

## GETTING TO KNOW OUR NEIGHBORS



Last year, our parish responded with enthusiasm to the invitation from Peninsula Temple Beth El to attend a Shabbat service, followed by a meal and the opportunity to learn more about Reform Judaism. Over 50 members of our parish attended the Friday evening event. Afterwards we extended a reciprocal invitation to their congregation to attend a Sunday morning service at St. Matthew's. That encounter was likewise very well received.

The idea of our visiting one another grew out of our mutual participation in several service projects. Members of our congregations worked side by side

at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service a year ago, and we also participated in several events with Home & Hope, a local organization that works with homeless families. Beyond a merely natural response of wanting to get to know one's neighbor, I believe that the impulse to reach out and connect is informed by the knowledge that among various faith groups, there still exists in our society some deep lines of fracture and misunderstanding. Reflecting upon different faith traditions, Mohandas Gandhi once observed, "It is the duty of every cultured man or woman to read sympathetically the scriptures of the

world. If we are to respect others' religions as we would have them respect our own, a friendly study of the world's religions is a sacred duty." In a similar vein, Martin Luther King, Jr. remarked, "We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools." In my experience, meaningful engagement of different faith traditions occurs seldom, or not at all, if left to chance. By making an intentional commitment to spending time together and building bonds of trust, we create the opportunity for deeper learning and insight.

***"We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools."***

In the spirit of venturing to deepen our connection with the congregation of Peninsula Temple Beth El, Rabbi Dennis Eisner and I have arranged three evenings for us to gather and learn

more about each other's traditions. To foster discussion, we will make reference to two books. To promote greater understanding about Jewish tradition, Rabbi Eisner suggested the book *To Life! A Celebration of Jewish Being and Thinking*. To explore the Christian faith at a deeper level, I have selected a book by Marcus Borg titled, *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time: The Historical Jesus and the Heart of Contemporary Faith*. Our first gathering will take place at Temple Beth El on Wednesday evening, February 21st. At our first gathering, we will spend some time simply getting to know one another, and then Dennis and I will introduce

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some of the themes from the selected books. There is no expectation for anyone to do reading in advance of our first meeting. St. Matthew's will host the second gathering on Wednesday evening, April 11th, and we will return to Temple Beth El on Wednesday evening, May 23rd. Each session will be from 7:00pm-8:30pm. It is my hope that in addition to learning more about one another's faith traditions, we will also strengthen the bonds of friendship within our larger community of faith. *Blessings, Fr. Eric+*

## MILESTONES

### *Baptism*

Lillian Rose Field, January 6th

### *In Memoriam*

Pat Kresge, December 19th

Pat was a longtime parishioner before moving to Oregon in 2014 to be near her children and grandchildren.

She passed away at age 99. Pat and her late husband Howard became parishioners at St. Matthew's when they retired to California after spending their working lives in Europe and Washington D.C. Fellow parishioners enjoyed her sharp intellect, quick wit and deep faith. In addition to her active participation in lectionary circles and serving with distinction on the Vestry, Hospitality Committee, and Christian Social Relations, she lent her extensive professional journalism experience to the editing of this newsletter. She is deeply missed.

Harriett Stinson, January 1st

Harriett was a highly active parishioner for many decades. Harriett was introduced to the Episcopal Church and St. Matthew's when her husband Ralf signed her up to teach Sunday School! Harriett served St. Matthew's in countless capacities over the years, most recently as an office volunteer, a member of St. Catherine's and the Hospitality Committee, and a Lectionary Circle participant. She imbued all of her involvement at St. Matthew's with her lively intelligence and charm. Harriett led a fascinating life outside of St. Matthew's. She was deeply involved in political causes, worked as an educator, lived with her family in Liberia for a time, and enjoyed many outdoor pursuits including hiking, camping and birdwatching. Harriett will be deeply missed.

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## TAIZÉ CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

*Tuesday, February 6 at 7pm, Side Chapel*

Everyone is invited to attend this ecumenical service characterized by meditative silence, repetitive songs, scripture and prayer. Taizé is the first Tuesday of every month (year around) in the side chapel. Be sure to save these upcoming dates for future Taizé services: March 6, April 3 and May 1. To sign up for reminder emails, please visit <https://episcopalstmatthew.org/worship/taize-candlelight-service>.

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## SUNDAY COFFEE HOUR

The rotation for bringing treats to coffee hour after the Sunday service is as follows:

*February 4: A-D*

*February 11: E-J*

*February 18: K-P*

*February 25: Q-S*

We ask you to please put the food you are bringing on a paper plate (rather than in a package) and place it on the table in Julia Beylard Hall.

