



# The Vergers Voice

*The news blog of the Vergers Guild*

Welcome to the [Vergers Voice](#), the official news blog of the [Vergers Guild of the Episcopal Church](#). Also known as the VGEC, we are located on the web at [vergers.org](#) and [facebook.com/vergerguild](#) the #1 online resources for vergers world-wide.

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Friday, February 13, 2015

## Natalie Hala - 1st Verger at Episcopal Church of St. Mary the Virgin and New VGEC Fellow



Natalie Hala is recognized as a Fellow of the VGEC at the 26th Annual Conference by Scott Smith, VGEC President

By Ken Holloway, VGEC News Manager

"Bridging the People and Worship" is how Natalie Hala, the first Fellow of the Vergers Guild of the Episcopal Church (VGEC) in the Diocese of California describes her verger ministry in an article in the newsletter of [The Episcopal Church of St. Mary the Virgin](#) in San Francisco as seen [here](#), beginning on page 7. The diocesan newsletter picked up the story and published it in the [November 18th edition](#). Here are some excerpts from her article:

"Do you know that over 200 names appear on the rosters of our worship ministries at St. Mary's? If you are serving as a chalice bearer, choir member, usher, Altar Guild member, lector, or in other related ministries, you are an important part of what makes our worship a truly distinct expression of the gathered community. Whether or not you serve in any of these ministries, have you ever wondered how all these people come together with the clergy to create coherent worship services that lift the hearts and souls? This is where the ministry of verger comes in.

"During this past year of intensive study and prayerful discernment, the Rev. Christine McSpadden served as my mentor and adviser. I worked ...in many aspects of the "behind the scenes" work that are part of planning, implementing and evaluating a service, especially during Advent, Christmas, Holy Week, Easter and other special services, like the Feast of All Souls' Day.

"During this past year the Associate Rector and I developed customaries and directionals that sequence the actions and movement for each member of the altar party, including the formation and order of processions, in and out of the church. I compiled checklists that identify specific items that are needed in a service. The verger confirms that all the items are in their designated places before the start of a service.

"As verger I will add another perspective and voice in the development, content, and flow of services as they are being prepared. Occasionally I will attend weekly Liturgy Team meetings of

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the Rector, Associate Rector and Director of Music. The call to the ministry of verger has risen during my continuing spiritual discernment. To me, part of fulfilling the Baptismal Covenant means actively participating in my faith community through Christian service and leadership. I view myself as the "people's representative" in the planning and implementation of worship. My hope is that I serve all of you capably and prayerfully as we strengthen the spiritual dimension of our worship at St. Mary's, and broaden the life of the church through Christ beyond our courtyard walls."

Natalie was installed as verger for the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, San Francisco, at the 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, November 30, 2014. She graciously volunteered to answer questions about the verger ministry by publishing her email contact information in the newsletter. The article also included a reference to the VGEC website for anyone interested in the guild or our training program.

When a VGEC member is the first in a diocese to be recognized as a "Fellow" of the guild we can collectively celebrate the accomplishment while thinking about how we can help to make the VGEC better known and more available to others in that diocese. For that matter, shouldn't we take on an evangelistic attitude about the guild? How can we spread the word about our [2015 VGEC Conference](#) as a way for new vergers (and seasoned vergers too) to experience grand conversation and learning opportunities around our ministry?

Natalie helps to represent the presence of the VGEC on the west coast. Here's hoping that more vergers in the Diocese of California and surrounding dioceses will join the guild, enroll in the VGEC Training course and earn the distinction of becoming a "Fellow of the Guild," not for recognition, but for the expanded understanding and appreciation for the verger ministry, its heritage and daily path of servant leadership.

P.S. Another way to publicize the guild and the conference is to register now and get your parish administrator to issue a press release locally with a few words about your plan to ["Meet Us in St. Louis!"](#)

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[Register for the 2015 Annual Conference](#) being held October 1 to October 4, 2015 in St. Louis, Missouri by clicking on the big red button:



*Abstract: The first "Fellow" of the Vergers Guild of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of California is big news. This woman is setting precedent in her diocese. We are proud of her accomplishment. If that were not enough, her parish church, The Episcopal Church of St. Mary the Virgin, has made her its first verger. Kudos all around.*

Posted by [Ken Holloway](#) at 8:07 AM



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