



THE LION'S MARK

THE NEWSLETTER OF SAINT MARK'S CHURCH

LENT 2009

ISSUE 21

Heavy Weather

The nation-wide economic downturn has affected almost every corner of American life, and Saint Mark's is no exception. We rely on income from our endowments to cover about half of our operating costs in the parish; the other half is funded by giving from pledging members and contributions in the collection plate, etc. Like virtually all other investment portfolios, the endowments dropped significantly in value over the last quarter of 2008 and will take time to recover. The Trustees will be working carefully to look after the long-term well-being of the endowments. In a much happier sign of the overall health of the parish, the amount of money pledged by members of the parish remained pretty steady – just about the same level as last year – which, under the circumstances, is a strong commitment. We have slightly fewer members making pledges this year, which is a matter for some concern, but the decline in that figure is far from precipitous, and again, probably understandable under the circumstances.

We are challenged by the Scriptures, by our parish community, and by our own encounters with God's call to each of us, to be generous in our giving for the work of the gospel – even when times are tough. Your ready willingness to be generous makes a difference to the many people whose lives we touch each week in our ministries of worship, care, and feeding.

The Vestry Finance Committee has worked hard to pare down an already lean budget for this year. They were able to achieve this by trimming in most areas rather than hacking, and by freezing staff and clergy salaries at their 2008 levels

for the moment. Nevertheless we still do not expect our income to match our expenses for the year. A pattern of careful spending in recent years has left us with some surplus funds available that will enable us to fund most of the deficit in the 2009 budget. You can be assured that these funds do not come from the capital of the endowments; in fact we will be



Fr. Sean Mullen

drawing on our endowed funds at a rate of only 5% this year, continuing to bring our rate of draw down to a more prudent level. But we now have to use funds that we might have deployed for new initiatives or capital projects just to meet our basic expenses. The parish leadership realizes that hard times do not signal a diminished need for the ministry of the church. In some ways – notably already in the Food Cupboard – need is growing. So while we curb spending here and there, we will continue to respond to God's call to an expansive mission – learning how to do more with less when we have to.

All these circumstances pose a challenge to me, to the Vestry, and to the entire parish to consider that part of an appropriate response of our parish to these circumstances will be to work more deliberately to grow – a topic we

have talked about a lot in recent years, but on which we have made only modest progress. In order to be more deliberate we will probably have to adopt specific strategies that may result in some measure of change. I am aware that working to make the parish grow is not something that will be greeted with universal enthusiasm. Saint Mark's is a comfortable place for many of us, it's about the size where you can feel you know most people, find a way to fit in if you want to, hang out at the edges if you'd prefer that, and we have gotten accustomed to things the way they are. So growing might not always be such a welcome idea. But it remains the case that growing looks like a good idea for us.

For one short sailing season in Australia I was a crew member on a small boat that could be comfortably sailed with three people; with four people you could sail competitively. I began my time on the crew as the fifth man: I didn't absolutely have to be on board in order to sail the boat, but I was extra weight that could be moved from one place to another, and the boat just sailed better with more people on board – we actually had a chance of winning races that way. And by the time the season had ended, we'd won a few races, and even when we didn't win we finished every race we started, and I had actually worked in every position on the boat except the skipper's.

Some boats sail better with more people on board, and I believe that Saint Mark's is such a vessel. She certainly was built for more people, to judge by the number of available seats at a given service. This is not to say that it isn't perfectly lovely sailing just the way

things are – it's actually very easy to enjoy our parish life just the way it is! But it does so happen that the weather has gotten a bit rough, and God is still asking us, if not to win, then at least to sail with exceptional form and technique as he calls us to undertake exciting mission work. And I suspect this will require us to bring some more people on board so we can sail the boat better.

