

THE EPISTLE



ST. PAUL'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Following Jesus together in prayer, worship and service.

From the Rector

Dear Friends-

In December we shift to our third and final Landmark in our RenewalWorks process of spiritual growth. As a reminder, last year 84 of us took the RenewalWorks Spiritual Inventory. We plan to take it again in 2 years, in the fall of 2022. In the meantime we are focusing on three Landmarks that address areas of potential growth for us, both individually and as a Christian community.

In Lent and Easter we focused on the first Landmark, becoming spiritual leaders of our own faith. In the summer and the fall we focused on the second Landmark, transparent and accountable leadership. From now until the beginning of Lent we focus on the third Landmark, finding Jesus in the face of the least.

This Landmark involves both an outer and an inner challenge. The outer challenge is to participate in one of the four areas of Outreach where you can befriend the least. These are the Teen Success Breakfast, the Death Row Ministry, Our Homeless Neighbors and the San Rafael Health Care Center. The inner challenge is to find a place and time where you can begin to glimpse where Jesus is in that friendship. Discipleship Groups are one place, but our RenewalWorks Team will be providing other places too.

This Advent and Epiphany, let us discover anew what Jesus means when he says “surely as you did it to one of the least, you did it to me.”

Faithfully,

Christopher

RenewalWorks Landmark 3 by Jacob Moody

As we move into the third Landmark of our Roadmap:

Landmark 3: Link service to Jesus.

Signpost g. Explore what it means when Jesus says, “Surely as you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me.”

Signpost h. Receive the Sacrament of Bread and Wine, remembering that we, like it, are Broken and Poured Out.

Signpost i. Through service to the least, find our personal and collective witness to the Word.

We are reminded of the deep connections between how we define “the least of these.” Our encounter with the Sacrament of Bread and Wine and

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Christmas Worship and Festivities



Christmas Eve -Tues. Dec. 24

5pm Family service

10:30pm Service with Choral

Prelude

Christmas Day -Weds. Dec. 25

10am Service

Christmas Day Potluck Feast

11am Hosted by the Martin family service.

All are welcome, and feel free to bring friends and family to this joyful gathering.

Please RSVP to chloedmartin@comcast.net.

Renewalworks Cont'd from page 1 how service leads to the powerful witness of God's love in the Word that is Christ. There is so much possibility that lives in this Landmark. The RenewalWorks Group is working to enhance our experience of this Landmark. Perhaps the prayer attributed to Saint Francis will be helpful as we grow into this Landmark:
 Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
 Where there is hatred, let me bring love.
 Where there is offense, let me bring pardon.
 Where there is discord, let me bring union.
 Where there is error, let me bring truth.
 Where there is doubt, let me bring faith.
 Where there is despair, let me bring hope.
 Where there is darkness, let me bring your light.
 Where there is sadness, let me bring joy.
 O Master, let me not seek as much to be consoled as to console,
 to be understood as to understand,
 to be loved as to love,
 for it is in giving that one receives,
 it is in self-forgetting that one finds,
 it is in pardoning that one is pardoned,
 it is in dying that one is raised to eternal life.

Ritter Center Donations

Don't forget to bring in your donations for the barrel by Friday Dec. 13th. Gifts should be new and unwrapped. See the barrel (or Christopher's email of Nov. 21) for suggestions of what to give.



How can I Serve the Least of These?

Teen Success Breakfast: Four days a week, volunteers prepare and serve a hot breakfast to at-risk youth at the County Community School. If you are interested in learning more about this ministry, please contact Ginny Horton: 415-559-7659 or hornlocker@comcast.net.

San Rafael Health Care: On the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month, a small group of parishioners slips out of church early and heads down the street to lead a simple worship service with prayers and songs for the residents at the 5th Ave. Health Care center. 11:00 – 11:25. Children are welcome. Contact Sue Adamson at 415.461.1798.

Death Row Ministry: Members of our congregation have committed themselves to a range of service associated with St. Paul's Death Row Ministry, including correspondence and visitation with inmates and hosting family members of inmates coming from out of town for visits. If you have any questions about Death Row Ministry, feel free to contact Brigitte McCulloch (415) 497-5469, Richard Olive (415) 259-9198 or Christopher Martin (415)456-4842.

What is Your Next Spiritual Step?

- **Morning Prayer:** Tuesdays at 7:30am in the church.
- **Bible Studies:** Wednesdays 10-11am Duncan Hall.
Thursday 6:20-7:20pm Duncan Hall.
- **Spiritual Forum:** Sundays 9-9:40am Duncan Hall.
- **Christian meditation:** 2nd & 4th Sunday at 7pm Duncan Hall.
- **Discipleship Groups:** small groups with a longer term commitment focused on spiritual maturity and loving community with the poor. Speak to Christopher.

