To fill
The platter high with fish ?

Is it to fast an hour,
Or raggd to go,
Or show
A downcast look and sour ?

No ; ‘tis a fast to dole
Thy sheaf of wheat,
And meat,
Unto the hungry soul.

It is to fast from strife,
From old debate
And hate ;
To circumcise thy life.

To show a heart grief-rent ;
To starve thy sin,
Not bin ;
And that’s to keep thy Lent.

Robert Herrick (1591-1674)

In the SPOTLIGHT

Gregory Cletus Willmore, Berkeley

Occupation: Deacon in training

Hobbies, interests: Classical music, singing, computer and Internet

Most people don't know that:
I collect stuffed animals and various icons

What I like best about St. Mark's is:
The sense of community and heavenly music

Favorite TV show, book:
I Love Lucy, *St. George and The Dragon* by E. Hays

I have lived in my apartment for 20 years, and served the disabled for 16 years, was a union rep. until a work accident happened over 6 years ago. I am a postulant for the sacred order of deacons in this diocese. I am a single gay man but I do want to fall in love if God sends me the right man. St. Mark's has been my home since 1995.

✠



HOT MEALS



Members of Cal's Pre-Dental Society were among the 50 volunteers who helped serve 125 dinners at Hot Meals on February 21.

ORGAN RECITAL MICHAEL BAWTREE



by **George Emblom**

The 29th season of the Second Sunday Evensong/Organ Recital continues March 8, 2015. Evensong will be offered by the St. Mark's Schola Cantorum, followed by a recital by British conductor and organist Michael Bawtree.

Michael Bawtree enjoys a wide-ranging international career that includes recent performances across Europe, the United States and Asia. Based in Glasgow, Scotland, he maintains regular commitments with the Edinburgh Royal Choral Union, the Glasgow Chamber Choir and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. He regular-

ly conducts the Royal Scottish National Orchestra – including a recent gala New Year's Eve concert – and has also directed the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and many performances with Scottish Ballet across the British Isles.

Mr Bawtree makes his debut at London's Royal Albert Hall in June, conducting Mozart's Requiem with the London Philharmonic Choir. For five years Michael Bawtree was Assistant Director of Music at St Edmundsbury Cathedral in Suffolk and now serves as Director of Music at St Margaret's Episcopal Church in Glasgow. ✕

Michael Bawtree



**St Mark's Episcopal Church
Sunday, March 8, 2015
6:05 PM**

Michael Bawtree - Organist

CPE Bach:	<i>Fantasia and Fugue in C</i>
Carl Nielsen:	<i>Five Short Preludes</i>
Dietrich Buxtehude:	<i>Passacaglia in D minor</i>
Albert de Klerk:	<i>Variations over the sequence Laudes Organi</i>
J.S. Bach:	<i>Trio in C BWV 585</i>
Judith Bingham:	<i>The Gift</i>
Louis Marchand:	<i>Grand Dialogue (from Troisième Livre d'Orgue)</i>

ADULT FORMATION



by Judith Berling

Theology for the Rest of Us

August 28-30 at Bishops Ranch

We tend to look to professional theologians or those with advanced theological education to “do theology” for us. But, as has been noted by Kathleen Norris and others, theology arises out of worship and our lives; all of us who worship are already doing theology. But how does what we believe about God matter in our lives?

At our retreat in August, we will reflect on our personal theologies and engage a range of theological images and ideas. We will have substantial, but also lively and engaging theological conversations --- and, of course, we will enjoy the rich resources of Bishops Ranch and lively social hour conversations.

This year’s retreat will be facilitated by Michael Aune, St. Mark’s parishioner and professor emeritus from Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, and Stephen Trever, our Assistant Rector.

The deadline for signups will be in mid-March. Because in the past, the parish budget has been charged each year more than a thousand dollars for folks who sign up and then pull out of the retreat, the Vestry has requested that we ask registrants to pay their entire fee (non-refundable) when they sign up. If you find that you cannot attend after all, you may be able to find a new participant to buy you out, but we ask for the fees at sign-up so that the parish is not “on the hook” for those who pull out after the deadline. If you have questions, ask Judith Berling. ✕

Lenten Adult Forums

We have chosen scripture as our theme for the Lenten Adult Forums. Because of the rich and intense liturgies of Holy Week and Easter, we will not have Adult Forums on Palm Sunday, Easter, or Low Sunday.

