



Greetings St. Mark's!

As I write this note, it is Thanksgiving Day. It's a strange one, perhaps for you too. There's just me and Bob this year, (with the cats, of course). We will pack a few more boxes, and we will reflect and give thanks for our lives here in NH. In the midst of change we are grounded, filled with the grateful anticipation of being with you all in just a few days.

It's so compelling for us to want to jump straight forward to the birth of our Savior in just a few short weeks. I think this is especially true given the circumstances that surround us in these days. It seems strange to me that despite public health warnings to stay safe and close to home, we will still see folks giving in to the pull of our dominant consumer culture in retail outlets. And in spite of the overwhelming impulse to rush here and there, we in the Church push back, trying to walk a bit slower than the pace around us. In fact, we might look backward in time to the 25<sup>th</sup> of March. That is the date that we as Christians honor the Feast of the Annunciation, the blessed event when the angel Gabriel came to the young girl Mary, to ask of her an extraordinary request.

Poet and priest Malcolm Guite writes, *"Although her role as...the God-bearer, is in one way unique, in that she alone physically nurtures and brings into the world the body and person of Jesus Christ, in another way Mary is the archetype of every Christian soul, and of the whole Church. We are all called in some way to respond to God's promise, to say 'be it to me according to thy word'." In the nine months between the Annunciation and the birth of Christ the structure of the Church year invites us into spiritual journeying. This Advent we are slowly growing and being nourished in the intimacy of the Word. We are being formed in the womb and brought forth to serve; and also, like Mary, to bear Jesus into this world in living our lives.*

So, let us not hurry to greet the child Jesus. The blessed Nativity will come soon enough. Let us wait a bit longer, walk a bit slower, take in the sweetness of each other's company, in whatever medium brings us together safely, and find a moment or two to breathe in the blessed fullness of this time of Advent with the mother of our Lord.

Peace in Christ,

**Sandi+**

In Mary – Darkness by Jessica Powers

*I live my Advent in the womb of Mary  
And on one night when a great star swings free  
From its high mooring and walks down the sky  
To be the dot above the Christus i,  
I shall be born of her by blessed grace.  
I wait in Mary-darkness, faith's walled place,  
With hope's expectance of nativity.  
I knew for long she carried me and fed me,  
Guarded and loved me, though I could not see,  
But only now, with inward jubilee,  
I come upon earth's most amazing knowledge:  
Someone is hidden in this dark with me.*

## 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](mailto:office@stmarksma.org)

Web: [www.stmarksma.org](http://www.stmarksma.org)

Office Hours: Mon-Thurs 10am-2pm  
& Fridays 8am-12pm by appointment



## Weekday Prayer

Prayer stands at the heart of our faith. It connects us to each other, and to God. Christians long ago learned the incredible power and peace that a consistent schedule of prayer can offer. For this reason, since the beginning of the Pandemic, St. Mark's has offered daily opportunities to pray. St. Mark's continues to be committed to offering multiple forms of weekly prayer to support you in your journey of faith.

- ◆ Morning Prayers will be offered Monday-Friday at 8am on our Facebook feed.
- ◆ Evening Compline services will be offered Monday night at 8pm
- ◆ Celtic Prayer with Taize chant and music will be offered Thursday night at 8pm
- ◆ Meditation will be offered Friday night at 8pm

If you are interested in being part of the team of prayer leaders and livestream computer workers, who make these times of prayer and connection possible, please email ([office@stmarksma.org](mailto:office@stmarksma.org)) or call (525-6341) the church office.

Rector- Rev. Sandi Albom  
Sr. Warden - Sue Schneider  
Jr. Warden - Peter Fairman  
Director of Music - Susan Matsui  
Parish Administrator - Darcy Dumaine

## ~ Gather Digitally to Study the Gospel~

Are you interested in learning about and discussing the Gospel lesson for the upcoming Sunday? Are you confused about the Psalm? Would you like to gather with like minded friends to learn more? Curious? Confused?

