
ST. MARK'S MESSENGER

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Reflections from the 2nd & 3rd World

Recently I had coffee with a 25 year old in our community and part of our wide ranging discussions was around our recent Kenya mission trip. He asked a lot of great questions that caused even deeper reflection for me. The truth is that anytime one goes on a mission trip, especially in a different culture, a second or third world culture or another country (and its often all of the above) there is a tremendous amount to process intellectually and emotionally. In talking with our Kenya mission team members they have done a lot of processing and still have much left to process.

I have had the privilege of participating in countless mission trips in my lifetime. Most of them have been in the United States, which minus American Indian Reservations is all first world (I would argue reservations are second world). In the foreign mission experiences that I have had, they all have been in poor areas of second and third world countries. Things like electricity, toilets, 3 meals a day are all luxury items. Our idea of luxury is a fancy car or a big house. Its all relative and we have much to be thankful for. We are blessed, but our blessings come with a challenge.

I have been quite transparent that I go through a lot of culture shock when I return from second and third world countries. Most get culture shock going to these places, I get it coming home. One of the side effects of my culture shock is that it takes a couple weeks for me to get used to the petty things that get our attention and complaints in light of the actual challenges the people in the second and third world face. The second and third world countries make up more of the world than the first world countries. The number of people living in second and third world conditions make up more of the world population than first world countries. We are not blessed, we are privileged. Privilege comes with a cost.

The biggest cost is that we lose sight of what really matters and what really constitutes a problem. Its hard to rationalize complaints about furniture, decor, technology, music and other small things in the church when you have spent an hour with a woman living in a dirt floor closet who until you spent \$30 on groceries had no food and now has food for a month. For \$30 I cannot take my family of four to McDonalds. Perspective is a powerful thing and while we must be thankful for what we have and use it well, we are called to consider what matters most. We are also called to care about all of God's children. Satan is the master of distraction and he loves to distract churches and Christians that are focused on what matters most. He often uses gossip, division, and distraction to take our eyes off the Gospel. Its not the big things that distract and divide us. Its not the big stuff that we gossip about, it is the little things.

My mentor as a teenager had two simple rules:

1. Don't sweat the small stuff.
2. Its all small stuff.

I hated those rules, mostly because I was not good at them, but life has had a way of making me better at them and these mission experiences sure have helped as well. I think these rules only apply to Americans, especially in light of experiences with those who face real challenges. This is not to say that the little things do not have any significance, but it should cause us to pause before we put so much time, energy, anger and worry into those small things. It should prevent us from ever losing sight of what really matters, what real suffering looks like. We should never allow Satan to use our focus on comfort, personal preferences and opinion to cause us to take our eyes off the Gospel.

I was asked during coffee whether or not its really true that people in second and third world situations are happier than we are. I was also asked if it was really true if those who serve feel like they got more out of the experience than they felt like they gave. Yes, both statements are true and as I pointed out during that meeting, they are more than cliches. Contrary to popular belief happiness is a choice and perhaps the one gift of utter poverty is it forces you to rely on God and to realize what really matters. Don't take my word for it, there are at least 7 other people in our midst who can tell you all about it. My prayer is that in the midst of doing life together at St. Mark's we can focus on what matters most while not ignoring the small challenges and inconveniences we face. Perspective is powerful and it matters.

~Pastor Marcus

Dates

August Birthdays

5 — Ron Dicke
6 — Emma McCollough
9 — Len McCollough
12 — Eleanor Thomas
13 — Barb Saunders, Jon Hillabrand

August Birthdays

21 — Justin Aldrich, Judy Bozarth
23 — Becky Wisner
24 — Dave Houser
26 — Mary Heyse

August Anniversaries

3 — Rob & Kathy Garrison
7 — Jeff & Cindy Reese
13 — Rod & Barb Knox
19 — Don & Connie Myers
24 — Brian & Heidi Moeller
31 — Dave & Jayne McClellan

Prayer Requests

Grief: Roger Easterday (Ruby Tuttle's son)

Church Members

Carole Toebe, John Crager, Nila Muzzillo, Sue Burdick, Regina Smith, The Kaduk Family, Ruby Tuttle, Sue Brown, Joyce Springer, and Kathleen Lutz, our missionary in Kenya

Friends of St. Mark's

Jeff Reynolds (son-in-law of Barry & Bonnie Trenary), Brent McCollough (Len McCollough's son), Ron Vancamp (friend of Vicki Bergdall), Dean Pheffercorn (husband of Carol Reese's friend), Nik McKean (Nicki McKean's son), Bill Zabel (friend of John & Jane Foell), Tina Muzzillo (Nila Muzzillo's daughter-in-law), Susie Dilley (friend of Cindy Warstler), Randy Young (member of our community), Gerry Nagel (Konieczki family), Steve Dwyer, Bun Mettert, Katlyn Kucharik (friends of Mary Heyse), Gladys Girado (Barry Trenary's cousin), Betty Deininger (Diann Hines friend's mother), Bob Dannenburg (friend of the Foell's), Nancy Pearl (Mandy Kintz's mother), Leonard Hines (Mary Heyse's brother-in-law), Diana Raney (Cindy Warstler's sister), Mungumio Vine (Kristen Konieczki's sponsored child), Judith Berry (Sue Brown's sister), Bob Friend (cousin of Marge Norris & Marilyn Myers), Rosie Reade (friend of Marilyn Myers)

Shut-ins and Homebound Members

Alden Swenson, Joanne Ruger, Marilyn Imus, Dolores Souder, Richard Bowerman, Eleanor Thomas, Betty Saunders, Sandy Muckenfuss, Ella McClellan, Maxine Mason, Jean Yoder, Noel Flannigan

**Prayer Requests will be kept on this list for two months, unless otherwise requested. If you would like to add a new request or update us on the status of a person currently on the list, please contact Kathy Fribley in the office.*

Kenya Mission Trip Review

Below is more information about our Kenya Mission Trip on behalf of the team of 9 who served: Pastor Marcus Carlson, Jessica Carlson, Alex Kaduk, Peter Jungk, Sue Brown, Diann Hines, Dave Hines, Peggy Badenhop and Scott Lutz.