February 22: Judith Berling on the role of the Bible and other scriptures in our lives

March 1: Via Media video and discussion on the Bible in the Episcopal tradition, led by Pam Jester

March 8: A Social Justice forum on Immigration, led by our Deacon Phyllis Manoogian

March 22: Donn Morgan on wrestling with challenging scriptural passages ✕

THE LION LOOKS BACK

BISHOP KIP: GOLDEN VISIONS

by L. Retrospectans

Re-elected in 1857 as bishop of the newly regularized Episcopal Diocese of California, William Ingraham Kip, his wife, and their younger son, returned to San Francisco, as we learned in our last installment, via the Isthmus of Panama, following the same long and arduous route they had taken to reach the Golden State on their first visit four years earlier. Soon after arriving, the family purchased a home on fashionable Rincon Hill, where the bishop, assured of staying a while, was able to install his extensive library and art collection. He had as yet, of course, no official seat, there being no cathedral in the city.

Things would soon change, however, when the vestry of Grace Church, founded as a small chapel in 1849 as the second Episcopal church in San Francisco, asked Kip to serve as the rector of its imposing third church, which consequently became known as Grace “Cathedral.” Grace was thus one of the first, if not the first, Episcopal cathedrals in the United States. (An historical aside: one of the other short-term rectors the church called at the time was James Smith Bush, great-grandfather of George H. W. Bush.)

That new church moniker did not mean, however, that the bishop had to sit still in his seat, or see. According to an informative account by

Ralph Kuykendall, found in *The Hawaiian Kingdom: 1854-1874, Twenty Critical Years* (U of Hawaii Press, 1965), he was visiting London in 1860, hobnobbing with the likes of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Oxford, the formidable Samuel Wilberforce. This turned out, coincidentally perhaps, to be propitious for one of his visions, the establishment of the Episcopal Church even farther west than California, in Hawaii. A letter to Manley Hopkins, the Hawaiian

Consul General in London at the time, from R. C. Wyllie, Minister of Foreign Relations for King Kamehameha IV, asks that Hopkins intervene with the highest authorities in the English church to ensure their support for such an effort. Both the king and Queen Emma, who had already offered the site for a church in Honolulu, would view such assistance with much gratitude. Wyllie had also corresponded, we discover, with Kip, who, enlisting the support of Bishop Potter of New

York, also in London at the time, heartily backed the royal aspirations. Their support, along with that of others, resulted in the Episcopal Church’s decision to send two or three clergymen as part of the proposed Hawaiian mission. The outbreak of the Civil War, unfortunately, prevented this plan until after the war, when two American clergymen were sent (see Kuykendall, 88). You may

Bishop William Ingraham Kip



recall from an earlier column that the Kips' elder son Lawrence, a West Point graduate, served in the war on the staffs of Generals Sumner and Sheridan.

Although he spent the war years largely in San Francisco, by 1864 the bishop was back in Europe, on a visit to his critically ill son William, Jr., who was in the diplomatic service. His father was doubtless glad to see his recovery as well as his marriage to the daughter of the United States ambassador to Italy, in February, 1865, at the Anglican Chapel in Nice. He then set out on a tour of Europe. Thus it was that he was in Frankfurt-am-Main during the period following Lincoln's assassination; the U. S. Consul General there asked him to preside at a service and give a sermon on June 1, 1865, observing the national Day of Humiliation and Prayer proclaimed in 1863 by President Lincoln. Bishop Kip returned to the United States later in the year, in time for the General Convention, held in Philadelphia, at which the southern bishops took their seats for the first time since the Civil War had started.

