



**Highlights:**

- Rector's Ramblings
- Covenant Groups
- The Snyder Report
- 



**Rector's Ramblings**

by Fr. Ray

I wish everyone a blessed New Millennium! Even more than most new years, this is a time to give thanks and to be open to new things in our lives.

As I begin this new millennium, I am thankful for many things in our parish life:

- our wonderful liturgical art during Advent
- a recent \$10,000 gift to St. Mark's designated for creating a new church sign and for supporting the ministry of Ann Sullivan
- an excellent fall Alpha Course, with a great banquet shared with the Experiencing God class
- the training this fall of leaders for our Covenant Groups, with several groups ready to start in January
- a very good start to our Sunday School year, with the "Godly Play" curriculum ably taught by Ian Laing and Elaine Thomas with much help from David Muller
- our St. Mark's Preschool, led so well by Kate Mikami, with plans to add another classroom in February and exciting possibilities for future daycare

- ministry
- the competence and cheerfulness of our new church secretary Julie Macchi
- our new assistant priest Ann Sullivan, who has added so much to our life and who has both supported and challenged me in my ministry
- the many years of ministry at St. Mark's by deacon John Palmer, wishing him a great new ministry at Holy Spirit Church, Campbell.

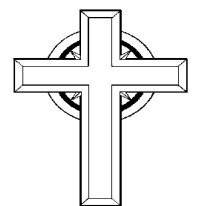
I am looking forward to new things in our life together:

- working with the vestry to be a more prayerful, discerning group
- launching our new Covenant Groups in January
- starting "The Divine Drama" (a new Bible study program) in February
- working with our leaders and congregation to do ministry

- according to our spiritual gifts
- making our worship more transforming and inspiring
- the coming ministry of our new deacon Judy Ahlvin
- growing in my own leadership: to be a clearer, stronger, more consistent leader

What are you thankful for as we jump into the new century and millennium? What do you see God doing in your life to bring transformation? Happy new year/century/millennium to all!

In Jesus' love,  
Fr. Ray



**Inside this issue:**

Annual Mtg/Combined Serv.	2
New Deacon	2
New St. Mark's Sign	2
Educational Programs	3
Buildings and Grounds	4
Reduction of Vestry Size	4
More Articles	3-6
Birthdays, Anniversaries, info.	6

## COMBINED SERVICE AND ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Our St. Mark's Annual Meeting will be on Sunday January 23. We will have one combined service at 9:30 a.m., followed by a brunch in the parish hall and the meeting. At the meeting, we will elect new vestry members and diocesan delegates. The meeting is also a time to reflect about our past parish year of ministry and to look ahead to the ministries of the new year. It is also a good time of fellowship. Please plan to attend!



## NEW DEACON AT ST. MARK'S

Our new deacon Judy Ahlvin will begin her ministry among us on Sunday January 9. She will be assisting at all three services that Sunday. She will be preaching for the first time at St. Mark's on Sunday January 16th. Please give her a warm welcome as she gets to know us and starts her ministry at St. Mark's.

--Fr. Ray

## NEW ST. MARK'S SIGN!



"The sign will be lit from within and be very easily seen at night."

Because of a generous donation to our parish, we will be getting a new street sign for St. Mark's on Pruneridge Avenue. This sign will replace the existing wooden sign. The new sign will be made by a professional church sign company. It will have a sign board on it where we can make messages with moveable letters. The sign will be very attractive and give us much more visibility to all the people driving on Pruneridge. It will enable us to advertise various parish ministries and events on the sign board. The sign will be lit from within and be very easily seen at night. Thanks to our Buildings and Grounds Team which has done all the research about possible signs, will be working with the city to have our sign approved, and will be putting up the new sign when it is ready. Thanks also to a previous donor about two years ago and the most recent donor who have provided the money to create our new sign. We do not have a schedule yet for the installation of the new sign, but keep an eye out for its appearance in the coming months!

## Happy New Year to the people of God at St. Mark's

By God's grace and the Bishop's wisdom, I am delighted to have been assigned to St. Mark's in Santa Clara. Currently, I serve as chaplain at St. Stephen's Episcopal School in San Jose. I teach religion and conduct chapel services for pre-school through sixth grade students. Before I became a deacon, I taught sixth grade at St. Stephen's for thirteen years. I have lived in the past years with my husband and daughter in Morgan Hill twenty-two years with my husband Bruce and daughter Greta; a student in Speech Pathology. Bruce owns an ad agency and has an active music ministry. I was ordained to the diaconate on June 24, 1998 and, as my first assignment, served at Holy Spirit, Campbell. I look forward with much eagerness to meeting each of you as we grow together in our servant ministry.



