



The Messenger

VOL. LXI, ISSUE IX

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

September 2019

Called by the Spirit. Equipped to Serve. Sent to love all!

From the Desk of Pastor Bev Piro

God's Work. Our Hands. And Shoes!

September is God's Work, Our Hands Month! That's right, instead of one day, we will engage for four Sundays with a focus on poverty and homelessness in our neighborhood. Pastor Tyg Taylor will join us on September 8 along with some special friends to share his ministry among these populations.



**God's work.
Our hands.**



Pastor Tyg will be with us again on September 15 to share the ministry of Wholly Kicks. The aim of this project is to not only provide good, new, or nearly new shoes to those in need, but to also walk with those who have much to share about the twists and turns that life can take. Our project will be to collect shoes for elementary age children. So when you are out and about this month or shopping from home on your computer, remember there are kids who quickly outgrow their shoes or wear them out. Tyg is working with area schools to reach families who need this support.

Here are the guidelines: shoes or boots only (no flip flops or sandals), sized for kids in kindergarten through 6th grade. For every pair of shoes that you bring in you can also add a pair of shoe stickers to the paper sidewalk on the sanctuary wall. Our goal is to reach or exceed 100 pairs of new kid's shoes. On September 29 we'll bless the shoes and wrap up GWOH 2019. God's Work! Our Hands!



Listening Posts

What is a Listening Post? A Listening Post is a small group of St. Mark's members gathered with two members of the Transition Team for about an hour on a Sunday after worship service is over. The purpose of the Listening Post is for Transition Team members to LISTEN to other congregation members as they continue to gather information that will shape the future mission and ministry of St. Mark's. One team member will facilitate the discussion and the other will take notes. Ask your questions. Share your concerns. Seek clarification to rumors. Sign up to attend a session. **This is a must. No last-minute drop ins.** If attendance on Sunday morning is impossible for you, please indicate that too. The Transition Team will make every effort to accommodate as many people as possible in this time of discernment.

Building and Grounds Leader is Needed

There is a vacancy on the Council for the head of Building and Grounds. Every Council seat is important and this one is no less so. The ideal candidate is someone who can call and arrange for service when needed, seek and review contracts for service, and approve expenditures. The ability to do hands-on repairs is a plus but not a requirement. Is it time for YOU to step into this role? Contact Ryan Gohl to volunteer or for more information.

Crop Walk

This is the time of year when thoughts turn to the annual CROP Walk. Pastor Terry Schjang has invited St. Mark's to engage with New Beginnings Prison Ministry for the CROP Walk this year. You will be asked to pledge for the women who will walk the prison yard for this year's CROP Walk. More details will become available soon.

Thursdays in Black



Voting members of 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly voted to endorse and support the **Thursdays in Black Campaign** of the World Council of Churches.

About Thursdays in Black

In every country, gender-based violence is a tragic reality. This violence is frequently hidden, and victims are often silent, fearing stigma and further violence.

We all have a responsibility to speak out against violence, to ensure that women and men, boys and girls, are safe from rape and violence in homes, schools, work, streets—in all places in our societies.

The campaign is simple but profound. Wear black on Thursdays. Wear a pin to declare you are part of the global movement resisting attitudes and practices that permit rape and violence. Show your respect for women who are resilient in the face of injustice and violence. Encourage others to join you.

Often black has been used with negative racial connotations. In this campaign black is used as a color of resistance and resilience.

For more information, visit the World Council of Churches' page at <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/get-involved/thursdays-in-black>

For a summary of actions from the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly:

<https://elca.org/News-and-Events/8003>

Transition Team Update

Survey Said: Listening Posts!

Josh Vermaas, Transition Team Member

This past month has seen the St. Mark's Transition Team play its own version of "Family Feud", surveying the congregation in preparation for upcoming Listening Post sessions across the five Sundays in September. We have collected 88 responses so far, giving us a snapshot for the mood of the church and basic demographics of our members. This will be used to determine what topics are most critical to bring up for individual feedback during the Listening Posts and to complete the statistical profile of the church as we move closer to forming a call committee.