On November 26, 1865, the bishop delivered a sermon at Grace Cathedral. On the fly-leaf of the pamphlet in which it was published we find the notation: "Sermon delivered by Author on first Sunday of his return to diocese after European trip ..." In it, benefitting from his recent tour, he characterizes the Roman Catholic and Calvinistic traditions he had experienced in Europe, both of which he finds wanting. The Anglican Church, he avers, combines the best of both, and we American Episcopalians, he maintains, are fortunate to be its descendants! Propelled, no doubt, by such certitude, a major period of growth followed his return to California, symbolized not only by the completion of a railroad to Los Angeles, but also by the establishment of a number of diocesan institutions, e.g., the Protestant Episcopal Old Ladies Home (a church home for "aged, worthy women") in 1869, and St. Luke's Hospital, in 1871. He continued to bless new parishes throughout the diocese. And he continued to be a prolific author, adding to a good half dozen earlier volumes *The Unnoticed Things of Scripture* in 1868, *Olden Times in New York* in

1872, and *The Church of the Apostles* in 1877.

His last visit to New York occurred in 1889, when he was 78 years old. Back in California, he astonishingly soldiered on all over the state, despite failing sight and health. An Assistant Bishop—W. F. Nichols, later no stranger to St. Mark's—was consecrated in 1890. In the last official act of his episcopate, Kip ordained his own grandson, William Ingraham III (UCB 1888; General Seminary 1892) at Grace Cathedral in 1892, following which he returned home, "never to leave again in this life," according to the biography we quoted earlier in this series. His obituary appeared in the *New York Times* of April 8, 1893. His beloved wife, "Miss Maria," died six months later, to the day.

It seems fitting, as a conclusion to this perhaps overlong account of the life of this extraordinarily visionary pioneer, to cite another extraordinary churchman, the former rector of our parish and also bishop of California, Edward Lambe Parsons, who wrote the following moving tribute to his predecessor:

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Grace Church dating from 1870, looking pretty much the way it did in 1862 (when it first opened for services). The iconic California Street bell tower was not completed until 1890. The view is southeast from the intersection of Stockton and California Streets. The church burned in 1906 and the Ritz-Carlton Hotel is on the site today. Photo courtesy of California Pioneers Society and Michael Lampen of Grace Cathedral.

Three Transforming Days - continued from page 5

During the early centuries of the Church, Christians began observing his death and resurrection with a night-long vigil, beginning Saturday night. Although we don't stay up all night, we do begin the Easter Vigil after dark on Saturday, gradually moving through different expressions of the transforming power and meaning of Jesus' resurrection. Some of those expressions include the lighting of New Fire, the Paschal candle, ancient stories of God's transforming power, and renewal of our baptismal vows. This is the first service of

Easter. (The celebration, of course, continues on Sunday morning.)

In Three Transforming Days, we pass with Christ from ordinary life to death, to risen life. We see three ways in which all of life is blessed and shared by Jesus, in which God's Love is present with us: in ordinary things, actions, and community; in death; in new life. In all these ways God loves us in Christ Jesus, and we are joined and strengthened to be channels of God's love to our world. ✠



The
**BAPTISM of
MORGAN
ELIZABETH
JO
BRETON-
LAKE
Feb. 15, 2015**

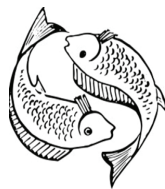
(Above) Morgan is baptized, after stealing Corrie's glasses.

(Below) Newly baptized Morgan, and her parents and godparents, receive the Light of Christ.

Photos by Bruce Alexander

Mourning - continued from page 6

coo of a dove. Like a winnowing fork, the pain of mourning separated the chaff of false expectations and hopes from the wheat of that Love which gives life meaning and lasting purpose. The process of mourning, far from keeping me looking to the past, helped me re-orient to the future with a renewed sense of the sacredness of life. The imagery of the desert that is evoked in Lent is an apt metaphor for mourning. The desert is a harsh place not to be treaded lightly. The harsh environment, however, also helps us easily distinguish what is essential for life. I hope that we can recognize this time of Lent as an opportunity and an invitation to mourn the losses that need to be mourned, so that we might be rekindled by the love of God, who brings forth new life even in the driest of places. ✠



Bishop Kip - continued from page 11

As one goes over the story of his life there grows before one's mind the portrait of a great gentleman, a noble Christian character, patient in dealing with difficulties, wise in his touch upon the lives of his people, humble in the spirit before the Lord. Under his wise guidance the Episcopal Church in California grew steadily in numbers and influence; but the largest contribution which he made to it was the impress of fine devotion, of high ideals, of nobility of purpose, of undaunted courage.

