



The Messenger

VOL. LXI, ISSUE XI

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

November 2019

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

From the Desk of Pastor Bev Piro



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

It has been almost a year since I came to St. Mark's as your Interim Pastor. Over the past several months the Transition Team has accomplished its tasks and is ready to present a final report to the congregation. With this process completed, St. Mark's is ready to form a Call Committee and enter the last phase of the Interim/Transition process. I have been called to St. Andrew's in Arvada to be their next pastor. I will begin at St. Andrew's in January. This is a logical time for a transition. You will be under the guidance of a Bridge Pastor until your next pastor is called. Hopefully the Call Process will move smoothly and quickly.

I will be with you through the end of 2019. It has been a privilege to be in ministry with you and lead you in this time of reflection and preparation for the next phase of St. Mark's life. For the next two months, we will continue to be partners in ministry and witness to the love of God made known in Christ for all people.

With Gratitude,
Pastor Bev



Vacation Time

Pastor Bev will be on vacation from November 18 through December 12. During her absence Pastor Tyg Taylor will preside at worship on November 24 and Pastor Bonita Bock on December 1 and 8. Pastor Bev will join her husband who is a visiting professor at Nuertingen-Geislingen University near Stuttgart, Germany. When his assignment is completed at the end of November, they will travel to France, Belgium, and Prague before returning home.

The Transition Team Final Report: Lessons From a Changing World

Josh Vermaas

The Sunday of October 20 marked an important step in the interim transition period, with the presentation of the contents of the report that will be presented to the council in early November. This means that the work of the Transition Team is complete pending council approval, and that we expect a call committee to be formed shortly after the new year. We realize that this process has taken longer than what some members in the church may have preferred, but we gained valuable insights into what the needs and wants of the congregation are, and how they should shape our path forward into the call process.

The primary takeaway from the surveys and listening posts conducted by the transition team is that the congregation is generally supportive of the current mission direction of the church. Outreach activities such as the food pantry, meals for those in need, and youth programming have strong support from the congregation, with majorities or near majorities indicating through survey results that these activities are very important to church life. In a sense, this is largely an argument for the status quo, since the congregation is largely happy with the direction of the church. The challenge going forward is to maintain and strengthen these programs given the

realities of budgeting St. Mark's limited resources (particularly for the youth program), while also exploring new opportunities for community engagement, such as potentially through the VA hospital on Colfax.

Community engagement will be key as St. Mark's tackles the demographic realities of the future. Like many mainline Protestant churches in America, the congregation at St. Mark's is older than the population as a whole. To maintain the vitality and sustainability of the congregation into the future, St. Mark's will need to continue to attract new members. An analysis of the church directory has indicated that most members live nearby or did so in the past. Through demographic analysis, we found that the neighborhoods around St. Mark's have changed significantly over the past 30 years and are currently majority-minority, implying that most potential new members to St. Mark's are non-white. It is therefore imperative that we continue to be a welcoming place to all comers, and maintain a flexible approach in community engagement.

The slides for the presentation are available as a Google Document (see <https://bit.ly/31WH49v>) or a downloadable PowerPoint presentation (see <https://bit.ly/3210vht>).

Transition Team Wrap Up

The Transition Team has completed their work. A copy of their final report is available for pick up at the church or you can request a copy be mailed to you by contacting the church office. The Transition Team will meet with the Council on November 12 to present the report and their work on the Ministry Site Profile (MSP). This document will be used by the Call Committee and the Office of the Bishop to search for St. Mark's next pastor.

Please offer your thanks to Transition Team members for their dedication and hard work. They are: Ron Maniscalco, Josh Vermaas, Claudette Gilbert, Michele Gohl, and Susan Saeugling.

From the desk of the Director of Youth and Family Ministry

Kinna Nordstrom

Fall Quest Camp

OHANA Youth had another eventful weekend in Buena Vista, CO at Frontier Ranch Camp with the Episcopalians. Since we began as an ecumenical youth group, we love to go to the Episcopal camp as well as the Lutheran events. The theme was **#blessed**, and the big take away was that there is absolutely nothing we can do in order to receive God's blessings. We just are blessed. (Quite Lutheran when we think of justification!) We had four new youth that went to camp, and they loved it! We were the largest youth group that attended with 28 youth, nine adults, and a baby (Kobe's first Quest!).



