

SAINT MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
LIVING IN FAITH. GROWING IN LOVE.

the EPISTLE

A Monthly Newsletter of Saint Mark's, Columbus

January 2023 • Issue 285

Chalking the Door 20 + C + M + B + 23

A Centuries-Old Custom of Holy Graffiti

The Rev. Vicki Zust



There is an old practice of blessing homes at Epiphany and chalking the top of the door to remind us that everyone who comes in brings the light of Christ with them and that as we go out into the world, we carry the light of Christ with us.

Chalk is used in this service as an ordinary substance made of common elements of the earth, put to holy use. Chalk will not permanently mar the dwelling. As its image fades from view over time, those who participated in its original placement will remember it and the purpose for which it was intended. In doing so, they may re-dedicate themselves to that purpose. After a year passes and a new Epiphany arrives, they will have the opportunity once again to celebrate the themes of this season and once again to seek God's blessing on their homes and on those who come and go through its doors.

Pastor Vicki is offering to come to your home and lead the short

prayers of blessing and mark the lintel over the front door of your home with chalk on Epiphany – January 6. You can also say the prayers and chalk the door yourself.

The writing over the door is traditionally the year and the initials C, M & B in memory of the traditional names of the three Magi who visited Jesus. As a reminder for us to seek the presence of Christ when we go out of the door. The mark looks like this 20+C+M+B+23.

If you would like to have your house blessed for Epiphany (with or without the chalking), please sign up on the Sign Up Genius link on the front page of Saint Mark's website.

If you would like to do your own Epiphany House blessing the prayers are on the Saint Mark's website in the Faith at Home section or in the arched bookcase in the parish hall.

Saint Mark's Celebrates the Ministry of Hospitality in January

Saint Mark's regularly celebrates the Ministry of Hospitality by welcoming all in our midst. And we like to have fun doing it, as is evident in our parish events such as the annual Festival of Advent Lessons and Carols and Pentecost Picnic to after-service Coffee Hours held 52 times a year. This month, we take time to especially welcome newcomers to Saint Mark's with a Newcomer Celebration, and rekindle relationships and make new friends at the Parish Family Dinner.

Newcomers' Celebration

On Sunday, January 22, after the 10:30 a.m. service we will celebrate the newcomers to Saint Mark's.

We will have a special and elaborate coffee hour, we will have information about Saint Mark's and some upcoming events, and we will have a Scavenger Hunt around the buildings that everyone can join in. We will mix up teams so you will have a chance to get to know people. There will be prizes too.

Those new to Saint Mark's will receive mailed invitations to attend, but mark your calendars and plan on spending a little extra time after church on Sunday January 22.

Parish Family Dinner

The next Parish Family Dinner is at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday January 11 in the parish hall.

We will open with grace and then eat dinner. We will all help clean up beginning around 6:30 pm.

You don't need to sign-up. You don't need to bring anything.

There will be a basket for a free-will offering to offset the cost of the dinner, but no donation is required.

Come, have dinner, talk with other Saint Mark's folk, and maybe meet someone new.



SAINT MARK'S STAFF

The Rev. Vicki Zust, Rector

Rector@saintmarkscolumbus.org

Dr. Matthew Bester, Director of Music

DirectorOfMusic@saintmarkscolumbus.org

Michael Schreffler, Organist

Organist@saintmarkscolumbus.org

Gary L. Garber, Organist-Choirmaster Emeritus

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SAINT MARK'S VESTRY

Mark Drew, Senior Warden – 614-301-2675

SeniorWarden@saintmarkscolumbus.org

Leslie Winters, Junior Warden – 614-327-6337

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Lukas Skoracki, Youth Warden

Martha Belury – 614-353-4800

Cheryl Boop – 706-614-1682

Anice Ellis – 614-529-9597

Betsy Gillespie – 614-795-5775

Judith Grant – 614-956-6844

Jody Hess – 614-270-9747

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Barb Keyes – 614-314-7630

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Roman Skoracki – 614-583-8801

Phil Glandon, Treasurer – 614-486-5806

Treasurer@saintmarkscolumbus.org

Barbara Hyre, Clerk – 614-488-1567

Vestry meetings occur every first Tuesday of the month in the Canterbury Center. Meetings are open to parishioners. Meeting minutes are available online at: www.saintmarkscolumbus.org/vestry-meetings.

The Epistle is the monthly newsletter of Saint Mark's Episcopal Church. The rolling deadline for submissions is the third Monday of the preceding month. Send photos, announcements, or story ideas for inclusion in the Epistle to: Communications@saintmarkscolumbus.org.

Annual Elections Coming

At the Annual Meeting in February we will elect three wardens and four members of the vestry.

Elections include:

- Senior Warden
- Junior Warden
- Youth Warden (this role may be shared among two people)
Warden positions serve one-year terms with the ability to be re-elected up to consecutive two times.
- Four vestry members for three-year terms
- Two delegates to Diocesan Convention and four alternate delegates

We are also looking for a person who is willing to be appointed as clerk of the vestry. This is a non-voting position on vestry whose job is to record minutes of the meetings.

The Senior Warden works with the rector and the rest of the vestry to oversee the smooth administration of Saint Mark's, helping make sure that everything runs smoothly.

The Junior Warden works with the rector and the rest of the vestry to oversee the maintenance of the physical facilities.

The Youth Warden works with the rector to bring the view point of the youth to the leadership of Saint Mark's. The youth warden position can be filled by either one or two youth.

The Senior and Junior Warden also serve as two of Saint Mark's four delegates to Diocesan Convention.

This year the Convention Delegates will also vote in the election of the next Bishop of Southern Ohio. The Bishop election will be Saturday September 30 in Cincinnati and the regular Convention will be Saturday November 11 in Portsmouth.

