



## In the Interim

I am always pleased when Easter is early in the year, because it means Lent will be finished early and there will be plenty of time to enjoy the spring flowers inside as well as outside. We try to keep Lent in our house as best we can; in addition to the extra prayers and reading I do, we make a point of not having flowers in the house, of keeping fewer treats around for ourselves and heaven knows I don't decorate for Easter. This is all good discipline, but there are some years when it weighs more heavily on me than others, because, I have a lilac bush that bursts into a wonder of tiny flowers and fragrance at this time of year and a row of callas that stretch up like graceful ballerinas just begging me to cut them and take them inside where I can admire them. There are some splendid and very special irises too; special because I received them as bulbs from Dick Hall and Leonard Benaski and every spring, the spirea and camellia bushes do fabulous things, but - just for a few weeks. When Lent and Easter are late, I must admire the flowers through the windows or go outside and often they have faded before Lent is over. I don't allow myself to cut them and bring them in.

It is a good discipline. It is a visible and vivid Lenten reminder of what we are shutting out when we shut God out of our lives or out of our souls. Most often, God ends up 'outside' when I do something that causes someone else pain, but we all have something that sets God outside. What we want is God inside, all the time. We want the fragrance, and the color and the variety; all the delicate, wild, extravagant beauty of God to permeate our bodies and souls, in the same way those flowers fill up my house in the spring. St. Paul says we are to be "the fragrance of Christ" and one of the best ways I have of keeping this in mind is by carrying with me the vision of my spring flowers, in all their sensuous beauty, as a model for the person I want to be.

Mother Susan

This year, my Lent without flowers began as usual but then, after Gabbie died, my office simply bloomed with beautiful flowers and my home did too. They were a comfort to me, as were the cards and the letters, the prayer shawl and all the expressions of love. Your presence with me and around me as we walked together through the grief of losing sweet, little Gabbie was a gift beyond words. Thank you all for being here

for me; Bruce and I will never be able to express our gratitude for your thoughtfulness and love. It was an awful moment, made easier only because you were there with us. Again, thank you.

Then, as if heaven sent...

All the flowers in my office had faded as I wrote this article, but when I came in this morning, I found a huge bouquet of peonies, irises and orchids in my office, from some secret friend. Oh, that I could look and smell as good as this bouquet...

## Youth Group Returns to New Orleans!!

**IMPORTANT DATE:** We're meeting again to discuss the trip and hand out mandatory materials this Sunday, April 11, in the Vicarage from 1-3pm. We can take up to 15 or 16 youth, so we're operating on a first-come, first-serve basis. We're already at seven confirmed from our first meeting two weeks ago!

**MISSION TRIP DATES:** We're going same week as last year: Saturday, 19 June-Saturday, 26 June.

**LOCATION:** We'll be staying with the United Methodist Church again, but at a new location: 2221 Filmore Ave, New Orleans, LA 70122.

**FUNDRAISING:** We'll be walking the Marin Human Race again: check out our website at [www.marinhumanrace.org/stfrancisnolateam](http://www.marinhumanrace.org/stfrancisnolateam) On that site, you can either directly donate to our cause or sign up to walk the Race with us on May 8th and raise some money on your own. There will be more fundraisers to come in May and June, so be sure to check next month's Bell on how to support this great rebuilding trip to New Orleans!

**QUESTIONS:** Email Matthew at [mattachew3@comcast.net](mailto:mattachew3@comcast.net)

## Hospitality Committee

The Hospitality Committee is happy to announce that the Easter Vigil Champagne and Caviar end of Lent party was a huge success. Thanks to Rhea for her wonderful champagne glasses, and thanks to all of you for your generous donations of goodies. Wow! It was really decadent!!!

Coming up - men's breakfast at Sam's Place on Saturday, April 10th and the women's breakfast in Block Hall on Saturday, April 17th. Be prepared to enjoy yourself, eat, make flowers for Spring Fling (May 1st) and . . .

See you then! Miss Congeniality

## Vestry Doings – April 2010

### A WORD ABOUT THE PARISH PROFILE AND SEARCH COMMITTEE

What a joyful day we experienced on Sunday, March 21, when The Rev. Cn. Michael Barlowe came to celebrate and meet with us about beginning the process for our search for the next Rector of St. Francis. After an Extravagant morning of music, a wonderful sermon, Eucharist, and brunch, over sixty parishioners stayed for his presentation, and to ask questions afterward.