No wonder our parish wished in 1901 to dedicate its "splendid new church" to his memory! ✠

ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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SUNDAY EUCCHARIST

8 AM
Spoken - Chapel

10 AM
Choral - Nave (Main Church)

VOLUNTEER FOR A THREE HOUR SHIFT AT THE ALAMEDA COUNTY FOOD BANK

Through a network of 240 strategically placed member agencies—food pantries, soup kitchens, child-care centers, senior centers, after-school programs, and other community-based organizations—the Food Bank distributes enough food for 380,000 meals weekly. This organization depends upon volunteers to help out at its main facility near the Oakland airport. St. Mark's would like to organize a group to go out in March on a date to be determined. For more information, please contact Jeff Armbruster at jscottarmbruster@gmail.com. ✠

Lent Madness - continued from page 6

happened to use in marvelous ways.”

Lent Madness began on Schenck’s blog in 2010 as he sought a way to combine his love of sports with his passion for the lives of saints. Starting in 2012, he partnered with Forward Movement (the same folks that publish Forward Day by Day), to bring Lent Madness to the masses.

The Rev. Canon Scott Gunn, Schenck’s Lent Madness co-conspirator, says, “Throughout Lent, as we’re having fun with the competition, we are also inspired by how God used ordinary people to do extraordinary things.” Gunn, who is executive director of Forward Movement in Cincinnati, Ohio, adds, “That’s the whole point of the Christian life: to allow God to work in us to share God’s love and proclaim Good News.”

Schenck and Gunn form the self-appointed Supreme Executive Committee, a more-or-less benevolent dictatorship that runs the entire operation. The formula has worked, as this online devotional has been featured in media outlets all over the country including NBC, The Washington Post, FOX News, NPR, USA Today, and even Sports Illustrated (no, really).

Here’s how it works: on the weekdays of Lent, information is posted at <http://www.lent-madness.org> about two different saints. Each pairing remains open for 24 hours as participants read about them and then vote to determine which saint moves on to the next round. Sixteen saints make it to the Round of the Saintly Sixteen; eight advance to the Round of the Elate Eight; four make it to the Faithful Four; two to the Championship; and the winner is awarded the Golden Halo.

The first round consists of basic biographical information about each of the 32 saints. Things get a bit more interesting in the subsequent rounds, as we offer quotes and quirks, explore legends, and even move into the area of saintly kitsch.

This year Lent Madness features an intriguing slate of saints ancient and modern, Biblical and ecclesiastical. 2015 heavyweights include

Teresa of Avila, Frederick Douglass, Francis of Assisi, Hildegard of Bingen, Balthazar, and the Venerable Bede. The full bracket is online at the Lent Madness website.

From the “you can’t know the saints without a scorecard” department, the Saintly Scorecard -- The Definitive Guide to Lent Madness 2015 is available through Forward Movement. It contains biographies of all 32 saints to assist those who like to fill out their brackets in advance, in addition to a full-color pull-out bracket.

This all kicked off on “Ash Thursday,” February 19. To participate, visit the Lent Madness website, where you can also print out a bracket for free, to see how you fare or “compete” against friends and family members. Like that other March tournament, there will be drama and intrigue, upsets and thrashings, last-minute victories and Cinderellas.

