



The Messenger

VOL. LXII, ISSUE V

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

May 2020

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

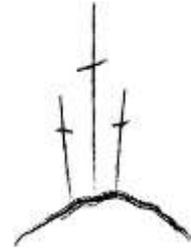


St. Mark's Lutheran Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

April 27, 2020

Dear Member of St. Mark's:

The Church Council received the recommendation from the Call Committee for Nic Leither to become our next pastor. Unanimously, like the Call Committee, we voted for the acceptance of this recommendation.



I would like to present Nic as our next potential pastor at St. Mark's Lutheran Church.

Many thanks to our Transition Team and Call Committee, consisting of Michele Gohl, Claudette Gilbert, Ron Maniscalco, Susan Saeugling, Josh Vermaas, Dorie Gerhardt, Clark Gilbert, Norma Duncan, Dawn Ramos, Fanus Tampubolon, and Ken Barger. Please when you have a moment make sure you thank them as well for all their efforts and diligence during this process. They worked extremely hard to make sure all our needs were addressed.

With the help of Sarah Moening and the Office of the Bishop, here is an outline on how we will move forward:

- 1) Two consecutive Sunday announcements to present Nic Leither. - April 26th is the first official announcement.
- 2) Announcements as written will go into the Sunday bulletin as well as distributed via an email blast and again in each Thursday weekly email.
- 3) Sunday May 3rd will be our second official announcement and we will invite Nic to worship with us and be available for a meet and greet with our congregation following the service.
- 4) All members including our youth please submit your questions that you would like to ask Nic. Please email your question and a contact number to the church office.
- 5) We will take the questions and organize them so that a leader can ask the appropriate congregational member who submitted the question to present it to Nic. This provides an atmosphere so that we are not talking over each other and everyone can hear what is being said.
- 6) May 10th following service we will conduct a vote to accept Nic as our next pastor. This will need to be a poll conducted via the web (Details to follow next Sunday). For those who are not able to attend, a council member will place a phone call to each non attending congregational member and ask them for their vote. Please as you are talking to other members, mention not only Nic but also encourage them to attend the next two Sundays. This is especially important to the future of St. Mark's. Your voice needs to be heard, during these times your assistance in conveying this information is vital.
- 7) A quorum of at a minimum 40 confirmed members must cast their vote. Without that no business of the church can be decided.
- 8) We will also include the additional question of accepting the term extension of all current council members as we continue to navigate these difficult times.

Now is the time to know that you have a stake in our future as a church. Please take the opportunity to take part.

God Bless,

Ryan Gohl
Council President, St. Mark's Lutheran Church

From the Desk of Pastor Ken Thurow

Bob Dylan didn't know how right he was! "The times, they are a'changing." Well, maybe he did, writing amid the great changes of the time. But the line has never been more true, with the massive changes brought about by the novel coronavirus pandemic. Death, infection, unemployment, and more are constantly in the news. Less traffic, cleaner air, a more relaxed pace of life are true as well. Schools are closed, people working from home, families having time for recreation. A mixed picture in a scary time. And worship as we never imagined it! In mid-March I had never heard of Zoom, now it is our means of worship, helping us maintain a sense of community at St. Mark's as at innumerable other churches.

Friends, I commend you as I thank the people who make it possible. Kinna and Mary Katherine do the heavy lifting on a weekly basis, Kinna running the Zoom meeting and Mary Katherine preparing the bulletins and the PowerPoint form of the bulletin (as well as helping on vocals). Kinna and Mary Katherine alternate serving as Assisting Minister and as reader of the congregational responses. Equally deserving of our thanks are Organist Rose Kvern, Choir Director (now lead vocalist) Betty Falk, sound guy (recording worship music) Bill Stephenson, and Mary Stephenson for regularly serving as Lector. And thanks to all of you. Our attendance on this "virtual platform" has been strong and consistent (I should mention that Patty Costello has been a "regular" all the way from Tulsa!)

Now more change is in the wind—the welcome change to the calling of a new pastor. This newsletter features the message delivered to the congregation last Sunday by Congregation President Ryan Gohl and Call Committee Chair Michele Gohl. The Call Committee has interviewed and recommended to the Church Council a candidate for the pastoral office at St. Mark's. The Council has interviewed the candidate and unanimously recommends him to the congregation for call. Now the decision is in the hands of you, the members of St. Mark's. The Council has called a special meeting of the congregation for May 10. The candidate, Nic Leither, will be present (well, as present as anyone can be) at our May 3 service. So step up, check in, listen thoughtfully, and vote your own thought and opinion as we face this important and hopeful step.

