



ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5 AT 10 AM ST. MARK'S GOES TO THE DOGS... LITERALLY!



Each year as the Feast of St. Francis Rolls around (October 4) St. Mark's goes to the dogs...and cats, and fish, and birds. This year, as we seek to live more fully into our saying "Christ welcomed all, we welcome you" St. Mark's will be taking an increased roll in the Pet Blessing that takes place at AW Browns.

On Saturday, October 5 beginning at 9:45 parishioners will welcome 50 or more community members and their pets by handing out worship booklets, encouraging folks to sign up for email communications, and telling people about St. Mark's. Then all those from St. Mark's will help lead a worship and blessing service for everyone from the broader community.

Together we will literally go out into the town, and bring the message of Jesus to people who are seeking connection with God. (Just think how many times Jesus sent his disciples out into the community to pray, teach, heal and bless. Jesus never seemed to tell his disciples to just hang out in the building and hope folks came to them...) Come and be part of St. Mark's going to the dogs this year!

A.W.
BR:WN'S
YOUR HOMETOWN PET & GARDEN STORE

***** Pet Blessings will also occur on Sunday, October 6 at the 10am service. *****

As in previous years, pets who play well with others are welcome to church to be blessed and for their people to receive special blessing certificates.

This year, to be certain that we provide a worship experience to anyone who might want to attend (such as people with dander allergies or fear of certain animals) the 8am service will be **a dander free zone**.

***** See page 4 for important "Beyond Our Walls" information *****

MISSION STATEMENT:

St. Mark's is called to serve all people in greater Springfield, MA. as a guiding light and a spiritual home where Jesus' spirit is known through inclusive, joyful worship, spirited formation, thriving ministries of service, and powerful outreach. Christ welcomed all, we welcome you.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church

One Porter Road

East Longmeadow, MA 01028

413.525.6341

Email: office@stmarksma.org

Web: www.stmarksma.org

Office Hours: Mon-Thurs 9am-3pm

**Sunday Worship: 8am & 10am,
6:30 pm**

**Wednesday Worship:
12:00pm Eucharist**

Rector- Rev. Peter Swarr

Sr. Warden - Sue Schneider

Jr. Warden - Peter Fairman

Director of Music - Susan Matsui

Parish Administrator - Diane Chandler

Good News Editor - Diane Chandler

I.T./Webmaster - Ryan Schneider

The *Good News* is published monthly by St. Mark's Church. The deadline is usually the **3rd Tuesday of every month** unless otherwise noted.

**Next deadline is
Tuesday, Oct. 15, 2019**



Submit articles to:
Diane Chandler, Good News Editor
office@stmarksma.org

SABBATICAL 2020 By Fr. Peter

"Be still and know that I am God" so says the 10th verse of the 46th Psalm. But I think we all know that is easier said than done. Life is anything but still. Commitments, work, errands, family obligations, health issues...the list of things that can keep us from stillness is rather immense. And yet God keeps calling us, inviting us to rest in God's presence, to find our true home in God.

My work and ministry alongside you, the amazing people of St. Mark's, is an incredible gift. I see God at work in you and in this place day in and day out. But I also confess that in our activity and our ministry, stillness is not a hallmark of my ministry. I find myself often rushing from one program to another, from one pastoral visit to another, from one wonderful planning meeting to another. And I give thanks to God for the vitality and life that this represents. But I also know that in the rushing I fail to stop, be still, and find myself in the true source of life-God.

This is not how God calls us to live. And it is dangerous to fail to make time for rest and renewal. Without this centering and intentional seeking of God life can get out of balance, we can forget what truly matters, we can be swallowed up by the demands of life and fail to follow, love, and serve God.

This is one of the primary reasons I will be going on a three month sabbatical beginning in May. To seek God, to be still with God, to re-center my life and my ministry with you in God.

In the Episcopal Church sabbaticals are a regular part of ordained ministry. In Western Mass priests are asked to take a three month sabbatical every five years!

Sabbaticals are intended to help build us up for MORE service in our churches. This is not about unplugging from St. Mark's and looking elsewhere for my future, it is about recharging and reentering so the next years of ministry together can be even more full of blessing and grace. This sabbatical is all about me wanting to engage with you more fully and more faithfully so we can live into the work Jesus calls us to right here in East Longmeadow and beyond.

While all the details of my sabbatical are not finalized, I want to share with you some of my plans for how this time of "Being Still and knowing that God is God" will be playing out for me and my family.

