

February 2020

Dear Friends,

On January 26, we held our annual meeting. Many of you were in attendance as we worshiped together, shared a meal, and conducted the business of our congregation. For those who were not able to be in attendance, here are a few highlights of the year past:

- We begin 2020 with a much healthier financial position than what we showed when we began 2019. We ended 2018 with a budget shortfall of nearly \$49,000. We ended 2019 about \$7500 in the black. Thank you for your generous support of the ministries here at St. Mark's.
- Staffing adjustments that were made last year opened up many more opportunities for member involvement in the work of the congregation. You all stepped up. Thank you to committee members, morning receptionists, musicians and worship leaders, Children's Church and Confirmation leaders, hospitality leaders, and so many more. You have all made it work.
- In spite of a tight budget we were able to fix a whole bunch of things this past year. We replaced the Sanctuary roof, repaired or replaced over 100 steam traps, managed some much needed parking lot repairs, renovated some rooms, among other projects. Again, thank you for your commitment to the care of this property from which we are able to go and do God's work in the world.
- We were able to get the columbarium installed after many years of dreaming, planning and hard work. Several of our people have been laid to rest in this beautiful, peaceful, sacred space.
- This past year we opened our space to new partnerships with Genesis East and Head Start. These new relationships are proving to be incredibly mutually beneficial. Thank you for your hospitality and willingness to share our space.
- On top of everything else this past year, we were able to continue – and in some instances, expand – the ministries we have been engaged in together for years. We continued to care for our congregational members, our neighbors in North St. Paul, and our partners around the world in India, Tanzania, and now Rwanda. We worshipped together, learned together, prayed and played together.

It has been a good year. Thank you all for your partnership. It is a joy to work alongside you all. I am looking ahead to another good year. Our foundation is solid and provides us with a good opportunity to build.

The annual meeting also gave us the chance to look ahead as we move into 2020. We identified a few areas that need our attention and provide us with opportunities for growth in this next year:

- Our attendance has been declining for some time. This is an area that we all can play a role in addressing. Who have you not seen lately? Give them a call and invite them back. Who is new in your neighborhood? Might they be looking for a church home? How is your own commitment

Coming Up...

Feb. 2: Youth-Led Worship

Feb. 2: Adult Forum: Youth @ 9:35 am

Feb. 5: Youth-Led Worship

Feb. 9: Scout Sunday & Reception

Feb. 9: Adult Forum: Pete & Angel Mogren (REACH Home) @ 9:35 am

Feb. 9: Baby Book Club @ 9:35 am

Feb. 10: *Fare for All* at Redeeming Love Church (3:30 to 5:30 pm)

Feb. 16: Adult Forum: Generation-to-Generation @ 9:35 am

Feb. 18: Bridging the Gap @ 6:30 pm

Feb. 23: BINGO fundraiser @ 11:30 am

Feb. 23: Adult Forum: Social Justice Book Study @ 9:35 am

Feb. 26: Ash Wednesday Worship Services (11am & 7pm)

Get all the details inside!

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What's happening this month

Upcoming Sunday Adult Forums (9:35–10:20am) Rees Hall #102-103

The time between services on Sunday mornings is designated as a time for learning and enrichment. All are welcome and no sign up is necessary.

Feb. 2: The youth of our congregation will be leading worship this Sunday, and will be available for conversation between services. Get to know our young people. Hear their concerns, hopes and dreams.

Feb. 9: Angel and Pete Mogren will report on their recent trip to the REACH Orphanage in Bapatla, India. Over the course of many years and many visits, Pete and Angel have developed deep relationships with the children and leaders of the orphanage. They are excited to share the latest information.

Feb.16: Generation-to-Generation. This quarterly event connects generations through storytelling, activities and community building. We will explore how we live out God's love beyond Valentine's Day.

Feb. 23: Social Justice Book Study will discuss the book *A Good Time for the Truth - Race in Minnesota*.

Adult Forums for March

During Lent, our Adult Forum topics will focus on how our faith speaks to questions of race., starting with:

March 1: "Can we talk about race?" Conversations about race can be uncomfortable. How can we navigate such conversations? What are some of our own experiences with race and racism?