Whether and how we can accomplish this kind of growth has a lot to do with whether or not you want it to happen. It will be your prayers, the vitality that you have given to this parish already, your support, your enthusiasm, your faithfulness, and maybe even your friends and acquaintances that make this the kind of place that can grow – because God will use all of that when we offer it to him for the building up of his church, if we will offer it to him.

It is my absolute delight to worship and work together with you in this wonderful parish. I want Saint Mark's to be the happy, healthy, vibrant, financially sound community that generations before us built it to be and that successive generations will love as much as we do. I want to enjoy sailing with you no matter what the weather. And in the heavy weather of these tough times, I think God may be asking us to do what we have been talking about for a long time: to grow in order to become a parish with enough people and resources to carry out the wonderful mission God has given us.

Saint Mark's is a community that gathers in faith, serves in love, and proclaims hope, through Jesus Christ.

GENEROUS GIFTS

So much of Christmas, of Epiphany, even of Lent is about gifts. Christmas we receive the gift of Christ in our lives, Epiphany we celebrate the giving of gifts by the wise men. In Lent, we give some of our gifts to God for a time, as a discipline as we prepare our hearts to hear again the message of the Crucifixion and Resurrection.

Gifts have been on my mind recently, since I have been the recipient of some very wonderful ones. First, St. Mark's hosted my ordination and many did a tremendous amount of work to make that a wonderful occasion. As part of that occasion, many of you gave the incredibly generous presents of my vestments for my ordination, and the purse from the parish.

As happens when seminarians graduate and leave to go out into parishes, I have been inundated with a series of invitations recently to ordinations around the United States. As I have talked with my colleagues and classmates about their ordinations, it has become clear to me how great the generosity of St. Mark's has been. Most of my colleagues had to spend innumerable hours planning their ordinations, sweating about the service, their invitations and their vestments; none of which I had to worry about. And when I look at my vestments, when I celebrate mass daily, when I preach and deacon, I know that one of the great gifts is the gift of being a part of this amazing community which is St. Mark's.

One of the ways that I think the Church is struggling to re-imagine itself is when it comes to its clergy, how it understands what they do, who they are, how they need to work. Many of my colleagues are in parishes that have taken as their model the predominant cultural one: that of the corporation. In the "parish as corporation" model, the clergy are seen as senior executives, who are evaluated by their efficiency, their effectiveness, their successfulness; in the parish these criteria are much more amorphous and complex than the corporate bottom line, and many of my colleagues find themselves in difficult positions as a result of this.

This transition into parish ministry from the relative calmness and insularity of seminary life has been complex and massive, and yet I find myself daily thankful to be at a parish that is struggling to come to grips with what it means to be a historic, catholic parish in the midst of a city with deep and complex problems, and which has high expectations for its clergy, but whose expectations are rooted in parish life: every time I stand at the altar, or chant the Gospel, or sit down to talk with people in hospital, or in my office about their lives, I am reminded not only of my own insufficiencies and mistakes, but also that I serve a people who knew that I wasn't perfect, but still called me and gave me munificent gifts for my ordination, listen to my sermons and my stumbling through the mass, and who nonetheless have welcomed me, Jennye and Esme into their community and lives in astonishing and poignant ways.

I think perhaps that one of the great gifts that I have been given is to work with you as your curate and to learn the work of priesthood in a community of such astonishing and generous people.

I thank you.

—Father Andrew Ashcroft

THE FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION – 25 MARCH

The Annunciation of our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary is a major feast of the Christian year. At Anglo-catholic parishes, feasts of our Lady are usually kept with a certain solemnity and enthusiasm. At Saint Mark's we have a special connection to this feast because it was on the eve of the Annunciation in 1900 that Fernanda Wanamaker died. According to the parish history, Fernanda "had been baptized, confirmed, and married in Saint Mark's, had been an active worker in the Altar Society, and was completely devoted to the parish." Of course, her death led to the extraordinary gift of the Lady Chapel, built by her husband Rod-

man as a place for his young wife to be buried and dedicated in honor of Mary. The lavish appointments of the Lady Chapel are hard to match and invite us to think of how lavishly we can offer our prayers, praises and gifts of all kinds to the God who chose a peasant girl to be the Mother of his Son, our Lord. We'll keep the feast of the Annunciation with a Choral High Mass, suspending most of the strictures of Lent for one night only, and with prayers near the crypt where Fernanda Wanamaker's body was laid to rest beneath the Lady Chapel altar.

