



A Community of Discernment

BY REV. DANIEL C. GREEN

At St. John's annual parish meeting in January we announced a "year of discernment" to coincide with the final year of our grant from the Diocese of Northern California and the final year, also, of my Letter of Agreement as Priest-in-Charge. A Discernment Committee has formed and is organizing a process of reflecting on the past four years, taking stock of the present, and looking toward the future. All of you will have an opportunity to participate in this good and important work. At the same time that this is happening, I have begun to organize my own work of discernment, which I will be carrying out in the months ahead. On a weekend in October the Discernment Committee and the Vestry, as representatives of the congregation, will come together for a retreat. And I will join them, representing myself.

When I think about the months that lie ahead, and what might happen at that retreat, and come out of it, it is clear to me that we are not really working toward a decision. As **Clif Hill** points out in his excellent introduction to the topic in this issue, discernment is not a decision-making technique. Nor is it a planning process. If in the end the Vestry decides to call me as Rector, and I decide to accept, it will not be because we came to consensus on a decision. It will not be in order to carry out a specific plan. It will be because we perceive that this is God's will for St. John's, Petaluma. And it will involve us in a shared commitment to continue as a community of discernment, seeking to be guided into our future by Holy Spirit.

That is what "discernment" is, in a Christian context — seeking and accepting the guidance of the Spirit. It involves an element of discrimination, because not all spirits are the Spirit of God. That is why discernment requires time, and care, and deep listening. It also requires conversation, a word which in its Latin roots means "turning things over together." It is not enough for us to listen for what the Spirit stirs in our own hearts. We need to bring these stirrings out and "turn them over" with others in our community, pondering them from another point of view.

Because we belong to a tradition, our community includes our ancestors. So our life of discernment has to include ongoing, disciplined conversation with the scriptures that connect us to them.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

holy week and EASTER 2014

Saturday, April 12

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Saturday Work Party

Palm | Passion Sunday, April 13

8 and 10 a.m.

Palm procession/Passion liturgy

Wednesday in Holy Week, April 16

12:15 p.m.

Holy Eucharist with prayers for healing

Maundy Thursday, April 17

6:30 p.m.

Potluck Communion supper in Cram Hall
and Stripping of the Altar

Good Friday, April 18

12:00-3:00 p.m.

Good Friday Vigil

Holy Saturday, April 19

9 a.m. Holy Saturday Liturgy of the Word

10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Easter Decorating in Church

Easter Sunday, April 20

8:00 and 10 a.m.

Feast of the Resurrection

11:15 a.m.

Easter Egg Hunt



Discernment

BY REV. DANIEL C. GREEN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 If our work is truly to be the ministry of the gospel, we seek the blessing of the God who created the universe and made a covenant with Abraham, who liberated Israel from bondage and gave the law on Sinai, who placed his people in the land of promise and spoke to them through the prophets. We seek guidance from the Spirit of God who raised Jesus Christ from the dead.

And our discernment is also conversation with our community in the present, in which we invite the Spirit to be present. For you this community will primarily be individuals and groups in the parish of St. John's. And that will be true for me also, but to a lesser extent. I also need conversation with people outside the parish, to help me view my work here from a larger perspective. I will look to the wider church for a community of discernment, in conversation with a spiritual director, clergy colleagues, and theologians. I will also be looking for conversation partners outside the church, in the neighborhood and the town.

When I look ahead and consider the possibility of another ten or twenty years of ministry in this place, it is my responsibility to ask, "What spirits are shaping the future of Petaluma?" and "What role might St. John's Episcopal Church have in subjecting those spirits to the Spirit of God?" Or to phrase things a little differently, "Where in Petaluma today do the poor hear good news?" "Who is proclaiming liberty to captives, and recovery of sight to the blind?" "How do the oppressed go free?" "When do we announce the year of the Lord's favor?" Come to think of it, maybe the responsibility for asking these questions belongs to us all. Maybe these are just exactly the kind of questions that we need to become a community of discernment, not just this year, but far into the future. ■