Scout Sunday – February 9

St. Mark's has been the charter partner with Scout Troop 46 for 70 years. That adds up to a lot of meetings, Courts of Honor, camping trips, bike trips, canoe trips, selling wreaths and popcorn, earning merit badges, advancements, Eagle projects, and so on! Scouting prepares youth for life, teaching skills that will last a lifetime. Many scouts have learned how to tie knots, set up tents, write up a budget, cook over an open fire, treat a burn, prepare for and lead of meeting of their peers, all in the halls of St. Mark's. It has been a fantastic 70 years, but unfortunately the troop will be ending at the end of 2020. Please join us on Sunday, February 9 to celebrate this incredible partnership between Scouting and St. Mark's. If you were a part of Troop or Pack 46, join us...with or without your uniform!

Bridging the Gap – February 18

Bridging the Gap: Questions and Conversations around Faith and Life meets monthly on the third Tuesday at the Tamarack Tap Room at 6:30 pm. This is a fun group of 20- and 30-somethings that's looking to add new people! Come alone or invite a friend. For more information, please contact Pastor Mary. Question to consider for next gathering: Is Jesus the only way to God? or Will Christians be the only ones in heaven?

BINGO Youth Trip Fundraiser – February 23

Join us from 11:30 am to 2:00 pm for a fun afternoon of BINGO! concessions, and great prizes. \$10/adults and \$5/children provides cards to play all the games. Additional cards are \$1 each. Proceeds support the youth summer mission trip.

Ash Wednesday – February 26

Ash Wednesday ushers us into the season of Lent, that 40 day period where we intentionally walk with Jesus on his way to the cross. It is a time for self-examination and contemplation; a time to deepen our faith and understanding.

Worship services in the Sanctuary will be at 11:00 am and 7:00 pm. Dinner will be served from 5:00 to 6:30 pm.

Lent 2020:

Sacred Encounters

On **Sunday mornings** our scripture readings will lead us to consider life changing encounters with Jesus. The Devil, Nicodemus, the Samaritan Woman at the Well, the Man Born Blind, and Lazarus, all had an interaction with Jesus that challenged and changed them.

On **Wednesday evenings** we will use the Holden Evening Prayer format and hear from members of our congregation about Sacred Encounters they have experienced that challenged and changed them. Following the evening service they will be available to continue the conversation in the Fireside Room. Thanks to Shirley Pickett, Steve Yahr, Cyndi Johnson, Paige Ericson, and Mark McKenzie for their willingness to share their stories with us.

Continued from front page

to regular church attendance? Our community of North St. Paul offers us some great opportunities to reach out to new folks. North St. Paul offers good and affordable housing for young families and new family homes are under construction. Young couples with babies who are new to the North St. Paul community have been showing up in worship and in baptism classes. Let's not pass up these opportunities.

- We haven't had a strong stewardship emphasis for a long time. That's changing this coming year. St. Mark's will be participating in a program sponsored by the St. Paul Area Synod called Stewardship for All Seasons. A team from St. Mark's will work with a consultant and join with other congregations in the synod, to define our vision and values, and implement new ministry opportunities. You will be hearing more about this program in the very near future. I'm excited about it!
- We are paying attention to worship and will continue to do so in this coming year – particularly the second service Sunday morning and the Wednesday evening service. I am so grateful for the quality of our music staff and the willingness of members to step up and give of their time and talents to lead us in worship. I don't think we're done sorting everything out yet after the changes to our worship this past year, but we will continue to pay attention to making our worship faithful, meaningful and joyful.

In other business:

- We adopted a balanced budget for the second year in a row.
- The following were elected to leadership positions:
Council Members: Beth Ingberg (reelected), Dan Colberg, Adam Reinke
Synod Assembly Voting Members: Kurt Biederman, Jenn Luong, Carol Yahr, Steve Yahr
Treasurer: Kelly Nickell
Auditors: Tammy Peterson, Dave Benck
- Kelly Kleppe, Gary Hook, and Alan Wyman were thanked for their years of good service as treasurer and council members.
- Gary Hook announced a fund drive for a new Chapel roof. Estimated cost will be \$25,000 and it would be good to have a \$3000 cushion for unforeseen contingencies. Cost of materials will increase by the end of March, so it is important to move on this project as soon as possible. Gary has been making phone calls, and prior to the annual meeting, he had already collected pledges of \$13,000. He invited those in attendance to write a check toward this project now, to avoid a call from him in the near future! Many folks contributed to the cause and we anticipate having the money in hand before work begins this Spring. If you would like to make a contribution (before Gary calls you) you may make checks payable to St. Mark's. Please indicate Chapel roof on the memo line. Thanks much!