Saint Mark's Day Celebration - 25 April

The Feast of Saint Mark – the patron Saint of our parish – falls on Saturday, 25 April. On this day we will be visited by Bishop Neil Alexander, the Bishop of Atlanta, who will be here to celebrate, confirm, and preach. Bishop Alexander is an excellent preacher, having taught homiletics at both the General Seminary and Sewanee. A group of about a dozen members of the parish have begun the process toward confirmation or reception into the Episcopal church – a process that will culminate on this day. **Bishop Alexander will celebrate Solemn High Mass with Confirmation and Reception at 11 am on Saint Mark's Day.** A festive Open House will follow in the Rectory following the Mass to which all are invited.

Discerning Ministry at Saint James the Less

Last summer, the clergy, Vestry, and people of Saint Mark's entered into a covenant of ministry with the Standing Committee that allowed our parish to adopt the vacated Church of Saint James the Less as a mission of Saint Mark's. We sought out this relationship because we believe that God still has work to accomplish among the graceful buildings and aging gravestones of Saint James the Less—and more importantly, among the people of the surrounding neighborhood. The church and its other buildings stand as wonderful but unused resources for the building up of God's kingdom in a city that cannot possibly hear too much of the Gospel!

At Saint Mark's we have been talking and praying for many months about what ministry at Saint James the Less might look like. From the outset we have believed that the way forward

would involve building relationships with partners—individuals, parishes, schools, other institutions—who share our conviction about the potential at this amazing complex of sturdy buildings and verdant space in an area of the city where families are struggling.

On Sunday, 22 February at 4 pm, we're gathering together anyone who would like to talk and pray about the future ministry at Saint James the Less, touching on plans for a week of urban mission there this summer as well as longer-term goals. Our plan is to meet in the Parish House for discussion till about 5:30 and then go to the church for a very simple service of Evening Prayer.

If you have never been to Saint James the Less you may be surprised to discover how beautiful a place it is and how expansive its campus is. The

church is located at 3227 West Clearfield Street, Philadelphia, PA 19132. The Parish House is on the left hand side of the street. There is ample on-street parking.

At Saint Mark's, our discussions so far have got us thinking about a summer mission program (including Vacation Bible School) in the short term and the possibility of re-opening a school for kids from low-income families in the slightly more distant future. We'll need many hands and hearts to discern the future God has in mind for this church and then to realize that future. We pray that you may want to join your hands and hearts with ours as we advance that cause. Please feel free to contact Fr. Sean Mullen at Saint Mark's at (215) 735-1416 or se-mullen@saintmarksphiladelphia.org if you have thoughts, questions or ideas about this ministry.

LENT, HOLY WEEK & EASTER AT SAINT MARK'S

Tuesday, 24 February, Shrove Tuesday

5:30 pm Evening Prayer and Low Mass, followed by Supper

Wednesday, 25 February Ash Wednesday

7:30 am Low Mass with Imposition of Ashes

12:10 pm Low Mass with Hymns and Imposition of Ashes

7:00 pm Choral High Mass with Imposition of Ashes

Friday, 27 February

5:30 pm Evening Prayer & Stations of the Cross

Friday, 6 March

5:30 pm Evening Prayer & Stations of the Cross

6:30 pm Lenten Program: The Potter's House

Friday, 13 March

5:30 pm Evening Prayer & Stations of the Cross

6:30 pm Lenten Program: The Potter's House

Friday, 20 March

5:30 pm Evening Prayer & Stations of the Cross

6:30 pm Lenten Program: The Potter's House

Wednesday, 25 March The Annunciation of our Lord

7:00 pm Choral High Mass of the Annunciation &
Prayers at the Wanamaker Crypt

Friday 27 March

5:30 pm Evening Prayer & Stations of the Cross

6:30 pm Lenten Program: The Potter's House

Friday, April 3

5:30 pm Evening Prayer & Stations of the Cross, improvised by
Matthew Glandorf with the poetry of Paul Claudel

