

## About Faith Dialogues at Saint Mark

*"Faith seeks understanding"* — so said Anselm, Saint, Archbishop, and Theologian. Faith Dialogues at Saint Mark (formerly the Visiting Theologian program) seeks to promote understanding among the faithful, not only within the parish of Saint Mark, but also within the wider church as a gift to the entire Salem community.



Since the early 1970's, Saint Mark has welcomed more than thirty distinguished theologians and scholars into the Congregation's life of worship, learning and service. Teachers of church history, ethics, Bible, culture, art, theology, liturgy and sacramental life have enriched our community's deliberation on what it means to believe in the God of Israel and live accordingly. The ecumenical community, including students at Willamette University, Western Oregon University and Mount Angel Seminary, have participated.

By means of visiting teachers, Saint Mark hopes to encourage lively reflection and faithful action within the Congregation and all faith communities, inviting broad participation in the program for the sake of mutual appreciation, growth in common understanding and service.

### Recent Visiting Speakers

|   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| <b>2018</b> Dr. Rev. Barbara Lundblad   | <b>2012</b> Mark Allan Powell |
| <b>2017</b> Dr. Samuel Torvend          | <b>2011</b> Lisa Dahill       |
| <b>2016</b> Helmuth Rilling             | <b>2010</b> Stephen Bouman    |
| <b>2015</b> Susan Pitchford             | <b>2009</b> Martin Marty      |
| <b>2014</b> David & Susan Palo Cherwien | <b>2009</b> Bruce Bengtson    |
| <b>2013</b> Barbara Rossing             | <b>2009</b> Phyllis Anderson  |
|   | <b>2008</b> Bishop Gomez      |

*Welcoming*  
ALL IN CHRIST  
*Journeying*  
TOGETHER IN FAITH  
*Reaching*  
OUT IN SERVICE

### FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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[stmarksalem.org/about/faith-dialogues](http://stmarksalem.org/about/faith-dialogues)



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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

05.2019

# FAITH DIALOGUES AT SAINT MARK

FAITH • UNDERSTANDING • COMMUNITY



Reflections on Scripture,  
Humor, & Faith with  
Rev. Dr. Anthony Petrotta

June 13<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, & 30<sup>th</sup> 2019

 **SAINT MARK**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH



# Schedule of Events

All events are **free** and  
**open to the public.**

## THURSDAY, JUNE 13

**7:00–8:30PM**      **Reflections on Scripture,  
Humor & Faith: The Day of the Donkey**  
*Saint Mark Sanctuary ~ Doors open at 6:30PM*

**8:30PM**      **Fellowship & Reception**  
*Fireside Lounge*

## SUNDAY, JUNE 16

**10:45AM–NOON**      **Surprise? Surprise!**  
*Fireside Lounge*

## SUNDAY, JUNE 30

**10:45AM–NOON**      **Is That a Parable or a  
Very Subtle Joke?**  
*Fireside Lounge*

## Session Descriptions

### *Can Scripture Stories Be Funny?*

Come explore how humor may serve to both challenge our faith and enhance faith practice. Some humor is subtle, can it also be precarious? Even in the midst of danger possibly inherent in humor, in the end, it seeks to deepen faith should we allow it.

Over the three sessions, Father Tony will explore key stories that he believes are intended to be humorous. Together we will find the laughter ( and danger?) in the stories of Balaam and his donkey, Abraham and Sarah and some of the encounters between Jesus and his “would be” disciples.

### SESSION ONE // JUNE 13

#### **The Day of the Donkey: A Prophet, a King, and a Donkey go into a bar...**

How do we know something is funny? Can humor ever be “innocent”? (*Numbers 22-24*)

### SESSION TWO // JUNE 16

#### **Surprise? Surprise! Abraham and Sarah**

Improvising when “Mazel-Moments” come our way. (*Gen 18*)

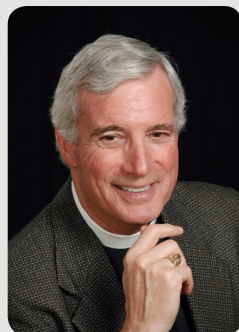
### SESSION THREE // JUNE 30

#### **Is That a Parable or a Very Subtle Joke?**

Humor as test and an invitation to faith and joy. (*Various passage in the Gospels*)

*This Year's Speaker:*

## Rev. Dr. Anthony Petrotta



**FATHER TONY** has a varied background. He has lived in California, Kansas and Tennessee. He received his PhD in Biblical Studies from University of Sheffield, England and a M.Phil from University of St. Andrews, Scotland, both in Biblical Studies. He has served as a Children's Minister, taught Old Testament

at Fuller Seminary and became ordained in the Episcopal Church. He served St. Francis Episcopal Church in Wilsonville,

Oregon for 12 years before retiring in 2018. He has a love for languages, especially Hebrew. Father Tony's manuscript for “Scripture, Humor and Faith” was recently accepted by Wipf and Stock (Eugene) to be published in the next year.

### OTHER PUBLICATIONS:

“The Ways We Read”, Radix 36/4, 2012

“A Test of Balaam: Locating Humor in a Biblical Text” and “A Forsythia for Your Thoughts: Reciprocity in Reading J. B. and Job” in *Probing the Frontiers of Biblical Studies*, 2009

“Leisurely Thoughts on Being Bored”, Radix 34, 2008, et al

*“Rejoice in the Lord  
always. I will say it  
again: Rejoice!”*

—PHILIPPIANS 4:4