The meeting ended with good energy and positive anticipation for all that lies ahead. You can access a copy of the annual report at www.stmarks-nsp.org in the resources section. There are also a few hard copies in the church office.

God's Peace,
Pastor Mary

Financial Update through December 2019

	December 2019	YTD Budget	YTD 2019	Over/(Under) Budget	YTD 2018
Contributions	\$71,888	\$590,408	\$562,789	(\$27,619)	\$586,484
Other Income	3,249	12,545	26,731	14,186	15,847
Total Income	\$75,138	\$602,953	\$589,520	(\$13,433)	\$602,332
Expense	\$52,196	\$602,933	\$581,937	(\$20,996)	\$651,651
Difference	\$22,942	\$20	\$7,583	\$7,563	(\$49,320)

Children, Youth & Family Ministries

Baby Book Club for Families with children ages Birth to 3 years old

Join us in the nursery for an interactive time of storytelling around helpful and faithful board books on Sunday February 9th from 9:35-10:20 am. We'll read a book together, engage in a simple activity and connect with one another as we grow in God's grace. Please RSVP to the church office.

Congratulations Confirmands! Thank You Mentors!

On Sunday January 19, nine of our young people affirmed their baptismal promises and were welcomed as adult members of St. Mark's. We rejoice with and continue to pray for: Shelby Anderson, Anne Griesbach, Kylie Hook, Tate Jensen, Zoey Livingston, Tino Martinez, Paige Simanski, Logan Studer, and Logan Woods. And a special thanks to those who mentored these young people over the past year: Renee Anderson, Diane Pottratz, Jackie Hook, Lee Simanski, Karen Biedermann, Trish Ketola, Tara Woods, Brad Nelson, and Josh Hirman. We are also thankful for the senior mentors and small group leader who walked with these young people during their confirmation experience: Dick and Laurie Dolby, Paul & Peggy Ellefson, Beth Ingberg, Beth Jensen, Diane Pottratz, and Tyler Livingston.

Youth-Led Worship Services: Sun. Feb. 2 & Wed. Feb. 5

Each year we invite our young people to take over our worship services to help us hear and see God at work in different and wonderful ways. This year, the theme of the services will focus on the Beatitudes and the many blessings God brings out of our hard times. Marri Smith will be our student preacher as the high school youth group leads the services. Confirmation small groups will be in charge of greeting (6th grade), ushering (7th grade) and reading/ leading prayers (8th grade). Join us for worship as we pass the faith around.

Generation to Generation Event- Sunday, February 16

This quarterly event takes place during the adult forum time and seeks to connect the generations of the church through storytelling, activities and community building. We will be exploring how we live out God's love beyond Valentine's Day. Join us in Rees Hall 102-103 from 9:35-10:20. All ages are encouraged to participate!

Seeking Thrivent Action Grants!

Are you a member of Thrivent Financial? If so, do you know that you might be eligible to apply for a Thrivent Action Team Grant for \$250 which could be used towards some of the special events and community building we do at St. Mark's? We've collected a list of potential projects which we could partner with here at St. Mark's and are available to help you throughout the process. If you are looking for ideas or need help talk with Pastor Ivy, Jim Wolf or Chuck Leonhart or call the church office at 651-777-7451.

Confirmation Update

**Confirmation: 6-8th grade
Wednesdays, 6:30-7:30pm**

Sun. Feb. 2: Youth Led Worship services (8:30 & 10:30). *Small groups will be in charge of helping at one of the services.*

Feb. 5: Youth Led Worship service

Feb. 12: Miracles of Jesus

Feb. 19: Youth Group Leads Confirmation. Small Group Leader Huddle

Feb. 26: Ash Wednesday Worship Service @ 7:00pm (No confirmation)

March 4: Small groups will choose a New Testament character to research and prepare a lesson for their senior mentors.