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## SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK AND ST. MATTHEW'S

When you go grocery shopping, please consider picking up a few extra canned goods or other non-perishable items. You can leave your food donations either in the basket at the back of the church or at the church office. These donations will be placed in a Second Harvest collection barrel for pick-up.

We appreciate your thoughtfulness, and thank you for your donations.

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## WOMEN'S SPIRITUALITY GROUP

Women of all ages are invited to join us for a women's spirituality group. We meet every week throughout the year at Charles House on Mondays at 9:15 am. This is a small group opportunity to reflect on scripture, God's presence in our lives, the challenges of discipleship, and to engage in prayer. For more information, please contact Rev. Lindsay or Ginger Fortmiller via the church office.

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## BAPTISMS

If you or someone you know is interested in receiving the Sacrament of Baptism, please contact the church office or talk to a member of the clergy. Future baptism dates are March 31 (Easter Vigil) and May 20 (Pentacost).

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## OBSERVANCE OF A HOLY LENT

One afternoon, my grandpa took my grandma for a long drive. They had been dating for about a year at the time. He was a widower with 6 kids and she was a divorcee with 6 kids, so any time away was precious. When they got to where they were going, my grandfather opened the door and escorted my grandma to a patch of grass, picnic basket in tow. This was the moment he had long waited for, the picnic at which he would propose! It was a gorgeous place – carefully manicured lawn and flowers all around. My grandma, completely clueless about the occasion, simply sat there. Eventually he said to her, “you know where we are? Right?” She hadn’t the slightest clue; she just knew they had been in the car a good amount of time, and had traveled a windy road. She tells the story that he then said something completely romantic, about how he wanted to be with her until death, as they sat in the middle of the CEMETERY. In some ways it was totally creepy, but in most ways completely romantic. This Valentine’s Day, when secular love celebrations and sacred services collide, we are greeted with an opportunity to embrace death, love and sin all in one day. For Christians, these three concepts are so intimately related, one with another, through Christ and his sacrifice. On Ash Wednesday, the priest will offer the official bidding of Lent, “I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God’s holy Word” (Book of Common Prayer 265). A careful outline of how we are to observe Lent is offered in a way that we do not get for other seasons of the church year. So why not take advantage of it? How will you set aside time this Lent to love yourself and others more boldly and more deeply? How will you right the relationships in your life and with God? Lent is a holy invitation to be in community – to be in relationship. What better way to start this journey than on Valentine’s day? Almost as good as proposing in a cemetery, I suppose.

*Lenten blessings, Lindsay+*



## LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

For the first five Sundays of the season of Lent, we to explore the life of Jesus using insights from the book, *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time* by Marcus Borg. We will gather in the Conference Room of St. Matthew’s Hall from 9:10am—10:00am on Sunday, February 18th and 25th, and March 4th, 11th, and 18th. The book by Marcus Borg is the same title that we will use in our conversations with Temple Beth El. Each session will be a distinct unit so that you can drop in for any or all of the sessions.

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## PANCAKE SUPPER COMING UP—WITH AN ICE CREAM SUNDÆ BAR!

It’s breakfast for dinner at the annual pancake supper on **Shrove Tuesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>**! Come to Julia Beylard Hall from 6:00 to 7:30 pm as we gather to prepare for Lent and serve up pancakes with all the fixings (sausage, fruit, orange juice, coffee, and tea). Suggested donation \$5 per adult in advance or \$15 per family.

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## ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES: FEBRUARY 14<sup>TH</sup>

Services will take place at 7:00am, 12 noon and 7:00pm.

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## CELEBRATE SUNDAYS

During the year we have once again identified CELEBRATE Sundays. On these Sundays at the 10:15 service, there is no church school; instead, children and youth participate actively in the liturgy as ushers, greeters, readers, acolytes and more! These services are a great opportunity for our congregation to connect intergenerationally.

*February 4: Day School Sunday*

*March 25: Palm Sunday*

*May 20: Pentecost*

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## CONFIRMATION, RECEPTION, RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS

Confirmation is a sacramental rite of the church whereby the Holy Spirit, invoked at one's baptism, is strengthened. Confirmation usually happens between junior high and high school age, but adults can also be confirmed if they have not been confirmed in another tradition.

If you have been baptized and confirmed in a different tradition, you are invited to be received.

Reception is when the Bishop acknowledges your Baptism/ Confirmation in a different denomination, but into the Body of Christ, and welcomes you officially into the Episcopal Church.

Those who are baptized, confirmed and or received into the Episcopal Church, but have for whatever reason fallen away from their faith or desire to strengthen their commitment to Christ and his Church, are invited to participate in the Renewal of Baptismal Vows.