LITURGICAL NOTES

Passion Sunday & Holy Week 2014

The passion and death of Jesus figure in every liturgical celebration of the church. However, we make this the particular focus of the liturgy of Passion Sunday, also known as Palm Sunday. The two names of the feast are an indication of the sudden and shocking turn at the climax of the story of Jesus. We begin the liturgy with the joy and triumph of his entry into Jerusalem, waving palms and crying "Hosanna in the highest!" But before we know it, we are crying "Crucify him, crucify him!" as we dramatize his betrayal, trial, torture, and death in the version appointed in the three-year lectionary cycle (this year, Matthew). But this reversal is not the final twist in the story, or in the liturgy. Even the passion story is Gospel, which is to say, good news. The love of God in Christ transforms even our treacherous and cowardly complicity in the crimes of history, dramatized by the sudden turn from palms to passion, into forgiveness and healing and thanksgiving. Even on this Sunday, the liturgy concludes with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, enacting the church's participation not only in Christ's death, but also in his resurrection, ascension, and eternal priesthood at the right hand of God.



This movement from Passion to Easter is the heart of the Christian life we struggle to live every day. It is a mystery we continually seek to see revealed, not just in the liturgy of the church, but in the transformation of our own lives and the history of the world. And so we use the week between the feasts of Passion Sunday and Easter Sunday for a prolonged meditation upon this mystery. The Liturgy of the Palms initiates the cycle of Holy Week liturgies, which unfold in "real time." Beginning with his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and continuing through the days that follow, we commemorate the events of the final week of Jesus' life, which Passion Sunday compresses into one hour and suffuses with the light and joy of their ultimate fulfillment.

They are, in a sense, a single liturgy. Step-by-step, hour-by-hour, the discrete and yet seamlessly connected celebrations of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday place us and our time into the context of that Passover long ago when God delivered us from the power of evil, sin, and death. They are our gateway to enter more deeply into the mystery of our own suffering, our own experiences of betrayal, shame, and abandonment, and to let Jesus carry them for us to the cross. We follow him in hope even into the total darkness of the tomb, there to await the eternal dawn of joy and gladness. ■

The Triduum

(Great Three Days) at St. John's

The services of the Triduum form a single liturgy. Their meaning and power is cumulative, bringing the participants deep into contemplation of the mystery of death and resurrection. We invite your attendance in as much or as little of this year's schedule as you can.

Note that the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services are continuous, and that the times given after the starting times are approximate. However, do feel free to join the services in progress if you are unable to arrive at the beginning.

MAUNDY THURSDAY SUPPER: THE NEW COMMANDMENT

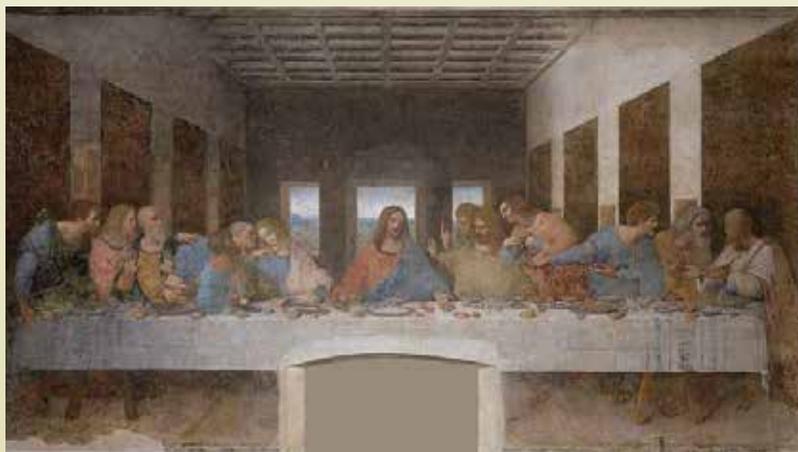
- 6:30 p.m. Potluck Mediterranean-themed Communion supper in Cram Hall with foot-washing
- 7:30 p.m. Procession to the Church and Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament, Stripping of the Altar
- 8:30 p.m. on Vigil before the Reserved Sacrament in the Sacristy