Blessings,  
Judith +



## Education Ministry Team

There are several stimulating educational programs planned for the new year. The Covenant groups, Alpha, the History Nights, and the Divine Drama. We are excited about these programs and have provided a variety of times these programs will be offered to fit your schedules. We hope you will enjoy sharing in some or all of these spiritual programs. Please read on for more information.

### COVENANT GROUPS BEGIN!

God's greatest joy is to bless our lives. God blesses us and our lives then become a blessing to others. Blessing comes to us when we gather regularly to know, love, support, study, pray and laugh together. A covenant group is a place where people open themselves to God's blessing. In a small group, the power of God emerges naturally from personal sharing and scriptural reflection.

St. Mark's is launching eight new covenant groups in January, 2000.

"Within my covenant group, I have found a very special bond of love, support, and understanding that I didn't know was missing from my life."

"The clarity, strength, and understanding I have received in my covenant group has empowered me to become someone I am proud of." (St. Timothy's Church parishioner in Mt. View)

WOULD YOU LIKE TO MAKE FRIENDS WITH PEOPLE OF FAITH?

WOULD YOU ENJOY THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE THE

MEANING OF THE GOSPEL WITH PEOPLE YOU TRUST?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO RE-BUILDING COMMUNITY IN THE SILICON VALLEY?

Then covenant groups are for you!

All St. Mark's parishioners and their friends are welcomed and encouraged to join a covenant group. Invitations are meant to go both ways. Covenant leaders will be reaching out to call and invite all members of St. Mark's. Parishioners are also free to select a group to join or try more than one until you find "the right fit."

Here is a list of St. Mark's Covenant Group Leaders: Please call them for times and locations.

- Marty Schaefer 408-253-9832
- Linda Dilisio 408-241-6308
- Ray /Deb Hess 408-225-0912
- David Muller 408-257-8262
- Brett Wormley 408-265-3237
- Elva Wormley 408-265-3237
- Dean Daily 408-281-1900
- Tom Lamb 408-376-3780
- Leroy Marcott 650-940-9173

Please call me with any questions - Rev. Ann Sullivan  
408-985-7293

Director of Covenant  
Group Ministry

### THE HISTORY NIGHTS

By popular demand "The History Nights" with Fr. Ray will be offered again in the new year. There will be two topics. Topic #1 will be on January 9<sup>th</sup>

at 7:00 p.m. Fr. Ray will be comparing the development of the Episcopal Church to the Church of England from the beginning to end. Tracing how the Episcopal Church and the Church of England (1600 – today) shared the same beginning however, ended up differently.

Topic #2 will be on February 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. Fr. Ray will talk about the history of the Episcopal Church from the mid 1800's to today.

### DIVINE DRAMA BEGINS!

Have you noticed that the bible can be a daunting book to comprehend? Does the bible overwhelm you or intimidate you?

Would you like to join with other folks and learn a basic orientation and the major themes of scripture?

DIVINE DRAMA is a 12 week course that will be offered to the parish starting in mid-February. The course will be available twice a week.

DIVINE DRAMA is written by Harry N. Wendt and published by Crossways International. It is colorful, creative, interesting, and does a great job of making the bible story accessible to us all.

A course will be offered on Sunday evenings at 6:00 p.m. (dinner, followed by class) starting Feb. 13<sup>th</sup> and on Wednesday mornings at 11:00, starting Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>. Allow an hour and a half for the actual class.

You will learn the narrative thread that holds the book together. You will receive a workbook and some reading materials.

The cost for the class will be \$25.00.

Call Fr. Ray at (408) 296-8383, or Rev. Ann at (408) 985-7293 for more information.

## BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS NEWS



We had a busy December because the fire marshall for Santa Clara paid us a visit and presented a list of 16 things to fix or change to bring us into code! I want to thank all the Buildings and Grounds Team for helping take care of these things during the busy Christmas season. Thanks also to Cliff Vinton and LeRoy Marcott (not members of the B & G team) who volunteered to help with our fire code repairs.