Out of this very informative and productive session, we are now ready to look at the first phase of the important task ahead. From the helpful information in a recently-published Diocesan guide to Congregational Leadership Transition, the Vestry thought it important to share information about the actual Search Committee process.

#### **A few useful facts about how the Parish Profile and Search Committee is selected:**

The Vestry appoints the Parish Profile and Search Committee. Although the Vestry welcomes suggestions for membership to the committee, we also will be recruiting members as well. Experience has shown that the ideal size is 12 members, including two (2) chair persons, who are appointed by the Vestry. The Chair persons should exemplify excellent organizational skills, a proven track record of successful leadership in parish ministry, and outstanding team-building and pastoral abilities. Here are some requisites we will be considering when making our appointments to the Committee:

They must be team players, with a proven track record of team building and reaching consensus.

Committee members must be faithful members of the parish, regular attendees, and supportive of the parish in their time, talent, and treasure. They must be comfortable dealing with confidential information about applicants, and willing to maintain confidentiality even within their households.

As a group, they should know the parish, parishioners, the diocese and area, and our community; they should be broadly representative of the demographic profile of the parish.

Once the Committee is in place, the Vestry is no longer involved until the finalists are presented (although frequent reports will be given to both the Vestry and the parish).

One member of the Profile and Search Committee should be a member of the Vestry (Teri Moss will be this representative). The purpose of this is not to report to the Vestry, but to be a resource to the Committee about Vestry matters during the search.

If you have been approached by a member of the Vestry and/or have interest in serving on the Profile and Search Committee, we'd like to hear from you in April, in writing, with the following information:

An example of when you were involved in a successful team endeavor here in church, or at work or in the community (and were able to put aside personal opinions) for consensus of the group; i.e., a team player!

How long you have been a pledging regular attendee of St. Francis, and at which service.

What does being a member of St. Francis mean to you?

A statement of intent that you will be available for the next year/or until a rector is selected for at least several hours a week, and considerably more during the evaluation of applications and interviews of candidates, and possible overnight travel.

We'll be including information each month about this Transition. Our goal is to be as transparent and communicative as possible as we journey together through this Interim period. Please feel free to talk to me, or to any Vestry member, if you have questions.

Prayerfully,

Dortha Kuhlman

Senior Warden



## Buildings and Grounds Update

The buildings and grounds committee has done a walk-through of the grounds and has identified priorities for upcoming work projects.

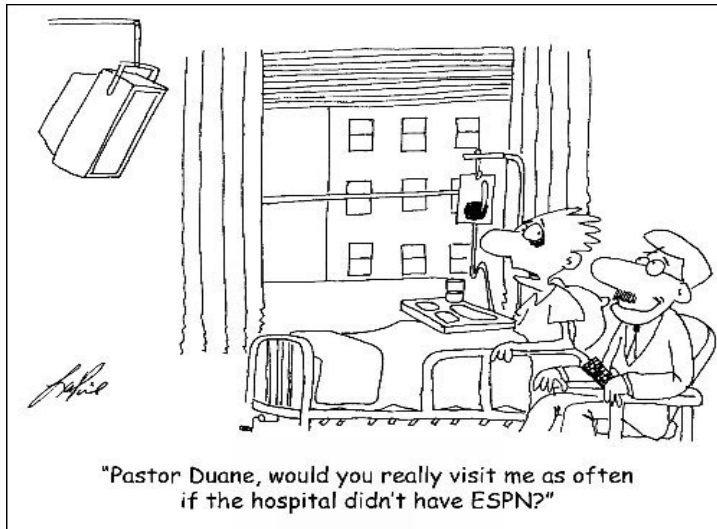
Additionally, the Diocesan Risk Management specialist did an inspection of the church and the grounds and his report will be forthcoming.

In the meantime, we are planning a work day after the Spring Fling - stay tuned for further updates

There are lots of things for all of us to do - both large and small.

The biggest, most pressing need is to repair the fence posts between the pre-school and the back 40 (oak trees and labyrinth area ). We are hoping to make this our first project while the ground is still soft.

More info to follow....



"Pastor Duane, would you really visit me as often if the hospital didn't have ESPN?"

