



Saint Mark's
Evangelical Lutheran Church

Weekly Update

November 5, 2020

Dear Friends,

November is the time of our Annual Stewardship Drive. Our theme for this year is Growing Together in Love: Loving God, Loving Others. We may have limited opportunities to gather in person, but the church is far from closed! We continue to worship, study, plan, reach out, and serve in so many ways, and the good gospel work that God calls us to is far from finished!

At St. Mark's, we have been blessed with resources that enable us to generously love God and love others. The faithful and consistent support of so many of you who contribute your time, energy, creativity, and financial gifts, has enabled us to weather this pandemic time well, and we are grateful. From this position of strength and stability, we can look to the future and dare to ask, "What more is God calling us to?" "How much more could we participate in God's good work around us with an increase in giving of \$50,000?"

Such a challenge may seem like too much, especially during a time of uncertainty. Such a challenge, however, can easily be met when shared among so many of us, and it is precisely during these times of uncertainty that we are most called to step out in faith and hope.

Over the course of the next few weeks, you will be hearing about some ministry initiatives that your Stewardship for All Seasons Team and the Church Council have identified for this coming year. These initiatives will enable us to sustain and enhance existing ministries as well as enter into new and exciting ventures, and will be made possible by an increase in giving. Here's a preview:

- Sustain and enhance our ministry excellence at St. Mark's, for both the current situation and well into the future. In addition to ensuring sufficient funding for operational stability, upgrading our technology in the areas of worship, communications, and our on-line presence is key to this end.
- Contribute to the mission of the larger church in the world by reigniting our partnership with Luther Seminary and serving as a Pastoral Internship site once again.
- Share the good news of Jesus Christ and invite people into the community of faith that is St. Mark's, by engaging in intentional outreach to our neighbors, particularly those moving into the new housing that is being built in North Saint Paul.

We are excited about these opportunities to move forward as God's faithful people into the future that is before us. We invite each of you to share in our excitement and commit to consistent financial support of our shared ministry. Thanks for all you have done in the past. We look forward to a bright future together!

God's Peace,
Pastor Mary

Congregational Zoom Check-in: Coffee & Conversation – Fridays at 10:00 am

Check in with Pastor Mary and your other friends from St. Mark's via Zoom each Friday morning at 10:00, for conversation and a quick peek at the upcoming Sunday's sermon texts. *This week's texts are:*
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and Matthew 25:1-13. All are welcome!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81850034128>
Meeting ID: 818 5003 4128

Veteran's Day Concert Online November 11

Veterans Day is an important for the St. Mark's family. In honor of our veterans, the music staff has recorded a special Veterans Day Piano Concert, which will be released next Wednesday. Dorothea and Trevor have prepared a collection of songs from *The Stars and Stripes Forever* to an Armed Services Medley celebrating our country and the people that have helped sustain us. Look for an announcement next week with a link to the video on St. Mark's YouTube channel.

Wreath Sales

Wreaths will be sold in the Rees Hall parking lot on Sunday, November 28 and December 6 from 10am to 12:00pm. Wreaths of various sizes and swags will be available. If you are interested, garland and mailbox swags can be special ordered. Please contact Heidi McKenzie at 651-231-5500 or heidimc@stmarks-ns.org for questions.

Would you like to sponsor someone who could use a little help to complete a Joyful Christmas?

St. Mark's will again be participating in the "Gift Goes On" program, in partnership with Ramsey County. This year the process will work differently to follow COVID guidelines. If you are interested in sponsoring a person, please contact Liz Elicerio-Nelson at lizeliceiro@comcast.net or 651.278.9049 to provide your contact information. (Or leave a message at church (651.777.7451 for Liz.)

Names of individuals to sponsor will be available after November 23. Once we receive the names, Liz will contact you so you can select the person you would like to help. Gifts need to be wrapped and returned to St. Mark's by Wednesday, December 11. Instructions for a curbside drop-off process will be made available when you select a person.

If you would like to select a name, but prefer to have someone shop for you, an option is to purchase a Target Gift Card. Another way to help is to purchase Cub Gift Cards in the amount of \$15 which will be included with each individual gift bundle. These Gift Cards can be purchased and mailed or dropped off at church or to Liz by December 1st. Please label with "Gift Goes On".