Kenya Mission Trip Presentations

There will be at least 5 opportunities for you to hear more about the mission trip:

- Talk to one of the team members.
- Join us on Sunday August 5 when Sue Brown gives a testimony of her experience in both worship services.
- Sunday, August 12, 10:45-11:30 when the team presents downstairs in between worship services. Kathleen will be here with us, but not presenting that day.
- Sunday September 30 (Confirmation Sunday), first service. Alex Kaduk will be presenting during service for his confirmation faith project.
- Sunday October 21, Kathleen will present during our ministry moment (offering time) on this Sunday.

Future Opportunities

In addition to the news we announced in June in worship (see below), the Kenya Mission Team has decided to continue to offer information about child sponsorship as an opportunity for the congregation. Kathleen will have more information when she is with us in August and October. Additionally, the Kenya team is encouraging the offering of future mission trips to Kenya. We will keep you posted as decisions are made about this recommendation.

The Big News!

On Sunday, June 24 in worship we shared an exciting announcement and story about what the Holy Spirit has done in the midst of the Kenya trip and at St. Mark's. If you have not viewed that announcement, you can do so on our public Facebook page (you do not have to have Facebook to do this), review the link that was sent out via email, request a DVD of the service from the office or contact Pastor Dan for a link to the video. We strongly encourage you to watch the announcement as anything we write in the newsletter cannot quite do it justice. Here is the short version of the story: While in Kenya, Pastor Marcus asked Sister Mary about their greatest need and dream. Given that they provide schools for the poor of the slums and the Masai tribe who cannot afford public school, they have a deep desire and need to build a high school which they do not currently have. They noted that they had gotten a miraculous donation of land for this school from the Masai. Pastor Marcus asked how much that would cost and Sister Mary noted the school would cost \$8,000 US dollars to build! After that Pastor Marcus was pretty determined, of only through his own effort to find a way to make this happen, whether or not it happened through St. Mark's. Prior to leaving, Pastor Marcus learned from the Lutheran Foundation that they had received an Estate Gift for the Funding Our Future Reserve at the Foundation that had not been created to them. It was an error that provided a great, unexpected gift to St. Mark's. The Lutheran Foundation also noted that there was back interest and gains due that needed to be calculated. Two days after learning about the cost of the high school, Pastor Marcus received a note from the Lutheran Foundation that the back interest was just shy of \$9,000. At the June Council meeting it was obvious that God was at work and the council decided to set aside money from this gift and the interest/gains (a little more than the \$8,000) to support the building of the high school and to send Pastor Marcus and maybe others to help open/dedicate the school. What a wonderful opportunity to build a tremendous legacy!

As an update:

We did later hear from the Lutheran Foundation that an additional error was made and that the amount of back interest and gains was not as much as expected. This does not change the decision made by council, nor does it at all change what we believe the Holy Spirit is doing in calling us to this effort. There is more than enough in the unexpected estate gift to make up for the change in interest/gains.

So, how can you help? The first answer is always to pray. Pray for this effort, our partners in Kenya and their work there. While we believe that the amount set aside will cover the construction of the school, we want to give our congregation the opportunity to be a part of this. If you wish to give to this effort above and beyond your normal giving to St. Mark's, you can give towards providing furniture, curriculum, material and school supplies for the school by marking your donation 'Kenya'. We will be collecting funds for the foreseeable future and will keep you posted on any deadlines or updates.

We will be sharing more information as we go, as the project progresses and as we learn more. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Pastor Marcus.

Thank you Letter

The letter was received from Scott Lutz and he has asked us to share it with the congregation (note you may not understand all the inside jokes, but we try to explain some of them):

Dear St. Mark's

I just wanted to thank you for extending an invitation to me to join the Kenyan Mission Trip. As a former member of St. Mark's (*Scott now lives in Monticello*), let me tell you, these present members are a great group of people, my latest brothers and sisters (and friends) in Christ.

My words are inadequate to express the experiences that we shared. We traveled through the abject poverty and squalor of the slums and then we opened the door to the Prince of Peace primary school and were immediately surrounded by happy, smiling children craving a wave or a touch. Then slogging our way through the muck and mire to visit a family, a mother and three children. They had recently been thrown out of their home by the husband. Heart to Heart had provided them a new "home" - a one room, dirt floored, no electricity or pulling place to live. Hopefully we were able to provide her with at least a temporary respite from her despair and give her a spark of hope by sharing God's peace and giving her family some food, shelter, and bedding.

Other days we fed what could be their only meal of the day to children of the slums that Heart to Heart reaches out to and tries to give them enough education to at least have a chance to escape a life of destitution.

Then we went back to that same area to attend their church, a three hour service. I know that wouldn't fly in my church. It was such an uplifting experience, filled with delightful music, and testimonies, that it went by rather quickly. I understand that your choir will be implementing some dance moves into their performances beginning soon!! Maybe not.

Heart to Heart, what a wonderful ministry they are involved in. From Sister Mary, an amazing and dynamic force of nature, to the fearless van drivers, to Alex's harem (*the young female staff that loved to give Alex Kaduk a hard time*) and the rest of the staff, nearly all of them whom grew up in the slums, so they know first hand the challenges the children face. It was so comforting to me to meet the support group that my sister has in Kenya. What a wonderful, nurturing, and caring group.