These courses will be offered during the Easter Season through Pentecost. If you are interested in participating, please let a member of the Clergy know, and we will provide further information about the session times. Confirmation, Reception, and Renewal of Baptismal Vows for adults and Juniors/Seniors in high school will occur in June 2 (Grace Cathedral) or at St. Matthew's during the Bishop's visitation in the fall.

A Confirmation program for Youth in grades 7-10 will begin in the fall of 2018, with Confirmation occurring in late spring 2019. Please contact Rev. Lindsay to be added to the contact list.

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## YOUTH NEWS

### *All Things 3G!*

Middle School and High School youth are invited to participate in YG3, a collaborative youth group including St. Paul's (Burlingame), Transfiguration (San Mateo) and St. Matthew's. We meet from 4-6pm most Sundays. To get more information about YG3 or to subscribe to our weekly newsletter simply subscribe at <http://eepurl.com/c2NC6L>. You won't want to miss what we have planned!

**Friday, February 2: Taizé at  
Mercy Center, Burlingame.**

**5:45-9:30pm, dinner  
included, meet us there!**

**February 4 – NO GROUP**

**February 11 at St. Pauls. Lenten  
Journey: Labyrinths**

**February 18 – NO GROUP**

**February 25 at St. Pauls. Lenten  
Journey: Pilgrimage**

**Friday, March 2 – Nightwatch  
at Grace Cathedral**

**March 4 – NO GROUP**

### *Nightwatch at Grace Cathedral*

Nightwatch is an overnight "lock-in" program in Grace Cathedral. Join youth from around the Diocese and Northern California for fellowship and fun. There will be facilitated community building, active and contemplative activities, art, music, and prayer. This year's Nightwatch is March 2 – 3. Cost is \$20 and ample scholarship funds are available. Please contact Rev. Lindsay if your youth wants to participate in this year's Nightwatch!

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## 50+ ANNIVERSARY EVENSONG

The Rt. Rev. Marc Handley Andrus, Bishop of California, and Grace Cathedral invite couples who have been married or partnered for 50 years or more to celebrate their years together at this festal Evensong sung by the Cathedral Camerata. Couples are invited to renew their vows to each other during the service and the bishop will pronounce God's blessing.

When: Tuesday, February 11.

Couples are photographed at 2 p.m.; Evensong begins at 3 p.m. Reception follows.

Where: Grace Cathedral, 1100 California Street, San Francisco

If you would like to receive a formal invitation in the mail, please let Rev. Lindsay know as soon as possible at [lmhills@episcopalstmatthew.org](mailto:lmhills@episcopalstmatthew.org).

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## SMILE!

We are always looking at ways to increase financial support of the parish. We are excited now to be linked to Amazon.com! Simply visit <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/94-1186209>, log into your Amazon account when prompted, and set St. Matthew's as the organization you wish to support. Then, whenever you do your Amazon shopping, go to smile.amazon.com. The website functions exactly like regular Amazon, but St. Matthew's will instantly receive .5% of all of your purchases! It's a win-win: whenever you shop there for the things you normally buy, St. Matthew's receives funds to support parish ministries.

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## MILES OF PENNIES?

Have you been in our church office lately? If so, you may have noticed two little boxes on the edge of Office Manager Victoria Wolcott's desk. One is our old friend, the Blue Box, waiting for passing donations for the United Thank Offering. The other says, *Miles of Pennies*. Perhaps you do not know about Miles of Pennies. This is an outreach project of the Church Periodical Club (CPC), an Episcopal group founded in New York City in 1888 by a small group of women from the Parish Church of the Holy Communion, who began their work by sending church periodicals, prayer books and bibles via Wells Fargo stage coaches to missionaries in the Dakotas and the "far west." They began as an auxiliary of Episcopal Church Women but, while they maintain close ties, are an independent affiliate organization of The Episcopal Church.

The mission of CPC remains to provide materials to missionaries, seminarians, and parishes in need around the globe. They provide materials such as books, prayer books, Bibles, videos and other materials through two funds: the National Book Fund, which supplies materials to adults and parishes, and the Miles of Pennies Fund, founded in 1988, on the organization's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This fund provides grants for children and youth, for classes, vacation bible schools, camps, tutoring programs, etc.

For many years, the League for Service (of the Episcopal Church Women) has made a small gift to the CPC and has collected pennies at its board meetings to support this ministry geared especially to children. Should you happen to be in the church office, take time to unload your purse or pocket of those pesky pennies and contribute to a really worthwhile, totally unsung activity of our church!

