

THE EPISTLE



ST. PAUL'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Following Jesus together in prayer, worship and service.

From the Rector



Dear Friends,

December presents the sharpest contrast of any month of the year. We are invited by the church to be quiet and keep watch. And we are pressured by everyone else to hyper activity and emotional intensity.

Here at St. Paul's I will invite us to keep watch throughout this month with just the book of Isaiah. Isaiah overflows with familiar passages that point to Jesus. Each of the O Antiphons, that mark each of the Sundays before Christmas is based on Isaiah. Handel's Messiah is woven largely out of passages from this same great book.

We will be harried this month by many voices clamoring for our attention. Let some part of your mind and heart settle into a steady gaze on this powerful and transformative book. Let your mind be curious about who this "wonderful counselor" might be and your heart yearn for this baby who is "Emmanuel," God with us. Remember, with words of Isaiah to God, that "those of steadfast mind you keep in peace, in peace because they trust in you."

Faithfully,
Christopher (cmartin@stpaulssanrafael.org)

Christmas Service Times

Sunday, December 24th

Christmas Eve Family Service
Christmas Eve Service with Choral Prelude

Monday, December 25th- Christmas Day

... followed by a Pot Luck Feast hosted by the Martins (see below)

8am Service
NO 10am Service
5pm
10:30pm

10am Service



Christmas Day Potluck Feast

The Martin Family invites you to celebrate the joy of Christmas at our annual Potluck Feast on Christmas Day at 11:00. RSVP to chloedmartin@comcast.net or 415-464-7149

Greening of the Church- Helpers needed

Volunteers are needed to help hang the garland and deck the halls for our Christmas Services. Please meet in the church at 1pm on Saturday, December 23. If you'd like to donate altar flowers, see announcement on page 2.

For more information please visit our website at StPaulsSanRafael.org.
Join the community on Facebook and Twitter. Church Office Phone: 415-456-4842.

Special Ways to Support our Outreach Ministries this Season



- ❖ **Gifts for Ritter Center:** We are collecting gifts for the clients of Ritter Center in San Rafael. Please bring an unwrapped gift and deposit it in one of the two barrels in Duncan Hall by **Thursday, December 14th.**
 Ideas for adults: warm socks, camping equipment, backpacks and duffle bags, gift cards for iTunes, Ross, TJ Maxx, Marshalls, Target, Kohls, Starbucks, Safeway.
 Ideas for teens: hoodies, sweatshirts, journal books, scarves, gloves, throw blankets, art supplies, toiletries, hair care products and accessories, cosmetics, jewelry, pajamas, gift cards as above.
- ❖ **Christmas Cards to San Quentin Inmates:** Look for the Christmas Cards in Duncan Hall, and write one to one of the 9 men we visit. The cards they received from us last year were truly appreciated.
- ❖ **Caroling at the San Rafael Health Care Center:** Join the children who have been learning Christmas Carols in Sunday School, and come sing to our friends at San Rafael Health Care Center. We'll be going after the 10am service on Sunday, December 17.

Death Row Ministry "Come and See" Meeting, Wed. Dec. 6, 5:30pm in the Upper Room
 We have a thriving ministry to 9 inmates on Death Row, and groups from other churches are interested in joining it. Come to this meeting to find out more about the ministry and how you might get involved. Or contact Richard (415.259.9198 or ollipops@comcast.net).

Coffee Hour Volunteers Needed

Coffee hour is such a special time of fellowship when we visit with friends and welcome newcomers. It has always been put on by volunteers who make the coffee, set the table, put out the food, then clean it all up afterwards. All expenses can be reimbursed. If you can help with this important ministry, even on a one-time basis, please call Chloe Martin 415-464-7149 or email chloeadmartin@comcast.net



Christmas Flower Donations

The beauty of our Church at Christmas time is legendary! But only if you help. If you would like to have flowers given in memory of someone you love, please contact Alex Elliot at isaiah24257@gmail.com or call him at 415.488.7930. There is no specific dollar amount required. If paying by check, please either send your check by mail or bring it in on a Sunday and put in the offering plate. Please specifically note what it is for and please have all Christmas Flower donations in by **Sunday, December 17.**

What is Your Next Spiritual Step?