My sister, I have always held her in high regard, but my admiration for her has gone to a whole new level. She is so courageous to follow God's calling to a foreign land where she teaches in the slums, provides an outreach ministry to single mothers with HIV positivity (what a greeting we had there!), travels to a Masai village to spread the Word, etc, etc. She is truly where she and God need her to be.

Thank you so much for your continuing support of her ministry. Those are funds that are well utilized, needed, and appreciated.

Ah, then there was our safari into the Great Rift Valley, an expanse so immense that it seemingly goes on forever, with wonders innumerable to behold. Oh, what a glorious Creature we have. Thank you God!

Anyway, from my perspective it was an awesome trip. It was humbling, inspirational, though provoking, and blessed journey.

Thank you so much for allowing me the opportunity. May God bless you.

Peace & Love,

Kathleen's Brother (Scott Lutz)

Article

The following article was written by Jessica Carlson and submitted to both the LCMC and NALC:

In June, nine members of St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Auburn, Indiana went on a mission trip to Nairobi, Kenya. We went to partner with our church missionary, Kathleen Lutz, who has served in Kenya for the last nine years. Up to this point, no St. Mark's group or family members had visited her and seen firsthand the work she was doing in Africa. Our trip was planned to include serving meals and leading children's programming at several schools in the slum areas of Nairobi, completing some painting at the schools, assisting with a Bible study with HIV+ women in a village outside of Nairobi, and visiting several homes in the slums in small groups to lead devotionals and prayer and give gifts of food. We knew what we were going to be doing and planned for it, but our experience went far beyond those plans. We connected with the staff of Heart to Heart Ministries in Nairobi led by Deaconess Mary Eliatika Oruko – we became instant friends and by the end of the week joked with each other like old friends.

On one of our work days a small group walked several miles through the congested, noisy streets of the Kibara slum in Nairobi and followed our guide down a dirt alley that also acted as the drainage ditch for the area. We weaved around the makeshift metal homes with their clotheslines strung out their doors, clothes blowing lightly in the breeze. Soon we ducked into a narrow, dark, open air hallway and walked past several doorways with fabric hung for a front door. At the end of the hall, we reached Regina's home and entered it. The first room was small and contained cooking and houseware items. It was very dark with pinpricks of light coming through small holes in the metal roof and gaps in the walls of the house at the corners. The second and last room was even lower than the first and contained a low couch, a long table, some shelves and a bed that was concealed from view by a white sheet hanging from the ceiling. It was dark in this room as well. Our guide found Regina in the bed and awoke her, while we set the food we brought with us on the table. Regina sat up and we lined the room, half of us sitting on the couch and half of us sitting on the bed as she told us her story. Tears rolled down her cheeks as she told us in Swahili through our translator about her seven children who had all died and how now she was sick from the conditions of sleeping on the floor which was cold and wet. Her husband, who had been Muslim, had passed away some time ago. While she practiced Islam during his life, she did not now. She cared for her six grandchildren, did not have a job due to her caretaking duties (though last year she had her own business she had to give up to care for her last dying child), had no food in the house and lost her electricity because she could not pay the \$4 monthly bill. She was three months behind in rent (which was \$39 a month) and her landlord was coming by frequently demanding payment and losing patience. She explained that when it rained the water ran down the alley, through the building's hallway and into the bedroom/living room of her home. It floods badly several times a year and yet she has lived in this home for twenty years. While she was 53 years old, she looked like and carried herself as if she was much, much older. Life has worn her down bit by bit. It was while she was sharing I realized that I had a waterproof jacket in my bag. At that moment, it felt like the least I could to offer it to her. Maybe it would keep the rain from

falling on her as she slept on the floor. Maybe one of her children could use it when walking the several miles to school. Her life was filled with burdens and stress that I will likely never experience personally. When she was done sharing her story with us, one of our team members began to share about the difficulties in life, how we are never alone, and how God is always near to us. As our team member spoke from her heart, tears streamed down Regina's cheeks. She finished with a simple prayer, we took a few pictures, thanked her for allowing us to come to her home and walked out the narrow doorway. Regina followed us out and when we reached the sunny courtyard, she spoke to us through the translator. She said, "Please come again and bring the Word of God to me." We smiled through our own tears, hugged her and left. A piece of my heart is still with her, and I wonder if she will survive the hard life she has. I wonder what will happen to her six grandchildren. These are the mission trip moments that change us forever.

We organize a mission trip, thinking that we go to help to disadvantaged people who have nothing. Instead they help us remember what is most important and that our relationship with God must be central to everything we do. After that we must use our lives to share his love with everyone we meet. It is humbling to watch people whose only clothes are likely the ones they are wearing, eat the one meal they will eat for the day and know they fight to survive each day and do it with such grace and joy. For some of us, it was our first experience with true poverty. All of us were reminded just how much abundance we have in the US and realized exactly what hunger, suffering, and deprivation looks like on a human face. All of us were humbled by the graciousness, love and acceptance we experienced from the Kenyans we met, especially the children. We will never forget it and will use our shared experience to continue to love and reach our community for Jesus.

New Staff

As you may or may not know we have been looking for a person for our Preschool Special Needs Assistant position for a year and a half. This position is critical based on our special needs population and our preschool growth. I am pleased to say that we have found someone and it has been worth the wait! I am more than pleased to share that after expressing some interest and having some dialogue with Linda and I, Stephanie Bellinger has accepted the position and will start August 1! This is a big win for our preschool and for our church. Stephanie brings education and experience to the table and is already invested in our program. Please join me in welcoming her.