If you would like to volunteer, or if you have questions, please contact:

Pastor Vicki at rector@saintmarkscolumbus.org

Mark Drew at seniorwarden@saintmarkscolumbus.org or

Leslie Winters at juniorwarden@saintmarkscolumbus.org.

Annual Reports Due January 30

The Annual Meeting will take place after the 10:30 worship service on Sunday February 12 in the parish hall. If you are part of a ministry or activity at Saint Mark's, start writing your annual report now and beat the February rush.

Please email your annual report by Monday, January 30, to communications@saintmarkscolumbus.org.

Gift Acceptance Policy

The vestry has passed a gift acceptance policy to set some boundaries for how we, as a congregation, will structure major gifts. You can read the policy on the publications page of the website:

www.saintmarkscolumbus.org/publications.



MUSIC & WORSHIP

Make Spiritual Discipline a Priority in 2023

Many people want to add some kind of spiritual component to their New Year's Resolutions. There are a several ways to do that.

If you want to add some prayer to your day here are a couple of resources:

- There is a brochure on arched bookcase in the parish called "Praying as a Family" that has prayers for various times of day that can be used by individuals or families. This is also on the Faith at Home section of the website.
- Mission St. Clare (www.missionstclare.com) has daily Morning and Evening Prayer.

If you want to add some Scripture reading:

- Forward Day by Day is a small booklet that has a reflection on daily readings. You can pick up a Forward Day by Day from arched bookcase in the parish hall. You can also follow it online at prayer.forwardmovement.org. They also have a podcast and some other resources.
- This year we are reading the Gospel of Matthew on Sunday mornings. There is a brochure on the arched bookcase titled "40 Stories from Matthew every Christian should know". If you do one story a week, that should take you to the end of September (or the beginning of Advent if you take a few weeks off through the year). You can also get this brochure on the Faith at Home section of the website.

www.saintmarkscolumbus.org/faith-at-home



Saint Mark's Director of Music, Dr. Matthew Bester directs the Canterbury Choir as they carol during Christmas by the Clock on December 16 at Tremont Center. A beloved tradition that includes Canterbury Choir alumni.

Praying with Music

Taizé

"Sing with your voices, your hearts, your lips and your lives."
—St. Augustine

5 p.m.
January 8, 2022

All are welcome to attend in person or via livestream
www.SaintMarksColumbus.org

SAINT MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
2151 Dorset Road, Columbus, Ohio 43221 | 614-486-9452

Taizé Service—Praying with Music

The Service of Light is one of several options for Evening Prayer in the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer.

The language and order of the service is a nice complement to a style of worship that is distinctive to the ecumenical monastery community of Taizé (pronounced *taa-zay'*), in the Burgundy region of France. Taizé services feature simple song and chant, scripture readings, silence, and meditation, enriched by a contemplative atmosphere that includes iconography, candles, and an intimate setting.

The music of the Taizé tradition favors simple, accessible melodies that are meant to be sung and repeated by all, providing a frame for meditation on the divine.

Saint Mark's traditionally has a Taizé service at the beginning of the Epiphany season. This year, the Taizé service will be held at 5 p.m. on Sunday, January 8.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communications Team Helps Keep Saint Mark's in the Know

In fall 2020, then Senior Warden Dot Yeager brought Bill Mayr and Joanne Drew together primarily to initiate a cleanup and refresh of Saint Marks' website. They were joined in this effort by Dot, Dan Morton, Matthew Bester, Margaret Wells, and Melanie Jacobs. Once that was well underway, Mark Drew established a Communications Team which included Bill, Joanne, and Melanie Jacobs. Their goal during the period just prior to Pastor Vicki's hire, was to streamline, expand, and improve overall internal and external communications for clarity, consistency, and better access. Pastor Vicki, who then joined Saint Mark's in September 2021, now oversees all communications and marketing activities.

In its current form, the Communications Team is made up primarily of Pastor Vicki, Bill Mayr, Joanne Drew, and Office Manager Melanie Jacobs, but is joined by a cast of people who contribute their time and talent to produce written, electronic, social, and livestream media.

Written communications include the weekly worship service leaflet and announcement bulletin, the monthly Epistle, the Annual Report, and occasional parish communications, such as letters, marketing brochures, and graphics.

The Epistle - In addition to the Communications team, several people contribute regular or occasional articles to the monthly Epistle in their fields of interest. These include Matthew Bester and Michael Schreffler (music), Leslie Winters (outreach), Joyce Acton (migration ministries) and Brenda Hammersley (pastoral care). We are always looking for ideas and contributors! Story generation, additional writing, and copyediting is done by Pastor Vicki, Bill Mayr, and Joanne Drew. Joanne also completes layout, design, and much of the graphic art. Printing, copying, and mailing the Epistle is done by the superheroes who staff and volunteer in the office and are always appreciated for their efforts!

Electronic media are forms of communication that arrive in your inbox. These are completed primarily by Pastor Vicki and Melanie Jacobs and include the following:

This Week at Saint Mark's – This compact newsletter includes general information and announcements of upcoming activities for the week ahead. It also often includes items in advance of that to allow parishioners time to mark it on their calendars. This online newsletter is especially useful as it includes direct links to relevant websites for more detail. It is sent to subscribers' email boxes at 2 p.m. on Fridays and is posted to Saint Mark's Facebook page and front page of Saint Mark's website.

Sunday Reminders – These include announcements

culled from the above that are relevant only to that day. It includes a list of those serving in the worship service, and it is sent to email subscribers email boxes on Sunday mornings at 7 a.m.

Pastoral Notes – Notices of special sensitivity and concern such as the death of a parishioner; sent to subscribers' email boxes as the occasion arises. These also are published in the monthly Epistle.

Special Updates – Important and time-sensitive announcements that cannot or should not wait until the regular announcement outlets. These have included COVID-related guideline changes and weather-related outages. These are sent sparingly and as the occasion arises.