High School Youth Group

**High School Youth Group
9-12th grade
Wednesdays, 6:30-8:00 pm**

Sun. Feb. 2: Youth Led Worship services at 8:30 & 10:30

Feb. 5: Youth Led Worship service

Feb. 12: Service Project

Feb. 19: Youth Group Leads Confirmation

Feb. 23: BINGO fundraiser @ 11:30 am



Children's Church *(formerly JAM)*

Faith Formation Activities for children ages 3 years old - 5th grade on Sunday mornings beginning in our 10:30 am worship (until 11:30) and Wednesday evenings from 6:30-7:30pm in the upper level classrooms of Rees Hall. Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings will offer separate and unique experiences so that families can choose to attend both without it feeling repetitive.

Wednesday Nights, 6:30-7:30 pm

- **Feb. 5:** Youth Led Worship at 6:00 pm
- **Feb. 12:** People & Parables Rotation: Four Friends
- **Feb. 19:** People & Parables Rotation: Transfiguration
- **Wed. Feb. 26:** Ash Wednesday worship at 7:00 pm. *No Children's Church*
- **Wed. Mar. 4:** Family Night: Parents need to attend- We'll meet in Fellowship Hall. Theme: Setting Priorities

Sunday Mornings, 10:30-11:30 am

- **Feb. 2:** Youth Led Worship: Children's Church participates in whole worship service
- **Feb. 9:** Worship & Justice: Isaiah 58: 1-12
- **Feb. 16:** Life with God: Deuteronomy 30: 15-20
- **Feb. 16:** Generation to Generation Experience 9:35-10:20am Theme: God's Love beyond Valentine's Day
- **Sun. Feb. 23:** Glory on the Mountain: Exodus 24: 12-18
- **Sun. Mar. 1:** Adam & Eve: Genesis 2: 15-17; 3: 1-7

Wednesday Night Dinners

Food, fun, and fellowship. A homemade dinner is available every Wednesday during the program year. The "cost" is a freewill offering of \$2/person or \$10 max/family. Like us on Facebook, where the menu is posted every week.

- 2/5: Chicken dinner
- 2/12: Chili Cook-Off
- 2/19: Italian
- 2/26: Soup (Ash Wednesday)
- 3/4: Pork roast dinner

The Grace Space & Activity Bags in Worship

A play space in the sanctuary for our youngest children (geared for children 0-5 years old) is open for quiet play throughout the worship service. Parents are encouraged to sit near their children as they play. If you prefer to have your children remain with you in the pews, we do have activity bags hanging in the Narthex which will help our kids engage in quiet play which worshipping with the larger congregation.

Children, Youth, and Family Ministries

Pastor Ivy Huston

Email: privyh@stmarks-nsp.org

Tel: 651-777-7451, ext 232

High School Youth Ministry

Susie Modrow

Email: susiem@stmarks-nsp.org

Cell: 320-279-0905

Synodical Women's Organization Soup Luncheon Saturday, February 8 at 10:00 am

Sandy Iverson, wife of former St. Mark's pastor Tim Iverson, will share the experiences of St. Paul Reformation Lutheran Church as they declared themselves a sanctuary congregation. Two years ago they welcomed a family of four from Nigeria who were seeking asylum. They have a sister congregation in El Salvador that they visit yearly. Sign-up on the women's bulletin board in Rees Hall. We will carpool from St. Mark's leaving at 9:00 am to Bethesda Lutheran Church (2855 47th St. E. Inver Grove Heights). There is no charge for this event, but a free-will offering will be taken. Join us for hot soup, breads, dessert and good conversation. All women are welcome!

"Go Red for Women" – Sunday, February 9

Go American Heart Association's Red for Women encourages awareness of the issue of women and heart disease, and the action to save lives. Based on research, a woman who Goes Red: follows an exercise routine, eats a healthier diet, visits her doctor for important tests, and Influences others by talking about heart health. While the official day to wear red is Friday, February 7, we are asking everyone to wear red to church on Sunday February 9. February is National Heart Month.