You're invited to join the Wednesday evening Gospel study, every Wednesday beginning November 11th, from 7-8 pm . We will be meeting virtually, in Jit.si (like Zoom, but better), to read and discuss the upcoming Gospel lesson and /or psalm.

We will be using <https://www.lectionarypage.net/> as our jumping off point, and growing from there. Our personal Jit.si meeting room is: <https://meet.jit.si/StMarksWedsGospelStudy> . Just click on the link, nothing to download, nothing to sign into. Easy!

For more information please email Meg Galbreath, at [meg.galbreath56@gmail.com](mailto:meg.galbreath56@gmail.com) or call me at (413)224-1111 and please leave a message.



*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  
December 15, 2020**



Submit articles to:  
Darcy Dumaine,  
[office@stmarksma.org](mailto:office@stmarksma.org)



Friends,

Thank you for the many messages, emails, calls, letters, and in person visits over the past month. The sharing of love and care has been heartwarming and an incredible gift to me. Thank you to the Transition Team for organizing a send off as best we could in the midst of COVID. Thank you for the thoughtful and creative work you put into the Maine themed goodbye. Thank you also for the shells, coffee, gifts for the kids, and the lovely check which will indeed help with our mortgage payment. The many gifts of the congregation were thoughtful and lovely. We continue to look at the amazing handmade book filled with photos and notes from so many of you. Angela, the kids, and I are deeply thankful.

Above all, thank you for the faith you hold and the community you are. Ministering along with you has been a joy and it has helped me grow as a priest, as a Christian, and as a human being. In the midst of saying thank you my family also wanted to share some updates about our family's move to Maine with you all as well as a few reflections. As of mid-November we have closed on a new home located at 96 Barnstable Rd in South Portland, ME 04106. Just like the Rectory, it is a two-story home located in a nice neighborhood just about 10 minutes from Trinity Church and other family members. Even as we move away from East Longmeadow, our hearts are so full of gratitude and love and fond memories of life here. Thank you for helping East Longmeadow be such a wonderful home.

Lucy and Eli are so sad to leave Melody Lane. They have cherished it, located on a quiet cul-de-sac with great neighbors nearby. They are particularly sad to leave the playground that a number of parishioners brought over and assembled in our backyard about 6 years ago. They have played for hours back there!

Angela and I will miss the lovely dogwood and perennials, the amazing kitchen you all put in, the woodstove, and the sound of owls calling at night in the summer and fall as well as the sound of peepers in the spring.

Thank you for providing not simply a house for our family, but a true home where we could move from married life as a couple into married life as parents. St. Mark's has helped create so many memories and so much joy in the midst of ministering in the Name of Christ. Thank you all, many times over. Our hearts are indeed full of gratitude.

Ever in Christ,  
Angela, Lucy, Eli, and Peter Swarr



## 2020 Advent Offerings at St. Mark's

While it's true that this Advent will be quite different from any we have ever experienced before, it still is a time we can mark our waiting for the coming of Jesus with meaningful activities. Below please find the offering from the Adult and Children Formation and Music Ministry for this season.

- December Activity Lesson Plan Box

The box was designed for church school activities for the season and will be distrib-



uted in the first part of December.

- Advent Virtual Activity and Opportunity Booklet

This virtual book (opened using the PowerPoint format) contains something for people of all ages. To help us prepare our hearts for the coming of the savior, each week during the Advent season links will be provided that will lead you to meaningful events and activities. Distribution of the booklet will be via parish wide email sent out at the start of Advent.