Social Media – In the last year, Saint Mark's has dramatically increased its presence on social media through a concerted effort with Remember marketing (see page 6) and through the combined efforts of all the parishioners who take photos during events and post message to their personal pages and tagging Saint Mark's.

Saint Mark's Website - currently being updated by Pastor Vicki and Joanne Drew. They keep it accurate, consistent, and as user-friendly as the current system allows. However, the diocese has mandated that we move to a new server and so we are in the process of developing a brand-new website. If you have web design skills and are interested in volunteering your time and talent, please reach out to Pastor Vicki. Many hands make light work and many creative minds make extraordinary things possible!

Livestream—While livestreaming was once considered a luxurious extra to worship services, it is now very much a necessary component. George Reed, Alex Reed, Mark Drew, and Steve Bigley are the primary people behind the curtain with added help from Matt Bester.

All of these efforts combine to expand Saint Mark's reach and keep its community connected and in the know. If you would like to contribute to the Communications Team's efforts in any way (writing, proofreading, ideas for content, contributing photos of events, etc.), please email the Communications team at communications@saintmarkscolumbus.org, contact Pastor Vicki, or visit the Communications page of the website: www.saintmarkscolumbus.org/communications.



Engage with the Saint Mark's community on Facebook and Instagram for inspiration, information, and weekly e-news

COMMUNICATIONS

Livestreaming Opens New Doors for Saint Mark's, Broadens Reach

By Mark Drew

Saint Mark's Senior Warden, Member of Saint Mark's Livestream Production Team

When COVID closed Saint Mark's doors to in-person gathering, an idea that had long been percolating on the wish list of a few parishioners soon became a reality: professional-grade livestreaming of Saint Marks' worship and holy services, musical performances, and meetings.

At the very beginning of lockdown Matt Bester and Mark Drew cobbled together patchwork system using their own cell phones, an iPad, and a Zoom account. It was a creative solution, but limited, unreliable, and messy with multiple power cords plugging it all in.

However, in August 2020, the vestry approved spending \$55,000 for the initial purchase and installation of equipment. Cameras, microphones, and thousands of feet of cabling were installed to bring us our first livestream broadcast on November 15, 2020. Although this certainly constituted a major expense, we felt strongly that our goal was "do it right" in order to provide a high level of production quality, which would allow our online worshippers as much of the Saint Mark's worship experience as possible during the height of the pandemic (and beyond).

In addition to its video and audio quality, our livestreaming has been highly reliable as well, thanks to the networking infrastructure investment by Dave Yeager and Steve Bigley. Both Dave and Steve have worked hundreds of hours in tunnels, on ladders, drilling through walls, and pulling wire to install a high-bandwidth fiber-optic-based network throughout our buildings. Their expertise and efforts have been vital to provide the capacity to have our services available on monitors in the kitchen, parish hall, nursery, and children's formation areas, in addition to broadcasting to all those beyond our campus.

Overall, since we began streaming out our services, we have averaged about 20 live connections per service, with nearly three times that watching the recorded version, usually later that Sunday. This average does not include our most popular events, such as the Christmas Eve Pageant and Easter Sunday, each averaging hundreds of views. In addition to our Sunday worship services, we have also broadcast Choral Evensong services and nu-

merous other special events such as memorial services, baptisms and confirmation services, weddings, the visit with Bishop Smith, and Pastor Vicki's Celebration of New Ministry. Since going live in August 2020, Saint Mark's services and events have reached people in 42 U.S. states and 21 countries worldwide.

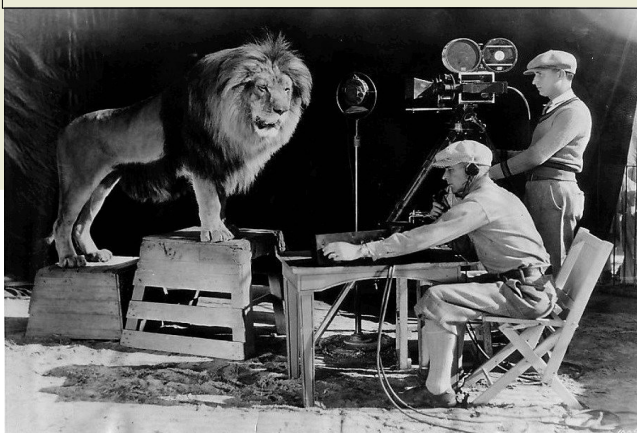
Behind the scenes, in a remodeled closet deep in the back of the sacristy, a committed group of volunteers consisting primarily of Steve Bigley, Mark Drew, Peter Milburn, and George and Alex Reed team up each Sunday to operate the cameras, push the buttons, and click the mouse to produce our services. Our volunteers find this both a fun and rewarding way to give their time and talent to Saint Mark's.

When pandemic restrictions relaxed and allowed for the return of in-person singing, Matt Bester returned to music directing during worship, however he continues to stay involved in livestream by producing the weekly slide shows that accompany services, which provide announcements and information on upcoming events.

Saint Mark's online worship hasn't slowed now that in-person worship is back. In fact, our average number of online worshippers is growing. Some new members have reported "church shopping" us online for a few weeks before coming in person, some members have made a habit of watching us while out of town, and distant families and friends tune in to watch friends and loved ones in choir events and baptisms. The numbers also indicate that many members safely avoid bad weather and attend the occasional "pajama church". Adding to this new ability to join in worship, events in the parish hall will now be made available as a new camera and microphone system has been added. People have already benefitted from this recently during the 9:30 a.m. Adult Formation series.

If you would like technical help on watching our livestream services, we offer in-home help in getting you set up to worship in the easiest and best quality possible. Please reach out to av@saintmarkscolumbus.org. Operating the AV system to produce a livestream event is a skill anyone can learn! If you would like to join the production team, please contact Mark Drew.