GOOD FRIDAY VIGIL: THE THREE HOURS ON THE CROSS

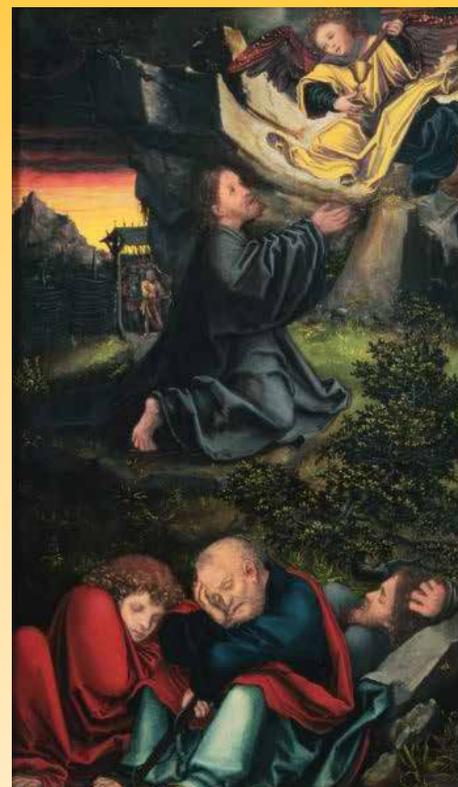
- 12:00 - 1:30 p.m. Liturgy of the Word, including the Martyrology and chanting of the Passion according to St. John, sermon, and the Solemn Collects
- 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. Stations of the Cross
- 2:15 - 3:00 p.m. Veneration of the Cross and Communion from the Reserved Sacrament

HOLY SATURDAY: THE GREAT SABBATH

- 9:00 a.m. Liturgy of the Word



The Last Super by Leonardo Da Vinci



The Garden of Gethsemane by Lucas Cranach the Elder

Maundy Thursday Vigil

A new practice for Holy Week this year will be a vigil before the Reserved Sacrament following the Maundy Thursday service. As part of that liturgy, the consecrated bread and wine from our communion supper will be carried in procession to the church and reserved in the Sacristy (the "vesting room") just off the sanctuary. It is traditional in many places to watch and pray through the night of Maundy Thursday, as Christ prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane before his betrayal and arrest. The vigil continues until the liturgy of Good Friday, when the bread and wine are consumed, leaving the church empty of the consecrated gifts until the first Eucharist of Easter.

A continuous 16-hour vigil may be beyond what our parish can manage, but feel free to drop in and pray anytime from about 8:00 p.m. on Thursday until 12:00 p.m. on Friday. ■



WISDOM of the Ancients

From the April 1914 edition of *The Instructor*, the monthly newsletter of St. John's Episcopal Church, Petaluma, along with an advertisement from Hale Bros. & Co., offering a special on Boy's Clothing: One double breasted suit, mixed Cheviot, one extra pair of pants, ages 7 to 15 years – \$2.95.

Easter Day, Queen of Festivals

On this day of days the Church lifts her eyes to the Risen Lord, and demands "O Grave, where is thy victory?" The reply is the joyful shout of the faithful:

*"Death's mightiest powers have
done their worst,
And Jesus hath his foes
dispersed;
Let shouts of praise and joy
outburst, Alleluia."*

Yes, wonder of wonders. Lo! how the Cross hath changed all things; the world hath ever wept and wailed before death and the grave, and now we sing songs of victory. Outside the spring powers are bursting into bloom; in God's Acre the graves are shining with flowers. So on this happy morn dark souls and sad spirits are bidden to rejoice and be glad, for Jesus hath overcome Death and the Grave. ■

FROM THE ALTAR GUILD

Spring Cleaning and Easter Decorating

The Altar Guild of St. John's is coordinating this year's annual cleaning of the church for Holy Week and decorating for Palm Sunday and Easter. Our parish's monthly work day in April will take place on Saturday, April 12 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. We will dust, vacuum, polish wood, silver and brass and then decorate for Palm Sunday. Then on Holy Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. we will prepare the church for Easter. All members of the parish are welcome and encouraged to join in. Come lend a hand for an hour or so. If you have questions call **Rebecca Smith** at 763-7701. Many hands make light the work! ■

SAVE THE DATE!

St. John's Parish Picnic on June 29

Save the date for the annual St. John's Parish Picnic. This year's event will take place after church on Sunday, June 29th at the Liberty Garage, also known as **Steve and Jeanne**

Nelson's house, with bocce court, lawn for games, barbecue, and vintage 1950s malt shop atmosphere. Watch this space for more details. ■



FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Bursting with Creative Energy

The Communications Team at St. John's is bursting with creative energy and good ideas; on the team are **Susan Hadenfeldt, Kristin Ikola, Jason Klein, Connie Prim, Rebecca Smith, Monty Sullivan, Victoria Temple, Frances Frazier**, and **Daniel Green**. Aligning with St. John's goals for this year, we are adding active outreach networking to our mission, stretching our communication connections to a broader audience within the larger Petaluma community. We want to get the word out that St. John's is a well spring of rich and varied community building activities, and that all are welcome. Victoria and Daniel continue to upgrade the St. John's website, and hope to complete the site shortly after Easter. This summer will see the beginning production of a brochure which will delineate ways that people can participate in the St. John's community. We are also refining our Communications Strategic Plan as we move into this year together.