Sunday, 5 April Palm Sunday

8:30 am Low Mass

11:00 am Choral High Mass

Wednesday, 8 April Holy Wednesday

7:00 pm The Office of Tenebrae

Thursday, 9 April Maundy Thursday

7:30 am Low Mass

12:10 pm Low Mass

7:00 pm Choral High Mass with Foot Washing. Stripping of the Altar & Procession of the Blessed Sacrament

Friday, 10 April Good Friday

12 noon Solemn Liturgies of Good Friday: Veneration of the Cross & Mass of the Presanctified

Saturday, 11 April Holy Saturday

8:00 pm The Great Vigil & First Mass of Easter, followed by a festive Reception

Sunday, 12 April Easter Day

8:30 am Low Mass with Hymns

11:00 am Solemn High Mass of the Resurrection

Fridays in Lent: Evening Prayer and Stations of the Cross

By ancient custom Fridays in Lent are days for the observance of special spiritual practice. One of the best known customs is walking the Way of the Cross – or more traditionally, the Stations of the Cross. After the brief readings and intercessions of Evening Prayer, we walk around the church stopping at 14 stations that tell of the story of Christ's passion. This short pilgrimage, reminding us of Jesus' suffering, links his Passion to the suffering of so many in the world today who suffer in countless ways. And the service leads us every week to the shadow of the Cross: that symbol of suffering and death that has been transformed, by Jesus' death and resurrection, into a symbol of new life and hope. Every Friday in lent at 5:30 in the Church.

Fridays in Lent: The Potter's House – A workshop with clay led by Kathie Regan

Parishioner and potter Kathie Regan will lead us in a Lenten workshop with clay. The prophets remind us that we are like clay in the hands of God who is our potter. During Lent we pause to reflect how it is that God shapes us, and re-shapes us as he calls us to repentance and renewal. Kathie will help us use our hands, working with clay, to guide our hearts on a Lenten journey of shaping and being re-shaped in God's hands. The parish clergy may occasionally offer a thought about the scriptures as we go. Fridays in March (March 6, 13, 20, 27) at 6:30 pm in the Parish Hall, (following Evening Prayer and Stations of the Cross in the church at 5:30).

Fridays in Lent – The Stations of the Cross Improvised by Matthew Glandorf

On Friday, April 3 at 5:30, organist Matthew Glandorf will improvise at the organ on the themes of the Stations of the Cross, punctuated by the poetry of Paul Claudel. These poems, written in 1911, were adopted some twenty years later by the great organist Marcel Dupre, as a suitable partner for his improvisations on the Stations of the Cross. We are extraordinarily blessed to have in Matt Glandorf an *improvisateur* worthy of the poems and the tradition established by Dupre.

THE TWENTIES AND THIRTIES

Andrew, Jennye and Esme Ashcroft are hosting potlucks at their apartment for people in their 20s and 30s. It is a time of fellowship, food and discussion. The following topics are coming up:

FEBRUARY 8TH – Work, jobs and vocation

MARCH 8TH – Time, Busyness and Sabbath

APRIL 5TH – Moving, transience and Stability

For more information, please contact the Curate (anashcroft@saintmarksphiladelphia.org) or (215) 735-1416 at Ext 104.

SHROVE TUESDAY

The young people of the parish will be preparing dinner for the parish following the Shrove Tuesday Mass. Come and eat the traditional pancakes and other delicious foods for the last time before Lent begins. If you would like to help prepare dinner, contact the Curate (anashcroft@saintmarksphiladelphia.org) or (215) 735-1416. Mark your calendar for February 23rd.