Saint Mark's worship services and events have reached people in 42 U.S. states and 21 countries.



COMMUNICATIONS

Intentional Engagement—Reaching The Community Through Social Media

One of the things that is always in the back of every rector's mind is how to increase membership of their parish. Certainly, this was on Pastor Vicki's mind when she gathered Senior Warden Mark Drew, along with Scott Milburn and Betsy Gillespie, both of whom are professionally engaged in marketing fields as a focus group to think creatively about ways to increase our social media presence in the community.

With \$2,500 in approved funding, which was then matched by the diocese, the group consulted with Shannon Rodocker, owner of **Remember** Marketing to develop and pilot a small, local social media strategy.

Since early June Ms. Rodocker has produced and posted a series of professional videos that feature Saint Mark's members sharing stories of how they came to Saint Mark's and reasons they choose to belong to the Saint Mark's community.

In addition to these, Ms. Rodocker created several shorter videos that advertise Saint Marks' events, such as the Fall Festival, the Blessing of the Animals, and Christmas service times, or that have highlighted Saint Mark's programming such as music, children's formation, stewardship and Canterbury Choir.

Each video is branded with Saint Mark's canterbury cross logo and completed with the tagline, "Join in a com-

munity that believes in making the world a better place."

The branded videos offer newcomers a "digital doorway" - an entry point for to quietly enter in and take a good look around. The videos are "sponsored," which means for a fee they are pushed to Facebook feeds targeted to people who live within a 5- to 7-mile radius of Saint Mark's but who may otherwise not be affiliated with Saint Mark's.

Many newcomers to Saint Mark's have said they saw one of the Facebooks videos and viewed a livestream service before attending in person.

"The goal, ultimately is to get more people to come to church," says Betsy Gillespie. "We are unapologetically who we are and we're not going to change that, and for some people we are the right fit."

One way you can help increase the reach of Saint Mark's social media platform is to share, comment, or like (or love!) the posts you see. Social media algorithms are like snowballs that gather momentum with each engagement.

Even if you are not active on social media you can still view these charming videos by going to Saint Mark's www.saintmarkscolumbus.com/communications or Facebook page at www.facebook.com/saintmarkscolumbus.



Clockwise from Right: Dr. Matthew Bester, Laura Skoracki, Bruce Johnson, and Betsy Gillespie, all have shared their Saint Mark's "Why" on social media.

PARISH LIFE

Saint Mark's Welcomes Cub Scout Pack 180

Cub Scout Pack 180 was established in 1948 and currently meets on Thursdays at Riverside United Methodist Church in Upper Arlington. The church supports their programs, organization, and provides a safe meeting place.

Beginning fall 2023 The United Methodist Church has decided to step back from chartering all scout groups, so Pack 180 will need a new chartering organization.

Cub Scout Pack 180 is a part of the Simon Kenton Council in Central Ohio. Most of their Scouts are students at Tremont Elementary School, and they have Scouts from all over Upper Arlington, so Saint Mark's was a natural choice.

Pastor Vicki has been in conversation with the Pack leaders to make sure that they understand the Episcopal Church's anti-discrimination policies and to find out what they would need from Saint Mark's. The vestry approved chartering Pack 180 at their December meeting.

The Pack will continue meeting at Riverside through the end of the school year. Beginning in September, they will have their monthly Pack meeting and some of the Den meetings at Saint Mark's.

So, if you see Cub Scouts and their leaders around on Thursday evenings this fall, that is who they are. The Pack will be storing some of their things behind the curtain in the Underbury, located in the lower level of the office building.

**Knitting Groups**

Do you knit? Do you want to learn how to knit? Do you have a project you are working on (even if it isn't knitting?) Do you enjoy getting together with others to chat and build relationships?

Evening Knitting Group meets at 6:30 p.m. on the second Monday of the month in the Canterbury Center. The January meeting is Monday January 9.

Daytime Knitting group meets at 1 p.m. on the first and third Thursdays of the month in the Canterbury Center. The January meetings are January 5 and 19.

You don't have to have any experience knitting. We will have some needles, yarn, and simple patterns for beginners.

If you are a knitter, bring your current project (or yarn

and needles to pick up a new one). You can also bring any other project that you are working on that you would enjoy doing while in conversation with others.

AARP Tax Preparation

The AARP Tax Preparation Service will be doing taxes at Saint Mark's again this year. They will start on February 8, and will be in the parish hall every Wednesday and Friday. They will start taking appointments beginning January 30 if you would like to have your taxes done. You can make an appointment by calling 614-359-8194. The appointments are limited and go very quickly. This is a free service primarily for senior citizens done by volunteers working under the close supervision of AARP and the IRS. Be sure to make them feel welcome if you see them in the building.

Coffee Guild Looking for Substitutes

The Coffee Guild is looking for a few people to fill in on an occasional basis when our regular hosts are unable to cover their scheduled week. Contact Cindy Anderson for more information.

Stewardship Campaign Yearend Success

Thank you to everyone for committing to be a part of the Saint Mark's story in 2023. Ninety-five pledges have been submitted as of December 22. Saint Mark's Treasurer, Phil Glandon says by yearend he anticipates receiving 102 pledges totaling \$425,468. This is an increase both in numbers of pledges and pledged amount as compared to 2021. He says, "I think that is exceptional with our economic uncertainty and with the stock market declines this year!"

FROM THE MAIL BAG

Dear Pastor Zust,

We wanted to convey our gratitude to Saint Mark's for opening the church and presenting such an outstanding Festival of Advent Lessons and Carols! Your choirs are amazing and brave (nothing more difficult than "acapella" musicals and your choirs performed them so beautifully!! We're already looking forward to 2023 and hope to see you again soon. Thanks to one and all for the fabulous reception afterward, as well!

