



Dear People of St. Mark's,

Aaron and I are joyfully anticipating our baby's arrival very soon and are overwhelmingly grateful for your love and support during this time. As we quickly approach the due date, I want to remind you of my maternity leave plans going forward and give you a chance to email me with questions before I'm out of touch.

Starting next Sunday (9/25) or sooner if the baby decides to come early, I will be away for 12 weeks of paid maternity leave. I will be returning to worship on Sunday, December 18.

I am so grateful for this generous time away. As I'm sure you can understand, this time is vitally important for my own recovery, for Aaron and I to learn how to be a parent to two (and Auggie to be a big brother), and to establish critical bonds with our new child. While on leave, I will not be working – this includes checking email and responding to phone calls and texts from parishioners. You, of course, are in good hands with our wardens and our supply priests. Please see below for answers to your questions on who to contact and when.

Aaron and I appreciate all the love and support from this parish, and we know how excited you are for our baby's arrival. While we want to share this experience with you, we also need privacy in the first weeks while we figure out new family rhythms and protect the baby's fragile immune system. We look forward to introducing our baby to you all when we are ready. (But don't be afraid to say hi if you run into us around town!) We are abundantly grateful that our baby will be born into such a loving community.

We promise to send word and pictures as soon as the baby makes an appearance in the world. We covet your prayers and support in this period of new life!

Questions?

What will happen with Sunday worship?

You'll be in good hands! Most Sundays, the Right Rev. Mark Beckwith will be leading services, with Deacon Eric assisting. Once a month, the Rev. Jim Munroe will lead services. They'll also help lead our Psalm study group at 9am on Sundays with Meg Galbreath. Bp. Mark will offer Wednesday noon Eucharist every other Wednesday. He'll also attend key parish meetings, such a vestry. You're in for some stellar preaching!

What do I do if I have a question about...

- General church matters: contact our office at (413) 525-6341 or office@stmarksma.org, Sue Aveyard is in the office 9-11am on Mondays, 9-1pm on Tuesday - Thursday
- Urgent issues and concerns (non-pastoral): contact our wardens, Dan Tapper, Co-Warden, (860) 573-4236, dtapper@gmail.com; Christine Whitehead, Co-Warden, (413) 297-1091, chriswhitehead5794@gmail.com
- Parish communications and social media: Claire Sygiel, clerk, (413) 348-6178, ckerr1@aol.com
- Stewardship and pledging: Christine Whitehead, Co-Warden, (413) 297-1091, chriswhitehead5794@gmail.com
- Outreach: Claire Sygiel, clerk, (413) 348-6178, ckerr1@aol.com
- Fundraising and the Spooky Spirit 5k: Jess & Michelle Stallworth, (413) 531-3838, bukowski.jess@gmail.com, stallworthm54@gmail.com
- Art & Craft Fair: Dan Tapper, (860) 573-4236, dtapper@gmail.com, Gail Gurney, ggurney8433@gmail.com, (413) 566-3665
- Building and grounds: Marj Bruns, (413) 285-5864, marjbruns@msn.com
- Children's programming: Isabella Whitehead, (413) 231-7653, whiteheadisabella@gmail.com
- Adult formation: Meg Galbreath, (413) 230-6362, meg.galbreath56@gmail.com
- Welcome and newcomers: Meg Galbreath, (413) 230-6362, meg.galbreath56@gmail.com
- Bills, finances, budgets, and reimbursements: Melinda DeCesare, treasurer, (413) 531-8037, meja3337@gmail.com
- Altar guild and flowers: Nancy LaBrie, nhl1126@aol.com, (413) 626-1394
- Livestream and online worship: Rob Fitzpatrick, (413) 847-0338, rob.w.fitz@gmail.com

What if I need pastoral care?

If you or a loved one are in need of prayer, email the office with your prayer request or fill out a prayer request card. Your name will be put on the parish prayer list and the request details for specific prayers will be sent to our prayer team. If you would like to be visited with communion or are unable to come to church because of infirmity, contact Deacon Eric Ellery (deacon@stmarksma.org) and Meg Schoenemann (413) 244-9185, megschoenemann@verizon.net) for a Eucharistic visit. If you are experiencing an **urgent pastoral emergency**, contact the Very Rev. Jim Munroe (jamesgmunroe@gmail.com, (413) 575-7989). In the event of a death or expected death of a parishioner, contact the Very Rev. Jim Munroe and our wardens. If you are in need of speaking with a priest, the Right Rev. Mark Beckwith will be in the office for visits every other Wednesday, check the Weekly Word for whether he is in.

Can we visit you and the baby? When will we meet the baby?

I will miss you all during my time away! Instead of coming by the rectory to visit, I would encourage you to say a prayer for my family or send a note. I'm grateful for your respect of my family's privacy and giving me the space to focus on learning how to be the best mother I can to my new baby. I'm hoping to stop by with her at a couple key parish events during my leave, but that will depend on both my and my baby's health and recovery. It'll be a surprise when I do (so come to all our events!)

What if we have a gift we'd like to drop off?

Thank you for your thoughtfulness and generosity! The crib and gift card from the whole parish was more than enough. If you must and small gifts bring you joy to give, please leave them at the church (not the rectory). My family (my sister Ellen and my parents) will help them get to me.



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