In the new year, we will be working to get our new street sign made, delivered, and installed. We will need to get city approval for the sign; not an easy task! Our monthly planning meeting will be on Saturday January 8th, starting with breakfast at 8 a. m. Our monthly workday will be on Saturday January 15th. We always love to have parishioners join our ministry any time!

Deborah Hess, chairperson

### ***CONVENTION/DEANERY DELEGATES NEEDED***

At our Annual Meeting on January 23rd, we will elect four diocesan delegates and four alternates. The delegates will represent our parish at the Diocesan Convention in January, 2001. The alternates serve if any of the delegates cannot attend. All the delegates and alternates are also deanery delegates. The deanery is a regional gathering of five churches in the Santa Clara Valley. Deanery meetings take place at least four times per year. Why would you consider doing this? Being a delegate at Diocesan Convention or for deanery give you a view of the larger church - you get to meet people around the diocese and to consider issues and ministries of the whole diocese and of our national Episcopal Church. This can be very exciting: to see what God is doing in many places and people beyond St. Mark's, Santa Clara.

If you would like to consider this ministry, please see me, Brett Wormley, or Dean Daily as soon as possible.

--Fr. Ray

## OPTIMAL SIZE OF THE VESTRY

At its December meeting, the vestry voted to change our parish by laws to reduce the size of the vestry from twelve to nine members, effective with the vestry of 2001 (the vestry would stay at its current size of twelve members for the year 2000). This change in our by-laws will be brought for ratification by the parish membership at the annual meeting this January 23.

Why make this change in size? The vestry in the coming year will be working as a prayerful, discerning group looking at the big picture of what God is calling us to do. This kind of work is very different from the vestry's past focus on parish management, overseeing committee work and finances. In the future, the vestry will still have responsibility for major budget decisions, but its focus will be much more on discerning God's will for our parish ministries. Parish management will be done by groups of people who have the spiritual gift of administration, and other ministries will be done by ministry teams or covenant groups.

In order to shift from being a management group to being a prayer-centered discernment group, the vestry will work better as a smaller, more cohesive group. Changing the size to nine will also free up more people to be involved directly in other ministries. The current vestry thinks that this change in size will be a helpful part of changing the way the vestry does its work.

If you have any questions, please talk with our wardens Dean Daily and Diane Johnston, past senior warden Brett Wormley, or with our priests Ray Hess and Ann Sullivan.

### **DIOCESAN CONVENTION**

Our annual Diocesan Convention for El Camino Real will be on Friday and Saturday January 14-15. Please keep the convention and our delegates in your prayers. Our St. Mark's convention delegates are Helen Prendergast, Barbara Rice, Sue Brown, and Deborah Hess. Our clergy Ray Hess, Ann Sullivan, and Judy Ahlvin will also attend convention.

# The Snyder Report

The Snyders just returned from two weeks vacation in Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, and Czech Republic.

"We worked one day each on Habitat Build sites in Gliwice (Poland) and Budapest (Hungary). People are being reached through the Habitat message and it was exciting to actually have hands-on experience working with locals in different countries. In Gliwice we stayed with Habitat friends and attended a marvelous Chopin concert in honor of 150 years since his death. The free program included; piano, dance, poetry and recitation of letters written by and to Chopin. Even though it was all in Polish, we were able to understand the main drift. Our

"Everyone should know about such places just to be sure it never happens again."

full day in Auschwitz and Birkenau (near Gliwice) was very emotional for us as well as for the groups of youth from Israel who were also there. Imagine a pile of thousands of pairs of shoes being displayed in a heap and also an enormous pile of luggage, most carefully labeled with the owner's name and hometown. Everyone should know about such places just to be sure it never happens again. Gliwice also contains the radio station wooden radio tower connected with the radio station into which German prisoners (disguised as members of the

Polish army) came and took possession on the evening of 31 August, 1939 and the next morning in Gdansk this takeover was used as the pretext on which World War II was started. We did lots of sightseeing in and near Warsaw, Gliwice, Krakow Budapest and Prague. We traveled by train and then used the local transport systems. The food was excellent throughout, especially the authentic Pilsner Beer in the Czech Republic. We attended classical music concerts each of the two night that we spent in Prague. The experience truly exceeded our expectations.

We're back now with renewed enthusiasm for Habitat and we feel we now understand a bit better about why we are here."