Thank you for honoring God the way you did! Please share to others!

Peace of Christ,
Mark and D. Silliman

IN AND AROUND SAINT MARK'S



Saint Mark's Canterbury Choir and children of Church School perform the 2023 Christmas Pageant.



The Good Shepherd—Gwendolyn Warren leads brother Jeremiah and sister Ophelia to the scene of the Nativity.



Assistant Director of UA Public Library, Kate Porter, reads the fifth lesson at Lessons and Carols on December 4.



Jillian Bohnert, as Mary, holds Henry Wells as baby Jesus.



Soloist Betty Barker sings with the Canterbury Choir at the Christmas Pageant.



Children gather minutes before the pageant for a last minute photo op.



Canterbury Choir choristers enjoy hors d'oeuvres, hot chocolate, and each others' company at the reception following their performance at Lessons and Carols.

IN ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS



Emma Moll lights a candle representing the first week in Advent.



Soloist Mikey Bester sings with the Canterbury Choir at the Christmas Pageant.



Over 180 were in attendance at Saint Marks' Festival of Lessons and Carols



All is Calm. All is Bright. And very cold this Christmas in Columbus.



Margaret Wells holds newborn son Henry before his debut role as baby Jesus in the Pageant.



Members of Saint Mark's Youth Group, Alex Reed, Lukas Skoracki, Anna Markwardt, Henry Markwardt, Alexander Skoracki, and Matilda Drew



A Christmas Day Baptism for Benjamin Keller Boeglin.

FORMATION

Adult Formation

Adult Formation in January will focus on Lesser Known Bible Stories. Pastor Vicki will lead an exploration of a few of the stories of the Bible that not many of us have read (and that don't get read as a part of the Sunday morning lectionary).

We will gather in the parish hall from 9:30 – 10:15 a.m. The session will meet January 8, 15, 22 and 29. There is no adult formation on January 1.

Forma 2023—Called to Covenant

Forma is a group of Christian educators, both inside and outside the Episcopal tradition. Every year Forma hosts a conference that has a variety of offerings.

Saint Mark's will provide a place for people to join in parts of the online Forma Conference. The Canterbury Center will be where we have the video of the conference. The theme for the conference in 2023 is "Called to Covenant." The four plenaries will be focusing on how we are called, through Micah 6:8, to "do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God."

The Conference pieces that will be available at Saint Mark's are:

Tuesday, January 17

4 p.m. Conference Welcome & Opening Plenary - The Rt. Rev. Dion Johnson – Bishop of Missouri

Wednesday, January 18

10:30 a.m. Morning Welcome & Plenary— "Do Justice" Heidi J. Kim
 1 p.m. First Workshop Session—
 Breaking .Generational Barriers: Designing Formation that Empowers and not Subdivides
 2:45 p.m. Second Workshop Session—Here I am: Partnering with Community Organizations for Youth Ministry
 4:15 p.m. Third Workshop Session—Messy Church: A Space for Everyone

Thursday, January 19

10:30 a.m. Morning Welcome & Plenary "Love Kindness" – The Rev. Edwin Johnson



More information is available at
www.forma.church/forma-conference-2023

Children's Formation

The Children's Formation curriculum will pair with that of Adult Formation in January and February and focus on the lesser known stories of the bible. These stories, related activity pages, and suggestions for talking about them with your children will be posted each week on the Children's Formation page on the Saint Mark's website.

Winter 2022 Curriculum
 Lesser Known Stories of the Bible

January

1/1 *First Sunday - No Children's Formation*
 1/8 Abram become Abraham: Genesis 17:1-23
 1/15 Jacob Wrestles with God: Genesis 32:22-32
 1/22 Gideon: Judges 6:11-7:25
 1/29 Elijah vs. Baals Prophets: 1 Kings 18:1-19:21

February

2/5 *First Sunday - No Children's Formation*
 2/12 Daniel in Babylon: Daniel 1:1- 2:49
 2/19 Shadrach, Meshach & Abednego Daniel 3:1-30

Each story is independent so children will not feel they have missed anything if they do not come every Sunday.

Children's Art Gallery in the Parish Hall

Keep your eyes open for changes coming soon to the parish hall as the grade school children build a gallery of art based on what they discover in the bible stories we will talk about in the coming weeks. We will use a variety of media that may include fingerpaint or tempura. On these days we will have children wear smocks.

Welcome Kate Conklin!

We are excited to welcome a new volunteer to Children's Formation! Kate Conklin is a substitute teacher in the Columbus area schools and is joining Children's Formation as an assistant and occasional substitute leader.

Welcome!

Volunteers and Visitors Welcome!

We have a lot of fun in Children's Formation and we always welcome volunteers and visitors! For more information contact Joanne Drew (jdrew627@gmail.com) or Laura Skoracki (lauragatsos@hotmail.com). If you are considering volunteering but not sure what will happen to you if you do, we invite you to wander down the red hall and down the stairs to the Christian Education wing. Stay for as long as you like—you'll be back before communion at the sign of the peace.

PASTORAL CARE

Saint Mark's Episcopal Church Grief Support: "Good Grief" - How Can That Be?

By Brenda Hammersley, RN, MSN, MBA

"Life is not a problem to be solved, but a reality to be experienced." —Soren Kierkegaard

A grief group I once led was referred to as "The Charlie Brown Gang" by our Rector. When asked what that meant, he responded, "It's about good grief, Charlie Brown". So... what could possibly be good about grief?

First, it's important to remember that grief is love with nowhere to go. With loss through death, you feel pain because someone you deeply cared for is no longer physically present to receive your love. But death gives us a chance to fully understand that although people pass away, love never dies. You will love the deceased person for the rest of your life – and that's a good thing.