Come and quilt with us on Thursday afternoons!

St. Mark's is Blessed to have a very faithful group of quilters who assemble and tie quilts for Lutheran World Relief as well as for those in our community. These quilts provide comfort and warmth, often in difficult times. Quilts change lives. All women of our church are invited to help make quilts. You qualify if you can tie a knot!! Plan to attend one or more quilting sessions on **Thursday afternoons – February 13 and 27, and March 12 and 26.** We meet in Fellowship Hall from 1:00-5:00 pm. Come for an hour or stay for the entire time. Your help is appreciated, and what a wonderful feeling of satisfaction to know that this quilt that you are making will help someone in need. Please contact our quilting coordinator Shirley Pickett 651-735-0016 with any questions.

Prayer Shawl Ministry – February 18

The Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet on Tuesday, February 18 at 7:00 pm in the Fireside Room. Prayer shawls give comfort and love to those who receive them. Bring your knitting or crocheting and be a part of this group. Contact Sue Fletcher 651-770-1271 to find out more about this ministry.

Women's Board Meeting – February 24

The Women's Board will meet on Monday, February 24 at 1:00 pm in the Fireside Room. Board members and circle representatives are asked to attend.

Women of the ELCA Gathering 2020: JUST LOVE July 16-19, 2020 in Phoenix, AZ

Renew your spirit with thousands of faithful women just like you who are eager to grow, learn, pray and party – together! Join us in Phoenix and live your faith in love that leads to justice. Register online: welcatg.org

Refresh & Renew Retreat – February 29

The Women's Ministry of Bethesda Lutheran Church invite you to attend their 6th annual *Refresh and Renew Retreat: A Day for Women Connecting in Faith* on Saturday, February 29 from 8:30 am to 1:00 pm. Guest speaker is Ruth Bachman. Cost is \$20 and includes a continental breakfast, lunch, skits, music, worship and wonderful fellowship. Bethesda Lutheran Church, 2855 47th St. E. Inver Grove Heights. Registration deadline: Feb. 25. Forms available on the women's bulletin board in Rees Hall.

Women's Bible Studies

Bible studies are always open to new members. They meet on a monthly basis, at a variety of times, and use the ELCA Bible study from *Gather* magazine. Most meet in the Fireside Room, unless otherwise noted.

REMINDER – The January/February issue of the *Gather* magazine contains two Bible Studies.

Anne: Thurs. Feb. 6 at 6:30 pm

Hannah: Wed. Feb. 12 at 11:00 am

Phoebe: Mon. Feb. 17 at 6:30 pm

Naomi: Tues. Feb. 11 at 10:00 am

Elizabeth: Thurs. Feb. 20 at 1:00 pm

More News

Coffee Hour Sponsorship

Members of the congregation are invited to consider sponsoring coffee on a given Sunday. \$30 will cover the cost of the coffee for our fellowship time for one week. And wouldn't it be nice to have cookies with coffee? Consider signing up to bring cookies for an upcoming Sunday! Sign up in Rees Hall on the bulletin board.

Have you signed up for Electronic Giving?

Electronic giving can be an easy way to commit to a consistent giving plan. Go to stmarks-nsp.org and choose "Donate Online" to access Simply Giving through VANCO Services. Create a user profile and set up your offering schedule. If you have any questions, please contact Helene Doran in the church office at 651-777-7451 or helened@stmarks-nsp.org.

Give Back.

Fill a Polar Pack.

Please consider making a special gift to help replenish our fund to purchase CUB Foods gift cards for families to help them purchase food for their holiday meals. Make checks payable to St. Mark's and put "Polar Packs" in the note.

Fare For All at Redeeming Love (Maplewood) – February 10

Stretch your food dollars. Fare For All is a cooperative purchasing program that offers affordable groceries and packages of produce and meat for up to 40% off retail prices. Community-supported and open to everyone once a month – the more people who participate, the more savings passed on. No income requirements. Redeeming Love Church: 2425 White Bear Ave. N. from 3:30 to 5:30 pm. www.fareforall.org.