We meet on the second Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. You are welcome to visit any time. — **Frances Frazier**

Go to www.stjohnsbignightout.com for all the details!

BIG NIGHT OUT | MAY 3 | RESERVATIONS BY APRIL 19

Its Just Around the Corner!

It is said that a good barometer to gauge one's actions against the will of the Spirit is if doors start to open. This has been the case with The Big Night Out.

We have much to be grateful for. Our group of dedicated volunteers has worked tirelessly on this event, particularly our Steering Committee of **Connie Prim, Jason Klein, Kevin Jones** and **Rebecca Smith**. We have seven host homes for the private dinners. Betty Petrillo has graciously coordinated this effort.

Megan Clark from The Parlour Petaluma, a professional event planner, was dropped into our lap as if from heaven. She is designing the look and feel of the kick-off reception in the Parish Hall, with no cost to us. Our own **Victoria Temple** created an exciting Big Night Out website, and **Alison MacKenzie** put together the Eventbrite site to enable you to purchase tickets online. **Erik Oehm** is setting up a system to take credit cards to pay for auction items. Several of our parishioners gave cash gifts to help with costs. We have secured a number of sponsorships and the silent auction items keep coming in. And last, but not least, you are responding by sending in your reservation forms.

If the restoration of our beautiful church and the support of COTS in their effort to feed the hungry are important to you, please come and be a part of this wonderful community event. You have until April 19th to reply. Tell your friends and neighbors about The Big Night Out. We have a great evening planned for everyone. — **Kathryn Hardt** and **Tom Rotella**, Co-Chairs

**ST. JOHN'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH**
PETALUMA SINCE 1856



**BIG
NIGHT
OUT**

MAY 3, 2014

A benefit
for
historic
preservation
and
homelessness
prevention

**Nourish
&
Preserve**

Raffle Highlights

Raffle Prize #1

2013 Felt Claire 3-speed
Cruiser Bicycle

VALUE = \$550



Raffle Prize #2

Kindle Fire HD (7 inch) 8GB Tablet

VALUE = \$139

\$5 per raffle
ticket or 10
for \$40



Auction Highlights

Everyone loves Lorgues!



Imagine spending a week in the south of France, staying in a lovingly remodeled townhouse, enjoying the sites and delights of this small hill village in Provence!

ORDER ONLINE at > <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/st-johns-big-night-out-tickets-10470534651>

CLIF'S NOTES

Discernment 101

This year St. John's congregation begins the process of calling a Rector. And, as discussed in previous newsletters, the process we will use is called discernment. However, before we get too far down the road, perhaps we should pause for a moment and talk a little about discernment . . . what it is and how we do it.

Most descriptions of Christian discernment begin with a discussion of what it is not. We live in a world where actions require decisions that are generally made by duly constituted bodies of authority following well-ordered rules of behavior. We are not used to discernment. We live in an action oriented society. Our first reaction is to do, to fix, to explain, or to contain. We seek consensus decision making. But, that's not discernment. Discernment is not a political process in which the majority rules. Discernment is not necessarily a logical, rational, or ordered discipline. It is not a method of problem solving. Discernment is not about decision making, even prayerful Christian decision making. Because, discernment is not about what we want, but about what God is calling us to be.

Discernment is a prayerful, informed, and intentional effort to distinguish God's voice from other voices that influence us: like past experience, our families, fears, anxiety, urgency, prejudice, our own desires, and pre-conceived ideas. Discernment is worshipful work in which the heart more than the head is engaged. It is a way of seeing as God sees and uncovering what God is already doing. Our underlying assumption is that God, through the Holy Spirit, is an active presence at work in the world and yearns to enter into the human experience. We find God in each other . . . in stillness, silence, prayer, sharing, listening, and love. Discernment is like receiving a radio signal . . . the radio must be turned on and tuned to the correct frequency, and we must be attentive and listening.