Grief will derail your life by disrupting your habits, expectations and routines. You'll discover roles that are no longer filled because they were done by the person who died. You'll have an opportunity to clarify what is important to you and to make decisions about whether those roles need to be continued by you, someone else or simply let go.

Loss will force you to protect your energy because grieving is exhausting. Emotional and physical fatigue increase irritability, sadness, hopelessness, isolation and anxiety. Fatigue and stress also reduce your ability to control your emotions. In grief, you can become mindful of your energy levels throughout the day and limit or eliminate events, people, obligations and self-inflicted expectations that wear you out.

Grieving people experience powerful emotions. When I counsel grieving adults I use a list with over 100 different emotional responses – all of which are part of normal grieving. You'll become more self-focused because these emotions are extremely close to the surface and may feel like they're taking you on a roller coaster ride. When you learn that it's not only okay, but essential, to feel and process these emotions and find the time and space to heal, grief will be less overwhelming. You'll recognize that it's okay that you're not "okay" for now but that this intensity will not last forever.

You'll learn that in grief some people drain you and leave you feeling tired, inadequate or hurt. If you must

psych yourself up to see someone, that's a warning sign that should be noted. Finding and mobilizing your supporters is a positive grief experience that helps you to deepen positive relationships, develop good boundaries against toxic relationships and protect your energy and tender heart. And you'll learn to say "No" when it's the right choice for you.

Loss will remind you of your own mortality and how short life really is. Grief can teach you to take advantage of each day and to stop spending your precious

time on earth in activities that hold no value for you. It can also motivate you to make meaning in your life while recreating your future.

Finally, grief will eventually teach you ways to keep an enduring connection with the deceased person through memories, rituals,

and actions that bring their values into play as a legacy of how they lived.

Learning to name and communicate your needs is just one of many topics we share in Saint Mark's Grief Support Group. It's a good starting place for healing your pain and looking to the future with hope.

Our winter session meets at 9:30 am in the church office and will alternate meetings on Thursdays and Saturdays starting Thursday, January 12. Other dates for the winter session are Saturday January 21; Thursday, January 26; Saturday, February 4; Thursday, February 9; and Saturday, February

No matter where you are on your journey, you're welcome to join us for one or all the meetings. You'll be in good company! Contact Brenda Hammersley at b.hammersley@yahoo.com for more information.



OUTREACH & SOCIAL JUSTICE

Street Church

On December 10th, Saint Mark's served the lunch at Street Church, taking the last of the community chili that all of you prepared several weeks ago. As usual, the chili was a big hit on a cold day with many of the participants coming back for second helpings. We served about 37 people and another 5 took meals to people at home. The group also distributed some warm hats that had been donated and they were gratefully received.

In 2023 Saint Mark's will prepare and serve the lunch on the last Sunday of January, May, July, and October, so our next meal will be January 29th. If you would like to participate with meal preparation, transporting, or serving please contact Roberta Morton at notvmorton@gmail.com or see her at church. New volunteers are always welcome.

NNEMAP

The Harmony for Hunger Concert held on November 18 was a big success!. The event, NNEMAP's biggest fundraiser of the year, featured Master of Ceremonies Yolanda Harris of 10TV and included top talent from the many churches that support NNEMAP.

Thank you to everyone from Saint Mark's who helped to make it a success by selling tickets, buying tickets, donating handmade items for the silent auction or buying at the auction. NNEMAP was very happy to be able to have the concert following its cancellation due to COVID the last few years.

The success of the NNEMAP fundraisers are more important than ever as NNEMAP visits are up by 50%. This past year they had 30,000 client visits servicing 100,000 family members. More visits resulted in the need for more food. With food costs up, this past year food costs increased from \$40,000 per year to \$100,000. NNEMAP needs our help more than ever. Please consider making either a monetary donation to NNEMAP or placing food items in the baskets by the front door of the church.

Last year, Saint Mark's put together spaghetti dinner kits for the clients of NNEMAP. They were very popular and went very quickly. We would like to do it again this year. Outreach would like to start collecting donations for the kits. We'd appreciate donations of spaghetti, large jars of meat sauce, canisters of cheese, boxes of brownie mix, and bottles of Italian salad dressing. Just place your donations in the baskets and we will take it from there.

If you would like to know more about volunteer opportunities at NNEMAP, see Bill Karl, mrbill.karl@gmail.com or Barb Keyes, bkeyes25@gmail.com.

Diapers and Spices and More

Our next assembly will be at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, January 11 in the parish hall. Everyone is welcome as many hands makes quick work. Come and visit with your friends and meet some of our new congregants as we work.

As a thank you to our wonderful volunteers who show up every month, after the January packing we will share a light brunch. We hope everyone can stay.

Due to the wonderful number of volunteers that regularly assist with this project, we have been able to add a new item to pack. On our last visit to Vinton County, we learned that some of the women don't have the resources to purchase menstrual products. The staff at Help Me Grow have personally purchased products for the women in emergency situations. We told them we would try to help them out by donating some menstrual pads they can distribute in emergency situations. So last month we began packing small packages of menstrual pads for them.

Our volunteer group is wonderful. Last month, following the completion of our regular work, they agreed to stay a little longer to make up some welcome mugs. With extra volunteers, what would have taken Robbie and Marilyn quite a while by themselves, they were able to finish in just a few minutes!

CATCH Court

Our next date to serve lunch to the Court participants is the second Thursday of the month, January 12. Normally the team serves lunch and then stays for the Court session to support the women in the program. If you would like to bake, help with meal preparation, transport the food or serve the meal, the team would love to have your participation. Contact Pat Iams (pati51@aol.com) or Barb Hyre (hyreb614@aol.com) if you can help in anyway or would like more information.