Huge thank you to Shannon Walsh, Oluchi Emenyonu, and Denise (Oluchi's roommate) for doing work crew—which means they helped prepare every meal, and cleaned up after every meal!!! Huge thank you to Michele Gohl, Fanus Tampubolon, Tony Sinaga, and Fred and Mary Bourque for helping to chaperone the youth throughout the weekend. And a huge thank you to those of you who were able to give money for us to attend the event, and those who prayed for us. We look forward to attending again for the Spring camp, March 13–15, when they will bless and send off our graduating seniors.



Affirmation of Baptism (a.k.a. Confirmation)

I am excited to announce that we have another Affirmation of Baptism class! This is my 6th year at St. Mark's, and so far I have only had one class of "confirmands." This summer, I had quite a few people ask me about Confirmation. It got me excited to be able to put together another class. We will start classes Sunday, November 10 from 10:30 a.m.–12 p.m. Affirmation of Baptism Sunday will be on Sunday, May 17, which will also be the Sunday where we celebrate our graduating seniors. Mark your calendars for a big party after worship during Cross+ Gen! If you know anyone else interested, I'm looking for youth grades 6 and up. I will even take young adults! We did this age range in my last class, and I think it worked rather well. I am also looking for an adult or two to attend the classes with us as my assistant. Please text (303-889-9844) or email (_____@gmail.com) for more info.

Affirmation of Baptism	
<u>Classes Sundays:</u>	<u>Cross + Gen Sundays:</u>
10:30a - 12p	10:30a - 11:30a
Begins: November 10	17-Nov
24-Nov	15-Dec
1-Dec	19-Jan
8-Dec	16-Feb
5-Jan	22-Mar
12-Jan	19-Apr
26-Jan	
9-Feb	<u>Affirmation of Baptism Sunday:</u>
23-Feb	8:15a - 12p
1-Mar	17-May
8-Mar	
29-Mar	
26-Apr	
Last class: May 10	

I created my Affirmation of Baptism curriculum specifically for this community, with the understanding that most of our youth aren't Lutheran. I am a "cradle Lutheran" like I know many in our congregation are, but our kids come from Catholic, Episcopal, or "un-churched" backgrounds. So there is an emphasis in my class on what it means to be a Christian, to be a part of a faithful community, and what the Bible tells us. Then we talk more about the specifics of Lutherans and other Christian denominations' understanding of faith and life. I love to teach, and I can't wait for this new group!

Auraria Campus Ministry

Here are some of our young adults who are the guinea pigs for the new Auraria Campus Ministry (ACM)! A couple of my colleagues from seminary started ACM, and our graduated youth were the first to be a part of this ministry. Warms my heart to see them participating in church outside of their participation with OHANA Youth Ministry. I currently serve as a founding board member for this ministry as well. It's very similar to the mission and ministry of OHANA, where all are welcome, and live into the love and grace of God. God is good!



OHANA, a word that means "all are family," has been adopted by our youth to mean Object Hate And Nurture Acceptance.

SMLCW News

Mary Stephenson, President

October is gone (almost) and here comes November. We are still enjoying the colors in the trees, plants, and fall decorations displayed in yards.

The RMSWO Gathering at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Albuquerque, New Mexico is past. Over 50 women came together to worship, visit, learn, pray, sing and EAT! Apparently no one went away hungry during the weekend. There was a time for Bible study, guest speakers, and several vendors had displays set up. Sunday wrapped up the Gathering with a worship service. The Gathering theme was from The Message: Ephesians:4:4–6, below:

“You were called to travel on the same road and in the same direction, so stay together, both outwardly and inwardly. You have one Master, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who rules over all, works through all, and is present in all. Everything you are and think and do is permeated with Oneness.”

So overall, the weekend was full of excitement and learning and reacquainting with Sisters in Christ. Perhaps another year we can have some from St. Mark’s attend. This year did not allow that opportunity.

Looking ahead the next RMSWO Fall 2020 Convention will be September 18–20. The location is Immanuel Lutheran Church in Greeley, Colorado. Being this close to us may allow a better chance for some St. Mark’s ladies to attend.

Also, the Eleventh Triennial Gathering takes place in Phoenix, Arizona, July 16–20, 2020. The theme is “Just Love.” Registration is open and you may gather more information at women.elca@elca.org.

It has been decided the Mary Circle will no longer continue. The loss of some members and other activities involving members makes it difficult to continue. Thank you to Patty for leading the Circle studies for many years and all those that participated. Perhaps there will be a time we can re-think and re-evaluate to make it convenient for all. Remember, the Ruth Circle continues to meet the first Tuesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in the church library. All are welcome to join the group.