Each of the questions and their results exposes a different angle of our congregation. Respondents over age 65, longtime members (15 years or longer), frequent churchgoers (3+ times over a four-week period), and women constituted a majority of the surveyed population, highlighting the longstanding community built within the church. Indeed, the St. Mark's community or family was frequently cited as the reason for joining the church. The strength of this community may be why so many respondents have recommended the church to others, and view St. Mark's as welcoming to most groups. However, the responses to the open-ended questions suggest that strong feelings exist around LGBTQ inclusion within the congregation.

Other questions probed changes to the service and related activities connected to their time or structure. A 9:15 service was the most popular time, although many respondents only selected one choice, perhaps not realizing that multiple answers were permitted, and that may require further study. The

potential popularity of a weekday late morning service brought up discussion within the Transition Team around additional technological solutions to bring St. Mark's message to congregants who cannot attend traditional Sunday services in person. One puzzle presented by the results was the disconnect between Adult Faith Formation attendance (approximately 1 in 5 respondents attend), and the demand for Bible study in about 1 in 3 respondents, perhaps suggesting that Adult Faith Formation should be rebranded to Bible study to increase attendance!



In my view, the most interesting results were the future direction questions: what parts of the church mission are important and should be emphasized, and which have run their course? Based on the results, the congregation is largely content with the status quo, with current programs and activities receiving strong support and rated as

important or very important by the overwhelming majority of respondents. A surprise finding was that scriptural interpretation and leadership development were among the strongest candidates for receiving more emphasis, although again the congregation largely wants to do more of everything, including OHANA and our existing homeless and community outreach efforts.

Interested in seeing the results for yourself? To preserve anonymity, only results for the multiple choice and rating questions are tabulated as a PDF file available over the internet: <https://bit.ly/31QHej6>. This PDF contains some additional commentary alongside each question.

SMLCW News

Mary Stephenson, President

Can you believe we are entering the month of September already? Time keeps moving on whether we want it to or not. First, thank you to Mary Crum for helping with the set-up and serving of refreshments on August 11. Your help was greatly appreciated.

Now as to what's coming: The RMSWO Fall Gathering will take place September 20–22 in Albuquerque, NM with St. Paul Lutheran Church as the host site. At this writing I am not sure who all are planning to go, but next month's article will include a report on the weekend's activities.

Circles and Bible study resume in September, too. Be sure to follow the bulletin calendar for your choice of Circle. Ruth Circle meets the first Tuesday of the month in the library at 9:30 a.m. Mary Circle meets the first Tuesday of the month also in the library at 7:00 p.m. (however, this Circle group will not start meeting until October). All ladies are welcome to attend one or both studies depending on your availability.

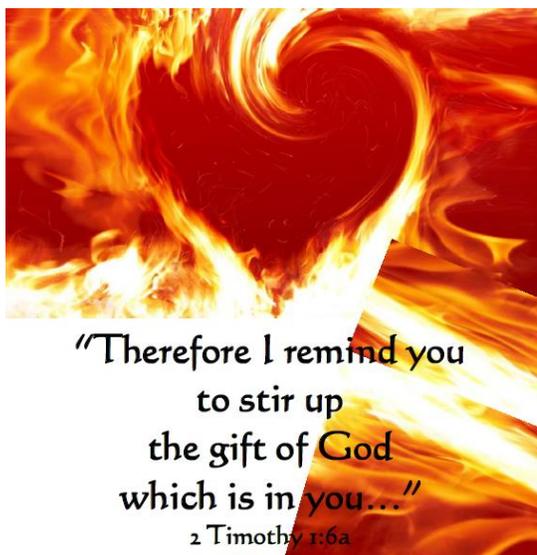
Your SMLCW Board met on Monday, August 26, to plan and prepare for our annual Christmas Party. This will take place Saturday, December 7 from 1:00–3:00 p.m. Our program is titled "Sweet Christmas" with readings and singing Christmas carols. Refreshments will be served. We will be collecting socks, gloves, or non-perishable food items for our food pantry. Please mark your calendar for this celebration with sisters in Christ to ring in the Christmas season.

Looking ahead, our annual bake sale will take place on Sunday, February 9, 2020. It is a long way off but mark your calendars now to remind yourself to bake!