First Sunday Project

There will not be a January First Sunday Project, but Outreach will be back on February 5 when we will be joined by a speaker from Move to Prosper who will give us a first hand account of their program which is designed to improve the lives of low income families by moving the families to neighborhoods where they have more resources. Last year they finished their pilot program which was quite a success at improving the incomes, health, school performance and the future outlook of the children. Please join us in the parish hall at 9:30 a.m. for this talk which will be followed by a quick project.

OUTREACH & SOCIAL JUSTICE

Giving Tree

Thank you to everyone who so generously supported the Giving Tree. We were able to deliver lots of gifts to the NNEMAP Christmas store. We had more gifts this year than last year which was wonderful. We also had a nice variety of gifts for both the young children and the teens. The variety was too great to list but included 54 books, \$220.00 in gift cards and cash, toiletries, lots of underwear and socks, hoodies and other fleece items, craft supplies, stuffed animals, a DVD player, binoculars, walkie talkies and 33 board games. The Outreach Committee appreciates all you did to help the more than 1000 children serviced by the store to have a good Christmas.



Cookie Walk

By the time you read this, the cookies will be gone but the money raised from the Cookie Walk will continue to assist Saint Mark's Outreach Ministry-supported projects. This year \$1,099 was raised at the Cookie Walk because due to your generosity. Thank you to everyone who donated and/or purchased cookies, and to all those who let Outreach keep the change.



Saint Mark's Migration Ministries

What is Asylum?

The concept of asylum is an ancient one, arising within many world faith traditions and later becoming part of many countries' legal codes. The Hebrew Bible names six cities of refuge; the New Testament quotes Jesus commending his followers to welcome the stranger, for in so doing, they welcome him. The Universal Declaration on Human Rights guarantees the right to seek asylum from persecution.

Asylum seekers flee persecution and travel to another country to seek safety and request asylum. To receive asylum in the U.S., they must prove their persecution occurred, and that it occurred due to the membership in a protected group, as defined by U.S. and international law. Seeking asylum in the U.S. is an incredibly long, complex, and fraught process, often taking years.

What is a Refugee?

People do not become refugees by choice. Refugees are children, women, and men forced to flee their homes on account of persecution, war, or violence. When refugees cannot return home nor integrate into the first country that provides them safety, they may be eligible for resettlement to a third country.

All refugees who are admitted to the U.S. for resettlement come through the United States Refugee Admissions Program, or USRAP. The USRAP is an interagency and public-private partnership; Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM) is one of nine national agencies that work in partnership with the U.S. government to resettle refugees.

(Information from EMM (Episcopal Migration Ministries))

How can you help?

- Join Saint Mark's Migration Ministries committee. We actively participate in advocacy and education efforts for our parish. We also engage with and support a family who is seeking asylum.
- Volunteer with Community Refugee & Immigration Services (CRIS), an independent non-profit organization that serves the refugee and immigrant populations in Central Ohio. They need individuals who will extend a welcoming hand to those newly arrived in the United States, teach English as a second language, teach vocational skills like knitting and sewing, or transport people to take care of essential needs like medical appointments or grocery stores. CRIS will provide training and support.

For more information about how you can help, please contact Joyce Acton, actongroup@gmail.com 614-560-9219, or Brenda Hammersley, b.hammersley@yahoo.com.

FROM THE PARISH REGISTER

We celebrate the following births:

Quinn Josephine Wittwer was born to Erin and Greg Wittwer on November 29, 2022. Proud grandparents are Dianne and Bill Silliman. Quinn and her two siblings live in Richmond, VA.

Almighty God, heavenly Father you have blessed us with the joy and care of children: Give us calm strength and patient wisdom as we bring them up, that we may teach them to love whatever is just and true and good, following the example of our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

We welcome the following into the Body of Christ through baptism:

Benjamin Keller Boeglin received the sacrament of Baptism on December 25, 2022. Benjamin is the son of William and Sarah Boeglin, and is the grandson of Dwight and Elizabeth Anstaett.

Heavenly Father, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon these your servants the forgiveness of sin, and have raised them to the new life of grace. Sustain them, O Lord, in your Holy Spirit. Give them an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works. Amen.

We celebrate the following recent new member:

Saint Mark's Organist, **Michael Schreffler** joined Saint Mark's in January 2022 as staff organist and now has joined as a church member and parishioner.

O Lord, we thank you for the blessing of family and friends, and for the loving care which surrounds us on every side.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Gayle Frasher	1/01
Elizabeth Anstaett	1/04
Wendy Hauswirth	1/04
Pat Iams	1/06
Theo Warren	1/06
Maria Bester	1/09
Jackson Handley	1/09
Abby Wells	1/09
Lukas Skoracki	1/11
Madeline Iams	1/12
Hudson Bohnert	1/14
Ellen Berndt	1/17
David Boop	1/17
Robbie Hurley	1/17
Sally Rechner	1/17
Mark Drew	1/18
Lois Sechler	1/18
Lauren Wolfe	1/20
Cindy Anderson	1/22
Audrey Trotier	1/22
Molly Iams	1/29
Paul Brower	1/30
Frank Zubovich	1/30
Marilyn Gille	1/31

Watch over thy children, O Lord, as their days increase; bless and guide them wherever they may be. Strengthen them when they stand; comfort them when discouraged or sorrowful; raise them up if they fall; and in their hearts may thy peace which passeth understanding abide all the days of their lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Patrick Hreachmack Elected to Diocesan Council



Congratulations to Saint Mark's Parishioner Patrick Hreachmack who was one of four laypersons elected for a 3-year term as member of the Diocesan Council at the Convention of the Diocese of Southern Ohio on November 19. Patrick notes his experience for the position includes, "6 years' service on the Budget Committee, a 3-year term on Diocesan Council, and member of Saint Mark's where my wife and I were married. I bring and apply my 35+ years of health care administration and health care financial work including multi-million dollar budgets and contract administration, to bear on the needs of the Diocese. I have a proven track record with the Diocese of Southern Ohio."