We are also pleased to announce that we have found someone to fill Jon's role for the remaining time of the grant funding. Nicki McKean has accepted the position and is excited to join the team. We are excited to have her on the team and know she will bring a lot of energy, passion and giftedness to this role in the absence of Jon. Nicki has been stepping up as a volunteer with many things and grew up at St. Mark's. She has deep connections to the community and a passion for evangelism. She will not start this role in its full capacity until January 1, 2019. She will however begin working 5 hours a week alongside Jon, focusing on ALPHA on September 1. The funding for the overlap is coming from Funding Our Future. As you know from previous newsletters, Jon's role had been funded for 3-4 years. Nicki will train to lead ALPHA and work directly with Jon and will spend any remaining time working on other items with the team.

We are excited to have both of these women on our team and are thankful for the team that God has given us. We add these two new individuals with the gift of no budget impact.

If you have any questions, let us know.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Office Move

We will need some volunteers to help move everything back in on Saturday, August 4 at 9 a.m.

Upcoming Rehearsals & Music

Choir chimers will rehearse at 8:30 a.m. on August 5, 12, and 19. We will play on the 19th.

Chancel Choir will begin rehearsing on Wednesday, August 22 at 7 p.m. If we sing well, we will go out for ice cream after rehearsal. (Smile) Singing together for Jesus is an honor and a joy!

Sunday, August 26 we will have music by Ruth Gerken. She plays hammered dulcimer and sings. Her music is beautiful. Please come.

Sing For Your Supper from Laura

I would love to have a women's chorus sing Reba McEntire's "Softly and Tenderly". If you listen to it online, you will hear that the melody is just like the hymn. I know many of you can sing melodies beautifully. So, even if you have not sung in a choir before, please come. Let's work it up for Sunday, August 12th. We could have one practice at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 8th.

Rehearsal would be held at Mary Heyse's house. Her address is: 1813 Bent Tree Court, Auburn (Bridgewater Villa Section off of Morningstar Road).

After rehearsal, we will eat a meal together. Please bring a salad, side dish, dessert or beverage. Please let Laura Deckard or Mary know if you can come so we can coordinate the meal.

Willow Creek Leadership Summit

We have some spots for the Willow Creek Leadership Summit in Fort Wayne on August 9 & 10. If you are interested in attending, please contact Pastor Marcus. Priority is given to staff, council, ministry team leaders and those who have attended in the past.

Church Picnic

Our Church Picnic will be 8/19 at Rieke Park South Pavilion at 12pm. Sign-up in Kraus Korner for bringing a side dish or dessert.

Confirmation Information Meeting

On Sunday, August 26th at 12:30pm (after the 11:30am Gathering) we will have our information meeting for the upcoming year of Confirmation. Confirmation is open to all students going into 7th grade and above. We will give dates, meeting times, details to this years classes, and answer any questions. Classes start September 9th, and continue every other week throughout the school year. See Pastor Dan with any questions and to let him know if you are coming to the meeting.

Generational Understanding Seminars

Pastor Marcus offered a generational understanding seminar in May at Bridgewater for the community that was so well received that two more have been scheduled for the community, led by Pastor Marcus and sponsored by Learning Link and the Community Foundation. The seminars will be at the Community Foundation. The dates are Monday, August 27 OR Tuesday, September 11 from 4 p.m. — 6 p.m. Please RSVP to Melanie Beer to (260) 925-0311 or MBeer@CFDeKalb.org.

Coffee/Hospitality & Sunday School

The Worship Assistant Schedule is located in Kraus Korner. We need more volunteers for Coffee/Hospitality and Sunday School.

Grandparents & Caregivers Support Group

Every 4th Tuesday of the month, from 6:30-7:30pm at the Heimach Center (1800 E 7th St., Auburn) there will be a support group for custodial grandparents and grandparents who often care for their grandchildren. If you would like to come and need childcare, please contact Amanda and Rita at 260-357-3333.

Sunday Sermon Series

This summer we will journey through the book of Romans. Beginning after Labor Day, we will have a couple stand alone messages along with Faith in Action Sunday. If you have to miss a Sunday, you can always watch or listen online to the sermon or request a DVD of the service from the church office.

Lawn Mowing

The schedule for the lawn mowing season is up in Kraus Korner. Please sign-up for a time that works for you.

Weekly Bible Studies

Pastor's Bible Study

Pastor's Bible Study continues every Thursday at 10:00 a.m. Bring your Bible and join us!

Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study

Bible Study, with a new topic will start back up in September.

Upcoming Sunday Morning Sermon Series

We encourage you to read the passage for each week the Thursday, Friday, and Saturday before worship and the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday after worship as a way to further prepare for, reflect on, and listen to God as we look to the Bible together.

Romans

8/5 - Chapter 12 [Romans 12:1-8]

8/12 - Chapter 13 [Romans 13:1-10]

8/19 - Chapter 14 [Romans 14:1-13]

8/26 - Chapter 15 [Romans 15:1-9]

9/2 - Chapter 16 [Romans 16:17-19, 25-27]

Update: Jon Hunter

As you may recall, Jon Hunter joined us in 2017 as our Pastoral Intern. After that first year and seeing his skills and gifts, we transition him to a new role as Evangelism and Young Adult Minister. We also continued to be a source of internship hours and received a grant to cover a small amount of compensation for him during the entirety of his time here. We developed a plan to call, ordain and send him out to plant a church starting in 2020 with the same level of support for the first year. Jon has informed us that he has decided to take a different direction

than the plan that was developed and will be leaving his role at St. Mark's effective December 31, 2018. As a result, we will not carry out that plan, but are committed to the vision of planting a church. Jon has decided to go on his own and plant a church at the start of 2019 as he feels called to this particular timing. We are thankful for Jon and his work here. We believe he is called and gifted and wish him nothing but the best in his new ministry. We will have a time to offer prayer to Jon and Esther as they start this new adventure in worship at the beginning to middle of December. We have developed a transition plan to ensure the important work that Jon does, especially with ALPHA continues. As a result of the importance of ALPHA and the need for continued staff support for this role over the next couple of years as it, the modern service and Kingdom Communities grow, we have decided to fill this position. We have grant and special funding for the next 2-3 years for this role and ALPHA is one of the three most critical ministries of this church. Our hope is to have someone start for 5 or less hours a week in September to participate in ALPHA and be trained in that important ministry. If you have questions, please contact Pastor Marcus.