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- It will begin in silence on an 8 day centering prayer retreat at Holy Cross Monastery in New York where I will spend each day being still and listening to God.
- I will then visit three churches in the northeast to learn how they have successfully grown in faithfully serving God in our current context. How have they engaged new leaders? How have they reached out to their communities? How have they managed to grow despite tight resources and an increasingly non-religious culture?
- I will then go on Pilgrimage, walking 160 kilometers of the Camino de Santiago in Spain, seeking physical-ly and spiritually to follow and search for Jesus
- I will then spend time in Northern Spain with my family, resting, learning, and practicing my Spanish
- In Mid July I will travel to Uganda to seek Christ in an orphanage where my family and I will live and work, looking for Christ's presence in the midst of children who have literally lost everything but life itself.
- I will end my time on the coast of Maine resting and seeking to integrate this learning and spiritual discovery with the ministry and life I have in this community of St. Mark's.

This sabbatical is not right around the corner, but I wanted to share some of the rationale and plans which stand behind it. I look forward to conversations and discussions in the near future about this time of being still and growing in the presence of God. Know that I am deeply committed to St. Mark's and full of gratitude for this incredible opportunity to re-center, recharge, and then continue serving Christ in this community and in each of you.

ST. MARK'S VESTRY PREPARES FOR THE SABBATICAL

For a priest a sabbatical is very important in their life and for their ministry because it offers time for renewal of mind, body, and spirit through periods of learning, spiritual deepening and experiencing different ways God is at work in the world and the church.

But a sabbatical can also be a very important time in the life and ministry of a congregation. Having time apart from our beloved Rector and our normal worship and ministry routines can provide the opportunity for self-reflection, exploration and growth as individuals and as a whole congregation.

Your Vestry has already been hard at work making plans for the upcoming sabbatical. We are dedicated to creating opportunities for fellowship, renewal and growth while ensuring that all church operations continue uninterrupted. We are firmly committed to ensuring that the pastoral and worship needs of the congregation are fully met during this 3-month sabbatical period. Updates will be provided as work continues and plans are further developed.

Currently the Vestry is inviting interested people to be part of a Sabbatical Team. The team would work together to brainstorm, plan and organize activities and events during the 3-month sabbatical that will engage and enliven our congregation. An initial meeting of the Sabbatical Team will be held in early November where people will be able to decide what role they would like to take and how much time they are able to commit as we begin this exciting journey. If you are interested in being part of the Sabbatical Team, please contact our Junior Warden Peter Fairman (peter.fairman@wne.edu) or any member of the Vestry.

May God prosper our lives and ministry together,

The St. Mark's Vestry



THE 2019 STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM HAS BEGUN!



There's always something exciting happening at St. Mark's and this fall is no exception. Last year, as we looked at our life of stewardship and giving; we focused on ripples turning into waves. We explored how our giving impacts ministry within our church. Together we made a wave of impact through our increased giving of time and money.

But the wave of St. Mark's ministry doesn't just stay inside this place; it goes far beyond these walls. From helping found the Western Mass Food Bank to ongoing support of Church without Walls, mission trips, and the Open Pantry, St. Mark's has a long legacy of reaching out to the community. Our church has made a positive difference in the community and the world beyond.

With that in mind, the Stewardship Team is proud to present "Beyond Our Walls" as the theme for this year's stewardship program. Each week from September 22nd, until October 20th at services as well as online, you can expect to see and hear inspiring testimonials from individuals who have been touched and helped by St. Mark's presence and ministry beyond our walls.

You will also be made aware of the very real financial costs and personal commitment associated with making these endeavors a reality. Over the course of this program we hope to bring to life what Jesus knew and taught: that giving of yourself makes life rich.

We hope you will join us to experience the power of this program and explore the ways God is calling you to serve and give in the year to come.

FEED THE HUNGRY FOR REAL: FOOD PACKING EVENT-SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19 FROM 9:00AM TO NOON

Jesus calls us to be his hands and feet in this world. But sometimes it can be hard to figure out how to do that. That's where this special Food Pack event comes in.

St. Mark's along with other area churches such as St. Paul Lutheran and First Methodist will gather at St. Mark's at 9am on October 19, 2019 to put together food kits for people suffering from disasters and hunger.

The program is overseen by Outreach Inc. (www.outreachprogram.org) which has directed the packing and distribution of over 260 MILLION meals since 2004.



EVERYONE can take part in this event. Young children, teens adults and seniors can all come together and create an assembly line of food packing love which will literally help feed people who are not sure where their next meal will come from. At the end of this food pack containers of dried, non-perishable meals will be ready to sustain and give hope to those in need.