Growing thriving habitats



## ALTAR FLOWER DEDICATIONS

The Flower Dedication Chart for the year 2000 is posted on the bulletin board on the back wall of the Narthex. Excluding the Lenten season, you may dedicate flowers for the main altar, the children's altar or the Sanctuary candle. To offset the cost of the flowers and the candle, the suggested donation is \$15 per arrangement on the main altar and \$7.50 per arrangement for the children's altar. The cost of the Sanctuary candle is \$8.00. Please sign up on the chart for the date you would like to dedicate flowers, fill out the dedication form provided and note Altar Flowers and the dedication date on your check. If you have any questions about the procedure please call the church office (296-8383) or Helen Prendergast (998-4234).

## FELLOWSHIP ~ A Company of Friends "Living the Joy"



☺ Mark your calendar with these upcoming St. Mark's fellowship events:

### Friday, December 31 - Y2K New Year's Eve Celebration

Avoid the dreaded Y2K bug and have a safe, fun evening as we enter the 21st century together. If you are interested in hosting a New Year's Eve dinner party, or participating as a St. Mark's group in a local San Jose event, please contact Kathy Woolner (244-3822 or email [kpw@woolner.com](mailto:kpw@woolner.com)). Help us to make this a memorable New Year's Eve, and **give your input now!**

If you would like more information on this event, or if you would like to help with an event, please contact Kathy Woolner or Diane Johnston. Hope to see everyone "living the joy" at St. Mark's!





## Looking for a personal trainer?

We'd like to Suggest the man on the right.



St. Mark's Episcopal Church is hosting an introduction to Christianity course called "**Alpha.**" The course is the perfect answer to those individuals who know that life's tough philosophical issues don't require brute strength, they require strength of character. Come find out how to get the right guy on *your* side.

Cross training starts February 27, 2000.

A banquet dinner will be served and an introductory Video Will be shown.

**Child Care** will be provided.

"Don't miss these exciting courses!"



## The Divine Drama - "The Biblical Narrative"



Studying *The Divine Drama* is like traveling through the Bible by car. You can stop to enjoy sights, but you know you have to get to your destination in reasonable time. *The Divine Drama* gives you an overview of the Bible's story in 15 units called "The Biblical Narrative". As God's children, we are involved in an extraordinary drama, a divine one!

*The Divine Drama* helps us understand the script – the Bible – and our roles!

This is an exciting way to have the Scriptures opened to you. You may gain a refreshing interest in the Sunday Scripture lessons as well as in your own Bible readings. You may finally be able to make sense out of the Scriptures, and may gain a renewed interest in the Word as they connect the Old and New Testaments. You may gain a more personal commitment to serve others in their daily walks.

*The Divine Drama* outlines the Biblical narrative from creation to Jesus. It relates the Biblical storyline and Jesus' ministry to life today. You may come to know Jesus better and to discover the meaning of life!

**Climb In!**



## STAFF:

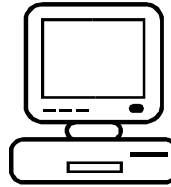
**Ray Hess, Rector**  
**Ann Sullivan, Assistant Priest**  
**Rev. Judith L. Ahlvin, Deacon**  
**Kate Mikami, Preschool Director**  
**Julie Macchi, Church Secretary**  
**John Cole, Verger**  
**Dean Daily, Senior Warden**  
**Diane Johnston, Junior Warden**  
**Charlie Cramer, Music Director**  
**Mikey Day & his Dad, Praise Band**  
**Al Daily, Treasurer**  
**Liz Moore, Recording Treasurer**



## St Marks Vestry Email

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 David: [drmuller@mindspring.com](mailto:drmuller@mindspring.com)  
 Diane: [didij@flash.net](mailto:didij@flash.net)  
 Hugh: [promocom@Concentric.Net](mailto:promocom@Concentric.Net)  
 Emily: [ebologna@groco.com](mailto:ebologna@groco.com)  
 Joanna: [lessontext@aol.com](mailto:lessontext@aol.com)  
 Kathy: [kpw@best.com](mailto:kpw@best.com)  
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 Bev: [beverly@lcl-imaging.com](mailto:beverly@lcl-imaging.com)

[office@st-marks.org](mailto:office@st-marks.org)



**St. Mark's web site:**  
**[www.St-Marks.org/restricted/members](http://www.St-Marks.org/restricted/members)**

**User Name: saint**  
**Password: agtmEc**

\*Office Hours:  
 11:30AM-2:30PM

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*"Living the joy!"*