2018 Strategic Plan

We are currently working on the 2018 strategic plan. Most completed items have been behind the scenes items. This summer and fall, you will begin to see more items completed including the painting and re-carpeting of the offices, the sealing and repainting of the parking lot, stealth ministry teams and more. If you have questions, see one of the Pastors or a council member.

Pastor Marcus' Book Available

Pastor Marcus recently published his second book, *The False Gospel of Guilt and Shame*. You can order it in print or kindle on Amazon or you can order one from the church office for \$10.

Community Cookout Note

We want to give a big thank you to everybody who helped out with our Community Cookout! It is such a great evening every summer when we get to throw a party for our community!

Vacation Bible School Note

We want to give a big thank you to everybody who participated and helped with VBS! We had such a great week. Each night we had 15-17 students participate and only 4 were from our church! It was a great time walking through stories from the book of Judges with the kids. While the whole crew was spectacular, I wanted to give a special shout out to Janice Tilghman. Every year she gives so much time preparing for crafts, designing beautiful back drops, and jumping in with the kids!

Faith in Action Sunday: September 16

On Sunday, September 16th, St. Mark's will be joining in our 3rd annual Faith in Action Sunday. We will combine our Sunday morning services into one service, gathering at 8:30am, before breaking off into groups to put our faith into action, serving our community. This year we will not only be partnering with both the Auburn First United Methodist church, but also Auburn Nazarene Church. Ken and Mary Heyse are helping coordinate the leaders from our church. If you would like to help with a project or lead a project please speak to them about your interest. Look for more information coming soon in the weekly announcement bulletin and in Kraus Korner!

Food Pantry Donations

For 2018 we will be accepting any non perishable items. Occasionally, we will ask for donations for special needs or specific organizations we are supporting. Please see the board each month in Kraus Korner for more information.

Celebrate Recovery

St. Mark's has partnered with Celebrate Recovery--a place for people walking through hurts, hang-ups, and habits--at the Cupbearer Cafe. There is a community meal at 5:30 p.m. every Thursday with the Celebrate Recovery large group meeting at 6:30 p.m. If you would like more information about CR or are interested in attending, please see a pastor.

Class: Understanding & Parenting Teenagers

St. Mark's will be offering a class to the whole community that Pastor Marcus will teach at the YMCA this fall! Join us for this practical seminar for better understanding and deeper connections with adolescents. Wednesday Evenings 6:30-8:00pm, September 5th-26th, YMCA of DeKalb County Chapel. \$10 per person, Scholarships are available for Y members. To register, please call or stop in at the YMCA: 260-925-9622

Back By Popular Demand! Creating Greeting Cards

Set the date for September 15th. On that date we will be having our Greeting Card Making Event again! We will be making fall, Thanksgiving and Christmas cards in September. There will be a \$5.00 charge to help with cost of supplies. There will be a limit of 25 spots. Please reserve your spot now by contacting Marge, Marilyn, Vicki, or Janice or sign up in August when we post a sign up sheet on bulletin board. Hope to see you in September!

Opportunities to Serve

Nursery:

We are looking for individuals to serve for one of the Sunday morning services once a month. Please contact Pastor Dan if interested.

Tech Team:

We are hoping to add to our tech team, those who run the slides and sound for Sunday morning services. Training provided! It would mean serving for at least one of the services once a month. Please contact any Pastoral Team member if interested.

Preschool Volunteers:

As our preschool grows we are looking for some preschool volunteers to spend time with our children in the classroom. Ideally, volunteers would come for 2 hours one day a week each week in the 9:30-3:30 time frame. Retirees, working adults, parents, grandparents are all welcome. Please contact Linda or the church office if you are willing to help.

New Quarterly Prayer Initiative

As we continue to grow in our prayer life as individuals and as a church, we will be emphasizing quarterly prayer days throughout the year. For each of these 4 days during the year, congregation members will be encouraged to take a day with an extra focus on prayer. Ideas, prompts and themes will be shared through the newsletter, bulletin and the all church email. Our quarterly days of prayer for 2018 will be September 10 and December 3.

Personal Ministry

A core belief of our Lutheran Theology is the Priesthood of all Believers, that we are all ministers. That means regardless of your age, your Bible knowledge, your gifts and abilities you are a ministry. It means that you are all ministers. Over the last 5 years one of our hopes has been to help you find your personal ministry at St. Mark's and outside St. Mark's. The third and final piece of that puzzle is to help you find the people God is calling you to minister to. It may be specific people, it may be a type of person or a people group. Often, it is simply the names in your contacts, in your circle of influence that do not have a faith, have a faith that has gone dry, do not have a church or do not know Jesus. Who are the people that God is calling you to minister to?

Alpha News

Only just over a month until we begin Alpha again at the Y of DeKalb. Alpha is run worldwide and has been life transformational to millions of people. It is also making an impact right here in Northeast Indiana. Alpha is one of the most effective tools at communicating the Good News of Jesus. There are three ways we are asking everyone in the church to get involved in Alpha. **Pray, Try, Ask or PTA.** No this isn't about Parents, teachers and associations. However, we would like everyone to *pray* for guests that will come to Alpha. The next way is to *try* Alpha. If you have never tried Alpha. Give it a go! The last is to *ask*. If you have benefited from Alpha and it has helped your faith in God, we wanted to encourage you to *ask* and bring along your friends for Alpha. Join us on September 10, 2018.