Fall is such a beautiful season. Unfortunately, it doesn’t last very long for us to enjoy. We have experienced rain, snow, and sun all in a short amount of time. God is in control even though we think we should have our say. Appreciate the beauty God has painted for you and remember to give thanks for all His gifts. We are truly blessed!

NOVEMBER BLESSINGS! HAPPY THANKSGIVING!



- **Church Decorating** – December 7, 2018, 9 a.m.–12 p.m.
We will need volunteers to bring in the decorations on Friday afternoon at 4 p.m. (due to Central Visitation that takes place on Saturday morning).
- **Semi-annual Congregational Meeting** – December 15, 2019, 10:30 a.m.
- **Church Undecorating** – Saturday, January 11, 2020, 9 a.m.–12 p.m.

Council Corner

Council Highlights—October 8, 2019

Pastor Bev led an opening prayer.

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

President's Report

Central Visitation has asked Ryan for more space. They would like two adjoining rooms for visitations as they are getting more families. The nursery and possibly music room will be cleaned out. Mary Stephenson has been in contact with other preschools wanting some of our preschool supplies. All items are being organized in the Fellowship Hall so schools can see what we have.

Since there is no one to help with building issues, Ryan will take time off work to put up fire alarms, fix choir loft, clean out and organize rooms, and work on various other items.

The Jerusalem Latino Church that rents space from St. Mark's is moving to east of Pueblo and ending their lease with us.

Pastor's Report

Pastor and Terri have been working on the Stewardship Drive and have one letter ready to mail. There will be a fancy coffee this year to celebrate Stewardship in our community.

New Business

Council decided to not have a Thanksgiving service this year since Pastor Bev will not be here. Other churches in Aurora were contacted asking if our congregation might attend their service, but no other church seems to be having one.

Old Business

Transition Team Update: Listening Posts are finished and a summary is being written. A report from the team will be written and sent to the Bishop's office. Then the council will appoint a Call Committee.

Ryan was able to find one snow removal company that had time for St. Mark's. Council voted to accept the bid from Noshuetzin's Lawn Care/Landscaping.

Social Ministry

Claudette reported that the number of guests for Wednesday night meals drops off dramatically in winter months, so the meals will close down in December, January, and February. They will resume in March.

The food pantry will continue as usual. The grant we were given has helped a lot, but will be used up after Claudette picks up food and completes all the paper work this week.

Claudette has completed the two classes required by Food Bank of the Rockies on food safety and civil rights.

Meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Summarized Report of Income and Expenses

Submitted by Bill Stephenson, Treasurer

September, 2019			
<u>Current Month</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Total Income	\$16,650.11	Total Income	\$140,723.79
Total Expenses	-\$17,209.52	Total Expenses	-\$149,182.06
Net Income	-\$559.41	Net Income	-\$8,458.27
BUDGET COMPARISON OF ENVELOPE OFFERING			
<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	\$12,596.00	\$123,467.67	\$102,216.65
Over/Under Budget	-\$1,122.63		-\$21,251.02



How are you doing on your pledge?

If you are not sure, contact the office for your current giving versus what you pledged.

Stewardship Report

Terri Maniscalco, Stewardship Chair

Stepping Up In 2020 started out this year with...well, stepping into cold, ice, and snow. The 51 members that did brave the weather for Stewardship Sunday, we thank you. A total of 27 pledge cards were presented Sunday. Out of those, 16 pledges were increased—including two new pledges—with a total of \$72,536. This is a start towards our 2020 proposed budget of \$181,456. For those who brought their pledge cards on Stewardship Sunday, *We Thank You!*

There is a perception in our culture that all churches want is your money, but this is not the case at all. All a healthy, vital congregation wants is YOU! All that is wrapped up in who you are, God's beloved child. We are all beloved+++ children of God, gifted with the call to be Christ in the world. Of necessity, money is part of our lives outside the Church and it is part of our lives within the Church. When you give sacrificially, you give with thoughtfulness and intention for the ministry of St. Mark's. Remember we will be calling a new Pastor to guide our priorities into the future. A stable budget is key to a stable future.



If you were unable to attend church on Stewardship Sunday you can bring your pledge card to church Sunday, drop it off at the church office during business hours, or drop it in the mail.

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 on Sunday, December 15.