Support the St Mark's Foundation with Amazon Smile

Are you ready for the holidays? Planning to use Amazon for your shopping needs this Christmas? Remember that when you make purchases on Amazon, you can also be donating to the St. Mark's Foundation. Just use this link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/36-3463204> and you will be directed to the site smile.amazon.com where you are automatically asked if you want to support St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church Foundation. We hope you say "yes" because then Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to the St. Mark's Foundation. Thank you for your support of the Foundation and its mission to carry God's Word forward. Please contact a Foundation board member or email the Foundation at stmarksnsfoundation@gmail.com with any questions or concerns.

There is still time to complete the Ministry Site Profile Survey

As St. Mark's moves into the process of calling a person to join the pastoral staff, we are seeking input from the congregation as to the type of skills and qualities needed for a successful candidate in this position.

Earlier this year, the Personnel Team and the Council met with Deacon Krista Lind from the St. Paul Area Synod, to discuss our staffing needs. We came to consensus that the biggest need for our congregation going forward is to find a person who will be able to complement Pastor Mary in the pastoral ministry of our congregation, with a primary focus on leading our Children, Youth and Family (CYF) programs. We decided to enter the call process with an openness to calling either a Pastor or a Deacon as an Associate on the Pastoral Team.

Last week we asked you to fill out the online Ministry Site Profile survey to gather your opinions on where St. Mark's is heading and what our next CYF Minister needs to understand about us and our future. Your feedback is important. The survey must be completed by Sunday, Nov. 8. **Please type or copy/paste the following link into your browser:**

<https://tinyurl.com/y6jebp7m>

Thank you for participating and sharing your perspectives to better inform the MSP!

Garden Gift Cards

Thanksgiving is coming up and that means Christmas is just around the corner too. Just a reminder that the Garden Team has Bachman's and Gerten's gift cards available for your shopping trips. Bachman's are in \$25 and \$10 amounts and are good for anything they sell. Gerten's cards are in \$25 cards and are good for anything green and growing. Plus – don't forget, they make much appreciated gifts for those on your shopping list. Call Sherry at 651-777-6704 and we can arrange a time for you to get the cards. Thank you for supporting the Garden Team.

Online Worship every Sunday & Facebook Live Sunday Preludes

Please continue to join us for online worship services every Sunday—available via links on Facebook, the St. Mark's website (www.stmarks-nsp.org) and emailed directly to you. Please join us as often as you are able. Trevor Wolter Ternez goes Live on Facebook on Sunday mornings at 9:30 am to provide prelude music.

Prayer for a Time of Uncertainty

Eternal God, amid all the turmoil and changes of the world, your love is steadfast and your strength never fails. In this time of waiting for ballots to be counted, grant us patience and courage. Bless all the public servants who have been entrusted with the oversight of this election. May they do their work in a spirit of wisdom and integrity. Help us to remember always, that we are first and foremost subjects of your kingdom and our leader is Jesus. Help us to follow him in our words and actions. Amen

Registration for November 15

In-Person Service at 10:00 am

The following protocols will be in place in order to conduct the November 15 service:

- Limited to 50 people in attendance
- Pre-Registration will be required
- Masks must be worn by all – no exceptions
- Controlled entrances and seating
- Social distance spacing as we assemble and leave
- Hand sanitizing stations at each entrance
- Physical interactions should be avoided (no hugging or handshakes)
- No social gathering before or after the service (participants will be directed to leave immediately after the service)

Here's how you pre-register...

ALL participants are required to pre-register for the service by filling out an online form.

Type the following link into your browser:

<https://tinyurl.com/y67f8yqp>

Or, you may call Heidi McKenzie at 651-231-5500.

All requests must be submitted no later than 5 pm on Friday, November 13.

The following information will be required:

- Primary Contact Name
- Primary Contact Phone Number
- Primary Contact E-mail
- Number people attending
- Names of all people in your group
- Answer the following TWO questions –
 1. *Have you or anyone in your group been exposed to anyone with Covid-19 in the past 14 days?*
 2. *Are you or anyone in your group currently feeling ill and/or have a temperature over 100.4? (If yes to either, you are instructed to stay home.)*

We are grateful for the opportunity to slowly bring in-person services back to St. Mark's. This will require everyone's cooperation and support to make this happen. We ask for your patience and understanding as we work out the details.