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Good Monday Morning: Salinas' St. Paul's Episcopal Church offers produce market to seniors

BY TOM LEYDE • FOR THE SALINAS CALIFORNIAN • MAY 10, 2010

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On Wednesdays, Salinas-area seniors make a pilgrimage to St. Paul's Episcopal Church, but the journey isn't so much for spiritual nourishment as it is for bodily nourishment.

The church, at 1071 Pajaro St. in Salinas, offers a weekly senior's produce market for those 55 and older from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., with prices for fresh fruits and vegetables that can't be beat. Such items as bananas, celery, lettuce, strawberries, pears and avocados are sold at cost. And the produce is snapped up pretty fast.

Last Wednesday, three flats of strawberries were gone by 10:15 a.m. The price was \$1 per container.

The church is able to offer the produce at cost thanks to a grant from Episcopal Senior Communities and the Darby Betts Fund. The grant fills in the financial gaps on weeks when the market doesn't break even.

The market, however, is more than just a place to buy produce, said produce buyer Maury Treleven.

"We always offer a little bit of hospitality. This is now a really great appointment on their [seniors'] calendar," Treleven said.

There is usually hot [coffee](#) and a snack available for shoppers. The market also gives seniors a chance to connect with other shoppers and the volunteers who make the market possible.

"We really want our seniors to own this market," Treleven said.

People who shop for seniors also are welcome at the market, she added.

About 20 volunteers show up at 7 a.m.

Wednesdays to set up the market, and not all of them are members of St. Paul's.

"We have a great group of volunteers who enjoy food and cooking," Treleven said.



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Maury Treleven, right, helps first time customer, Sonya Swick, at the Seniors Produce Market at St. Paul's Episcopal Church on Wednesday morning. Treleven is a volunteer produce buyer for the market and a member of the church. (Richard Green)



Rev. Jim Ezell

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The market began last August after St. Paul's pastor, the Rev. Jim Ezell, was contacted by the minister of the Epiphany Lutheran Episcopal Church in Marina. That church had received a grant to start another senior produce market in the area and the minister suggested it be at St. Paul's.

So Ezell met with St. Paul's senior community. They then got volunteers together, purchased baskets for the produce and launched the market. Similar markets also are available in Pacific Grove, Carmel, Carmel Valley and Marina. There are 15 of them from [San Francisco](#) to Monterey County Ezell said.

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