Lines of tables (16 feet per line) will be set up and 10-12 volunteers will work on each line. The more lines of volunteers, the more food we can pack for those who are hungry. Each line can pack 2,000 meals in one hour! The more of us who come and give our time, the more people we can feed.

There is no cost for this event as all the food is being bought in advance by area congregations. All you need to do is **sign up in the Great Hall** and tell us if you can come..

ST. MARK'S NEXT WAY OF LOVE PROGRAM—OCTOBER 18, 6-8PM

THE WAY OF LOVE — PRAY

Are you curious about various forms of prayer?

Would you like to expand your prayer life?

Have you tried different prayer practices but want to learn more?

Please join us at St. Mark's Church on Friday, October 18th in our next Way of Love program, focusing on prayer. We will learn and practice:



Using prayer beads.



Lectio Divina



Walking a labyrinth



Centering prayer

St. Mark's Church, 1 Porter Road, East Longmeadow

6:00-8:00pm

We will be serving hearty appetizers at 6, with the program beginning at 6:30.

Childcare will be provided.

There is no charge for this program.

Please sign up in the Great Hall, so we have a head count for food.

For more information please call (413) 545-6341 or email meg.galbreath56@gmail.com

Kids Sing and Play

Come and Join Sue Matsui after Sunday Morning Service in the Nursery Room.

- * Children are invited after Sunday morning service to participate in our Kids Sing and Play program.
- * Parents please encourage your children to be part of this fun time.
- * Kids Sing and Play will share their songs and dances in church about once a month.

(We also would love if maybe one or two parents could stay to help with the group. That would be greatly appreciated.)



Thank You! ~Sue Matsui
and Gina Parent~

UPDATE FROM THE BIG E FUNDRAISING TEAM



This year the Big E posted record attendance. Likewise, the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association posted record sales. They were very pleased with our involvement and have invited us back for next year. So mark your calendars for September 18th through October 4th, 2020.

Jeanne and I would like to thank all of those who volunteered their time to make this a successful year for us. We managed to fill 122 of the 129 potential shifts and earned \$4,780.

Thank you,
Scott Conrad

ST. MARK'S 2ND ANNUAL COOKIE WALK AT THE ART & CRAFT FAIR



Attention all bakers, non-bakers, family members and others of the like: We are gearing up for our 2nd Annual Cookie Walk at the Art & Craft Fair!

Last year was such a huge success we decided to bring it back again and we're looking to triple in size (as we ran out of cookies by noon time last year!).

To add some extra fun, we've scheduled two baking events where we can be together, bake, laugh and have fun on October 20th at 11am (right after the 10am service) and November 4th at 6:30p.m.

A sign up sheet will be posted in the Great Hall and we hope you can join us!

We'll also need bakers who CAN'T make it to the baking events too! We have put together a recipe book of 100 cookie recipes (most of them freeze well!) or you can use your own. We're so excited to have another successful year!

Blessings from the Welcome Ministry Team

ST MARK'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT—2019

Hello families!

It's hard to believe that it's time to start looking ahead to the St. Mark's Christmas Pageant 2019!

This Christmas Pageant is a drop-in pageant, so all children who come to the 4:00 pm service on Christmas Eve can get a costume and join in!

If your child would like a bigger role - one with a vocal solo, or a role like Mary, Joseph, Gabriel, etc. - please let me or Gina know as soon as possible! Children and youth who would like to have one of these important roles can volunteer and make a commitment to come to as many Sunday practices as possible (right after the 10:00 am service on Sundays from now till Christmas), and also to the dress rehearsal. There are more important roles than you might think, so please don't hesitate to get in touch about this!

Blessings,
Sue Matsui (susan.matsui1@gmail.com) and
Gina Parent (scoob78056@aol.com)

Save the Date!

November 24, 2019  St. Mark's Church 

Ode to Joy

Play and Sing-Along.

Children, teenagers, and adults at St. Mark's are practicing "Ode to Joy" from Beethoven's 9th Symphony on their instruments, from violin and piano to trombone, from ukulele and chimes to tuba.

On November 24th, they will perform it during the 10:00 am service and everyone will be invited to sing along in the grand finale.

Please mark your calendars and come help us make a joyful noise!