If you would like to cook and host one of the meals for Alpha please email Jon at jon@stmarksauburn.org.

Save the Date

August 9 & 10 - Willow Creek Leadership Summit
August 12 - Kenya Mission Trip Presentation 10:45-11:30 a.m.
August 19 - Church Picnic
August 27 - Generational Understanding Seminar
September 8 - Church Retreat (half day)
September 11 - Generational Understanding Seminar
September 10-November 19 - ALPHA
September 16 - Faith in Action Sunday
October 13 & 14 - Dan Clites, LCMC Church Plant Director Visits
October 20 - Church Work Day
October 27 - Oktoberfest

Kingdom Communities

You have gifts I don't have. I have gifts you don't have. As a team we can do great things in Jesus name! Each Kingdom Community is a team that has a specific mission to transform the world around them. Kingdom Community groups will practice up, in, and out. Each Kingdom Community will eat, pray, laugh, read the Bible, and share life together just as they did in the early church. This is where some of the deepest discipleship and transformation occurs both with people inside and outside our church. Do you have ideas about local mission our church could get involved in? Would you like to be part of the first Kingdom Community at St. Mark's? For Alpha or Kingdom community questions, please email jon@stmarksauburn.org.

Thank You

Dear Members of St. Mark's,
Thank you for your recent donation to the Community Center of Caring Food Pantry. Your thoughtfulness and continued support is appreciated by the clients we serve.
Shirley Johnson, Program Coordinator



Montessori Moment

Our 2018-2019 school year begins in just a few short weeks! We are busy getting the classroom ready for our students. Ms. Jill has started her Montessori Teacher training and we will be adding another part-time assistant this year. Exciting things are happening as we continue to grow! As we grow we are always looking for people to help with supplies, and substitutes. If you would be interested in helping us in any way please reach out to Ms. Linda or any other staff member. We will again post things monthly that the class needs. Your prayers and support are truly appreciated as we begin another year at St. Mark's.

Events

There are a couple spots left for the 2018-2019 school year. If you know of anyone looking for a Montessori school please encourage them to schedule a tour. You can do this by emailing Linda at linda@stmarksauburn.org

Help Needed

We are looking for substitutes for the 2018-2019 school year. If you would be interested in helping in the classroom as a substitute please email Linda at linda@stmarksauburn.org

St. Mark's Financial Update

Due to timing of bank statements, reconciliation and council meeting schedules, we will always be presenting information from the end of the month occurring two months before the date of the newsletter.

Operating Fund Snapshot

General Fund/Budget/Operating Fund

The Operating Fund is our yearly budget. This is also called the general fund. This is what Pastor Dan likes to describe as the 'regular' income and expenses of the church. The Operating Fund covers those things that occur on a regular basis such as compensation for Pastor Marcus, Pastor Dan, Kathy and Laura and things such as utilities, insurance and other regular expenses for our staff, building and ministries. This is different from the special (restricted/designated accounts) that cover new initiatives and one-time or special expenses.

Through June 30, 2018

Operating Fund Reserve Remaining: \$11,584.95

| | <u>Income</u> | <u>Expense</u> | <u>Net</u> |
|------------|---------------|----------------|-------------|
| Budget | \$134,537.50 | \$134,537.50 | \$0 |
| Actual | \$126,598.88 | \$135,691.27 | \$0 |
| Difference | -\$7,938.62 | -\$1,153.77 | -\$9,092.39 |

August Finance Note

June shows us quite far behind, however the primary reason for that is that we have not moved all of the reserves that we are budgeted to this point from our Funding Our Future Reserve account as of yet. We will be moving more of that over in July as we have been waiting until we need it to move it. That said, May, June and July are our toughest months financially and this year is no exception. This is part of the reason that we encourage the automatic giving. The good news is that for June we are in the best place financially that we have been in 5 years. If you are behind on your usual or pledged giving, it would help us immensely if you caught up as we enter the busy fall season. Thank you for both your faithfulness and generosity!

Finance Education for August-an Update

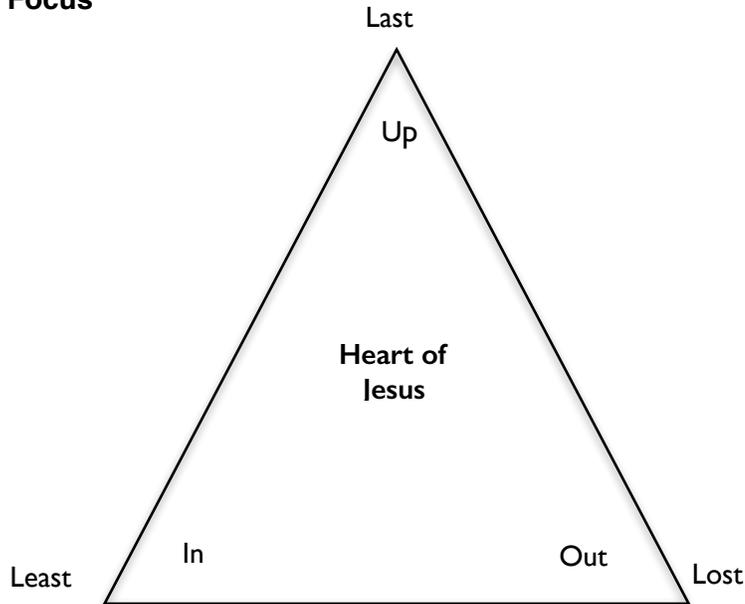
The overall financial health of St. Mark's is strong. We have great assets, a strong finance team and a thoughtful Council. Our preschool is growing and remains financially self-sufficient. Our giving this year has improved and we are thankful that we continue to see new members, regular attenders and visitors. We are still not meeting our budget without assistance from our Funding Our Future Reserve account at the Lutheran Foundation as we continue to grow into the second pastor position. It is vital to our growth and our future as a church. We are hoping to be able to count on a small amount of interest from that fund each year for this position at minimum. When people ask us where they can give to the greatest need, we always tell them to give to the general (operating) fund. We have been blessed to have had special gifts and grants that have allowed us to do everything that we have done new here at St. Mark's. We have finally caught up on and have a plan for the continued maintenance and improvement of our building. As we seek to grow our general/operating fund to support our budget we will need to continue to grow giving in two ways: from those who currently call St. Mark's home and from those who become a part of our wonderful church family. In this we ask for your prayers as we continue to move into the future God has for us. It has not been easy, nor has it been perfect, but we are thankful for what God has done in our wonderful little church. We are thankful for how we have grown and for the opportunities God has given us to reach out to others in our community and across the world. Most churches in our country are struggling with immense challenges. We are thankful that our big challenge is growing our operating fund and continuing to trust God as we hit the normal and natural speed bumps of change. We are cautiously optimistic as we move into the future and will continue to work hard as a finance team and a Council to be good stewards of what God has given us and called us to. We hope to continue to keep you updated, especially as we move into the fall and our stewardship campaign.