The Council is also beginning to discuss and make decisions regarding the cautions to be observed and procedures to be followed when the "re-opening" of social gatherings gets underway. We are monitoring the recommendations of the Rocky Mountain Synod as well as those of state and city governments.

For now, thanks again for your participation in the worship and ministry of St. Mark's. Special thanks for your continued financial support, for recognizing that most expenses of the congregation continue even as much of the activity is suspended.

Pastor Ken Thurow



A fun cartoon I saw

From the desk of the Director of Youth and Family Ministry

Kinna Nordstrom

High School Graduates from our OHANA Youth:



Melody Emenyonu – Hinkley

1. **Greatest accomplishment?** I was elected Ms. T-Bird—it means that not only am I recognized for my success within the classroom, but I am a valued member of my community, by teachers and students alike.
2. **How will you celebrate?** I plan to celebrate with family. Given the COVID-19 situation, a party is most likely not going to happen, but we still plan to celebrate.
3. **What's next?** I plan to study healthcare management with a pre-med track at a four-year university.

Queen Emenyonu – Hinkley

1. **Greatest accomplishment?** My greatest high school accomplishment was making such down to earth friends and learning more about myself.
2. **How will you celebrate?** By looking back at my high school memories.
3. **What's next?** I plan to attend college and begin my journey to becoming an OBGYN or emergency physician.



Gabriel Bourque – Smoky Hill

1. **Greatest accomplishment?** My greatest accomplishment was being nice to others!
2. **How will you celebrate?** I am going to celebrate with my family.
3. **What's next?** I will go to transition and then hopefully to film school.

College Graduates from our OHANA Youth:



Malik Ray – CU Denver, Architecture

1. **Greatest accomplishment?** My greatest college accolade is from the first semester of my senior year. In the Architecture major, we are challenged with peculiar and daunting prompts to design for. This specific prompt was to design a multi-residential complex for humans and a non-human species to coexist. I designed a luxurious and dystopian housing complex that enforces social and solitary living concepts. I chose the Canada Lynx as my species and created hidden passageways for the feline to circulate throughout the complex without coming into direct contact with humans unless it decides to. At the end of the semester, my solution to the design challenge was the greatest of all my colleagues. My project was put on display for the school and was also shown to hundreds of architecture practitioners during the CU Denver career fair. Which made me a stand-out and helped me secure a paid internship at KTG architecture.
2. **How will you celebrate?** My graduation commencement has been postponed until this December due to the pandemic. Although, I will still receive my degree in the mail like normal. I do not have any celebration plans as of yet. Initially, I was going to have a cookout with my friends and family. Also, my Aunt was going to treat me to Atlantis and Disney World. Those trips have been pushed back until later this year or next summer. I'm really looking forward to those.
3. **What is next for you in your life journey?** More school. I got accepted into Graduate school with a scholarship. So, I plan to practice in the field while I work towards my Master's degree for the next two years. After completion, I will obtain licensing to be a professional architect. I have dreams of being a developer and real estate mogul. Which I will strive for after Grad school. I have hopes of going to culinary school and learning martial arts but that will be later down the road.

Jacob Gohl – UNC Greeley

1. **Greatest accomplishment?** My greatest accomplishment will be in two weeks when I finish my bachelor's degree!! If that doesn't count, then it would have to be getting into the business school at UNC straight out of high school. Fun fact is that The Monfort College of Business at UNC is the only business school to ever receive the Malcolm Baldrige award for excellence from the office of the president of the United States
2. **How will you celebrate?** I plan on hopefully having family and close friends over for a lunch/dinner celebration being that my ceremony was cancelled.
3. **What is next for you in your life journey?** I'm not really sure what is next. It's scary to admit that but I don't honestly know that I have what I want to do for the rest of my life nailed down yet. Whatever journey I do end up embarking on I do hope to be known as a leader, as someone who is dedicated to making a positive impact and change on the world, and someone who tries their best with whatever they do. If I can live a life that can resemble those qualities, I think that I will be set up for success in any adventure I pursue.



Affirmation of Baptism Class of 2020

Each student was asked to answer three questions:

1. Why did you take this class?
2. What is one thing that you learned?
3. What will you take away from the class?



Eleanor Bourque – 5th grade Mission Viejo

1. To find out more about why we do the things at church.
2. I found out that nothing I do can stop God's love for me.
3. I had fun and learned a lot.



Azael Muniz – 6th grade, Lotus School for Excellence

1. I joined Miss Kinna's Affirmation of Baptism class because I wanted to get involved in church more.
2. I learned that no matter what you do, God will never stop loving you.
3. This class has helped me learn to be more forgiving.