Your SMLCW Board will meet following worship on November 10 in the church library to finalize our Christmas program/party.

With the change in the month will also bring a change in the season. We have been experiencing many hot days but we are not in control of what each day brings. God is the only one who controls what takes place. Look for the changes in the seasons and enjoy what God has given you.

HAPPY SEPTEMBER—HAPPY FALL!



**Bethel Lutheran Church Women
Present**

Opening Your Gifts with the *Stirring of the Spirit*

**2019 Women's Retreat – September 27–28
at Bethany Lutheran Church**

Brochures with more information are available on the long counter in the Narthex or you can contact by email at church@bethelaurora.org or by phone at 303-364-2245. Registration is due by Sunday, September 8, 2019.

Community News



Thank you

Jean Rose wishes to thank everyone for their cards, phone calls, and especially their prayers for her since her fall last month. Your caring is much appreciated!

New Office Hours

Starting Tuesday, September 3, the new office hours at St. Mark's will be 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Directory Update

We are nearly done collecting pictures and updated contact information so that the order can be placed for the new printed directories. If you were planning to provide a picture and have not done so yet, please do so soon!

Events



Tickets can also be bought online at the website: <https://www.newbeginningswc.org/>

Join us for our 2019 Gala Celebration!

Friday, October 11, 2019 at 5:00 PM

Bethany Lutheran Church
4500 E Hampden Ave
Cherry Hills Village, CO 80113

Click [here](#) for a map

Tickets are \$65 per person

To purchase tickets, please send a check payable to New Beginnings to:

New Beginnings
c/o The Lutheran Center
7375 Samuel Drive
Denver, CO 80221

Please indicate your choice of vegetarian or chicken (dairy and gluten free) entree when you order tickets.

USAF Academy Stellar Brass Concert

Augustana Arts is pleased to bring the United States Air Force Academy's Stellar Brass ensemble for a **FREE performance on Friday, Sept. 20** at 7:30 p.m. at Augustana Lutheran Church (5000 E. Alameda Ave. Denver). The Stellar Brass combines percussion instruments with a traditional brass quintet offering original and innovative music that



represents a broad range of eclectic musical styles. This year the concert will feature Cindy Lindeen-Martin, guest organist from Augustana Lutheran Church. Join us for an evening concert that salutes the men and women who serve our country. To reserve your free tickets, visit www.AugustanaArts.org. Tickets will also be available at the door.

Council Corner

Council Highlights—August 13, 2019

Pastor Bev led an opening prayer.

Secretary, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary reports were reviewed and accepted.

Pastor's Report

Pastor Bev attended one week of continuing education at California Lutheran University.

She is planning another campfire worship on Labor Day Sunday.

Priority work is with Transition Team, Stewardship, and God's Work. Our Hands.

Pastor will take vacation November 18 to December 14 to meet her husband who will be working in Germany.

The church office hours will change to 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday beginning in September.

Old Business

The responsibility instructions for those helping with worship have been revised and were reviewed by the council.

Council reviewed and updated Section 3 of the policies referring to the handling of church monetary donations.

Transition Team will meet again Saturday to go over the results of the survey they have been working on.

Listening Posts will be conducted each Sunday through September. Sign-up sheets will be available.

New Business:

St. Mark's needs a snow removal company for this winter. All council members are looking for companies to contact.

Harvest Festival will be held September 20.

The kick-off date for God's Work. Our Hands. shoe collection will be September 8. Pastor Tyg Taylor will come to St. Mark's to share information on Wholly Kicks, an Aurora based nonprofit that provides shoes for those in need. He is asking for shoes for elementary age children.

Stewardship Sunday will be October 27.

Meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Summarized Report of Income and Expenses

Submitted by Bill Stephenson, Treasurer

<u>July, 2019</u>			
<u>Current Month</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Total Income	\$11,634.41	Total Income	\$108,771.62
Total Expenses	-\$19,396.62	Total Expenses	-\$115,522.05
Net Income	-\$7,762.21	Net Income	-\$6,750.43
<i>BUDGET COMPARISON OF ENVELOPE OFFERING</i>			
<u>Monthly Budget Amount</u>	<u>Actual Current Month</u>	<u>Budget Year to Date</u>	<u>Actual Year to Date</u>
\$13,718.63	\$8,946.00	\$96,030.41	\$80,466.65
Over/Under Budget	-\$4,772.63		-\$15,563.76

Fellowship Committee Report

Susan Saeugling

Summer Fellowship Thanks

Thank you to everyone who provided yummy treats to enjoy following worship this summer! We extend our gratitude to the following for volunteering to serve as a host for one or more Sundays: Claudette Gilbert, Bernette Douin, Susan Saeugling, Ellie Weaver, Rose Kvern, the Gohl family, the Stephenson family, Chris Elbert, Susan Tami Whitcomb, the St. Mark's Women, Dorie Gerhardt, and Joan Gustafson.

Please plan to join us for our 10th Annual

Harvest Festival

Friday, September 20th at 5:30 p.m.
St. Mark's Park & Community Garden



It's time once again for St. Mark's Annual Harvest Festival. A time to share the harvest and give thanks for all our gardens have given us here at St. Mark's and at home.

Please sign up to bring a soup, veggie tray, dessert, or a complimentary side or extra—featuring fresh harvested treats from the garden is encouraged.

We will have some fun fall crafts for kids and adults, so invite your neighbors and bring the family too!

We look forward to seeing you.

Parish Education

Dorie Gerhardt

Shortly, we'll be welcoming the breathtaking season of fall. Along with the falling leaves, changing colors, and cooler temperature there will be a "different look" to our Ohana Family. Children's Chapel will continue as usual; however, with Miss Kinna being on maternity leave, Miss Shannon and Fanus will be filling in for her. Another difference you may have noticed is the children are leaving during the Gathering hymn instead of after a Children's sermon. This change is taking place because of the limited time we have for Chapel. Per usual, we try to return to worship during the Passing of the Peace. When this isn't possible, please know every effort is taken to return in the most respectful and appropriate manner possible. The children are using the curriculum "Echo the Story." This curriculum takes the children on a journey through the Bible to familiarize them with it. For many of the youth, this is their introduction to Scripture. For all the youth, this is an excellent manner to bring Scripture into their lives.

Our Adult Faith Formation Class has been reading the book *Inspired* by Rachael Held Evans. Pastor Bev led the class in not only stimulating conversation but provided thought-provoking "food" to feed our souls' conversation. It's my feeling that the discussion that takes place in the Adult Faith Formation Class touches us all, and strengthens us in our faith. I extend an invitation to anyone who would like to join us when we resume classes later this fall. Your presence would be warmly welcomed and a blessing to us all. As it states in Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, "To everything there is a season, a time to every purpose under the heaven..." Perhaps this is your time and/or season to experience the joy of faith formation.

My prayer for us this beautiful time of year is that we thank our gracious and loving God for our many blessings and ask Him to grant us the ability to demonstrate to others the benevolent love He so freely gives to us.

#BLESSED

Reminder: For those youth planning to attend the Fall Quest camp next month, please turn in your registration materials to Shannon, Fanus, Michele, or Mary *by Sunday, September 15.*

Stewardship Report

Terri Maniscalco, Stewardship Chair

The last few mornings I have noted a slight crispness of fall in the air. This of course means the ending of summer and the approach of the end of the year. This has been an extremely busy time of changes in the life of St. Mark's. A time of decisions and preparations for the yearly stewardship of our church drive.

Stewardship means taking care of all that God has blessed us with. We think of our health, our relationships, and our money. But do we think about our church?

The church, the only organization whose primary purpose is to bring people into intimate relationship with God and also gather them as scared community. Without church, how could people grow in faith? How would the Gospel be spread to all people, as Jesus commands?

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Although we tend to think that our church has a mission, it's more accurate to say that God has a mission, and that mission is the church. We grow in faith as people and community when we dedicate ourselves to be good stewards of our church.

During the four Sundays in October we will be exploring this deeper, concluding with "Celebration Sunday" on Reformation Day, October 27. There will be two mailings going out—one the last week of September and the other one mid-October with your commitment card.