## Needed: Tables and Chairs For the Spring Fest Auction/Picnic

We are in need of tables and chairs for the celebration this year on Saturday, May 1. Instead of renting them, we are asking people to lend them to us for a few days. If you have we can use, please e-mail Anne-Marie Bonfilio at [ambonfilio@hotmail.com](mailto:ambonfilio@hotmail.com) or call at 898-4314.

## Financial Corner

**For the month of March 2010**

Pledge Anticipated: \$ 12,747.30

Pledge Actual: \$ 10,856.

Plate Anticipated: \$ 2,8846.60

Plate Actual: \$ 2,544.

**Thank you for keeping your pledge current.**

## St. Francis Campout

Spring Lake from Friday June 25- Sun June 27.

We have reserved several sites. Anyone interested should contact Kathy Henderson at 598-4240

## Choir Singers Wanted

Hi folks, just a friendly reminder that the choirs are open for all who would like to participate. There is no lifelong commitment required, come join us in song and give praise to our Lord in this very special ministry. The 9:00 choir practices on Tuesday nights at 7 and the 10:30 choir practices on Monday nights at 6. If you feel the calling and have a voice then come on down, all are welcome!

## Angel's Attic News

The Angel's Attic has a number of items for sale that are not in the store. Other items will be listed as they become available. If you are interested, you can contact Jackie Walton.

The items include: 46 pieces International gold plated flatware, 11 pieces of Lenox Moonlight Mood china

33 pieces of Mikasa Signiture stemware, approximately 30 issues of *Arizona* Magazine from 1970-80

## Grandma Can't Read!

On a recent visit, my mother was handed a furiously scribbled page of crooked lines by granddaughter Aubrey.

"Here, Grandma, look what I wrote," Aubrey said proudly.

Grandma peered at the unintelligible lines. "Very nice, Aubrey. What does it say?"

Aubrey shrugged, took the paper, and went to find her mother. "Mommy," she whispered anxiously, "Grandma can't read!"

**St. Francis Fundraiser  
Spring Fest  
Saturday, May 1, 2010**

As part of the annual fundraiser, we will be having a raffle featuring these fabulous prizes:

White Gold Diamond Cross Pendant from Giroux Jewelry

4-Club Level SF Giants Tickets and Parking Pass-  
August 12<sup>th</sup> game vs. Chicago Cubs

Cruise on the San Francisco Bay for 4

Barefoot Wine Gift Basket

Raffle tickets will be on sale at the school and church during the weeks of April 19<sup>th</sup> and April 26<sup>th</sup>.

They will also be on sale at the event.

Raffle ticket prices are:

10 tickets - \$20    6 tickets - \$15

3 tickets - \$10    1 ticket - \$5

Don't miss out on the chance to win one of these great prizes!

## Coffee Hour

A big THANK YOU to everyone who contributed to our coffee hour success! We've been bustling with coffee drinking parishioners for the past several weeks. For all of you who brought goodies and baked dishes from March 21st through Easter Sunday, thank you so much for your contributions! Many of you signed up, but lots of times a plate of some wonderful treat will just show up on the table! Thank you to all you mystery bakers out there! We appreciate your generosity!

Many thanks as well to everyone who has helped to set up tables, clean dishes and organize the kitchen. There's a lot that goes on behind the scenes to make Block Hall look and feel welcoming to parishioners both old and new.

Please be sure to take this opportunity to say "hello" to someone new, and if you're not sure if they are new, well, just start a conversation anyway! I promise it will only help you to feel more connected to our community!

Finally, we are in need of a coffee host on April 18th. If you would like to host please see me, or sign up on the board in Block Hall. Coffee and goodies will be provided. Thank you!

Happy Spring!

# STEPHEN MINISTRY



The Caring Corner: Stephen Ministry at St Francis

## A Thought on Christian Caregiving.....

Each member on our St. Francis Vestry is asked to facilitate one of the standing Committees during the coming year. Stephen Ministry very naturally falls into the area of Pastoral Care, and if you read this column each month, you already know that Stephen Ministry is about caring and listening. But.....so often needs arise when Stephen Ministry might not be the appropriate solution, such as just a cheerful greeting card, or a LEM visit or just a friendly stop to visit to some of our seniors and shut-ins. There are also times of emergency, such as to provide food or care when there is a death or illness.

To this end, we hope to establish what we're calling for now a Caring Committee, to encompass more of the pastoral needs that may arise. M. Susan and I, along with all of you, could identify a need, and then we'd set about to make sure it gets met. If you have interest in joining us, we'll be meeting after the Women's Breakfast on Saturday, April 17, for just a few minutes.