- Zoom Pageant for Christmas Eve

Children and teens can participate in this virtual pageant as a way to focus mind and heart on the coming birth of Jesus. They simply pick a role, come borrow their costume and take part in the Zoom recorded pageant. Anyone who is interested should contact Sue Matsui at [susan.matsui1@gmail.com](mailto:susan.matsui1@gmail.com) or Gina Parent at [Raschi@gmail.com](mailto:Raschi@gmail.com)



Our Advent Warming Tree will have a different look this year. Instead of a tree in the sanctuary, we will have a bin outside the admin wing door where we can bring gloves, warm socks, new or gently used blankets, sleeping bags and coats for the homeless in downtown Springfield. Let's fill that bin to the top! If you prefer to order new socks and gloves online, they can be sent to Christ Church Cathedral, 35 Chestnut St. Springfield, MA 01103 in care of Linda Taupier. Please include delivery instructions to be made Monday through Friday between 9 am and 3 pm.

We will once again be helping two single moms make the Christmas season brighter by providing gifts for their children. Please watch for an email containing an online list of possible gifts. Just sign up to provide a gift and directions on where and when to bring your unwrapped gift will be provided. Thank you in advance for offering to help during this unusual Advent season.

Dear friends ~

2020 undoubtedly is a difficult one for all of us. Whether it is because of economic, health, family issues, or change and transition, we are all experiencing challenge. This year the Vestry invites you to join us in reaffirming our commitment to the good work that continues at St. Mark's Church in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and ask that you support the church in whatever ways you are able.

If you are able to give your time to support the work of church ministries or teams, we welcome and give thanks for your offering.

If you are able to share a talent or skill in service to a St. Mark's activity, program, or event, we welcome and give thanks for your offering.

If you can financially support the church, whether you are able to increase your giving, keep giving at the same level as last year, or decrease your giving because of your current circumstance, we welcome and give thanks for your offering.

As long as we continue to love each other and join in supporting the good work that God has begun here at St. Mark's Church, God will continue to be faithful and see us through this time of transition, change, and uncertainty.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration of this invitation to reaffirm your commitment and connection to St. Mark's in whatever way you feel so moved.

(link to our stewardship video ) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=82pybT3gAp4>

(link to our pledge card)

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScZwJXWgKK-NeBS1BOo2zS->



**REAFFIRM**

**St. Mark's Church  
2021 Giving Card**

We invite you to join in reaffirming our commitment to the good work that continues at St. Mark's Church in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

***Blessings,***

\* Yes! I want to REAFFIRM in 2021!

My financial gift will be \_\_\_\_\_ (monthly/yearly)

My time and or talent gift will be

\_\_\_\_\_.

\* I want to fulfil this gift **electronically** (via online banking or the church website)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Your St. Mark's Vestry**

Given the uncertainty of these times and the challenge it presents for in person worship, St. Mark's has found that electronic giving is beneficial for the church and the giver. For this reason, we encourage everyone to consider making your pledge electronically through our website. Details on how to set up electronic giving are found below.

### **Vanco Electronic Pledge Setup**

Depending on the form of payment you wish to use, you will need either, a credit card, the routing number and account number from your checking account, or the routing number and account number for your savings account. Once you have this, proceed to the steps below.

1. Go to [www.stmarksma.org](http://www.stmarksma.org) on your web browser.
2. In the upper right portion of the Home page select "**Give**".
3. Click the blue box the says "**Click here to Give Online**".
  - Click the "**Create Profile**" button located center right in the grey box.  
Enter the email you want to use for this account. You will enter it two times.  
**This will also be your User ID.**
  - Complete all fields in the Profile and select a good password that is both strong and memorable.
4. Click the "**Add Transaction**" button.
5. In the box next to General Operating enter the dollar amount of your pledge based on The frequency you will be paying (One-time, Weekly, or Monthly).
6. Go to the drop down located below the "**Total**" and select the appropriate Donation Frequency (One-time, Weekly, or Monthly).
7. Click on "**Continue**" once you are certain the amount and frequency are correct.
8. Donation Information- This is where you select your payment options.
  - You may select from Checking, Savings, or Credit Card.
  - Complete the appropriate information for your selection.
9. Select "**I am not a Robot**", complete the questions and press "**enter**".
10. You will be sent to an Online Donation confirmation page. Be sure to review this to be certain it is setup as you desire.

