



Saint Mark's
Evangelical Lutheran Church

Weekly Update

May 21, 2020

Attention: You may have seen in the news that the Catholic church in Minnesota and some Lutheran churches in Minnesota, have decided to defy the Governor's order and resume in-person worship services. Please note, St. Mark's Lutheran Church is not part of the Lutheran denomination (Lutheran Church Missouri Synod) that has decided to do this. St. Mark's is a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), and we along with the other congregations in our denomination, will follow the advice of health professionals and remain in compliance with the instruction of our civic leaders, staying apart from one another out of love for our neighbor and to assure safety for all.

In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. ~Acts 2:17

Dear friends,

Sunday, May 31, will be Pastor Ivy's last day with us as Associate Pastor of St. Mark's. It's also the Day of Pentecost and, for the first time in a long time, our worship will include Holy Communion.

In mid-March, when we first suspended in-person worship services and switched to worshipping on-line, we were all optimistically thinking it would only be for a short time. Now we understand that this will not be over soon. Prior to COVID-19, St. Mark's had been accustomed to celebrating Holy Communion at every worship service. Now we have not shared the Sacrament together for weeks. We began to wonder, "How long will it be until we can gather together again for communion?" "Even if we can't gather in person, could we do something differently to make available this means of God's grace?" We thought Pentecost Sunday, Pastor Ivy's last time leading worship at St. Mark's, would be a good time to try.

Under normal circumstances, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated when the people of God are gathered in Community. We find ourselves in far from normal circumstances, though. We also understand that in this Sacrament we are connected to Jesus and to one another beyond space and time. In Holy Communion we are connected to siblings in Christ close at hand and around the globe. We are united with Christians throughout the ages who have gone before us and with those who are yet to be born. This mystery of faith forms us, with Jesus, into the Body of Christ.

God's Spirit is continually renewing and reforming Christ's church as it lives out it's calling to share the love and grace of God under ever changing conditions and in unique contexts. On Pentecost Sunday, as we celebrate the power of God's Holy Spirit to move us beyond our normal routines and blow us in unexpected directions, we also trust that Christ is present with us in bread and wine, in ways we cannot understand, even if we are not together in the same space at the same time. We give thanks for the gift of technology which makes celebrating this mystic, sweet communion possible.

As we celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion, I encourage you to be intentional in your preparations. Claim sacred space wherever you will be watching the service and worshipping with us. Set the table – maybe a bowl of water to remember your baptism, a candle to symbolize the light of Christ, and bread and wine or juice. If you are feeling ambitious, you might want to try making your own communion bread. I've included a recipe from Luther Seminary below. Come as you are with whatever you have at hand, trusting that Christ welcomes and receives us, meeting us at the Table of Grace, where everyone has a place and there is always room for more.

God's Peace,
Pastor Mary

Need to talk?

If you have concerns, needs, or just want to chat, please feel free to contact one of the pastors:

Pastor Mary

Cell: 608-295-5401

Email: primaryf@stmarks-nsp.org

Pastor Ivy

Cell: 651-398-1596

Email: privyh@stmarks-nsp.org

Farewell for Pastor Ivy Huston

Sunday, May 31, is Pastor Ivy's last Sunday with us. After serving as Associate Pastor of St. Mark's for 9 ½ years, she is off to serve among the good people of Living Waters Lutheran Church in Lino Lakes, Minnesota. We are planning ways to honor her time among us, while at the same time being mindful of the restrictions placed upon us by the reality of the COVID-19 pandemic. This farewell will not be what farewells have been in the past. There is grief in that, and it is important to acknowledge that. Nonetheless, we will do our best to give thanks for her presence among us and send her off with our love and gratitude. While we do not have the capacity to livestream the entire worship service on May 31, we are asking people to try to tune in at 10:00 so we can be together at the same time, if not in the same space.

Schedule of events for May 31, 2020

9:30 Facebook Live Prelude by Trevor Wolter Ternez

10:00 Worship service with Holy Communion
Pastor Ivy preaching and presiding

11:15 Livestreamed Blessing and Sending of Pastor Ivy
12:30-1:30 Drive-through reception (rain or shine) for
Pastor Ivy, Bill and Nora in St. Mark's Parking lot.

You are invited to drive through the main parking lot at St. Mark's between 12:30 and 1:30 pm, to share a word of love and appreciation with Pastor Ivy, Bill and Nora, from a safe distance. Decorate your cars with handmade signs or balloons, or wave banners or pom-poms from the windows to make it festive—think outside the box. There will be a table to leave cards or gifts if you would like. Please follow the signs and the directions of the attendants to enter and exit the parking lot.

Send us your hands!

St. Mark's has a tradition of sending people who are leaving us by calling them to the center of the sanctuary during worship, laying hands on them and blessing them. We will not be able to do this for Pastor Ivy in the way we are used to, but let's get creative! We invite you to trace your hand on a piece of paper, write your name on it along with words of thanks and blessing. We will find a way to string these together and wrap Pastor Ivy in our hands and love on May 31, her last Sunday with us. **In order to get this all together, we ask that you send your "hands" to us no later than Sunday, May 24. You can scan and email them to annm@stmarks-nsp.org. We will cut them out for you!**

Congregational Zoom Check-in:

Coffee and Conversation – Fridays at 10:00 am

Check-in with your St. Mark's friends and pastors on Zoom – everyone is invited! We have a brief devotion, check in on each other, and preview the scripture reading for the upcoming Sunday. Join us:

<https://tinyurl.com/y9dfxwqu> (or just open Zoom on your computer/tablet/phone if you already have it downloaded)

Meeting ID: 870 2565 8262

Password: 486201

Online Worship Services

& Facebook Live Sunday Preludes

Worship services will continue to be posted on Wednesdays and Sundays for the foreseeable future. Please join us when you are able. Trevor Wolter Ternez goes Live on Facebook on Sunday mornings at 9:30 am to provide prelude music and his following continues to grow. Greet one another in the comments section...it's a fun way to connect with your church friends.

