

Upcoming Events @ St. Mark's

WEEK OF DECEMBER 14, 2025

Today is the last day to return Decorating Forms

In order to ensure that your memorial/honor is included in the Christmas bulletins, please return your form today. Extra forms are available at the Welcome Center.

Caring Ministry meeting for Dec. 15 is canceled

We will resume in January with our regular schedule.

Children's Christmas Choir – Sun. Dec. 21

All children are invited to learn to sing *Away in a Manger* during Sunday School time, and sing it for the Offertory. They will be led by Mackenzie Lyon, who sings in the Choir of St. Mark's, and teaches voice and piano as a profession.

Wednesday Community Dinners

All are welcomed to the table for this homemade meal offered Wednesdays during the school year. Freewill offering gladly accepted. Dec 17: *Italian dinner*. Note: The kitchen crew will be off for the holiday break. No meals on Dec. 24 or 31.

Holden Evening Prayer Service during Advent Wednesdays at 6pm in the Chapel

In the midst of the busy Christmas season, St. Mark's invites you to a moment of peace on Wednesday evenings at 6pm in Lundquist Chapel. **December 17** is the last Advent service of the year.

The Women's Advent Potluck Brunch has been postponed and rescheduled for Sat. Jan. 17

If you weren't able to sign up before, please contact Virginia Collier at 651-777-0584 if you would like to sign up for the rescheduled time.

Have you returned your 2026 Statement of Intent?



We are currently at 85 percent of our goal! If you haven't returned your card yet, simply place it in the offering plate, mail it, drop it off in the church office anytime during the week (M-Th), or complete it online using this QR code. If you have questions about how to update your giving online, please contact Helene at helened@stmarks-nsp.org.

Thank you for your faithful support of St. Mark's ongoing ministry. Watch the thermometers in the Narthex to track continued progress toward our goals.



2026 Intent

Celebrate Christmas at St. Mark's

Christmas Eve

3pm with the Worship Band

10pm* Candlelight service with the Choir of St. Mark's, Jubilee Handbell Choir, and St. Mark's String Quartet.

**Prelude begins at 9:45*

Christmas Day 9:30am in Lundquist Chapel
(Ann Braaten, piano)

Lessons & Carols

9:30am on Sunday, Dec. 28

Jennifer Arsenault (flute) Susan Borowick (ukulele)

Worship Assistants needed for Christmas Services

If you will be attending one of the Christmas services, please consider signing up to serve as a greeter, usher, communion assistant, altar care, or welcome center attendant. Sign up as an individual or as a family. Sign up sheets at the Welcome Center.

Special Thanks to our Choirs Today

The St. Mark's community expresses our deep gratitude to each of our choir members for hours of rehearsals, faithful worship leadership, and their commitment to providing excellent worship music, especially during the busy holiday season. *Thank you!*

Choir of St. Mark's

Soprano

Lauren Lammers-SL
Susie Lenz
Missy Lillie
Bonnie Pottratz
Lindsey Samelian
Maureen Schnitzer

Alto

Anna Bjorklund
Cory Engwer
Suzanne Ericson
Mackenzie Lyon-SL
Barb Michel
Barb Swenson
Amy Reddy
Sharon Tyman

Tenor

Susan Borowick
Mark Ebner
Kim Engwer-Moylan
Tom Michel
Tim Reddy
Tyler Ronsberg

Bass

George Blattner
Mitch Buckley
Bill Kempe-SL
Dan Gerl
Matt Perrault
John Pottratz

Jubilee Handbell Choir

Jennifer Arsenault
Susan Borowick
Rachel Danko
Suzanne Ericson
Sandy Leach
Rosanne McCann
Andy Petersen
Corinna Petersen
Bonnie Pottratz
Tyler Ronsberg

SL=Section Leader

Music Notes

Tom Paulson, Director of Music & Worship

Today in worship we are beginning the St. Mark's Christmas festivities. Jesus, coming into the world, being born among us and in us, is so central to our faith and important to our being that we celebrate in a big way – Sundays, December 14, 21 and 28, Christmas Eve at 3 & 10pm, Christmas Day at 9:30am, and it all comes together when we sing, "Go, Tell it on the Mountain. Jesus Christ is Born!" on Sunday, January 4.