Thank you for using our electronic format for paying your 2021 pledge. With all of the inconsistencies caused by COVID this year, and likely next, this ensures that pledges are received predictably and are deposited directly at the bank. Thank you for your faithful support of St. Mark's.





## Minutes of the November 24, 2020 Special Meeting via Zoom St. Mark's Vestry

Present: Sue Schneider, Peter Fairman, Claire Sygiel, Doreen Tapper, Don Edwards, Carlos Dias, Nancy LaBrie, Doreen Tapper, Michelle Stallworth, Rob Fitzpatrick, and Eric Elley.

- The meeting was called to order with an opening prayer at 6:03 p.m.
- Rob made a motion, seconded by Carlos, to accept the September minutes as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.
- Under Updates, Don reported that our finances are up \$14,000 from this time last year and our expenses are about \$8,000 less. At the end of October, we had a surplus of about \$1,300. He is projecting a small surplus at the end of 2020.
- As far as 2021, pledges are down from last year, we don't know how long COVID will last, and we have some major capital projects that we will need to sort through. Rob asked if money may come from the Diocese again through something like the CARES Act and Don said it was a possibility.
- Sue mentioned the lovely farewell to the Swarr family that was held Nov. 9. She updated the vestry on the Rev. Sandi's plan to begin work on December 1 but stay in a hotel until she and her husband move into the rectory on December 14. The transition team plans to have a welcome basket at the rectory on the 14<sup>th</sup> and then provide a few meals while Sandi+ and her husband unpack and settle in. Sue said Sandi+ plans to meet with the live stream team in preparation for her first Sunday service on December 6.
- Sue reminded the vestry that Bishop Fisher once again urged churches to suspend in person worship due to rising COVID numbers and reminded us that no more than 10 people should gather indoors. Deacon Eric mentioned that CWV is no longer distributing Communion.
- Under Ministry Teams, Claire updated the vestry on the Outreach Team's plans to collect warm items for Big Blue in a bin outside of the lower level doors instead of the traditional Advent Warming Tree and said an email will be going out with suggestions for gifts for the two families we have been helping out at Christmas. She said the team would also be putting together 12 backpacks for Mary D'Alessandro's women transitioning from prison program. Parishioners have offered to go out with Deacons Linda and Eric this winter on Big Blue to provide warm items and food to those living outdoors. Nine tents were sent to the Cathedral for Big Blue from the outreach monies.
- Sue updated vestry on plans for youth and adult formation Advent events. These will include Christmas activity boxes being sent to families with children, a virtual Christmas pageant to be aired on Christmas Eve and a hymn sing on the Sunday after Christmas.
- The Welcome Ministry Team plans to mail something to everyone for Christmas and Building and Grounds did a walkthrough of the rectory noting needed repairs. Cleaning of the rectory is being done and Jon Robichaud repaired the rack in the vesting room.
- Under Discussion Items, vestry continued its review of the 2021 budget with Sue reporting that projected pledge income looks to be about \$167,000, down from the \$192,000 of last year. She noted that the Canon to the Ordinary indicated that there may be money for clergy continuing education so that we could eliminate that from our budget. Sue made a motion, seconded by Doreen that, going forward, Internet, gas and electric bills for the rectory would not be paid for by the church. The motion passed unanimously. With some adjustments made to the budget, it looks like total income could be \$197,000 and expenses \$232,000, leaving a projected deficit of \$35,000.