Summer Worship Schedule

We will continue to worship together electronically on Wednesday afternoons and Sunday mornings for the foreseeable future. We will also continue to gather as a congregation via Zoom on Friday mornings at 10:00 for coffee, conversation, and a preview of the upcoming Sundays Scripture passages.

Sermons and Songs by Request

You are all invited to help direct the shape of Wednesday worship this summer. Is there a topic you have always wondered about but haven't ever heard talked about in a sermon? Is there a Biblical person or story you would like to hear more about? Do you have a burning theological question you would like answered? Send your ponderings to me (Pastor Mary) at prmaryf@stmarks-nsp.org, and I'll do my best to address them – or at least ponder along with you! And while you're at it, send along a song you'd like to hear or sing. We'll see what we can do to pull it all together!

Tuesday Morning Bible Study

The Tuesday morning Bible Study will not meet this coming Tuesday, May 26, but will resume on June 2, beginning a study of Revelation. We meet via Zoom beginning at 9:00 (formerly 8:30) and go for about an hour. We are always open to new participants, so if you would like to check us out, email pastor Mary at prmaryf@stmarks-nsp.org, and she'll send you a link to join.

NSP Food Shelf

The NSP Emergency Food Shelf is open. Enhanced health and safety procedures have been implemented for both volunteers and clients. Our community has responded to this current crisis with great generosity, and the shelves are well stocked! If you or anyone you know is in need of food, please call 651-770-1309, and arrange to pick up grocery items. Staff and volunteers stand ready to assist you!

Women of St. Mark's Thank You

Thank You to the ladies who so generously sent offerings to the Women of St. Mark's. You help us fulfill our commitments here at home, in Tanzania and in India. You are a Blessing.

Staff Emails

Music

Dorothea Jirsa: dorotheaj@stmarks-nsp.org

Trevor Wolter Ternez: trevorw@stmarks-nsp.org

Office

Heidi McKenzie: heidimc@stmarks-nsp.org

Helene Doran: helened@stmarks-nsp.org

Ann Mott: annm@stmarks-nsp.org

Youth Ministry

Susie Modrow: susiem@stmarks-nsp.org

Custodial

Hunter Winner: hunter@stmarks-nsp.org

Neil Knutson: neilk@stmarks-nsp.org

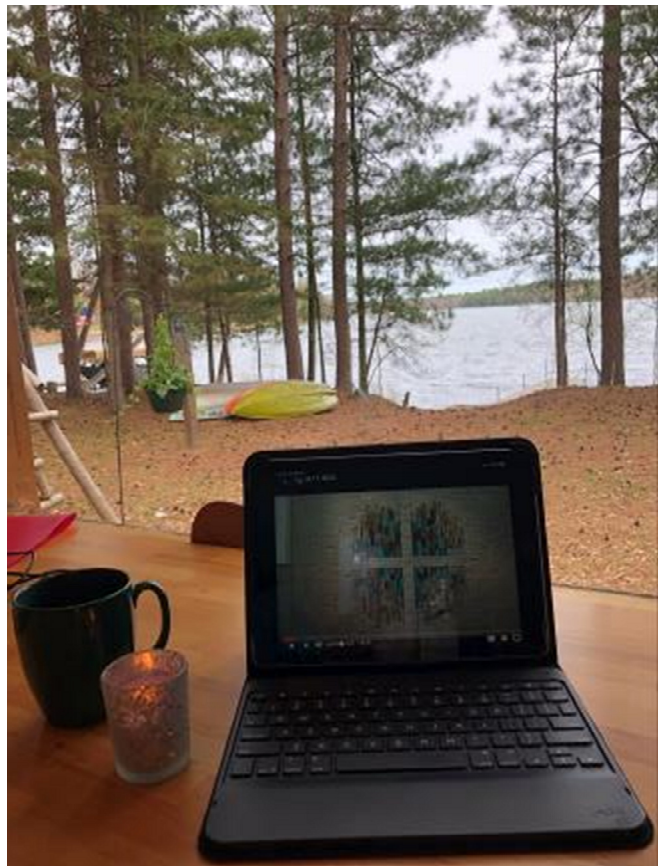
Heather Winner: heatherw@stmarks-nsp.org

What does worship look like?

Worship is looking quite different these days, but some of you have been sending us pictures of what worship looks like at your house. We thought it would be fun to invite more of you to submit a picture of what "Worship at St. Mark's" looks like for you these days. We would like to include one or two each week in our Weekly Update, to lift our spirits and help keep us connected during this separation time. **Please send your pictures electronically to annm@stmarks-nsp.org.**



Jim Wolf and companions are ready for Sunday Morning church



John & Bonnie Pottratz worshipping at another sanctuary