St. Mark's Culture & DNA

Our DNA:

While we are all unique and have our own unique DNA, we also as a church have a shared and unique DNA. We utilize the shape of a triangle to explain much of our ministry, vision and structure. This is rooted in the first triangle that represents the three dimensions or focuses of Jesus' life and ministry. Jesus lived his intentional life on earth through three relationships: up, in and out.

Service Focus



Service Focus: The triangle helps us to understand the focus of the ministry of our church based on how Jesus lived his life, up-in-out with the Father, the disciples and the world. As a church, we have recognized our need to focus on service. For many years, like most other churches in our country, we have not done a good job at serving the community and world around us. Those days are over. As a church we have identified three areas of focus for our service, consistent with the life of Jesus and and the Scriptures. The first is reaching *in* to those who are seen as the 'least of these' in our church, community & world. The second is to reach *up* to those who are often seen as the last to be considered in our culture. Finally, we reach *out* to those who are lost and do not know Jesus.

Our Vocabulary:

Most churches (along with other organizations) do not realize that the language and the vocabulary of the organization have great significance to the organization. One of the cornerstones of any culture is language or vocabulary. This month our vocabulary words are *apprentice and equip*.

Apprentice: one who is learning through training, modeling and practice in intentional relationship.

Equip: to train and prepare, a follower of Jesus for the ministry they have been called and gifted to do in the church, community and world. Ephesians 4:1-16 is our model for this understanding.

Prayer of the Month:

Let nothing disturb me, Let nothing frighten me, All things pass away: God never changes. Patience obtains all things. He who has God finds he lacks nothing; God alone suffices. ~ Prayer of Teresa of Avila

Culture Question of the Month:

Considering the article for the newsletter this month, how have you seen our focus on being the church, being in mission and seeking to reach people for Jesus bear fruit? Where do you think God wants to work through our church to better be the church, to be on mission and to reach others?

Worship Assistant Schedule August 5, 2018 to September 9, 2018

| | August 5 | August 12 | August 19 | August 26 | September 2 | September 9 |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Preaching | Pastor Marcus | Jon Hunter | Pastor Dan | Pastor Marcus | Pastor Marcus | Pastor Dan |
| Assisting Minister (T) | Mason R. | Diann H. | Jane F. | Dave H. | Jane F. | Mason R. |
| Children Time (T) | Jessica C. | Pastor Marcus | Jon H. | Pastor Dan | Jessica C. | Jon H. |
| Acolyte (T) | Camden K. | Ava A. | Alex L. | Abby C. | Ava A. | Alex K. |
| Lector (T) | Bill H. | Alison A. | Suzanne L. | Peggy B. | Kathy G. | Marilyn M. |
| Communion Asst. (T) | Peggy B. & P. Dan | Janice & Barry Trenary | John F. & Glenn M. | Diann H. & Marge N. | Peggy B. & Janice T. | Glenn M. & Marge N. |
| Ushers (T) | Jerry S., Art B., Stan B., Tony K. | Jerry S., Rex B., Russ H., Len M. | Jerry S., Rex B., Dave & Jayne M. | Jerry S., Rex B., Janice T., Kathy G. | Jerry S., Rex B., Art B., Stan B. | Jerry S., Rex B., Jim & Ann F. |
| Greeters (T) | Don & Connie M. | Len M. & Carolyn O. | Bill & Sarah H. | Barry & Bonnie T. | Bill & Sarah H. | Stan & Judy B. |
| Nursery (T) | | Jessica C. & Kaitlyn G. | Carol R. & Linda W. | | Alison A. | Jessica & Kaitlyn |
| Sunday School (T) | Cindy R. | | | | N/A | |
| Tech (T) | Jeff & Jarrett R. | Justin A. & Micah C. | Barry T. & Micah C. | Connie M. & Justin A. | Justin A. & Micah C. | Jeff & Jarrett R. |
| Prayer Team (T) | Cindy R. & Jayne M. | Marge N. & Sue B. | Brian M. & P. Marcus | Jessica C. & Jon H. | Mary H. & Sue B. | Cindy R. & Jayne M. |
| Altar | Diann H. | | | | Barb K. | Barb K. |
| Coffee/Hospitality | | | N/A | | | |
| Emcee (M) | Jon H. | Pastor Dan | Jon H. | Jon H. | Pastor Dan | Jon H. |
| Communion (M) | Marge N. | Pastor Dan | Jeff R. | Marilyn M. | Marilyn M. | Jon H. |
| Prayer Team (M) | Pastor Dan | Mary H. | Cindy R. | Jayne M. | Jon H. | Pastor Marcus |
| Greeters/Usher (M) | Tina M. | Ken & Mary H. | Jeff & Cindy R. | Jayne M. | Linda Wolff | Tina M. |
| Nursery (M) | Heidi M. | Carol R. | Ashlyn R. | Heidi M. | Carol R. | Heidi M. |
| Tech (M) | Barry T. | Pastor Marcus | Mason & Jarrett R. | Pastor Dan | Marge N. | Barry T. |
| Other | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