- **Morning Prayer:** Tuesday at 7:30am in the church.
- **Bible Studies** Wednesdays 10-11am: Gospel of Luke
 Thursday 6:15-7:15pm: Letters of Paul
- **Spiritual Forum:** Sundays 9-9:40am-Exploring the soul. Duncan Hall.
- **Christian meditation:** 2nd & 4th Sunday at 7pm in the Upper Room.
- **Afternoon 20-minute meditation in the church:** Tuesdays at 5pm
 Thursdays at 5:45
- **Discipleship Groups:** small groups with a longer term commitment focused on spiritual maturity and loving community with the poor. Talk to Christopher about joining a group.

St. Paul's offers many ways for you to learn, pray and grow spiritually

St. Paul's History Corner

By Joy Moss

Leading up to St. Paul's 150th anniversary, let's take a look at some of the former church members who are memorialized with their gifts to the glory of God and in remembrance of loved ones.

THE SANCTUARY LIGHT WAS DONATED BY THE ALFRED N. THOMSON FAMILY

The sanctuary light is a continuously burning flame above the aumbry that contains the consecrated bread and wine left after the communion service. The flame represents the presence of God in the church.

The sanctuary light was donated to the Glory of God and to the remembrance of Alfred Thomson. Alfred Thomson was born in San Francisco in 1916. He started working for the San Rafael School District in 1946. He worked at San Rafael High School first as a football and swimming coach and then as Dean of Boys and later as vice-principal. He served as the principal from 1961 to 1966. He was also a vestryman at St. Paul's. When he died in 1970, his funeral service was at St. Paul's.

His wife, Constance and his sons, Norman and Robert were members of St. Paul's as well.

Alfred N. Thomson, a photo from the 1966 San Rafael High School Yearbook, "The Searchlight" from the collection of the Marin History Museum.



Children and Youth at St. Paul's

The children at St. Paul's have been learning the traditional Christmas songs. We invite the congregation to join us on **December 17th after church for our Annual Caroling trip** to the San Rafael Healthcare Center on 5th Avenue.

The first Sunday of Advent (Dec. 3), we will begin assembling the Crèche. Each Sunday leading up to Christmas, the children will unwrap the precious pieces (imported from Italy and hand carved!) and place them into the stable. Church goers will exit church and notice that "little elves" have left a little more of Jesus' story.



- *Dec. 3rd - first Sunday in Advent, learn more music
- *Dec. 10th - Godly Play with Kati
- *Dec. 17th - Music Sunday with Libby, followed by caroling at San Rafael Health Care Center
- *Dec. 24th - There is NO 10 am service, but there's a 5pm service (help finish the manger)
- *Dec. 31st - Children practice for pageant and families host coffee hour
- *Jan. 7th - Epiphany Sunday - Children's Pageant

For more information please contact Kati Dombrosky , kdombrosky@gmail.com 415-846-1700

St. Anne's Guild Weekly Lunch

Please note that St. Anne's will not be hosting their Annual Christmas Luncheon this year. They welcome all to join them for their weekly lunches in Duncan Hall at 11:00. Bring your sandwich and they provide tea and cookies. They have good conversation and enjoy one another, and hope that if there are more regular members they will be able to host the luncheon again in the future years.

Marin Episcopal Youth Group For Middle and High School Youth

White Elephant Gift Exchange-Sunday, Dec. 10
from 6-7:30 at Redeemer Church.

Outreach Night to the Marin Street Chaplaincy-
Tuesday, Dec. 12 from 5-6pm at 1st. Pres. San Rafael

Movie Night: The Last Jedi-Sunday, Dec. 17 at
6:10

For more information contact Daniel London at
daniel.london@gmail.com

Save the Dates

St. Paul's 150th Anniversary Celebration

Thursday, January 25, 2018 at 7pm

Choral Evensong

With The Right Reverend Marc H. Andrus
followed by Dessert Reception

Saturday, January 27, 2018

St. Paul's Parish Dinner/Dance

Details and invitations to follow

Sunday, May 6, 2018

Open House

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EPISCOPAL CHURCH

1123 Court St.
San Rafael, CA 94901