Anderson Sinaga – 6th grade, Aurora Quest K-8

1. I didn't choose this class (my parents chose for me).
2. I have learned the story of Jesus,
3. and it has impacted my life by teaching me the whole story, how and why Jesus did what he did.



Rolando Ferrufino – 7th grade, Aurora Quest K-8

1. I chose to take AoB class because it would help me learn more of baptism and of God.
2. I learned stories from the New and Old Testament.
3. This class impacted my life because it will help and push me to learn more about the church and God.



Santiago (Santi) Guerrero Mendia – 8th grade, Aurora West Preparatory Academy

1. Because I know a lot of the people there.
2. It is better to read the Bible with a group of people to see others points of view.
3. It impacted me because I learned a lot of stuff I didn't know already about God and the Bible.



Christian Pardosi – 8th grade, Prairie Middle School

1. I took this class because I wanted to take my faith in God to the next level in seeing what I could do to help others in this world.
2. One thing I learned in AoB is how God wants us to live with ourselves and with him.
3. AoB impacts my life by showing me a new perspective in life and brings me joy and hope every day.



Kalani Heath – 9th grade, Smoky Hill High School

1. I chose to do Miss Kinna's class because of family tradition and wanting to learn more and to honor my grandma.
2. One thing I have learned is that we all may come from different things in life, but we come together without judgment of one another.
3. This class has impacted my life by kinda what I said before, but having more understanding of what Jesus did for everyone and how he did it.



Andraïne Sinaga – 9th grade, Hinkley

1. I chose to take AoB with Ms. Kinna because I wanted to strengthen my relationship with God by learning more about what having faith and living in faith meant. Ms. Kinna was also the perfect person to teach me more about what it meant to be a child of God.
2. I learned that we are simultaneously 100% sinners and saints. As humans we constantly make mistakes but God is always willing to give second chances, always forgives, and is able to change his mind. He is proof of love that cannot be understood.
3. This class impacted my life by teaching me more about greed and helping me be more aware of the differences between what is needed and what is wanted. Naturally, it helped me be more grateful and renewed because I had a different view of what God's word meant and it changed the way I looked at my own personal relationships and bonds.



Timothy Pardosi – 10th grade, Overland High School

1. This class allowed me to get closer and build a stronger relationship with God.
2. One thing I learned was thinking differently in life. What I mean is different perspectives and how these different perspectives impact my life.
3. This class impacted my life by being able to understand God and Jesus.



Andrea Sinaga - 10th grade, Hinkley

1. I chose to take Ms. Kinna’s affirmation of baptism class because I wanted to grow my faith and relationship with God. I wanted to learn more of his ways and what he meant by his words.
2. One thing I have learned in her AoB class is that everyone should be equal. No one can have too little or too much.
3. This class has impacted my life because it taught me that perspective is important when reading the Bible. I also learned that the Bible sometimes contradicts itself because different people wrote it but the big picture is still the same.



Carlos Ferrufino – 11th grade, William Smith High School

1. I chose this class because I wanted to learn more about God.
2. I learned stories from the Old Testament.
3. This class has changed my perspective of how I see life.

Parish Education Reflections

Dorie Gerhardt

As St. Mark’s Parish Education representative to our Church Council, I would like to share with my church family what an honor and pleasure it has been to serve my church family these past four years. For me serving on Council alongside my fellow council members was not only a blessing but a pleasure. And, under our current circumstances, I’m more than happy to extend my term until my position may be filled.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Call Committee members for our time spent together serving our congregation here at St. Mark’s. Again, I feel honored and grateful to have had the joy in the selection for a new pastor to shepherd us into the future. A special thank you to Michele Gohl, the Committee’s Chairperson. Michele displayed kindness and patience every step of the process. Her guidance was greatly appreciated. A BIG heartfelt thank you, Michele, Dawn, Norma, Clark, Ken, and Fanus!

My prayer for our church family: May we thank our gracious and loving God for those who have nurtured us—Pastor Bev and Pastor Ken. And may we welcome our new pastor in the way our Lord and savior taught us. Continue Lord to keep us in your loving care. Amen

John 13:34 A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

Council Corner

Council Highlights—April 14, 2020

President Gohl called the meeting to order at 6 pm on Zoom.

The Call Committee was present and updated council on a potential candidate for pastor of St. Mark's. Council voted to accept the recommendation and Ryan will set up a date for council to interview him. Ryan thanked the Call Committee for all their hard work.

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

President's Report

Replacement of the door at the top of the education wing has been put on hold until after the COVID-19 quarantine since it is hard to get bids at this time.