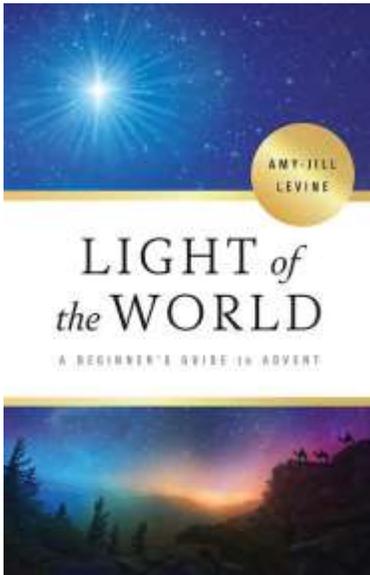
Please start praying about our congregation's mission and ministry together. Pray about our future together as Christ's Church. Pray about your Time and Talents for the next year.

Thank you for being a part of this congregation and for helping with **Stepping Up in 2020**

Parish Education

Dorie Gerhardt

Friends in Christ:



I'm excited to share the news Adult Faith Formation will be meeting in December. Previously I wrote that Adult Faith Formation would be taking a break until after the first of the year due to the Transition Team's activities.

However, Pastor Bev has ordered material by Amy-Jill Levine, a Jewish New Testament scholar pertinent to our Advent season. Pastor Bev says Ms. Levine has an amazing ability to honor Christian thought and tradition setting her writing within an accurate Jewish context of the day. What a wonderful way for us to prepare for the birth of our Lord! We can never learn too much and here we are presented with the opportunity of learning more through a different aspect. For me personally, I am always anxious to know more about Scripture. It's a never-ending journey. Please take a moment and prayerfully consider joining us for this chance to enhance this most blessed time of year and bring us closer to our Savior. My prayer is we ask our Heavenly Father to guide our hearts and minds that we may follow His Son's example of love and compassion and live lives pleasing in His sight.

Fellowship Committee Report

Susan Saeugling

Join us after worship service on Sunday, November 24 for a Thanksgiving pie social. Please sign up to bring your favorite pie; we will provide ice cream, whipped cream, and refreshments. We would also appreciate it if some folks will help with the clean up afterwards.



I know as this year comes to a close, I have many things to be grateful for. One for sure is my family at St. Mark's. I am also grateful for the time I spend here worshipping and the opportunities to enjoy fellowship with everyone.

So please, join us for another opportunity. Bring your friends and family—everyone is welcome!

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:

Jean Rose (*recovery from heart procedure*)
Jeff Martin (*vascular surgery for leg*)
Susan Saeugling (*digestive waste system issues*)

For homebound members and friends:

Colleen Graham Lillian Ripper
Arlene Selk Clare Pankratz
Mark Heflin Gerry Redlin
George Devers Don Snook and Trish Kulp

For the faithful departed and those who mourn:

Family of Anna Devers
Family of Jim Snook
Family of Colina Kandt

For those diagnosed with cancer or long-term illness:

Doreen Goldsberry (*Doris Seline's daughter, breast cancer*)
Chuck Martell, II (*Lou and Bubbles' son, heart issues*)
Virginia Martell (*Chuck's wife, Alzheimer's*)
Jean (*Jackie Kirk's sister, cancer*)
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*)
Rich Rusk, Sr. (*COPD*)
Isaiah Daniels (*Ollie Daniels' grandson, deployed to Kuwait*)
Darrell Hesselius (*incurable health problem*)
Brian Hodgson (*health*)
Sandy Day (*health*)
Jeff (*Hugo Redlin's son, health*)
Rick Parsons (*friend of Diana Ratliff, cancer*)

Christine Slape (*friend of Brian Hodgson, cancer recurrence*)
Cogie Elzea (*sister of Sara Jensen, health*)
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 Service Schedule - November 2019

As of time of publication; subject to change

Communion Assistants:

3rd: Terri Maniscalco and Rich Schnier
10th: Terri Maniscalco and Mary Stephenson
17th: Terri Maniscalco and Name TBD
24th: Kinna Kemp and Name TBD

Assisting Ministers:

3rd: Mary Katherine Smith
10th: Patty Costello
17th: Rich Schnier
24th: Mary Katherine Smith

Ushers

Ken and Anne Barger
Marcia Daugherty
Ellie Weaver
Kathy Clevenger

Greeter:

Ken and Anne Barger

Lector:

3rd & 10th: Mary Stephenson
17th & 24th: Jim/Betty Falk

Weekly Attendance October 2019

October 6th 79
October 13th 64
October 20th 66
October 27th 51

WORSHIP LIFE AT ST. MARK'S

November 2019

Sunday, November 3, 2019 ~ All Saints Sunday

In holy baptism God makes saints out of sinners. In holy communion God forgives the sins of all the saints. In the assembly today we give thanks for all the saints “who from their labors rest,” who have fought the good fight, who have gained the crown. In the same breath we petition our God for the strength to hear and to heed the admonitions of the Lord Jesus in today’s gospel. Recalling that we have been sealed by the Spirit and sustained by the Savior’s body and blood, we keep on keeping on as God gives us breath, to the praise of God’s glory.