Directed by Sue Matsui and Ryan Schneider

Adam Lape, bass soloist



OCTOBER

*Happy
Birthday*

10/03 Peter Swarr	10/18 Claire Sygiel
10/06 Theo Hutchins	Lori Decker
Erin Peteros	Adam Lape
Harrison Peteros	Hannah Salvador
10/09 Dan Schneider	10/21 Tracy Plass
Dwayne Lipinski	10/23 Caroline Peteros
10/13 Lucy Swarr	10/24 Melinda McQuade
10/14 Brett Boyd	10/26 Dan Tapper
Tralee Noonan	10/27 Sue Schneider

*Happy
Anniversary*

10/04 Raymond & Nicole Antaya
10/07 Robert & Dolly Nicoli
Lester & Ginny Sill
10/08 Rob & Hannah Fitzpatrick
10/09 Bryan & Wendy Boyd
10/13 David & Paula Wicks
10/20 Don & Linda Edwards

In an ongoing effort to relay information about the work of the church and its current financial standings to all in our congregation, please find both the monthly Financial Summary and the monthly Vestry Minutes immediately following.

Additionally, members of the Vestry will be available on the last Sunday of each month in the Great Hall from 8:45 to 9:30 AM to provide updates, information and answer any questions. All are welcome to attend.

**St Mark's Church
Monthly Financial Report
08/31/2019**

	Actual YTD 2019	Projection 2019	Budget 2019
Income			
Other Offerings	5,709	8,610	8,500
Pledges-current year	130,208	195,312	205,000
Endowments	5,785	7,713	7,682
Building Expense Recovery	10,049	15,074	16,600
Special Gifts	1,948	2,000	2,000
Fund Raising	2,024	10,500	10,500
Total Income	155,722	239,208	250,282
Expenses			
Outreach & Stewardship	17,146	26,559	27,116
Salaries and Fringe Benefits	97,053	146,330	149,166
Church & Rectory Utilities	18,091	25,903	25,440
Office Expense	6,615	9,029	6,875
Christian Education	3,001	5,032	4,815
Clergy Expense	1,954	2,931	3,200
Altar Expense	553	1,185	1,185
Music Expense	599	1,673	1,510
Welcome & Mutual Care	550	1,850	1,850
Buildings & Grounds	17,793	26,212	25,847
Debt Management	10,820	17,480	15,200
Total Expenses	174,175	264,183	262,204
(Deficit) Surplus	(18,453)	(24,974)	(11,921)

Minutes of the August 27, 2019 Meeting

St. Mark's Vestry

Present: Fr. Peter Swarr, Sue Schneider, Rob Fitzpatrick, Claire Sygiel, Peter Fairman, Ellie Otto, Scott Conrad, Nancy LaBrie, Jon Robichaud, and Rich Bruns.

The meeting was called to order with an opening prayer at 7:00 p.m.

Vestry reflected in small groups on what types of things make us feel welcome and unwelcome and what do we see at St. Mark's that we think makes others feel welcome.

Ron made a motion, seconded by Peter F, to accept the July minutes as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.

Vestry members reviewed the information sheet about various activities in the parish.

Under Updates, Scott reported our cash flow has gone down slightly but we are still semi-comfortable. The pledge number has gone down, most likely due to light attendance during the summer. Scott suggested that we encourage parishioners to set up automatic payments of their pledges although not through VANCO which takes a percentage. The upcoming fundraisers will hopefully hit the budgeted amount. Loose plate offerings have gone down while the water bill was huge due to a running toilet. We may want to give Sue Matsui the budgeted \$250 bonus before the end of the year.

Ministry teams will be asked to submit their budgets in Excel. Vestry talked about the need to pay down the line of credit. Fr. Peter reported that the Executive Committee had discussed doing a soft ask for matching funds to the \$7,000 that was given this year by various donors, perhaps during Advent. Scott, Rich, Ellie, Sue and Fr. Peter will work on the specifics of the ask.

Fr. Peter reported that Scott has decided to step down as treasurer for next year. The vestry thanked him for his service in this role.

Jon updated the vestry on Buildings & Grounds activities, noting that the sign in the front of the building has been fixed while the lighting in the sanctuary continues to be an issue. The estimate from Rob Mitus came in at approximately \$6,500, which is higher than what was budgeted. Rob reported that all storage units in the lower level have been completed and there may be room to construct two more. Vestry again discussed some ways to handle recycling.

Fr. Peter reported that Gina Parent has been hired as the Christian Ed coordinator and will begin on September 1. He noted that this is a one-year grant-funded position.

Sue noted that a Leadership meeting and Stewardship meeting will be held on September 10 and that a teaser video created by Rob will debut at services on September 8 and 15 to announce the upcoming "Beyond The Walls" stewardship campaign.

Fr. Peter reported that ten parishioners will be attending the Exploration into Christian Leadership beginning next week. It will run for five sessions ending with a retreat in November. Sue and Fr. Peter are also doing three Leadership programs with other area churches.

