

OUR MISSION

Gathered around Word and water, bread and wine,
we spread God's Word by living our faith daily
and welcoming all with open hearts and minds.



THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

DECEMBER 17, 2017

9:30 A.M.

WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT ST. MARK. Please sign our attendance pad located in each row. We are happy to have you here with us! Please join us for refreshments on the walkway following worship.

ANNUAL BUDGET MEETING - St. Mark's Congregational Meeting is held in two parts. Today, **December 17 following worship** we will meet in the sanctuary to adopt a budget for 2018. You're invited to stay and get updated information on church finances and to ask questions, if you would like. All confirmed members are asked to attend these meetings.

OPENING ON CHURCH COUNCIL Are you interested in being part of our leadership team here at St. Mark? There will be an opening for a three-year term on St. Mark's Church Council starting in February 2018. The Nominating Committee is currently looking for members who might be interested in serving in this capacity. Elections will take place at the end of January. If you feel the Spirit moving you to serve, contact Helen Henwood (helen.henwood@aol.com) or Jennifer Grumbling (grumbje@gmail.com)

CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE is **TONIGHT**, December 17th. Instead of our "progressive" appetizer and dessert Christmas Party for adult members, your Fellowship Team has decided this year to have an Open House here at St Mark. This event is open to all ages as well as friends and neighbors of our members. This is a great opportunity to come and enjoy our beautiful church decorations and socialize with old or new friends while enjoying a variety of refreshments. The event will take place from 5:30 pm to 9:30 pm. There will be holiday lights and music as well as some crafts and games for young attendees. The Fellowship team will provide beer and wine as well as non-alcoholic beverages. So that we know how many to plan for, there is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex which has a check off box for anyone needing transportation. Just like our progressive party, we are seeking volunteers to bring either an appetizer or desert to share with others. Appetizer/Dessert sign-up sheets are also in the Narthex.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP - On Sunday December 24th, St. Mark will NOT have its regular 9:30 am worship. Instead, there will be three later worship services. We will have a **4:00 p.m.** Family Service with Communion. We will a **7:00 p.m.** Traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Communion and we will have a **9:30 p.m.** Traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Communion. We hope that you will join us for one of the three evening worship opportunities

CHURCH COUNCIL meeting is rescheduled to Tuesday, December 19th at 7:00 pm in the large conference room. Packets are available in the Narthex for your review in advance.

BLUE CHRISTMAS EVENING PRAYER SERVICE - While Advent is a season of hope and Christmas is a season of joy, not everyone feels hopeful or like celebrating. Grief, illness, aging, depression, loneliness, unemployment, and loss are magnified. Even those who are not struggling with losses may feel the stress of preparations and expectations around Christmas time. This Blue Christmas service may provide a time and place of solace during the often-frenetic days surrounding the celebration of Christmas. We come together seeking healing and room to share grief, sadness, loneliness, or confusion when these emotions often feel out of place during the holidays. This service will take place on **Wednesday, December 20 at 7:00 pm** and is hosted by **Grace Lutheran Church in Clearwater** - 1812 N Highland Ave, Clearwater, FL 33755.

GO "TAIL" IT ON THE MOUNTAIN: ALTERNATIVE GIFT GIVING - This year, St. Mark's Giving Tree will go from local to global. Once all the tags have been taken off our Giving Tree to be purchased for local families in need (see the next page of our newsletter), new ornaments with farm animals will take their place! Help us raise funds to purchase a farm through ELCA Good Gifts. A cow, a couple of goats a dozen chicks, two pigs, farming tools, seeds and agricultural training (totaling \$715) will help a family somewhere around the globe achieve a fresh start. **Simply take an ornament envelope off the tree, place your gift inside it, and place it in the offering plate by December 31st.** If your gift is in honor of a friend or loved one, cards are available on the table by the tree for you to take. Give a gift that will keep on giving! For more information, please go to the Good Gifts website: www.elca.org/goodgifts.

SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS - Please join us on **Sunday, December 31 at 9:30 a.m.** for another special worship service featuring scripture and music. This is a great way to ring in the New Year.