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

Downing Library Book of the Month

by Tom Witt

into a well of anxiety about how the Internet is changing us.

The question is as timely as can be. And for that reason, St. Paul's book of the month selection is the New York Times Best Seller, **The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brain.**

“For the last five centuries, ever since Gutenberg’s printing press, made book reading a popular pursuit, the linear, literary mind has been at the center of art, science and society. As supple as it is subtle, it has been the imaginative mind of the Renaissance, the rational mind of the Enlightenment, the inventive mind of the Industrial Revolution, even the subversive of mind of Modernism. It may soon be yesterday’s mind.”

Part intellectual history, part popular science, part cultural criticism, **The Shallows** sparkles with memorable vignettes of great thinkers grappling with change. Nietzsche wrestling with a typewriter. Freud dissecting the brains of sea creatures. Nathaniel Hawthorne contemplating the thunderous approach of a steam locomotive. It is, as one Bay Area newspaper put it: “a lovely story well told – an ode to a quieter, less frenetic time when reading was more than skimming and thought was more than mere recitation.”- **San Francisco Chronicle**

To explore this and other well-told reads, visit the Downing Library on the second floor of Duncan Hall. The Library is open on Sunday mornings during coffee hour (11 am to noon) and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 am to 2 pm.

Children and Youth at St. Paul's

Greetings St Paul's families,

May you and your children be immersed in the wonder and deepening of this Advent season! We've had a wonderful last few weeks, with a couple of our girls attending the Harry Potter event at Grace Cathedral, some marvelously full Family Sundays, and the creation of beautiful Advent-wreaths at the end of November.

If you look carefully, you'll notice the Creche in the front of the church will be slowly filled over the next few weeks with its carefully placed Nativity characters (the children do this after Godly Play and Music Sunday). We hope to see you at the Homeless-Kit making and caroling, plus, don't forget the family-led coffee hour on the 29th and Epiphany play on January 12th! I will be in touch via email about participating, so if you're not on my email list, please let me know.

December 8: Libby's Music Sunday, followed by Homeless Kit-making in Duncan Hall during coffee hour

December 15: Godly Play Sunday (with Karin leading) followed by caroling at San Rafael Health Care Center at 11.30.

December 29th: Family-led coffee hour, organized by Sarah Owens (thank you Sarah!)

January 5th: Epiphany Godly Play (with storyteller Kati)

January 12th: Epiphany Pageant!

Wishing you a warm, meaningful Advent and a happy Christmas!

Karin Holsinger, Children's Ministry Coordinator

karina.holsinger@gmail.com 719-358-1549

Caroling at San Rafael Healthcare Center is an ALL AGES EVENT

Please join us to spread good cheer after the 10am service on Dec. 15th!

Congratulations to Evelyn, who was adopted by Jill on Dec. 5



Christmas Flowers

The beauty of our Church at Christmas time is legendary! But only if you help. If you would like to give flowers in memory of someone you love, please contact Alex Elliot at

isaiah24257@gmail.com/415 488 7930

There is no specific dollar amount required for the flowers.

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 Wed, December 18.

Greening Party

Please join us to decorate the Church for Christmas on December 22 after the 10 a.m. service. We'll supply the poinsettias, greens, pinecones, ribbons, wreaths and garland – you supply the decorating talent! Alex Elliot and Holly Pritchard will be your fearless leaders!

Christmas and San Quentin

What value is there in a simple Christmas card?

For condemned inmates at San Quentin who have received cards since Saint Paul's initiated its program a few years ago, the reception has been nothing short of wonder and deepest gratitude —especially from several who had not received visitors or letters for many years.

Following is a typical sentiment from one of numerous inmates who have responded to the outreach of Death Row Ministry, which involves participation by some 17 members of St. Paul's, two other churches and other volunteers:

“ I am amazed at your willingness to reach out to me, a stranger on death row, and I am extremely grateful. I love that your motive for starting to reach out to some of the men here is simply, Jesus said to. There are so many broken, hurting souls here and it does make a huge difference ...”

Once again, cards and contact information will be provided in Duncan Hall throughout December. Feel free to send Christmas greetings to one or more of the 20 inmates who have been in touch with Death Row Ministry. You may address and seal the envelope and use St. Paul's Episcopal Church (1123 Court St., San Rafael, CA, 94901) as the return address. (If you include your last name we will make every effort to let you know about any responses.)

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