The Time and Talent sheets will happen on a separate Sunday again this year so that both ways of giving can have ample emphasis. Watch for that opportunity in December.

Please start praying about our congregation's mission and ministry together. Pray about our future together as Christ's Church. Pray about your tithing for the next year.

Thank you for being a part of this congregation and for helping it grow into the future.

Please Keep in Your Prayers

We welcome your requests for prayers for persons in need or prayers of thanksgiving for blessings received. Please note that prayer requests will remain on the list for four Sundays; a request may be extended by contacting the church office.

Recent hospitalizations, illnesses, and concerns:

Gil Bliss (*recovery from cancer removal surgery*)
Jeanell Carlson-Bjorkman (*former member, post-cancer removal treatments*)
Lisa Wild (*friend of Patty Costello, kidney cancer*)
Cindy Lenzen (*Doris Seline's daughter, health*)
Ruth Lenzen (*Cindy's sister, back surgery*)
Kinna Kemp (*birth of baby Kobe*)

For the faithful departed and those who mourn:

Family of Elaine Heberlein (*Marlis Feller's sister*)

For those diagnosed with cancer or long-term illness:

Rich Rusk, Sr. (*lung issues*)
TJ Russel and family (*friends of Chelsea Thompson*)
Isaiah Daniels (*Ollie Daniels' grandson, deployed to Kuwait*)
Darrell Hesselius (*incurable health problem*)
Brian Hodgson (*health*)
Pastor Matthew Weber (*physical rehab*)
Sandy Day (*health*)
Jeff (*Hugo Redlin's son, health*)
Jeff Martin (*health*)
Karen Arensen (*hip issues, upcoming surgery*)
Rick Parsons (*friend of Diana Ratliff, cancer*)
Christine Slape (*friend of Brian Hodgson, cancer recurrence*)
Cogie Elzea (*sister of Sara Jensen, health*)

For homebound members and friends:

Don Snook and Trish Kulp
Lillian Ripper
Collie Kandt
George and Anna Devers
Dorothy Parker (*back and hip issues*)
Arlene Selk (*recovering from a fall*)
Gerry Redlin (*Alzheimer's*)
Clare Pankratz
Mark Heflin

Kevin Dominguez (*son of Mary Ann Dominguez, health issues*)
Luci Stephenson (*Bill Stephenson's mother, health concerns*)
Ollie Daniels (*pain and breathing problems*)
Vivian Ryden (*Anne Barger's mother*)
Sally Lynch (*breathing issues*)
Marie Calaway (*mother of Karen Arensen, in hospice care*)
Ann Howell (*cancer remission treatments*)
Patrick Stephenson (*cancer remission*)
Doug Benson (*health*)
Nancy (*sister of Dorie Gerhardt, health*)
Roxanne Knutson (*serious pain*)
Jim Ekberg (*cousin of Chris Elbert, health*)

WORSHIP LIFE AT ST. MARK'S

September 2019

Sunday, September 1, 2019 ~ Twelfth Sunday After Pentecost— Campfire Worship

Invited and inviting—that is the nature of the church. By God's grace in holy baptism we have a place at the banquet table of the Lord. When, by the power of that same Spirit, humility and mutual love continue among us, the church can be more inviting still.

Sunday, September 8, 2019 ~ Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost

* *Second Sunday of the month – food collection for St. Mark's Pantry and Aurora Interfaith Community Services*

Called to contemplate the cost of discipleship today, we might be helped by translating Paul's request to Philemon into our prayer of the day: Refresh my heart in Christ. Strengthened by the company and forgiveness of the Christ in the blessed sacrament and recalling God's grace in remembrance of baptism, we can be strengthened in this hour to "choose life"—to choose life in God as our own.

Sunday, September 15, 2019 ~ Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost

The grumbling of the Pharisees and the scribes in today's gospel is actually our holy hope: This Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them. That our God wills to seek and to save the lost is not only a holy hope, it is our only hope. As Paul's first letter to Timothy reminds us, "The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Thanks be to God.