An odd factoid: \$844.30 in pennies equals one mile of pennies, and that is the maximum grant given by CPC through the Miles of Pennies program.

As always, with thanks for your generosity,  
*Albe Larsen, League for Service Outreach Chair*

## ANGELIC FACES OF ST. MATTHEW'S: WHITNEY SIMONDS

Whitney is a woman with great love and admiration for her church family. The joy in her face is evident when she shares her love for the people of St. Matthew's. Whitney calls her church friends, "my heart and soul."

Whitney and her family joined St. Matthew's in 1972. She quickly joined Christian Social Relations, and eventually became its Chair.

She and her husband also participated in the Couples Club and she volunteered as a Sunday School teacher. Whitney partnered with Margo DeWitt to develop the children's Christmas Eve Pageant, which 40 years later continues as a vibrant St. Matthew's tradition in which 200 children and adults participate each year.

Whitney has served on the Vestry as treasurer and head of buildings and grounds. She served on two rector search committees, including the one in which our beloved Fr. Eric was called to St. Matthew's. Whitney served on the strategic planning committee. She loved her many years as a member of the Chancel Choir and Couples Club Choir. Whitney serves on the League for Service Board. She has been president of the garden guild for 10 years and regularly works in the garden. She is an altar flower arranger and decorates the church for various festivities. She helps in the thrift shop and at coffee hours. Whatever roll she takes on, it is done right and with the church's best interests at heart.

Whitney has a positive and outgoing personality. She is highly observant and warmly welcomes new faces each Sunday, introducing herself and inviting newcomers to coffee hour. She makes people feel at home.

Whitney has given so much of herself in many capacities and has no plans to slow down. We thank you, Whitney, for your time, talent and generosity.

With gratitude and blessings,

*Darlia Clerico*



**BELOVED COMMUNITY  
TRAINING DAY**

*February 10 at Grace Cathedral*

Bishop's Committees and Vestries (along with all lay leaders) are invited to Grace Cathedral on February 10 for an all-day Beloved Community training event.

Our keynote will cover the new Safe Church policies, what to do, how to keep your parish safe, and other issues of leadership in our current social climate.

There will be workshops on parish finance, vestry leadership and visioning, partnering with our camps, and more. Let a member of the Clergy know if you are interested.

**LIVING GRATITUDE  
with Colette Lafia**

*Living Gratitude* is designed to be a sacred time to open our hearts, inspire our lives, and nourish ourselves with gratitude this season. We are always awakening and reawakening gratitude and the spring season is a perfect time to renew our gratitude practice. This program offers reflection, inspiration, and prayer.

REGISTRATION FOR THIS PROGRAM IS FREE. Enroll to receive 21 daily offerings on *Living Gratitude*. Each day includes reflection, prayer and journal prompts. Join at any time and participate at your own pace: <http://www.colettelafia.com/living-gratitude/>.

Colette Lafia is a writer, spiritual director, and workshop and retreat leader. She is the author of *Seeking Surrender*, and *Comfort & Joy*. Colette has a passion for helping people connect more deeply with the presence of the sacred in their daily lives and blogs about it at [www.colettelafia.com](http://www.colettelafia.com).

**ST. MATTHEW'S CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS**

The Altar Guild demonstrated their phenomenal talents as they festooned the church with lovely decorations for the last day of Advent and Christmas eve, which fell on the same day this season. Many thanks to the Altar Guild members who lent their time and skill to making our church even more beautiful.

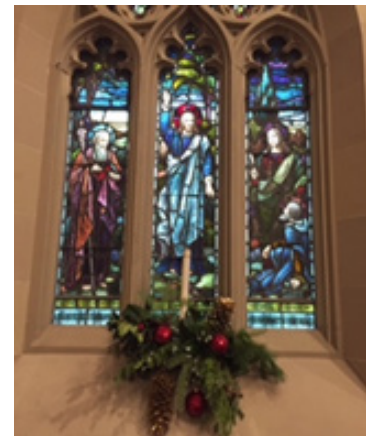
*-photos by Darlia Clerico*



*High altar on last Sunday of Advent (Christmas eve morning)*



*Pulpit on last Sunday of Advent*



*Window box of holly, pinecones, evergreens and ornaments*



*Side altar decorated with holly, roses, mums and fern*



*South doors decorated with poinsettias and wreaths of holly and pinecones*

# GETTING TO KNOW OUR CONGREGATION

Today we are introducing a new *Tau Cross* column entitled “Getting to Know Our Congregation,” adapted from the pages of *Vanity Fair* adapted from the pages of *Vanity Fair* by the Rectorina (Anne Hinds). Each month we will be asking a series of questions to a member of our Clergy, Staff and

Parishioners, one person at a time. Enjoy! This month’s subject: Father Eric, the Rector of St Matthew’s Episcopal Church, our spiritual leader, newly minted Doctor of Ministry in Preaching, discusses his greatest fear, his secret ambition, and the human qualities he most admires.