THE 10 AM SUNDAY FORUM

On February 1st, 8th and 15th, we welcome Dr. Ellen Charry, *Margaret W. Harmon Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary* who will be speaking about *Jews & Judaism in the Christian Scriptures*. The discussion Her topics are as follows:

February 1st – Jews and Judaism in Romans

February 8th – Jews and Judaism in Matthew

February 15th – Jews and Judaism in John

February 22nd we will discuss *The Great Emergence: How Christianity Is Changing and Why* by Phyllis Tickle.

Beginning in Lent we will discuss “*Images of the Passion: Artistic Renderings of the Crucifixion of Jesus.*”

THE ST. MARK'S BOOK CLUB meets the third Saturday of every month at 11:00 a.m. in the Library. Please join us for coffee, doughnuts and lively discussion of the following books.

FEBRUARY 21. Swann's Way by Marcel Proust. French novelist Marcel Proust ranks as one of the greatest literary figures of the 20th century. A novel of the Belle Époque, Swann's Way is a soft remembrance of a time lost, a journey through the memory of the mind, a young boy's discovery of the beautiful world around him, through scents, sounds and emotions.

MARCH 21. Swann's Way by Marcel Proust. Continuation of the earlier discussion.

APRIL 18. The Cellist of Sarajevo by Steven Galloway. In this elegiac novel inspired by an actual event during the siege of Sarajevo in 1992, the author explores the brutality of war and the redemptive power of music. With unforgettable imagery and heartbreaking simplicity, this small book speaks about the triumph of the spirit in the face of overwhelming despair.

MAY 16. The Eustace Diamonds by Anthony Trollope. Lizzie Greystock Eustace is young, beautiful, widowed, strong willed, intelligent, utterly untrustworthy (a "Victorian Scarlet O'Hara"). Her determination to hold on to a fabulous necklace in the face of legal harassment by her brother-in-law's solicitor entangles her in a series of crimes - apparent and real - and contrived love-affairs in this melange of detective story, political novel, and ironic romance.

JUNE 20. The Woman in White by Wilkie Collins. Generally considered the first English sensation novel, The Woman in White (published 1859) features the heroine Marian Halcombe and her sleuthing partner, drawing master Walter Hartright, pitted against the diabolical team of Count Fosco and Sir Percival Glyde. A gripping tale of murder, intrigue, madness, and mistaken identity, Collins's psychological thriller has never been out of print in the 140 years since its publication.

The Food Cupboard – The Need

The recent economic crisis that in the last twelve months has resulted in a loss of 2.3 million jobs has affected many agencies that have traditionally provided relief to the 'non-working' poor. The unemployment rate as of November 2008 had risen to 7.2 % with a projected increase to 9% by the end of 2009. Paul Krugman, Nobel Prize winning economist, has projected a possible increase to 11% by the end of 2011 if drastic changes to our economy are not effectuated within the next few months.

What does this dire prognostication mean to one ministry outlet servicing the less fortunate in a small portion of our greater city community? We have noted an increase of approximately 10% in our base. The most recent issue of The Pennsylvania Hunger Advocate (the newsletter of the PA Hunger Action Center) reported that most worker wages rose only 2.9% over the past

year, well behind inflation at 4.9%. The inflation rate inordinately adversely affects the poor with little to no income (or COLA) who must meet the rising costs of essential goods and services. The decision to pay the rent and/or utilities ideally should not have to be considered when providing sustenance for families.

The floundering economy has adversely affected the resources of many agencies that have relied on income generated from investments and giving. Suppliers have had to increase the cost of food as inflation rises. We at Saint Mark's are faced with these realities. With the growing need and reduced resources we are planning imaginative and creative ways to fill in the resource deficit. Our initial request to the parish is that each Sunday you bring to the parish basic canned items for all bags we give to our clients.