Sunday, September 22, 2019 ~ Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost

As we are invited today to consider what it means to be managers (rather than owners) of all that we have, it is crucial to recall that we are bought with a price. "Christ Jesus, himself human, . . . gave himself a ransom for all." Apart from the generosity of God we have nothing—we are nothing. By God's gracious favor we have everything we need.

Sunday, September 29, 2019 ~ Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost

Consideration of and care for those in need (especially those "at our gate," visible to us, of whom we are aware) is an essential component of good stewardship. It is in the sharing of wealth that we avoid the snare of wealth. It is the one whom death could not hold—who comes to us risen from the dead—who can free us from the death grip of greed.

Church Together Ambassador Notes

Mary Katherine Smith

At this year's Synod assembly, those who attended as voting members from congregations were commissioned to serve as Church Together ambassadors, sharing news from the Rocky Mountain Synod with our home churches.

With the kickoff of the **Excellence in Leadership** initiative in our Synod—where individuals who serve as leaders will begin a two-year study of five schools of thought to foster effective and meaningful leadership in the church and beyond—we are encouraged to think about who all we consider to be leaders. Reflect on what qualities make a *strong* leader in your experience. How can you support the development of these qualities in others?

Faithful God, you have called us, your Church, to be your hands and feet in the world. Grant those called to lead wisdom and a discerning spirit. We pray for boldness of vision and a renewed commitment to collaborative leadership. We ask this in name of the one who leads us, Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Happy Birthday!

Sept 4	Tommy Lopez	Sept 23	Neil Kvern
Sept 5	Bianca DeLong		Karen Arensen
Sept 8	Brooklyn Worcester		Chris Prillwitz
Sept 9	Devin Lopeman	Sept 25	Karen Burns
Sept 10	Terry Hamm	Sept 26	Ron Maniscalco
Sept 14	Karl Feller	Sept 27	Carl Stanger
Sept 15	Kris Bethscheider		Allie Nicodemus
Sept 17	Kathy Clevenger	Sept 29	Rod Burns
Sept 20	Terri Gunther	Sept 30	Robert Lopeman
	Teilene Bliss	Oct 2	Ella Weaver
			Sonny Pethan
			Mark Heflin

September

Happy Anniversary!!

Hugo and Gerry Redlin
September 1, 1955

Worship Service Schedule - September 2019

As of time of publication; subject to change

Greeter:

Ryan & Michele Gohl

Lector:

1st & 8th: Pastor Neil Kvern
15th, 22nd, & 29th: Anne Barger

Assisting Ministers:

1st & 8th: Mary Katherine Smith
15th: TBD
22nd: Richard Schnier
29th: Patty Costello

Communion Assistants:

8th-29th: Ryan Gohl
8th: Tyler Gohl
15th & 29th: Terri Maniscalco
22nd: Joan Gustafson

Ushers

Ken and Anne Barger
Kathy Clevenger
Lue Martell
Doug Benson (back-up)

**Weekly Attendance
August 2019**

August 4 th	63
August 11 th	64
August 18 th	67
August 25 th	63



St. Mark's Lutheran Church
 111 Del Mar Circle
 Aurora, CO 80011



Phone: 303-366-9702
 Website: www.stmarksaurora.org
 Email: admin@stmarksaurora.org

*Called by the Spirit.
 Equipped to Serve. Sent to love all!*

If you wish to change how you receive our monthly newsletter *The Messenger*—whether it is via email or hard copy (either by picking up at the church or by receipt in the postal mail system)—please email admin@stmarksaurora.org or call the church office 303-366-9702.

**September 2019
 Highlights**

- 2nd Labor Day, Office Closed
- 8th God's Work. Our Hands. Kickoff
- 10th Council Meeting
- 20th Harvest Festival
- 29th God's Work. Our Hands. Wrap-up

**St. Mark's Council
 Members**

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Ryan Gohl—President | OPEN—Building/Grounds |
| Bill Stephenson—Treasurer | Shannon Walsh-Vermaas—Youth |
| Patty Costello—Financial Secretary | Dorie Gerhardt—Parish Ed/Women |
| Ellie Weaver—Secretary | Terri Maniscalco—Stewardship |
| Claudette Gilbert—Social Concerns/ Fellowship | |