(Vestry minutes continued from page 7)

- Sue noted that Buildings and Grounds is asking that \$79,500 be provided in the budget for significant upgrades to the HVAC systems to meet code requirements. Rob mentioned that the admin wing should be done first as those units are 30 to 35 years old. Sue noted that this probably needs to be externally funded. She will ask Rich Bruns about the possibility of parceling out the work.
- Sue mentioned that we owe approximately \$151,622 on the line of credit and by adjusting our payments, we may be able to save approximately \$9,000 next year. Don explained that extending our line of credit now while we have a deficit could start a slow erosion of our finances.
- Under Discussion Items, Sue outlined the responsibilities of the profile and search teams that need to be established as we transition to a permanent rector. Vestry members identified qualities needed for both team members. . There should be one vestry member serving as liaison to each team and vestry will choose the chairs for each team. Sue asked that vestry members think about whether they feel called to either team as they should be appointed at the December vestry meeting.
- Under Quick Action Items, Sandi+ will attend the December 22 vestry meeting. A special meeting to finalize the budget will be held on January 12. The annual meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 24, probably via Zoom.
- The board voted unanimously to renew the license for all Eucharistic ministers, Eucharistic visitors, worship leaders, and live streamers.
- Rob made a motion, seconded by Ellie, to remove Diane Chandler and add Darcy Dumaine as the authorized contact on the St. Mark's Bank of America small business credit card account. The motion passed unanimously. Don offered to be the beneficiary agent on the account.
- The meeting was concluded at 7:35 p.m.



## October 2020 Financials

Account #	Account Name	Beginning Balance	YTD Balance
<b>Assets</b>			
1.003	United Bank Ck. Acct.	35,324.94	51,217.44
	<b>Bank Accounts and A/R</b>	<b>\$35,324.94</b>	<b>\$51,217.44</b>
1.101	Trustees Bement Scholarship	4,453.84	3,937.94
1.103	Trustee Childrens Education	25,376.77	22,437.30
1.104	Trustee Mem. Garden Burial	24,581.08	21,733.78
1.105	Trustee Memorial Funds	1,891.57	1,672.45
1.107	Trustee General Endowment	51,645.36	45,663.12
1.108	Trustee - Organ Maint	2,306.13	2,039.01
1.109	Trustee - RDF	2,162.32	1,958.59
1.110	Trustee Larch Gift	44,198.35	39,078.71
1.111	Trustee Stockwell Gift	13,848.34	12,244.25
1.112	Trustee Farquharson Gift	22,218.09	19,644.49
	<b>Trustee Accounts</b>	<b>\$192,681.85</b>	<b>\$170,409.64</b>
1.215	Furn and Cont - Church	2,716.00	2,716.00
1.229	Pipe Organ - Church	97,000.00	97,000.00
1.243	Major Improvements (Church)	123,949.55	123,949.55
1.244	Major Imp/add-Parish Hall	111,796.60	111,796.60
1.245	Major Imp/add Rectory	48,501.95	48,501.95
	<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>\$383,964.10</b>	<b>\$383,964.10</b>
1.999	All other Assets	4,859.24	4,859.24
	<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$616,830.13</b>	<b>\$610,450.42</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
2.000	Accounts Payable/Vendors	3,071.40	746.40
2.201	Loan (Bldg) United Bank	162,808.72	152,862.72
2.601	Next Years Pedges	6,040.00	1,240.00
2.602	Prepaid Special Gifts	0.00	0.00
	<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$171,920.12</b>	<b>\$154,849.12</b>
<b>Fund Balance</b>			
3.001	General Fund Balance	(37,731.22)	(30,477.92)
3.003	Transfer Fund Balance	191.67	191.67
3.090	Trustee Accounts	192,681.85	170,409.64
3.900	Net Fixed Asset Fund Bal	243,945.78	253,891.78
3.902	Good Friday Fund Balance	418.60	120.00
3.904	Episcopal Relief & Development Fund Balance	0.00	0.00
3.906	Annual Plant Sale Fund Balance	0.00	0.00
3.907	Flower Fund Balance	148.06	138.06
3.909	Special Events Fundraising Fund Balance	0.00	0.00
3.910	Rector's Discretionary Fund Balance	2,203.73	1,888.51
3.914	Holy Grounds Cafe Fund Balance	526.01	624.97
3.920	Memorial Fund Balance	5,949.72	4,876.89
3.921	Special Gifts (Transfer) Fund Balance	804.00	2,934.36
3.922	Prepaid Building Use Fund Balance	600.00	0.00
3.923	Bement Scholarship Fund Balance	174.14	223.56
3.924	Missions Outreach Fund Balance	3,337.31	722.87
3.925	Meal Expense Fund Balance	1,000.00	1,000.00
3.926	Organ Fund Balance	0.00	113.60
3.927	Summer Formation Programs Fund Balance	463.16	463.16
3.928	Youth & Children's Formation Fund Balance	0.00	0.00
3.930	Big E Fund Balance	0.00	0.00
3.931	Receptions/Socials Fund Balance	0.00	0.00