These items are: meat (beef stew, chili, tuna), vegetables (mixed vegetables, green beans, canned tomatoes), starches (corn, sliced white potatoes, yams/sweet potatoes), and fruit (apricots, mandarin oranges, peaches, pears). Non-canned boxes of rice and macaroni and cheese are also welcomed.

We are investigating ways to possible coordinate purchasing from markets at their cost during 'special sales' times. Plans are also in the mix to encourage food drives at neighborhood schools by grade and items as suggested above. We welcome ideas, suggestions, contacts and any influence that you may have to assist us in our efforts.

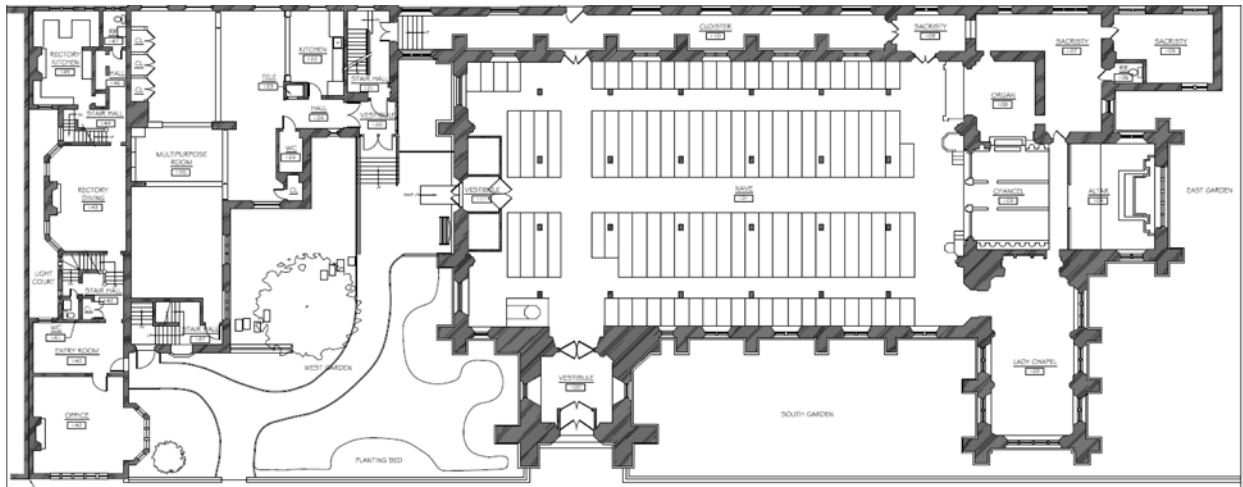
Together we will continue to meet the need.

- Kent John Pope

Master Plan

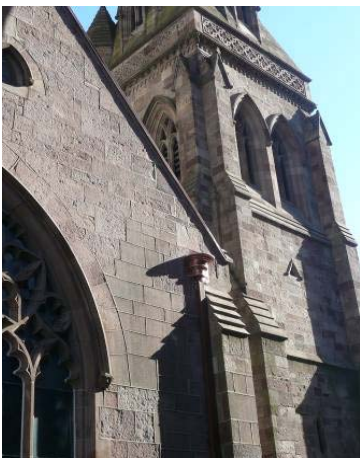
As 2008 drew to a close, representatives from John Milner Architects continued their work on the Master Plan for Saint Mark's. With a complete conditions assessment in hand, recent work has focused on space utilization and is addressing issues such as accessibility, wayfinding and balancing useable, multi-function spaces with dedicated space for ministries such as the Food Cupboard and Sunday School.

The buildings and property committee continues to work with Christopher Miller and Mary Werner DeNadi to prepare a final plan that both speaks to the desires of the parish community today and is prepared for Saint Mark's to grow in the future. We expect to receive final recommendations in the next few months and look forward to sharing them with the congregation.