NOTE: Our 2010 Stephen Ministry training has begun at Novato Presbyterian Church, and of the nine trainees, two are from St. Francis—Jane Mock and Steve Sayles. Please keep them in your prayers as they participate in this 50-hour training course until May.

Remember....if you are in need, or know someone who would benefit from Stephen Ministry, or for more information about Stephen Ministry, contact Dortha Kuhlman at [dorthakuhlman@comcast.net](mailto:dorthakuhlman@comcast.net) (telephone 897-6578), or Mother Susan at the Church

## TALES FROM THE SWING SET

Karen Arnett, one of our dedicated teachers, is retiring after being at St. Francis Preschool since 1976. It's difficult to imagine our Preschool without her. Her love for children is demonstrated in numerous ways. We'll miss her calm, positive, never complaining attitude. Karen was our creative poet and was the language arts teacher for the youngest children at St. Francis Preschool.

Spring may be here officially, but at Preschool we're ready for the winter rains to go away. Our spring flowers in the side yard garden haven't lasted as long because of the rain.

The children are busy with their many spring activities. They planted wheat berry seeds or "wee fairy" seeds, as expressed by a three-year-old, watered them each day and watched their sprouts grow into grass. Next they colored cooked eggs and placed them in their wheat berry grass spring baskets. They are observing the life cycle of frogs, beginning with our tadpoles, and are watering the lettuce, spinach, and sugar snap peas that they planted in their garden.

The Preschoolers enjoyed making oatmeal muffins and now the classes are taking turns making butter from whipping cream and spreading it on whole wheat bread.

We hope you are all looking forward to the Spring Fest, May 1. Anne-Marie Bonfilio and her volunteers have already spent many hours working on the fundraiser; there are some great silent auction and raffle ticket items; it should be fun for all. The children are presently working on their art projects that will be for sale at the Spring Fest.

We have a few spaces available in our July summer program and our Time for Twos program in the fall. Please inform your friends.

Sherry Fink, Preschool Director

## St. Francis' Spoleto Dream

He heard someone asking him where he wanted to go. When Francis revealed to him his entire plan, the other said: "Who can do more good for you? The lord or the servant?" When Francis answered him: "The lord," he again said to him: "Then why are you abandoning the lord for the servant, the patron for the client?" And Francis said: "Lord, what do you want me to do?" "Go back to your land," he said, "and what you are to do will be told to you. You must understand in another way the vision which you saw."

This "understanding in another way" would represent the beginning of Francis' "surrender," his liberation from the received tradition of religiously grounded knighthood. This involved a conversion from a militaristic approach to life and a faith that would justify violence in the name of God to another approach constituted by a novel way of disarmament. In this way he would experience himself becoming a knight of another kind.

Francis' dream, as Julio Mico writes, was the beginning of his transformation in faith itself: Behind the traditional image of God which Francis had formed was hidden the living God who utterly changed and broadened his spiritual horizons. Thomas of Celano describes this disconcerting experience in the well-known dream at Spoleto. In a typically feudal setting, it shows us the change in values that God wrought in Francis. Up to this point his one aim in life had been to win knighthood on the field of honor. But now all his thoughts were turned towards his Lord, who had given him life and for whom he would henceforth live.

The God of Francis' conventional background, who had remained unchanged and perfectly compatible with his other values, now gave place to the living and life-giving God who conquers and takes over, who broadens and even tears apart the accustomed horizons of one's life. Francis' consent to the evidence of God's lordship would mean that from then on he would live in a kind of continual ecstasy, a permanent leaving of self behind to go out to the God of fulfillment. After this experience, he would no longer be able to go on cultivating his own personality but would set forth along new roads as a pilgrim of the Absolute, searching for the well spring at which he could quench his thirst for God.

Francis' faith now moved from a cultural faith that canonized the status quo to a personal faith that critiqued not only the status quo, but also his own former participation in it. It invited him to embark on an ever deepening process that would move from a faith defined by creeds and canons to one that was a personal and transformative. As Mico summarizes the Spoleto experience, it "changed his image of God from the conventional God who scarcely mattered in his life's options to the living and true God who had won his heart so completely that he could never again disregard Him... Hitherto, he had confused God with the idols which society held up before him, but now it was the one true God Himself who became the sole purpose and support of his life.