**October 2020 Financials (continued)**

Account #	Account Name	Beginning Balance	YTD Balance
3.932	Retreats/Conferences Fund Balance	(590.00)	0.00
3.933	Memorial Garden Care Fund Balance	2,697.63	3,908.63
3.934	Memorial Garden Burial Fund Balance	229.00	661.50
3.935	Adult Education Fund Balance	0.00	0.00
3.948	General Endowment Fund Balance	0.00	0.00
3.951	Buildings & Grounds Capital Fund Balance	12,041.64	12,041.64
3.953	Pilgrimage Fund J2A Members Balance	1,395.18	1,653.88
3.961	Pilgrimage Fund - Parents Balance	0.00	0.00
3.962	Pilgrimage Fund Parish Balance	2,313.74	3,663.74
3.964	Craft Fair Fund Balance	0.00	0.00
3.965	Clergy Sabbatical Fund Balance	5,031.51	3,953.70
3.968	Mission Trip Fund Balance	569.00	569.00
3.969	Altar Guild Fund Balance	0.00	11.75
3.973	GSGC Program Fund Balance	35.10	35.10
3.980	Men's Retreat Fund Balance	0.00	0.00
3.981	Leadership Grant Fund Balance	0.00	0.00
3.982	Thrift Shop Fund Balance	0.00	397.00
3.983	Digital Gospel Grant Fund Balance	0.00	0.00
3.984	Church Play Balance	0.00	0.00
3.985	Men's Wine Ministry Balance	43.57	43.57
3.986	2017 Couples Ministry Grant Fund Balance	0.00	0.00
3.987	Website Maintenance Fund Balance	0.00	0.00
3.988	Community Garden Fund Balance	0.00	0.00
3.989	Refresh Great Hall Fund Balance	0.00	6,300.00
3.990	Digital Communication Fund Balance	0.00	0.00
3.991	Leadership 2 Fund Balance	4,312.29	2,775.33
3.992	Way of Love Part 2 Grant Fund Balance	2,118.54	997.81
3.993	Jester Music Fund Balance	0.00	9,327.50
3.994	2020 Account Fund Balance	0.00	2,140.00
	<b>Total Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$444,910.01</b>	<b>\$455,601.30</b>
	<b>Total Liabilities and Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$616,830.13</b>	<b>\$610,450.42</b>

# DECEMBER BABIES !!




- 12/04 Ron Brenner
- 12/07 Kathleen Rice
- 12/07 Thomas Rice
- 12/10 Mayra Bustamante
- 12/10 Meg Galbreath
- 12/10 Robert Teto
- 12/14 Dolly Nicoli
- 12/14 Peter Rosengarten
- 12/15 Grant LaBonte
- 12/15 Tanya Picking
- 12/16 Tracie Wood
- 12/19 Michael Derosé
- 12/21 Julianna Berselli
- 12/21 Christine Whitehead
- 12/23 David Wicks
- 12/24 Bill Hardy
- 12/25 Jessica Lister
- 12/26 Carey Noonan
- 12/29 Dick Volker
- 12/31 Michael Solitario


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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