WINTER BLOOD DRIVE - St. Mark's winter blood drive is scheduled for Sunday, January 14 at 9:00 am. You can be an unsung "everyday hero" by donating the gift of life. Your gift gets to someone within 72 hours potentially benefiting three persons with that gift. Thank you for your generosity!

IN YOUR PRAYERS

Please remember in your daily prayers members and friends of our congregation who are on our prayer list. If you would like to add someone to our congregation's prayers, please call or email the church office or sign the prayer notebook in the narthex.

FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK OR IN NEED OF SUPPORT:

Jim Boyter

Peg Weingart

Trish Kitchel

Michael Bryant

Ethan Gottlieb (grandson of Tim and Angela Langenback)

Heather Booth (daughter of the Plasketts)

James Dano (son of Arnie Dano)

Gretchen Woodard (daughter of Debbie Woodard)

Bret R. (friend of Linda Peterman)

Jerriann AnnEpern (friend of Linda Peterman)

Freddie Romani (friend of Arnie Dano)

Helen (Meighen) (friend of Doris Ullestad)

Judy Wallschlaeger (friend of Sue and Darrell Zenk)

Efrain Roman (great grandfather of Milla Grumbling and Kaeden Delerme)

Chelle S. (friend of Jennifer Grumbling)

Jax Cunningham (great nephew of Barbara Woodworth)

Holly and Mark Downing (friends of Suzanne Bryant)

Kurt Dunn (friend of Arnie Dano)

Jeff Phillips (friend of the Chernes family)

Chris Harris (son of Dave Harry)

Sayre Froelich (daughter of Janice and Lee Froelich)

Ernie Smith, Sr. (husband of Phyllis Smith)

Marion Dunn (friend of Arnie Dano)

Frank Ollari (friend of Doris Ullestad)

Linda Grumbling (mother of Jennifer Grumbling)

Eddie Frederick (friend of the Grumbling/Delerme family)

Karen Aungst (friend of Debbie Woodard)

Elizabeth K. (friend of Sue Nelson)

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Serving The Community of Faith

Assisting Minister: Emery Horvath
Ushers: Debbie Woodard and Bob Salsbury
Offering Bearers: Madison Seiter and Emily Seiter
Acolyte: Ainsley Horvath
Lector: Allen VanHaute
Communion Assistants: Jennifer Grumbling and Linda Vehrs
Bread Baker: Melissa Taylor
Altar Guild: Janice Froelich, Kathie Chernes and Carol Kitchen

Given to the Glory of God:

Thanks to James Harry for helping to provide refreshments today.

This Week at St. Mark

Sunday 9:30 am **Worship**
December 17 10:45 am **Handbell Choir**
11:00 am **Annual Budget Meeting**
5:30 pm **St. Mark Open House**

Monday 7:00 pm Al-Anon
8:00 pm Ala-Teen Meeting

Wednesday 7:00 pm Blue Christmas Evening Prayer Service at Grace Lutheran

Thursday 6:00 pm AA
7:00 pm Al-Anon

Sunday 4:00 pm **Christmas Eve Family Worship**
December 24 7:00 pm **Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship**
9:30 pm **Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship**

Readings for next Sunday—Christmas Eve

Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14[15-20]

Our Statement of Welcome

St. Mark is a spiritual community that celebrates the gifts of God that empower us to engage in the struggles of life, to care for each other, and to serve Christ where we work and live.

We welcome the participation of people of all ages, faiths, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, gender identities, educational backgrounds, and economic conditions – all who want to join in community to honor God and be of service to people. We recognize that each person is a unique creation of God and by the grace of God is called a “child of God.”

St. Mark is a Reconciling in Christ congregation.



*The Rev. Katy A. H. Fast, Pastor
Cheryl Burton, Music Director and Cantor
Willie Hobbs, Office Administrator
Jim Boyter and Beverly Entwisle, Property Stewards
Regina Hickey, Bookkeeper*

1120 Curlew Road, Dunedin, FL 34698
(727) 733-0474 ~ Fax (727) 736-2357
www.stmlc.com

Office Hours:

Monday – Friday
8:00 am until 3:00 pm

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Communion, “God Shall Gather In”, tune: 18th Century English, adapt. and arr: Alonso

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**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.