Roof Update

In the Christmas newsletter, we reported that the roof rehabilitation project was nearly complete and today we are excited to say that the project has finally come to an end. We are thrilled to have worked with Jeff Levine and John Reynolds as both the planning and construction phases featured great attention to detail and high-quality workmanship. To best protect our investment, we have engaged Jeff and John to make biannual visits to Saint Mark's to perform routine maintenance and inspect the roofs for any potential problems, so expect to see their faces around Saint Mark's for some time to come.



MORE THAN JUST ORGAN

GETTING BIGGER AND BETTER

Those of you who are privileged to be at leisure during the late lunch hour on Tuesdays know that our midday concert series (at 12:45pm, following the noon Mass), presents a wonderful variety of classical instrumentalists and singers, including our own talented musicians from Saint Mark's, (Diane Meredith Belcher, Matthew Glandorf, baroque oboist Geoffrey Burgess), students from The Curtis Institute of Music, and various distinguished guest musicians. This spring the roster of artists is even more exceptional. While on any given Tuesday you are likely to hear intriguing music splendidly played, we are especially delighted to present this spring such fine artists as pianist Christopher Falzone, a Curtis graduate who is amassing significant international concert dates, our nationally famous former section-leader sopranos, Veronica Chapman-Smith, and Clara Rottsolk (the latter in concert with forte-pianist Sylvia Berry), the very talented Philadelphia organists Kevin O'Malia and Riyeehee Hong, local trio Soprano Marianne Lipson, Baritone Joseph McGowan, Pianist Jeanne Pundt, Saint Mark's singers Aaron Spencer and Heather Gardner, and organist Gail Archer, professor at Barnard College (Columbia), the Manhattan School of Music, and Vassar College. The complete schedule is posted below. Do come as often as you can, and spread the word about this wonderful series.

— Diane Meredith Belcher

SCHEDULE OF PERFORMANCES

January 27	Christopher Falzone, Pianist
February 3	Diane Meredith Belcher, Organist at Saint Mark's Church
February 10	Students The Curtis Institute of Music
February 17	Aaron Spencer, Tenor Saint Mark's Choir
February 24	Marianne Lipson, Soprano Joseph McGowan, Baritone Jeanne Pundt, Pianist
March 3	Diane Meredith Belcher, Organist Saint Mark's Church
March 10	Students The Curtis Institute of Music
March 17	Clara Rottsolk, Soprano Sylvia Berry, Fortepianist
March 24	Heather Gardner, Soprano Saint Mark's Choir
March 31	Veronica Chapman-Smith, Soprano Saint Mark's Choir
April 7	Diane Meredith Belcher, Organist at Saint Mark's Church
April 14	Students The Curtis Institute of Music
April 21	Kevin O'Malia, Organist at First United Methodist Church of Germantown
April 28	Riyeehee Hong Organist at the Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral
May 5	Students The Curtis Institute of Music
May 12	Gail Archer Organist at Barnard College, Columbia University
May 19	Christopher Falzone, Pianist
May 26	Iris Lan Organist
June 2	Diane Meredith Belcher, Organist at Saint Mark's Church

HOLY WEEK AT SAINT MARK'S

- Wednesday 8 April Holy Wednesday**
 7:00 pm The Office of Tenebrae
- Thursday, 9 April Maundy Thursday**
 7:30 am Low Mass
 12:10 pm Low Mass
 7:00 pm Choral High Mass with Foot Washing. Stripping of the Altar & Procession of the Blessed Sacrament
- Friday, 10 April Good Friday**
 12 noon Solemn Liturgies of Good Friday: Veneration of the Cross & Mass of the Presanctified
- Saturday, 11 April Holy Saturday**
 8:00 pm The Great Vigil & First Mass of Easter, followed by a festive Reception
- Sunday, 12 April Easter Day**
 8:30 am Low Mass with Hymns
 11:00 am Solemn High Mass of the Resurrection

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