Council Corner: January 9 Meeting

As Council met earlier in the month of January to finalize the proposed 2020 budget for review and the Annual Meeting, several committees had their regular meetings later in the month.

- The CYF team met and continued to develop youth programming and events with several volunteers.
- The Nominating Committee searched to fill positions for Council and Synod Assembly.
- Members of the Stewardship Committee met with the St. Paul Synod to find out more information on stewardship consultation for the upcoming year.
- Hot Buttered Popcorn is well underway with their rehearsals for the upcoming youth performances of "Friends".
- Please give thanks to Gary Hook and Alan Wyman for their wisdom and guidance for the past few years as they have fulfilled their Council terms. In addition, please give Kelly Kleppe the recognition she deserves for her dedication as she steps down from her position as treasurer and chair of the Finance committee.
- Finally, the congregation approved a balanced, 2020 budget at the annual meeting.

With so many hands at work across St. Mark's to make Sunday's meeting a success, we are truly blessed to move into a new year with this community. The complete meeting minutes are available in the church office after they are approved at the following meeting. The next Council meeting is scheduled for February 20, 2020 at 6:30 pm.



Did you know...

The St. Mark's Foundation Board of Trustees meets 4-5 times a year to conduct its business. If you have any questions about the Foundation mission or operation, comments, grant requests or new business for the board members to consider, please contact a board member, fill out the contact form on the website, drop a note in the Foundation mailbox in the church office or email us at stmarksnspfoundation@gmail.com. You are invited to attend any of our upcoming 2020 board dates: April 14, June 9, Sept. 8, Nov. 10. Please visit our website at <http://www.stmarksnspfoundation.com> for more information about the Foundation's mission.

St. Mark's website is getting a new look

In the next couple of weeks we will be unveiling the updated website: same address, all new look. Watch the Sunday bulletins, eNews, Facebook and even Instagram...we'll let you know when it's up and running.

Website: www.stmarks-nsp.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/stmarksnsp/

Instagram: [stmarksnsp](https://www.instagram.com/stmarksnsp/)

Have you subscribed to St. Mark's weekly eNews update?

It's a fun way to keep in touch with what's happening at St. Mark's, in the community, and the world. If you would like to receive this weekly "mini-newsletter" just email annm@stmarks-nsp.org. You can unsubscribe at any time.

Church Office Hours

Mon - Thurs
9:00 am - 4:30 pm
Closed on Fridays

Weekly Worship Services

Sundays
8:30 and 10:30 am (Sept-May)

Wednesdays
6:00 pm (Sept-May)

Visit us online

At www.stmarks-nsp.org you will find lots of resources such as the current newsletter, the most up-to-date online calendar and downloadable forms.

St. Mark's Prayer Line & Community Prays Email

Each week, an email list of prayers for our community and people within it are sent to help guide our prayer times and encourage us to be holding one another in prayer. If email isn't for you, we also can send out a hard copy through the mail so you can participate. If you would like to receive the Community Prays email, or if you have a prayer request to be added to the list, contact Pastor Mary or call the church office. You may also continue to contact Dawn at 777-7693 with Prayer Line requests.

Follow us on Facebook



Fun pictures from events and around church, inspiring updates, and timely event reminders are posted often. Find us at [facebook.com/stmarksnsp](https://www.facebook.com/stmarksnsp) to get status updates on your timeline!

Staff Directory

Church Office.....	(651) 777-7451
After Hour Pastoral Emergency (Pastor Mary).....	(608) 295-5401
Lead Pastor, Rev. Mary Froiland.....	primaryf@stmarks-nsp.org , ext. 222
Associate Pastor, Rev. Ivy Huston.....	privyvh@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 232
Organist/Choir Director, Dorothea Jirsa.....	dorothaj@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 227
Organist/Choir Director, Trevor Wolter Ternez	trevorw@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 225
Office Manager, Heidi McKenzie	heidimc@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 231
Communications, Ann Mott	annm@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 235
Youth Director, Susie Modrow	susiem@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 233
Finance Associate, Helene Doran	helened@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 238
Custodian, Neil Knutson	neilk@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 237
Custodian, Hunter Winner.....	hunterw@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 237
Custodian, Heather Winner.....	heatherw@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 237