Reminder: As we did last year, we will have an *ofrenda/altar* in the “PrayGround” area for folks to put a picture frame of their deceased relatives. This is one way that our Mexican siblings in Christ honor their loved ones on *Dia de los muertos* (day of the dead) on All Saints Day. For more information regarding the ofrenda tradition, please pick up a flier outside of the sanctuary. All are invited to bring a picture to place on the altar.

Sunday, November 10, 2019 ~ 22nd Sunday after Pentecost

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

We worship on the first day of the week because our Savior was raised on that day. Every Sunday is a little Easter. This Sunday feels more like Easter than many as the appointed texts celebrate the reality of the resurrection. Live it up this Lord’s day. Our God is the God of the living.

Sunday, November 17, 2019 ~ 23rd Sunday after Pentecost

The end is near. There is no doubt about it. The warnings are dire. The tone of today’s texts is ominous. But the baptized know how to live in the “meantimes.” The baptized are strengthened for the living of these days in word and sacrament. The baptized rally around the invitation of the apostle: “Brothers and sisters, do not be weary in doing what is right.”

Sunday, November 24, 2019 ~ Christ the King

Jeremiah’s promise of the execution of “justice and righteousness in the land” finds ironic fulfillment in the execution of Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. It appears so utterly contradictory that the king should be crucified with the criminal. This victory appears for all the world as ignominious defeat. Yet through the gate of death our Lord opens the door to paradise.

Blessing of the Animals – St. Francis Sunday, Oct. 13



Happy Birthday!

November 4 Antoni Sinaga

November 8 Doris Seline

November 10 Chad Gilbert

November 11 Angela Hines

November 13 Jeffery Martin

November 16 Leogene McKinney

November 17 Marlene Brelsford

November 19 Gary Lambert

November 21 Ele Lopeman

November 22 Michele Gohl
Ryan Gohl

November 23 Gennisa Watson

November 25 Audrey Kair

November 26 Norman Kair

November 27 Avery Stephenson

November 29 Haylee Brunn

December 2 Arlene Selk

December 4 Patty Costello

Notes from the Office—Directory Update

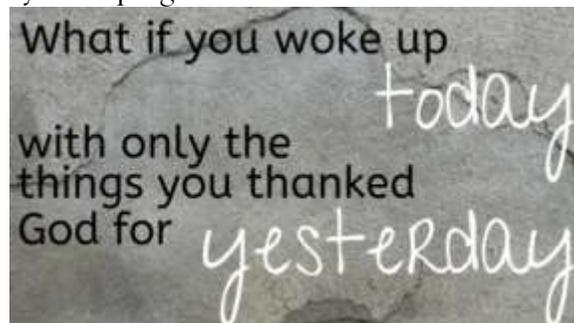
Mary Katherine Smith, Office Manager

It should not be too much longer before we receive our new photo directories! I received both the first and second proofs, submitted corrections, authorized printing, and am now awaiting a specific timeframe as to when we will receive our new books. The directories should be here before the end of this year. Every family who submitted or sat for a photo will receive a copy, and a small quantity of extras will be available for claiming by those who did not have a photo included.

One thing that will be noticeably different about this directory from ones that we have done in the past with Lifetouch is each photo will have a corner tag that reads “2018.” This is due to a policy that Lifetouch has instituted where the year that the directory project began is indicated on every photo. One requirement of the Community Book program

that we signed up for with them last year is that a new photo from each family must be taken or submitted every four years to appear in future updates. By marking the year on the photo, Lifetouch can monitor when new photos are needed. I tried my best to negotiate on this matter as I know it will be a little confusing to see 2018 labels in a 2019 directory, but Lifetouch would not relent. Rest assured, the contact information in the back portion of the directory is current as of publication. In addition, the cover will indicate to us this is our 2019 directory.

As we await our directory, please submit any corrections, updates, or additions to your contact information to the office by either leaving a note in my box or e-mailing to: admin@StMarksAurora.org.



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.

**November 2019
 Highlights**

- 3rd All Saints Sunday
- 12th Council Meeting
- 24th Christ the King
 Sunday &
 Thanksgiving Pie
 Social
- 28th Thanksgiving,
 Office Closed
- 29th Office Closed

**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 | |