*What brought you to St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church?*

**Call to be the Rector in 2007**

*How long have you been at St. Matthew’s?*

**This is my 11<sup>th</sup> year**

*What is your current state of mind?*

**Very positive**

*What is your favorite journey?*

**A life-long journey of faith**

*What is your greatest fear?*

**Alzheimer’s disease**

*What secret ambition do you have?*

**To coach in the NBA**

*What trait do you most deplore in others?*

**Arrogance**

*What is your greatest extravagance?*

**Books**

*What do you consider the most overrated virtue?*

**Piety**

*Which living person do you most admire?*

**My wife Anne**

*Which words or phrases do you most overuse?*

**Amen**

*What is your greatest regret?*

**Not skydiving in college**

*What or who is the greatest love of your life?*

**Anne**

*When and where were the happiest?*

**Right now**

*Which talent would you most like to have?*

**To sing**

*If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?*

**To read faster**

*If you could change one thing about your family, what would it be?*

**More time together**

*What do you consider your greatest achievement?*

**Happily married for over 30 years**

*What is your most treasured possession?*

**The red Conte charcoal portraits of our children**

*What do you regard as the lowest depths of misery?*

**Losing a child**

*Where would you like to live?*

**Manhattan**

*What is your favorite occupation?*

**Clerical work**

*What is the quality you most like in a man?*

**Integrity and character**

*What is the quality you most like in a woman?*

**Smart and funny**

*Who are your favorite writers?*

**Steinbeck, Irving, Feynman, Beuchner, Paglia, Gaimon, Talese, Furlong**

*Who is your favorite hero of fiction?*

**Spiderman**

*What is it that you most dislike?*

**Dishonesty**

*How would you like to die?*

**Sleeping**

*What is your motto?*

**God loves you**

## YOUNG ADULT & FAMILY DINNER GROUP

Young adults and families with school age children gather for a potluck dinner, fellowship, play time for the children and adult conversation for the grown-ups. We gather for dinner the second Friday of every month from 6-8pm in Julia Beylard Hall. Our next dinner will be February 9. Be sure to RSVP to Rev. Lindsay at [lmhills@episcopalstmatthew.org](mailto:lmhills@episcopalstmatthew.org) or through the Facebook event so we know you are coming! And mark your calendar for upcoming dinners on March 9, April 13 and May 11.

# THE TAU CROSS

The Episcopal Church of St. Matthew  
is a family called by Christ . . .

*to live God's Love,  
to share the Gospel,  
to grow Spiritually*

**Come celebrate with us!**

*Service is at 8:00 am & 10:15 am each Sunday*

*Morning Prayer, 9 am, Tuesdays & Thursdays  
Rite I Holy Eucharist, 9 am, Fridays*



The Tau Cross is the monthly newsletter of the Episcopal Church of St. Matthew. We welcome submissions that have a connection to the parish. Inclusion is at the discretion of the staff and may be edited for space or clarity. The deadline for articles is the 15th of the month and may be sent by email to Beth von Emster at [bvonemster@yahoo.com](mailto:bvonemster@yahoo.com) or deposited in the Tau Cross mailbox in the church office. Entries should follow these guidelines: Include title of event or article; 200 word maximum description including when, where, cost and contact information as applicable; Avoid abbreviations and other "insider" lingo; Further guidelines and tips available upon request. Tau Cross Staff: Editor, Beth von Emster; Associate Editor, Cherie Hammer; Layout & Design //dadalab.com

## Upcoming Events

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| February 4  | Day School Sunday                         |
| February 6  | Taizé Service                             |
| February 9  | Young Adults and Families<br>Dinner Group |
| February 13 | Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper             |
| February 14 | Ash Wednesday                             |
| February 21 | Temple Beth El Gathering                  |

*Or Current Resident*

*The Rev. Dr. Eric Kimball Hinds, Rector  
The Rev. Lindsay Marie Hills, Associate Rector  
The Rev. Amber Stancliffe Evans, School Chaplain*

CHURCH OF ST. MATTHEW EPISCOPAL  
ONE SOUTH EL CAMINO REAL  
SAN MATEO, CALIFORNIA 94401  
TEL: 650.342.1481  
WWW.EPISCOPALSTMATTHEW.ORG

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