AUGUST 2018

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| <p>29 9:30 AM Worship Service with Communion 10:30 AM Coffee Hour 11:30 AM 11:30 Gathering (Modern Worship) 12:30 PM Move Office</p> | <p>30 Paint Office Pastor Dan's Day Off</p> | <p>31 Paint Office 5:00 PM Modern Service Rehearsal</p> | <p>1 Carpet Office 9:30 AM Pastors & Kathy Meeting 12:00 PM Genealogy Group</p> | <p>2 Carpet Office 10:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study 5:30 PM Celebrate Recovery 6:00 PM Council Meeting & Dinner</p> | <p>3 Carpet Office Pastor Marcus' Day Off</p> | <p>4 9:00 AM Move Office</p> |
| <p>5 8:30 AM Choir Chimers Rehearsal 9:30 AM Worship Service with Communion 10:30 AM Coffee Hour 11:30 AM 11:30 Gathering (Modern Worship)</p> | <p>6 Pastor Dan's Day Off</p> | <p>7 5:00 PM Modern Service Rehearsal</p> | <p>8 8:30 AM Open Prayer & Communion 9:00 AM Prayer Gathering 10:30 AM Pastors Meeting</p> | <p>9 Willow Creek Leadership Summit 10:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study 5:30 PM Celebrate Recovery</p> | <p>10 Pastor Marcus' Day Off Willow Creek Leadership Summit</p> | <p>11</p> |
| <p>12 8:30 AM Choir Chimers Rehearsal 9:30 AM Worship Service with Communion 10:30 AM Coffee Hour 10:45 AM Kenya Mission Trip 11:30 AM 11:30 Gathering (Modern Worship)</p> | <p>13 NALC Lutheran Week Pastor Dan's Day Off</p> | <p>14 NALC Lutheran Week 5:00 PM Modern Service Rehearsal</p> | <p>15 NALC Lutheran Week 8:30 AM Open Prayer & Communion 9:00 AM Prayer Gathering 9:30 AM Pastors Meeting 12:00 PM Genealogy Group 12:00 PM Senior's Luncheon</p> | <p>16 NALC Lutheran Week 10:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study 5:30 PM Celebrate Recovery</p> | <p>17 NALC Lutheran Week Pastor Marcus' Day Off</p> | <p>18</p> |
| <p>19 8:30 AM Choir Chimers Rehearsal 9:30 AM Worship Service with Communion 10:30 AM Coffee Hour 11:30 AM 11:30 Gathering (Modern Worship) 12:00 PM Church Picnic</p> | <p>20 Pastor Dan's Day Off</p> | <p>21 5:00 PM Modern Service Rehearsal</p> | <p>22 8:30 AM Open Prayer & Communion 9:00 AM Prayer Gathering 7:00 PM Choir Practice</p> | <p>23 10:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study 5:30 PM Celebrate Recovery 7:00 PM Executive Council Meeting</p> | <p>24 Pastor Marcus' Day Off</p> | <p>25</p> |
| <p>26 9:30 AM Music by Ruth Gerken at 9:30am Service 9:30 AM Worship Service with Communion 10:30 AM Coffee Hour 11:30 AM 11:30 Gathering (Modern Worship) 12:30 PM Confirmation Information Meeting</p> | <p>27 Pastor Dan's Day Off 4:00 PM Generational Understanding Seminar</p> | <p>28 5:00 PM Modern Service Rehearsal</p> | <p>29 8:30 AM Open Prayer & Communion 9:00 AM Prayer Gathering 7:00 PM Choir Practice</p> | <p>30 10:00 AM Pastor's Bible Study 5:30 PM Celebrate Recovery</p> | <p>31 Pastor Marcus' Day Off</p> | <p>1</p> |

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

211 West Ninth Street

Auburn, IN 46706

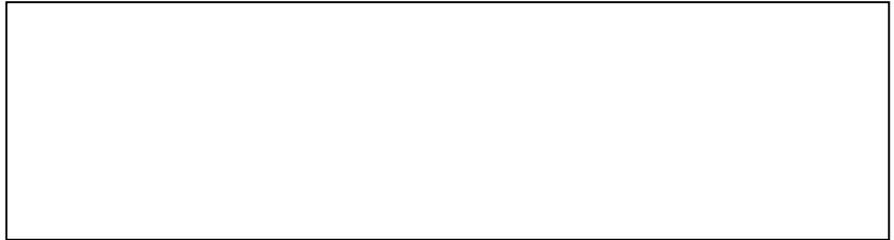
Web Page: www.stmarksauburn.org

Pastor Marcus: pastormarcus@stmarksauburn.org

Pastor Dan: pastordan@stmarksauburn.org

E-mail: office@stmarksauburn.org

Return Service Requested



St. Mark's

— LUTHERAN CHURCH —

**Building Relationships
Transforming Lives**

St. Mark's Messenger is published monthly by St. Mark's Lutheran Church

The Rev. Dr. Marcus J. Carlson Senior Pastor

Rev. Dan Bellinger Family & Outreach Pastor

Jon Hunter Young Adult & Evangelism Minister

Laura Deckard Director of Music

Kathy Fribley Church Secretary

Linda Vandemark Preschool Director

Our Mission: To bring about transformation in individuals, families, our community, and the world through Jesus Christ