The roof at the top of the stairs in the education wing appears to still be leaking. The repair company that took an initial look at it returned to re-address the situation.

We have a new lease from Families Forward.

Pastor's Report

Pastor Ken has received good responses on the zoom services. He wishes to thank Kinna, Mary Katherine, Bill, Rose, and Betty for all their hard work on setting up the services.

Pastor will meet with the family of Esther Rusk on Wednesday, April 15 to arrange the funeral service to be held on Friday, April 17. Only immediately family members will be allowed, and all social distancing rules will be observed, including the wearing of masks. No food will be served.

Youth and Family Ministries

Kinna has raised \$1090 for Ohana Pandemic Initiative. This is to help the families of our youth who have lost their jobs.

Old Business

Nominating Committee update: At this time, it is extremely hard to get the committee together and to find someone to fill an office on the church council. Ryan asked all council members whose terms are up, to extend their terms for 2–3 months. A vote by the congregation will be necessary to temporarily allow a term extension of this manner. Ryan thanked council for all their hard work during this hard time.

New Business:

Audits will be put on hold until it is safe to meet. The audits have to be complete before the congregational meeting we usually have in May, however, we do not know when we will be able to have that meeting.

Claudette will work with Mary Katherine on setting funeral guidelines at St. Mark's during the quarantine based on a model guidelines document from Massachusetts that was shared by our Synod.

Meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Summarized Report of Income and Expenses

Submitted by Bill Stephenson, Treasurer

March, 2020			
Current Month	Amount	Year to Date	Amount
Total Income	\$15,681.74	Total Income	\$38,562.95
Total Expenses	-\$15,124.40	Total Expenses	-\$41,017.60
Net Income	\$557.34	Net Income	-\$2,454.65
BUDGET COMPARISON OF ENVELOPE OFFERING			
Monthly Budget Amount	Actual Current Month	Budget Year to Date	Actual Year to Date
\$13,941.05	\$12,834.99	\$41,823.15	\$33,234.97
Over/Under Budget	-\$1,106.06		-\$8,588.18

SMLCW News

Mary Stephenson, President

Well, here we all remain under the 'stay at home order'. When you have to go out, you make the time away from home as short as possible. What an awkward world we are living in right now.

Sometimes I can't help wondering if God is trying to get our attention and look up. After all, He is in control. The demand for social distancing, wearing of facial masks, and hand washing are so important. It just shocks me to go into a store and see the lack of respect for others. We need to adhere to these policies so we can return to school, to church, eat out, visit with family and friends. I just don't get it. What is wrong with people?

About some other news now. I received word that the members of Southeast CO Women of the ELCA are pleased to announce their spring event. This is a one-day retreat Saturday, June 13 at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 4720 Galley Road, Colorado Springs. The title is "Stirring Up the Spirit". Pastor Barb Lemke, pastor of Bethel Lutheran Church will be the pastor and presenter. Registration forms will be available sometime in the near future. Please watch for future information via the church weekly eNews or Sunday bulletins.

What an awkward time we are living in right now. Schools are shut down through the end of this school year. Churches are closed to physical worship services. Restaurants, parks and playgrounds, small businesses are closed, and the list goes on and on. When the year 2020 began, little did we realize what would happen within the first couple months. Throughout these couple months we have experienced both sadness and joy. Being apart from both immediate family and church family is very hard. We all need people in our lives and I for one looked forward to seeing my church family every Sunday. I really miss not being able to hug and love on grandchildren. Thank heavens for Zoom and Facebook!

As you awake each new day, look for a 'splash of joy' and always remember God is in control!

MAY BLESSINGS AND PEACE TO ALL!

WORSHIP LIFE AT ST. MARK'S

May 2020

In keeping with the recommendations of the Bishop of the Rocky Mountain Synod, we will not be having in person worship services at St. Mark's throughout all of May.

Sunday, May 3, 2020 ~ 4th Sunday of Easter

Today is sometimes called "Good Shepherd Sunday." Jesus is called the "gate" of the sheep in today's gospel. The risen Christ opens the way to abundant life. He anoints our heads with oil and guides us beside the still waters of our baptism. Each Sunday he spreads a feast before us amid the world's violence and war. We go forth to be signs of the resurrection and extend God's tender care to all creation.

Sunday, May 10, 2020 ~ 5th Sunday of Easter

As we continue to celebrate the fifty days of Easter, today's gospel includes Jesus' promise that he goes to prepare a place for his followers in his Father's house. Our baptism commissions us to share Jesus' mission in the world. As 1 Peter reminds us, we are a holy people, called to proclaim the one who called us out of darkness into light. In words and deeds we bear witness to the risen Christ—our way, our truth, our life.