Ten “celebrity bloggers” from across the country have been tapped to write for the project including the Rev. Amber Belldene of San Francisco, CA; the Rev. Laurie Brock of Lexington, KY; Dr. David Creech of Morehead, MN; the Rev. Megan Castellan of Kansas City, MO; the Rev. Laura Darling of Oakland, CA; Neva Rae Fox of Somerville, NJ; the Rev. Nancy Frausto of Los Angeles, CA; the Rev. David Hendrickson of Denver, CO; the Rev. Maria Kane of Houston, TX; and the Rev. David Sibley of Manhasset, NY. Information about each of the celebrity bloggers and the rest of the team is available on the Lent Madness website.

If you’re looking for a Lenten discipline that is fun, educational, occasionally goofy, and always joyful, consider this your invitation to join in the Lent Madness journey. ✠



St. Mark's Episcopal Church

Mar 2015 (Pacific Time)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>8 am - Eucharist-CH @ Chapel 8:45am - "Coffee at Eight" 10 am - Choral Eucharist-NV 12pm - Forum: Via Media-LIB</p>	<p>5 pm - Suitcase Clinic (3-9p)-PAR</p>	<p>5:30pm - Stewardship--Rector's 6:30pm - Spoken Word-LIB @</p>	<p>9:30am - LION Mailing-offsite 12:10pm - Holy Eucharist-CH 5:30pm - Bridge Group-LH 5:30pm - Choir Board-LIB 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal-PAR</p>	<p>6:30pm - Intercessory Prayer 7:15pm - Contemplative Prayer- 8pm - Compline-CH</p>	<p>12:10pm - Holy Eucharist-CH</p>	<p>Daylight Saving-Spring Forward</p>
<p>8 am - Eucharist-CH @ Chapel 8:45am - "Coffee at Eight" 10 am - Choral Eucharist-NV 1pm - Forum: Hunger Film-LIB 3pm - The o' Cats-LIB 5:30pm - Evensong/Organ</p>	<p>6 pm - Suitcase Clinic (3-9p)-PAR</p>	<p>6:30pm - Social Justice-LIB @</p>	<p>12:10pm - Holy Eucharist-CH 5:30pm - Bridge Group-LH 6pm - Finance Committee-CON @ 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal-PAR</p>	<p>6:30pm - Intercessory Prayer 7:15pm - Contemplative Prayer- 8pm - Compline-CH</p>	<p>Vestry Retreat 12:10pm - Holy Eucharist-CH</p>	
<p>Vestry Retreat No Forum Today 8 am - Eucharist-CH @ Chapel 8:45am - "Coffee at Eight" 10 am - Choral Eucharist-NV</p>	<p>6 pm - Suitcase Clinic (3-9p)-PAR</p>	<p>6 pm - Adult Formation-LIB @</p>	<p>12:10pm - Holy Eucharist-CH 5:30pm - Bridge Group-LH 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal-PAR</p>	<p>6:30pm - Intercessory Prayer 7 pm - Vestry Mtg-LIB 7:15pm - Contemplative Prayer- 8pm - Compline-CH</p>	<p>12:10pm - Holy Eucharist-CH 6pm - Barefoot Chamber Concert-</p>	<p>1:30pm - Hot Meals-PAR @</p>
<p>LION Deadline 8 am - Eucharist-CH @ Chapel 8:45am - "Coffee at Eight" 10 am - Choral Eucharist-NV 1pm - Forum: Scriptures(T)-LIB 4pm - C.Rogers Memorial-NV</p>	<p>6 pm - Suitcase Clinic (3-9p)-PAR</p>	<p>6 pm - Communications-LIB @</p>	<p>12:10pm - Holy Eucharist-CH 5:30pm - Bridge Group-LH 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal-PAR</p>	<p>3:30pm - Landscape Task Force- 6:30pm - Intercessory Prayer 7:15pm - Contemplative Prayer- 8pm - Compline-CH</p>	<p>12:10pm - Holy Eucharist-CH</p>	<p>10:30am - Spoken Word Reh-NV 2 pm - Prayer Shawl-LIB @</p>
<p>No Forum Today 8 am - Eucharist-CH @ Chapel 8:45am - "Coffee at Eight" 10 am - Choral Eucharist-NV 12pm - Personnel Committee-</p>	<p>6 pm - Suitcase Clinic (3-9p)-PAR</p>					

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