Francis was convinced that the Spoleto experience which began his calling - as well as his response to that calling - was totally the work of God. He called this being led by "divine inspiration." He was convinced that it was God who had spoken to him in his dream; it was God who invited him to "withdraw" from the might and militarism around him; it was God who would lead him where he would go. This conviction of God's power-at-work in him via the life of grace would continue for the rest of his life. Br. Steve

## I wish I had halos...

... I could give to people who have done something particularly angelic. Until I find a way to make halos, this award will have to do. I call it the Halo award.

After getting more than three halos people should be glowing, even in the dark and that is how it's getting to be with **Susan Kenny** and **Dave Carter**. Susan gets yet another halo for being the angel she is for doing coffee hour every week and keeping us all happy by doing stuffed eggs once in a while. She was a real trooper through these last few weeks. Dave gets one for standing on a ladder and hanging the silks on Holy Saturday while Dortha and I stood safely on the ground telling him to move a little to the right ... or the left or whatever. Bob Kuchem is another three time award winner as is Dick Hall. They are getting halos for the fabulous Shrove Tuesday pancake supper that was better than being in New Orleans. Also getting halos for the Pancake Supper are **John Dickerman**, **Dave ...** and **Bill Babine**. Bill Babine gets a little extra shine on his halo because he cleaned up what has now become the 'Holy Hibachi' after Shrove Tuesday (we used it to make Ash Wednesday ashes out of dried palm crosses) and it was used with great ceremony at the Easter Vigil where it was the fire that lit the Paschal candle.

Thank you all for your dedication to St. Francis. You have displayed the kindness and devotion of angels. You look so good in halos.

# THE ST. FRANCIS FUNDRAISER NEEDS YOUR HELP!

AS PART OF OUR MAY 1<sup>ST</sup> FUNDRAISER, WE WILL HAVE A SILENT AUCTION.

WE ARE CURRENTLY SEEKING EXCLUSIVE, HIGH-VALUE ITEMS OR EXPERIENCES TO INCLUDE IN OUR AUCTION.

Suggested Ideas for Donation Include:

Vacation Home, Timeshare, or Hotel Stays

Tickets to Sporting or Cultural Events

Business Services

(spa/massage, landscaping or home improvement, catering for in-home parties, etc.)

Dining Experiences at Restaurants

Tours and Tastings at Napa or Sonoma Wineries

High-value, desirable Products

(jewelry, wine, sports and electronic equipment, children's products, etc.)

Behind-the-Scenes Tours at Exciting Venues

Leisure and Sporting Activities (boating, fishing, horseback riding, etc.)

We can provide you with a formal letter of request if needed.

For more information, questions, or to make a donation, please contact:

Anne-Marie Bonfilio, Event Chair 898-4314 or [ambonfilio@hotmail.com](mailto:ambonfilio@hotmail.com)

Jen Carlomagno, Silent Auction Chair 895-5341 or [jencarlomagno@gmail.com](mailto:jencarlomagno@gmail.com)

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP AND GENEROSITY!!!

In order to raise the maximum amount possible, we ask that you refrain from donating used items. Thank you.

## April Calendar

### *Weekly meetings:*

**AA meetings:** Mondays and Fridays 2pm & 8pm

**Alanon meeting:** Thursdays at 7:15pm

**Craft and discussion meeting:** Tuesdays at 9:30 am

**Prayer:** Tuesdays at 7 pm

**Choir practice:** Mondays at 6 pm & Tuesdays at 7 pm

**Christian Formation :** Tuesdays at 7:30 pm

### *Important dates:*

**Vestry meeting** — Wednesday, April 7 at 7 pm

**Youth Group**— Sundays, Grades 4-8: 4:30pm-6:30pm

Grades 9-12: 6:00pm-8:00pm, Dinner shared by all at 6pm.

