



EUCHARIST CHURCH

April 25, 2017

Feast of St. Mark

Dear Eucharist Church,

What an incredible Holy Week we had together! There were so many great moments including, perhaps especially, Hannah's baptism. I was personally impacted by the pilgrimage of love that we went on together from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday. Part of what made it so special was how deeply many of you engaged the week. Praise God!

It's hard to believe we are nearly halfway through our **Year of Sacramental Living**. A lot has transpired on the journey so far. I'd like to frame a bit of where we've been thus far and where we're headed. First, where we've been: We established our Sunday morning **Formation | Catechesis** time in which we spent a number of weeks exploring the nature of what we mean by "sacramental"; we continue to strengthen our vision and understanding of the faith on a weekly basis. In addition, those of us who participate in **Table Groups** have gone deep together in sharing in a personal way about our lives and faith. On the opposite end of the spectrum (from talking), about four weeks ago our church experienced a **Lenten silent retreat**. Along the way we've been reading *For the Life of the World* together and discussing it on the **podcast**.

Throughout this time we've been leaning into the **sacramentality of time** with our focus on the Christian calendar: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Ash Wednesday, Lent, St. Patrick's Day, Holy Week, feast days at Table Groups, and more. Currently we're in Easter Season and about to celebrate Ascension Day, Pentecost, and Trinity Sunday. And all of this has been happening alongside our weekly rhythm of worship on Sundays and ongoing Benedictine-inspired prayer rhythms and fellowship.

The result: God is building us into a distinctive community bearing His name... one that is increasingly living *all of life in reference to Christ*. All praise and glory to Him!

The second half of the Year of Sacramental Living is about to get really interesting! Here is what is coming up:

- A very relevant and important Formation | Catechesis module - **Bodies Matter: Implications of Easter for everyday living** (starting [this](#) Sunday - April 30 and continuing through much of the summer)
 - I'll say more about this below... but suffice to say that you can't talk about sacramental living without addressing the body. Remember that our understanding of *sacrament* must always remain connected to the *incarnation*. But to talk about the body is to enter into a minefield (not just currently, but throughout history). Our goal in this module is to address in a proactive, thoughtful way a wide-ranging series of topics all connected to the body that are very important to living *all of life in reference to Christ*.
- A new season of **Table Groups** (mid-May through early August) - talk to Fr. Joshua if you're interested in being in the loop.
- A special **Confirmation** service with our NorCal Deanery (joining other Bay Area Anglicans) - Saturday afternoon, June 3. Note: Bishop Todd Hunter will be here for this! If you have not talked to me about this and you're

interested in being confirmed, please reach out ASAP. Everyone is invited to attend the service, regardless of whether they intend to be confirmed. *Details forthcoming...*

- **Eucharist Village** - July 26-30 at Sugar Pine Reservoir / Giant Gap Campground. This is a unique opportunity to communally experience *all of life in reference to Christ* in the great outdoors TOGETHER! We will have a flyer available this Sunday at worship with more details and the opportunity to sign up. We have 30 spots.
- Starting in September we will feature a Formation | Catechesis module taking up the extremely important topic of **Christian faith and work** (as in *your job*). For many of us, most of our waking hours are spent at work. What does this have to do with our Christian faith and our calling to Christ? A lot.
- Finally, save the date for our **Fall Retreat**: November 10-12 (Friday evening-Sunday noon) at Mission Springs Retreat Center in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

As you can see, we have a very exciting second half of the year lined up as a church. I've not even mentioned some of the other aspects of our church that are in development such as a growing vision for outreach to International Students and families/children and Front Porch events for seekers. *What is your role in all of this? How would you like to serve and participate? Who do you know who you could invite to join us for this journey?* Let's talk! Our prayer is that God will build this church as He sees fit and shape our lives evermore into the image of Christ.

A couple of important "household" aspects of being a church together:

1. **Giving | Church Finances:** Heading into 2017 our Congregational Council set out a budget/spending plan that we thought was strategic to the growth and health of our church. It is ambitious yet realistic as long as our congregation is committed to generosity. So, this is the invitation: Give generously... give in response to the stunning gratuitous gift of God to us in Christ. And remember that our mission is not merely to keep doors open and make ends meet. That's not very inspiring. We want to see the Body of Christ flourish here in SF. We want to witness God changing lives across the Bay Area. We want to see a whole network of churches established from our own over the next 5-7 years. We want to see the poor cared for and the lost found. All of this involves building a culture of generosity. Let's do this together!

Currently we are running a fairly substantial deficit (year-to-date). While this isn't terribly uncommon for churches in the first quarter of the year, we don't want to get too far behind. We outline four ways to give on our website (including an online option) - eucharistSF.org/give. Thank you for your generosity!

2. **Congregational Council:** We are just beginning a process to nominate 1 or 2 new individuals to join our Congregational Council (vestry) which provides lay oversight to many aspects of our congregational life. A fully functional Congregational Council is essential for our maturity as a congregation. Nominations will be received starting this next week and then we will ultimately elect our new councilperson(s) at our congregational meeting after church on June 11. More information will be provided over the next week or so.

What an incredible joy it is to be together on this journey of faithfulness. We have so much to learn and so many ways in which to be formed. May Christ be glorified in all that we do.

In Christ,



Ryan+
Rector

Bodies Matter: Implications of Easter for Everyday Living

Overview:

When God became incarnate in Jesus Christ and took on a human body He forever established the importance of body. This was only further reinforced when Jesus was resurrected in a body, a body the gospels tell us was even capable of eating. Easter tells us that bodies matter. And then to cap this off, the material body took on an eternal dimension when Jesus bodily ascended to the Father - forever taking our human flesh into the experience of the Trinity. All of this tells us that bodies matter!

God created bodies to begin with and said they were good. But the effects of sin have had a devastating impact on the body and the rest of the created order. The body is a spiritual war-zone, a place of battle between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness. This has never been more pronounced than in the era in which we live (though this is certainly not new - see Gnosticism in the 2nd/3rd century). There is enormous confusion both inside and outside the Church about the body. Our world is very much in need of a thoughtful and faithful theology of the body with guidance about its place in Christian faithfulness.

Our year of sacramental living must address the place of the body. And that's what we're planning to do for the next four months at Formation | Catechesis (9:00-9:45am each Sunday). Simultaneously, we'll continue to provide children's catechesis as well (9:00-9:45) in which we are currently exploring the meaning of the Apostles Creed as an age/stage appropriate way of deepening our kids' foundation of faith and love for God.

Goals for *Bodies Matter*:

- To set out a positive, non-reactionary vision of the body for Christian living while engaging the complexity and challenges of 21st century secular life from a theological framework of incarnation / new creation that calls us to live all of life in reference to Christ.
- To cultivate a proactive faithful intuition so that we begin to intuitively engage life and all its complexity from a Christian standpoint.
- To create a conversational space to engage and explore some of the messiness and scariness of the "hot button" issues of life as a Christian.

Topics we'll explore:

- The body in Christian thought and practice
- Vanity, trauma, confusion, disease: The body and the effects of sin
- Identity, gender, race
- A positive vision of sexuality: marriage, singleness, and the purpose of sexuality
- Death, grief, and resurrection
- Pregnancy, birth control, and abortion
- The body and technology
- The body and emotions
- The body and suffering
- Health, Wholeness, and Holiness
- Addiction and healing
- The Body and Spiritual Formation