The book ***Grounded in God*** describes some practical guidelines for ways to make sure we are "tuned in" and listening attentively during the discernment process:

- Take time to become settled in God's presence and identify agendas and biases brought into the room.
- Listen with your entire self (senses, feelings, intuition, imagination).
- Do not interrupt.



Discernment Committee: Marti Shortridge, Tom Rotella (chaplain), Victoria Temple, Nancy Bosch, Clif Hill and Betty Petrillo

- Pause between speakers to absorb what has been said.
- Do not formulate what you want to say while someone else is speaking.
- Speak for yourself only, expressing your own thoughts and feelings, referring to your own experiences. Avoid being hypothetical. Steer away from broad generalizations.
- Do not challenge what others have to say.
- Listen to the whole group . . . to those who have not spoken as well as to those who have.
- Generally, leave space for anyone who may want to speak a first time before speaking a second time yourself.
- Hold your desires and opinions (even your convictions) lightly.

But once we have engaged in this process of discernment, how do we know when we are done? What are the indicators that "we got it right"? Here are some. Perhaps we will find others. There will likely be the presence of a persistent message. We will start hearing the same thing and we will have feelings of joy, and maybe even energy, about it. Thoughts and themes will seem to converge. We will smile. Ideas that were unlikely will abound. We will become fruitful. There will be a sense of God's peace.

As part of this year's process for calling a Rector, the congregation will meet in the Parish Hall on Sunday, May 25th to address the question "Who are we now and what is our unique mission?" More details about the meeting will be in next month's newsletter. In any event, we will have our chance to try out this discernment thing. I'm looking forward to it! — **Clif Hill**

Summer Camp Opportunities 2014

There are several Episcopal camps in our region that offer summer programs for children and youth.

The camp of our own Diocese of Northern California, **CAMP NOEL PORTER**, is on the West Shore of Lake Tahoe (see article on page 7). There are age-graded camps for children from 1st grade through Senior High School beginning June 22 and running through August 2. New this year is a summer choir camp! Brochures are available on the table outside the Library, and more info is at <http://www.campnoelporter.org/>



In addition, the Episcopal Diocese of California, based in San Francisco, has two camps in Sonoma County with summer children's and youth programs.



The **BISHOPS RANCH** is outside Healdsburg, and offers age-graded camps for children 4th through 12th grade and intergenerational family camps: <http://www.bishopsranch.org/programs-retreats/summer-camps/>

ST. DOROTHY'S REST, at Camp Meeker near Occidental, offers programs including ABC (Ankle Biters Camp) for one parent and one child aged 5-7, 3 week-long camps for ages 8-12, and Explorations Camp for ages 13-15, centering on 3-day backpacking trips in the Bay Area: <http://www.stdorothysrest.org/wp/camp-4/> ■



Cram Hall Welcomes New Piano

Thanks to a generous gift from members **Michael** and **Sylvia O'Neill**, St. John's Norman Cram Hall is the new home of a beautiful baby grand piano. This magnificent Wurlitzer instrument will be a tremendous asset to our parish for many years to come, greatly enhancing our desirability as a location for parties and receptions, as well as musical performances. The new piano can be heard at the Spring Concert of the Petaluma Children's Chorus on Monday, May 12th. A rumor has also begun about a possible dedication recital to celebrate the arrival of this new instrument sometime this spring—so stay tuned.

SAVE THE DATE!

Petaluma Children's Chorus Spring Concert on May 12

Under the direction of **Sadie Sonntag**, the Petaluma Children's Chorus will hold its annual Spring Concert at St. John's Episcopal Church, in Cram Hall, on Monday, May 12. Flyers will be posted with the time and more information soon.

Petaluma **Children's** Chorus



Camp Noel Porter Welcomes You!

BY KEELEY FORNACI, Camp Noel Porter Intern with Lutheran Episcopal Volunteer Network.

As the summer season fast approaches, it is my sincere hope that many of you are preparing to send your children to Camp Noel Porter for an experience of overnight summer camping, or as we like to call it here — sleep away camp!