If you would like to share an announcement of a birth or marriage of someone related to the parish, a job change, retirement, achievement, student news, etc, please send information to Robbie Hurley at hurley.robetta@yahoo.com. or Communications@saintmarkcolumbus.org or by calling the parish office at 614-486-9452.

JANUARY 2023

Parish Calendar

www.SaintMarksColumbus.org/Calendar

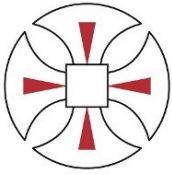
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 New Year's Day Feast of the Holy Name 10:30 am Holy Eucharist, Rite II 8 pm Sunday Night AA <i>Note there will not be an 8 am service on New Year's Day</i>	2 Office Closed 5:30 pm AA Men's Group	3 9:30 am Al-Anon 1:30 pm Columbus Clergy 7:30 pm Vestry Mtg	4 4:30 pm Canterbury Choir Rehearsal	5 1 pm Knitting and Stitching Group 6:15 pm AA 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal 8 pm AA	6 Epiphany Epiphany House Blessings 8 pm AA	7 5 pm Supper Group
8 First Sunday after Epiphany 8 am Holy Eucharist, Rite I 9:30 am Adult Formation 9:30 am Children's Formation 10:30 am Children's Formation 10:30 am Holy Eucharist, Rite II with Saint Mark's Choir 5 pm Taizé Service 8 pm Sunday Night AA	9 10:30 am Staff Mtg 5:30 pm AA Men's Group 6:30 pm Evening Knitting Group	10 9:30 am Al-Anon 1:30 pm Columbus Clergy 6:15 pm Contemplative Prayer 7 pm Sacred Conversations	11 10:30 am Spices and Diapers 4:30 pm Canterbury Choir Rehearsal 5:30 pm Parish Family Dinner	12 9:30 am Grief Support Group 11 am CATCH Court 6:15 pm AA 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal 8 pm AA	13 Rector's Day Off 8 pm AA	14
15 Second Sunday after Epiphany 8 am Holy Eucharist, Rite I 9:30 am Adult Formation 9:30 am Children's Formation 10:30 am Children's Formation 10:30 am Holy Eucharist, Rite II with Saint Mark's Choir 8 pm Sunday Night AA	16 Epistle Deadline 10:30 am Staff Mtg 5:30 pm AA Men's Group 7 pm Sisters in Faith	17 9:30 am Al-Anon 1:30 pm Columbus Clergy 7 pm Outreach Ministry Mtg	18 4:30 pm Canterbury Choir Rehearsal	19 1 pm Knitting & Stitching Group 6:15 pm AA 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal 8 pm AA	20 Rector's Day Off 4:30 pm Early Music in Columbus Board Mtg 8 pm AA	21 9:30 am Grief Support Group
22 Third Sunday after Epiphany 8 am Holy Eucharist, Rite I 9:30 am Adult Formation 9:30 am Children's Formation 10:30 am Children's Formation 10:30 am Holy Eucharist, Rite II with Saint Mark's Choir Noon Newcomers' Brunch 8 pm Sunday Night AA	23 10:30 am Staff Mtg 5:30 pm AA Men's Group 7:30 pm Monday Night Book Group	24 9:30 am Al-Anon 1:30 pm Columbus Clergy 7 pm Migration Ministry Mtg	25 4:30 pm Canterbury Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm The Marksmen Mtg	26 9:30 am Grief Support Group 6:15 pm AA 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal 8 pm AA	27 Rector's Day Off 8 pm AA	28
29 Fourth Sunday after Epiphany 8 am Holy Eucharist, Rite I 9:30 am Adult Formation 9:30 am Children's Formation 10:30 am Children's Formation 10:30 am Holy Eucharist, Rite II with Saint Mark's Choir 1 pm Street Church 8 pm Sunday Night AA	30 Annual Reports Due 10:30 am Staff Mtg 5:30 pm AA Men's Group	31 9:30 am Al Anon 1:30 pm Columbus Clergy 6:15 pm Contemplative Prayer	Feb 1 4:30 pm Canterbury Choir Rehearsal	2 1 pm Knitting and Stitching 6:15 pm AA 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal 8 pm AA	3 Rector's Day Off 10:30 am Flower Guild Mtg 8 pm AA	4 9:30 am Grief Support Group 5 pm Supper Group

Holiday Office Hours

Between December 26 and January 2 the office staff will maintain a flexible schedule. Calls and emails will be monitored so if you need to reach someone, please call the office 614-486-9452 or email Melanie

(OfficeManager@saintmarkscolumbus.org) or Pastor Vicki (Rector@saintmarkscolumbus.org).

Normal office hours of Mon - Fri from 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. will resume January 3.



SAINT MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

2151 Dorset Road
Columbus, OH 43221

www.SaintMarksColumbus.org
(614) 486-9452

See inside for a full calendar of events and gatherings and visit www.SaintMarksColumbus.org.

COMING IN JANUARY

Sunday, January 1

New Year's Day

8 a.m. No Worship Service

10:30 a.m. Worship Service, Rite II

Friday, January 6

The Feast of Epiphany

Epiphany Home Blessings

Saturday, January 7

5 p.m. Supper Group

Sunday, January 8

4 p.m. Taizé Service

Wednesday, January 11

5:30 p.m. Parish Family Dinner

Sunday, January 22

Noon Newcomers' Event

Chalking the Door - Epiphany Home Blessing



A centuries old custom of asking God's blessing on the Feast of Epiphany. Pastor Vicki will come to your home to lead the short prayers of blessing and mark the lintel over the front door of your home with chalk on Epiphany – January 6. You can also say the prayers and chalk the door yourself.

20 + C + M + B + 23

See inside for details.