Rob updated the vestry on the test run of the live streaming of the 10 a.m. service, saying that it seemed to go well and people are watching. Rob is putting together a team who will be able to handle the live streaming when he cannot attend.

Peter F. told the vestry that plans to assemble a team who will put together a plan for Fr. Peter's sabbatical next year are ongoing. The team will begin work in November. Sue said it is important that the congregation has confidence that church business will go on as usual. The Rev. Libby Wade will be at church once in January and once in February so that the congregation can get to know her before she fills in on Sundays for Fr. Peter when he is on sabbatical. Fr. Peter will write an article for the October newsletter explaining what a sabbatical is all about.

Under Discussion, Jon made a motion, seconded by Rob to purchase and erect a permanent welcome sign to hang on the corner of the front of the church building. The motion carried unanimously.

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Cont'd from Pg. 10

Jon made a motion, seconded by Rob to approve the updated safe church policy. The motion carried unanimously.

Sue reported that work on the 2020 budget will begin in November after the stewardship program is completed. Vestry went into executive session.

Under Discussion Items, Sue reported that the St. Mark's table at National Night Out, staffed by members of the Welcome team, was very well received and that several people commented on the friendliness and welcoming feeling of St. Mark's. There was discussion about exploring ways to enhance our welcoming of visitors to our church by making our buildings and grounds more welcoming, by branding, messaging and advertising, and in interpersonal ways such as nametags. Perhaps this could be a priority in 2020.

Fr. Peter updated the vestry on pastoral concerns.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 p.m.

EMERGENCY FIRE EVACUATION POLICIES & PROCEDURES

POLICIES

1. Whenever the fire alarm sounds EVERYONE is to leave the building, even if you are sure it is a false alarm or a drill.
2. St. Mark's Staff, Vestry, and selected members of the congregation will be trained in Emergency Evacuation Policies and Procedures and should be prepared to assist in the event of an Emergency Evacuation. These staff and members of the congregation are referred to as **Fire safety staff**.
3. The congregation will periodically conduct a fire drill in order to practice safe evacuation of the building, according to the general procedures.
4. The Vestry, in coordination with St. Mark's Staff, will be responsible to:
 - o Assure the periodic training of St. Mark's Staff, Vestry, and selected members of the congregation in Emergency Evacuation Policies and Procedures.
 - o Schedule and carry out periodic fire drills.
 - o periodically review and update the *Emergency Evacuation Policies and Procedures*.
5. Exits will be maintained free of snow, ice and obstructions.
6. Each church school classes will have and utilize an **attendance clipboard** for attendance records and a sign affixed to the back of the clipboard indicating the class name.
7. When the Fire Department is called to the scene, Fire Department (and other Emergency Responders) have authority to determine a course of action; St. Mark's staff, members, and building occupants will follow their directives.



Music, Art, & Faith: Let's Go To Boston Wednesday, December 4, 2019

Sponsored by Christ Church Cathedral, Springfield, Massachusetts
A trip for everyone (and their friends) throughout the Diocese.



Our journey will take us to...
Cathedral of St. Paul

View the first American presentation of Abraham - Out of One.
A Jew, a Christian, and a Muslim each portray Abraham in original paintings.
What makes their perceptions different? How are they the same?

The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum

Imagine a building and art collection created by a single person. In 1901, Isabella Stewart Gardner opened such a museum which she developed for 20 more years.

Tour her museum searching for the paintings that best capture her spirit.

A Concert about the Role of Music in Faith

Jodi Sufrin is Cantor of Temple Beth Elohim in Wellesley Hills. She will take us on a voyage of faith, asking how music touches our spiritual lives.



The day will include bus, lunch, admissions, and guided tours.

Mark Shapiro, Rabbi in Residence at the Cathedral, will be our guide.

Begin at the Central Library parking lot on State Street at 7:45 a.m. Return at 7:30 p.m.

RESERVATIONS

Reserve your seat on the bus by sending your check for \$95 made payable to Christ Church Cathedral at 35 Chestnut Street, Springfield, MA 01103.

OR Reserve on-line at ccspfld.org

Your Name(s) _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Payment due no later than Tuesday, November 12.

QUESTIONS/MORE INFORMATION

Please contact Liz Stevens....


413-686-3177 OR cnmstevens@comcast.net


Love Your
Neighbor

who doesn't

 Look like you

 Think like you

 Love like you

 Speak like you

 Pray like you

 Vote like you

Love Your Neighbor

No exceptions

St. Mark's Episcopal Church

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