I recently came across two articles that gave me pause to think about camping and the possibility for present-reality and far reaching impact. The first article is "Why the Church Needs a High Camp-ology," by Connor Gwin at <http://connorgwin.com/2013/12/08/why-the-church-needs-a-high-camp-ology/>. Connor is a former camper and camp counselor at Camp McDowell in Alabama. He makes some interesting points about why sending children to summer camp is a positive thing. He points out that summer camp is a place where children are encouraged to be themselves and peer pressure does not exist. Summer camp, Connor says, is a "rehearsal for the Kingdom of God."

Summer camp is about creating an environment where everyone supports one another. Finally, he points out that summer camp is the only place where people of all ages have the opportunity for genuine engagement. This might be one of the biggest social concerns facing our youth today. In today's so-

ciety, and in today's church, the youth are often completely separated from the rest of the congregation.

The second article I read was about why companies do not want to hire recent graduates. One of the primary reasons many companies gave is that young people do not know how to interact with older generations. Camping ministries and in particular, summer camp, presents a unique opportunity for multiple generations to come together.

At Camp Noel Porter our mission is to encourage personal growth in a safe and secure setting. We also like to have fun! Each week of camp we have a challenge course, where campers break into teams and complete an obstacle course, which always ends in a tug of rope competition. We love to express our wild side by dressing up and participating in our Crazy Olympics. On our final night of camp we end with a carnival or a dance that everyone looks forward to every week. Camp Noel Porter also works to celebrate our similarities and differences in a safe and accepting way.

As an Episcopal summer camp we place a emphasis on creating Christian community where everyone feels accepted and included. We do our best to provide a safe environment where our campers can make lasting relationships. When we asked our campers what their favorite parts of

camp were, we came up with a list of the top twelve things campers love about camp (you can read it online at www.campnoelporter.org). One of the things that campers said they loved about camp was making friendships that lasted for years to come. The campers also said that they enjoyed the various activities and exciting adventures we have at camp. It is a snapshot of the life we live at Camp Noel Porter. ■

Registration for Camp Noel Porter is now open. You can download our registration form, register online, apply for a camper scholarship, or pay for camp all at our website www.campnoelporter.org.



Spring Series Offers Soulful Line-Up

Saturday mornings at St John's U provides provocative and spirit nourishing encounters with skilled teachers offering regenerative opportunities, free of charge.

In February, **Meg Tinsley** led us in **Authentic Movement**, an expressive, improvisational movement practice that can open places you didn't even know existed. Next up in February **Devi Mathieu**, brought **Chanting the Lord's Prayer in Aramaic**, that inspired participants to ask her to come back.

Our March workshop, **Praying with the Body**, offered by **Rev. Daniel Green**, was a holistic alternative to praying only with words. Gestures, sounds, posture, breath and movement were woven into the sacred space of prayer, creating more concentration and awareness of the entirety of our being we wish to offer God in response to Her presence.

April and May workshops will round out this spring series of St. John's U.



Bringing Christ to Life

ST. JOHN'S U

Just around the corner on April 5 **Religious Art of the Renaissance** with **Dr. Bruce Elliott**, explores ways in which masters such as Michelangelo, Leonardo de Vinci, Rafael and Titian applying their artistic skills and Renaissance humanist values to infuse Biblical narratives with new life.

On May 24, **The Story of the Spirit in Man & Mathematics**, with **Larry Temple**, offers a look at the qualities inherent in the primary numbers as conveyors of spiritual insight into the nature of the world and the human being, enriched with form drawing exercises.

Please come, give yourself a delightful, soulful surprise and fresh learning on Saturday mornings from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

The mission of **ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH** is to bring Christ to Life:

- Celebrating the mysteries,
- Honoring the beauty and wisdom of every person,
- Healing the soul, and
- Serving the peace and renewal of the earth.

Parish Goals FOR 2014



- 1 Create a worshipping community that experiences harmony by honoring the depth and richness of Episcopal tradition and the best of contemporary currents in liturgy and music.
- 2 To move from Priest-in-Charge to Rector by January 2015.
- 3 To advance the mission of St. John's with effective communication that invites and empowers our congregation to lead and serve, and creates positive and accessible points of connection with the wider community.



ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, PETALUMA

EASTER FLOWER DONATION

Your Name _____ Amount _____

Dedication (please print legibly) _____

Please place completed form in the offering plate on Sunday along with your payment. Write "Easter Flowers" in the memo line. You may also deliver the form and payment to the parish office. The deadline for dedications to be included in the Easter service bulletins is April 15.