We begin with a Christmas Program, sort of. You've heard the birth of Jesus called the Greatest Story Ever Told. Well, our adaptation is the Greatest Story Ever Told (Well, Almost). As our narrator tells the story, our characters will gather around the manger. This is an opportunity for everyone to participate. If you've ever wanted to be an angel, a shepherd, a barn animal, here's your chance. See the costumer out in the narthex before worship and she will get you set. (Or just come forward, no costume necessary). The narrator will call you up. We cast Mary, Joseph, Jesus and the donkey ahead of time, but if you'd like to be one of them, I see no reason we can't have two Mary's!

This all begs the question for you to ponder this Christmas. Who are you in this story? Are you Mary carrying, waiting, expecting, and giving birth? Are you Joseph, feeling responsible for this new, homeless family? Are you the innkeeper, opening your heart, your mind and your home? Are you an angel celebrating the birth, or a shepherd going and telling everybody? Whoever you are, know that there is room for you in God's abundant and abiding love.

Apropos of nothing, did you know that the distance from Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem in Judea, is roughly the same as from Owatonna in Steele County to North St. Paul in Ramsey County?

Coming up in Worship...

Sun. Dec. 21: Choir of St. Mark's, Jubilee Handbell Choir

Men's Book Study Group

If you are interested in reading Scott Galloway's *Notes on Being a Man* as part of a men's book study in January please contact Pastor David (prdavidb@stmarks-nsp.org). Here's a brief description from the book jacket: "Boys and Men are in Crisis. Rarely has a cohort fallen further and faster than young men living in Western democracies. Boys are less likely to graduate from high school or college than girls. One in seven men report having to friends, and men account for three of every four deaths of despair in America. Even worse, the lack of attention to these problems has created a vacuum filled by voices espousing misogyny, the demonization of others, and a toxic vision of masculinity. But this just isn't a male issue: Women and children can't flourish if men aren't doing well. As we know from spares of violence, there is nothing more dangerous than a lonely, broken young man. Scott Galloway has been sounding the alarm on this issue for years. In *Notes on Being a Man*, Galloway explores what it means to be a man in modern America."

Global Mission Craft Fair Report

Last Saturday, St. Mark's held a Craft Fair to benefit our Tanzania Mission. Thirty vendors participated including many St. Mark's members. We raised \$2,271, which was \$465 higher than last year. The funds will be donated to the Kihesa and Mtwivila congregations in Tanzania to help with their building projects. Special thanks goes to all who organized the event, donated items, displayed their crafts, and shopped the fair!

Next Week's Ushering Schedule

Dec. 21 Team 3, Capt: Bob Engwer

Weekly Calendar

Sunday, December 14

9:30 am Worship Service, SC
10:30 am HS Youth Shopping Trip, offsite

Monday, December 15

1:00 pm Phoebe Bible Study, FS
6:30 pm Monday Night Bible Study, Zoom

Tuesday, December 16

9:00 am Morning Bible Study, FS
10:00 am Naomi Bible Study, FS
6:30 pm St. Mark's Strummers, #102

Wednesday, December 17

5:00 pm Wednesday Dinner, RH
5:45 pm Jubilee Handbell Choir, SC
6:00 pm Faith Formation

6:00 pm Holden Evening Prayer Service, LC
7:15 pm Choir of St. Mark's, SC

Thursday, December 18 – Office Closed

8:30 am Breakfast and Bible Study, offsite
1:00 pm Elizabeth Bible Study, FS
6:00 pm Worship Band rehearsal, SC
6:30 pm Church Council Mtg, #203

Friday, December 19 – Office Closed

Saturday, December 20 – Office Closed
9:00 am Saturday Stewards

Sunday, December 21

9:30 am Worship Service, SC
9:30 am Sunday School
11:30 am Children's Advent Afternoon, RH

Ministry Staff

Rev. David Bjorklund, Lead Pastor
prdavidb@stmarks-nsp.org

Kate Bentley, Deacon
deaconkateb@stmarks-nsp.org

Tom Paulson, Dir. of Music & Worship
tomp@stmarks-nsp.org

Office Hours

Mon – Thurs: 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
Ph: 651-777-7451

Weekly Worship

Sundays: 9:30 am

Guest WiFi

P3@nutButt3r