

The Gospel According to St. Mark's is our parish newsletter. Ask the Vestry greeter for a copy of a back issue or two.

Junior Warden A lay person elected to the Vestry whose primary responsibility is the care of the buildings and grounds.

Lay Anyone not ordained

Liturgy (From Greek for 'the work of the people.) These are the words we speak in worship—the common prayers and, most importantly, the word spoken during the Eucharist.

***Manciple** A middle-English term for the manager of purchases for a monastery. Ours is a lay officer of the Vestry, appointed by the Junior Warden to chair the Fabric (property) Committee.

***Pillars** The 5 areas that form our parish structure; so-called because they uphold our community life. They are Worship, Christian Education (Formation), Outreach, Parish Life, and Arts.

Presider We no longer use the term 'celebrant' for the person who leads the service, as all of us are 'celebrating' the eucharist. This is the person who simply presides or guides the service.

***Shrine Mont** Our church retreat held the second weekend in June, and is the location of the diocese of Virginia's retreat center in Orkney Springs, in the Shenandoah Mountains. Here we address major issues facing the parish and have a lot of fun.

Rector The priest who leads an Episcopal parish. You may call our clergy by their Christian name. You will not hear us refer to our rector as 'Father Paul' or Rev. Paul. We also have an associate rector, Susan Pinkerton, who joined us Oct 1, 2008.

Senior Warden The elected lay-leader of a parish. Ours serve two, one year terms.

Vergers The early church employed a person to lead the procession using a stick, called a verge, to keep order during services. We use the term for those who make sure our services go smoothly.

Vestry The elected governing body of the parish. Church canons (laws) require we elect people to make and carry out the policies which guide the parish. We elect 3 Vestry members each year, for a 3-year term. These 9 parishioners, with the wardens and officers, meet monthly, under the chairmanship of the Rector, to oversee budgetary matters and to guide the parish toward the goal of fulfilling our mission and meeting our priorities.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church Capitol Hill

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St. Mark's Episcopal Church Capitol Hill

St. Mark's 101 Sunday Worship Service

A brief guide for visitors



The Reverend Paul R. Abernathy
Rector

The Reverend Susan B. Pinkerton
Associate Rector

Welcome to St. Mark's Episcopal Church on Capitol Hill!

As you can readily see, our church community worships 'in the round'. Please feel free to sit in any part of the church, no reservations required!

There are two restrooms and a water fountain in the hallway and additional restrooms downstairs.

We have two services on Sundays.

At 9 a.m., the service is a Eucharist. It ends at 9:45 and after a short break, we re-gather to hear the sermon during what we call Sermon Seminar.

Sermon Seminar begins at 10 a.m. Please help yourself to the coffee or tea (by the organ pipes), return to your seat, and hear a reading and the sermon. After the sermon, anyone may offer comments. Sermon Seminar ends at 10:45 and is frequently followed by coffee in the Parish Hall (through the doors by the pipes and down the hall—follow the crowd!).

At 11:15 a.m., the service is also a eucharist and includes a sermon, but no "seminar." The service usually runs until 12:30 p.m.

Passing the Peace at St. Mark's it can be a bit intimidating! Many hug freely but you are welcome to shake hands and many parishioners do, too.

We observe an open communion. At St. Mark's, all are welcome at God's table, no matter where you are on your spiritual journey; whatever your religion is or isn't, whether you are a skeptic or believer. We believe that this is God's meal and belongs to all of God's people.

Come to the altar as your row stands.

There is no other method! We gather in a circle around the altar. Hold out your hands to receive the bread (the real thing, not wafers!). We use the 'common cup' but if you prefer, you may intinct—that is, dip your bread in either wine or grape juice. Just hold your bread at shoulder level and a server will come to you. S/He will indicate which is which. If you are willing to share the common cup, either the server or the person next to you will hand you the cup. You may wait for the words to be said (responding 'Amen') or you may drink when you are handed the cup. Stay in the circle until the presider dismisses the group with "Go in peace."

After the service, you are invited to speak to a member of the Vestry (our lay governing body) about St. Mark's. The Welcome Table is under the large, Tiffany window. S/He will answer your questions and direct you to others who share your interests. You will be invited to coffee hour (following Sermon Seminar) or pub lunch in the Parish Hall.

Pub lunch frequently follows the 11:15 service. The greeter will offer you a ticket which you will hand to the person serving lunch (regulars purchase a card which is punched). Pub lunch

provides us with time for catching up with one another, and frequently doing some 'business'. Please join any table, introduce yourself, and plunge into life at St. Mark's!

The Episcopal tradition uses terms originating in the early church. While some are rather odd, they link us to our past as well as being exclusive. These may also confuse. St. Mark's has also adopted some ancient and unusual terms (*). To get you 'up to speed' here are some you may hear in your conversations with us:

Acolyte Those who assist the clergy at the altar.
Annual Meeting Episcopal canons (laws require we hold at least one general meeting each year). This is when we elect our leaders. All are welcome but you must be a pledging member to vote.

***Beadle** In the early church, beadles were parish officers in charge of keeping order. We use the term to identify our greeters (ushers). They give you a bulletin and take up the collection.

Crucifer The acolyte who carries the cross.
Deacon A graduate of seminary who has been ordained to the 'diaconate'. The term is defined as 'one who serves', and priests begin their service as a deacon for 1–6 months before being 'priest-ed' or fully ordained.

***Functional Education** A method of teaching by examining the issues that confront us on our spiritual journey. This was developed by Charles Penniman, a St. Louis clergyman during the 1940s. Func Ed, as it is called, undergirds most of our Christian Education (Formation) programs.