**Men's Breakfast**— Saturday, April 10 8-10 am

**Women's Breakfast**—Saturday, April 17 9am

**Spring Fling Auction/Picnic**—Saturday, May 1

## The Church Mouse (Our gossip column)

After deciding it was just too darn cold and damp here in Northern California, the Church Mouse took off for warmer climates and has spent the last two months in Arizona and Southern CA. soaking up the sun. The Mouse is pleased to report that the gardens of both the **North's** (in AZ) and the **William's** (in Southern CA) are lovely, but is unable to say much about the inside of their homes as the Mouse couldn't get inside. There's much news to report, unfortunately, in the health department; **Carol Hall** went into Kaiser Terra Linda with problems with her gall bladder and was resting comfortably after her surgery when in walked Fr. Phil. She was delighted to see him, of course, but it turns out, he was actually coming to see her roommate **Jodi Weiss Rountree**. It seems Jodi had surgery too, and was in Kaiser for almost a week. They are both home now and doing well. **Mary Ann Wauters** has had a series of problems too, there was a back problem, the flu and some surgery and she was finally back in church on Easter after a long hiatus. Next we want to see her return to swimming and aerobics. **Lorraine Doran**, has also had a series of problems - a broken back and a heart attack - and is still continuing to recover. And **Brett Stranne**, one of our former Music directors was in the hospital too, with pancreatitis and though he's on the mend, the Mouse says that prayers are being asked for both Brett and Lorraine as they continue to recover.

**Fr. Phil Rountree**, was heard to say he had given up relaxation for Lent. Not only was Jodi ill, but his dad passed away in March. Phil's dad had been ill for some time and he said that his dad had blessed his family by saying his last farewells to them in a most compassionate and loving way. Many of us remember meeting Phil's dad at some time or another and we all send our deepest sympathies to Fr. Phil and his family.

Now for something completely different. There was a big farewell and blessing at church in March, for **Hayley Spencer**, who is off to the Ukraine with the Peace Corps for three years. She is there now and first hand reports are available on her blog [Ukrainedanceifyouwantto@wordpress.com](mailto:Ukrainedanceifyouwantto@wordpress.com)

Under the category of time flies, **Samantha Kenyon** graduates from Novato High this year, (!) and it's said that she's got an absolutely fabulous dress and a date for the prom. Also, she'll be studying photojournalism at College of Marin. Congrats to Sam and her mom and dad. And inquiring mice want to know; who else is graduating this year?

**Tarah Connolly** - need we say more? She was one of the big stories in the IJ this week and is doing all sorts of wonderful stuff over there at Novato High; pitching, volleyball, cake decorating, dancing. Go Tarah! **Crystal Brunelle**, another of our former music directors is out there doing great stuff as well. She has a CD coming out in June called *Tradewinds* and we have heard that St. Francis members are on the A-list for invites to the big release party. She made an appearance here playing and singing with both choirs on Easter morning. Exciting things are happening out in Washington, DC too, and they have nothing to do with the government. **Diana Ring Stoltzfus**, M. Susan's daughter has announced she's expecting her first baby around August 27<sup>th</sup>. No word on whether it's a boy or girl just yet, but M. Susan is knitting and planning a trip to DC for late August.

And we hardly recognized **Irv Hirsch** with hair.

At the Vestry retreat in February, the new team of **Vestry** people had an ice breaker sort of game they played all weekend that involved them writing down **secrets** about themselves that no one else knew. Then, at odd moments throughout the weekend, they would pull these secrets out and try to guess to whom the secret belonged. The Mouse has got hold of these secrets and plans to let them out, one a month.

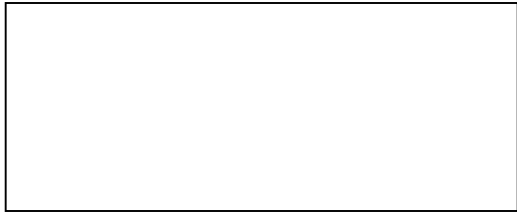
This month's secret? Who on the Vestry is a hit and run driver? The answer will be in next month's Bell and if you think you have the answer, email it to [susan@stfrancisnovato.com](mailto:susan@stfrancisnovato.com).

Get out there and start asking questions. And make some news that the Mouse can actually print.

St. Francis of Assisi Episcopal Church in Novato, CA  
967 5th Street, Novato, CA 94945

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### Worship Opportunities

Sundays: 7:30 am      Holy Eucharist Rite I  
              8:50 am      Contemporary Eucharist  
              10:30 am     Holy Eucharist Rite II  
              Noon         Children's Service

### Educational Opportunities

Tuesdays 7:30 pm      Christian Formation

St. Francis of Assisi Episcopal Church  
Visit our website at [www.stfrancisnovato.com](http://www.stfrancisnovato.com)  
415-892-1609