Sunday, May 17, 2020 ~ 6th Sunday of Easter

Jesus does not abandon his followers. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus comes to abide with his disciples of every generation. As Pentecost draws near, we are reminded that the risen Christ dwells in us as the Spirit of truth. We receive this Spirit in baptism and pray that in our gathering around the Lord's table the Spirit will transform us to be the body of the risen Christ in the world.

Sunday, May 24, 2020 ~ 7th Sunday of Easter

In these days between Ascension and Pentecost, we gather with the disciples in the upper room, waiting for the Spirit to transform the church around the world. In today's gospel Jesus prays for his followers and for their mission in his name. Amid religious, social, and economic divisions, we seek the unity that Jesus had with his Father. Made one in baptism, we go forth to live our faith in the world, eager for the unity that God intends for the whole human family.

Sunday, May 31, 2020 ~ Day of Pentecost

Pentecost derives its name from the Jewish festival celebrating the harvest and the giving of the law on Mount Sinai fifty days after Passover. Fifty days after Easter, we celebrate the Holy Spirit as God's presence within and among us. In Acts the Spirit arrives in rushing wind and flame, bringing God's presence to all people. Paul reminds us that though we each have different capacities, we are unified in the Spirit that equips us with these gifts. Jesus breathes the Holy Spirit on his disciples, empowering them to forgive sin. We celebrate that we too are given the breath of the Holy Spirit and sent out to proclaim God's redeeming love to all the world.

Online Worship on Zoom

Our worship services will be held online via Zoom at 10:00 a.m. MDT at

<https://zoom.us/j/389867134>

You can also join our worship services on Zoom by entering Meeting ID: 389 867 134 and password: **EMAIL TO REQUEST** in your computer, phone, or tablet's Zoom app. Alternatively, you may also call either 1-346-248-7799 (Houston) or 1-669-900-6833 (San Jose) to listen by phone.

The bulletin for the each service will be published online and can be downloaded from our website at <https://www.stmarksaurora.org/2020-virtual-worship.html>.

Online Worship Attendance - April 2020

April 1 st	28	April 9 th Maundy Thursday	44	April 12 th	67	April 26 th	58
April 5 th	53	April 10 th Good Friday	40	April 19 th	49		

Happy Birthday!

May 1	Dawn Hines	May 20	Dawn Ramos
May 5	Wyatt Gunther	May 22	Don Snook West Twomey
May 7	Rhonda Nimerichter Matsumoto	May 23	Janet Pethan
May 8	Gilbert Bliss	May 24	Lydia Scott Quai Barker
May 10	Heather Remington	May 29	David Heflin
May 13	Allyson Dominguez-Bower	June 2	Lucius Balsley
May 15	Clark Gilbert Dorie Gerhardt	June 4	James Arensen Chelsea DeLong Reinis
May 19	Juan Carlos Black		

Happy Anniversary!!

Randy & Sara Jensen
May 7, 1994

James & Karen Arensen
May 9, 1998

Richard & Susan Schnier
May 15, 2004

Community News

Lutheran World Relief- Join the 75,000 Face Mask Challenge



COVID-19 is threatening vulnerable communities, and Lutheran World Relief urgently needs cloth face masks to send to them. The cloth mask you sew in

your living room will provide love and protection to a neighbor in need halfway around the world. Sign up for more info, go to www.lwr.org/masks!

Directory Updates

- Ron and Terri Maniscalco's new address is 1470 S Havana St, Unit 806 Aurora, CO 80012
- Joan Chambers' email address is no longer valid
- Ele Lopeman has moved to Tucson, Arizona

- Susan Dille has transferred her membership to Bethlehem Lutheran in Lakewood, Colorado.

Please submit any corrections, updates, or additions to the office by either calling 303-366-9702 or e-mailing admin@StMarksAurora.org.

Thank you

Thank you for the cards, prayers, and calls regarding the death of Luci Stephenson. The hardest thing was not to have a funeral, but just knowing there are people who care touched our hearts and souls.

—Bill and Mary Stephenson and family

To Our St. Mark's Family,
Thank you all for your thoughts, prayers, and cards during this difficult time.

Sincerely
—Abel and Dawn Ramos

St. Mark's Lutheran Church
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 Aurora, CO 80011



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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.

May 2020 Highlights

- 2 Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly
- 3 Meet Pastor Nic Leither
- 10 Vote on Call of Pastor
- 17 Senior Recognition Sunday
- 12 Council Meeting
- 25 Memorial Day
- 31 Pentecost/ Affirmation of Baptism

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 | |