



# St. Mark's Lutheran Church

*Proclaiming Christ's Abundant Love*

I am the vine, you are the branches. (John 15:5)



## The Vineyard Press

April 2016

Volume 16, Issue 4

### First Communion Parents

**First Communion will be Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> during the 10:30am worship.** The day of First Communion is very exciting and one we look forward to with much joy and celebration! **We ask that you arrive a little early and head to the Check-In Table** with your student. You will pick up their binder filled with all their work and their corsage/boutonniere to be worn during the service.

**Feel free to take pictures in the Sanctuary after the service, or pictures in the Narthex before and after the service.** Please have your child dressed in their Sunday best. We are looking forward to a wonderful service with you all! Any questions don't hesitate to contact Kari Reiseck at: kreiseck@stmarksaurora.net or (630) 897-6891.



### Welcome to First Communion Youth

On Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> at the 10:30am service we welcome 27 youth to the Lord's Table. In the Sacrament of Holy Baptism these youth were welcomed into the Body of Christ and gifted to share in the mission of God. In the Sacrament of Holy Communion God invites us in Jesus Christ to be nourished for our life of discipleship. Let us welcome these sisters and brothers in Christ to Holy Communion and pray for them as they join with us in this great gift

† Carter Anderson	† Elliott Bauer Brunswick	† Cara Davenport	† Josh Jabori	† Evan Matkovich	† Sydney Wagner
† Leah Ayers	† Sara Carlson	† Keegan Folley	† Cassidy Jarrett	† Evan Olp	† Will Wauters
† Emily Bell	† Clodagh Creaney	† Lukas Grenman	† Avalynn Johnson	† Callie Reimer	
† Brooke Bjork	† Darragh Creaney	† Ashton Hobson	† Brady King	† Addison Runestad	
† Ethan Bjork	† Declan Creaney	† Lila Hopkins	† Madelyn King	† Isabella Swickert	

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the meal and the gift you provide me, Love. You are a God, my one and only God, and I'm thankful for my daily bread. I will share my gift of Love with others. In Jesus' name, all the people said, Amen.

~ Prayer written by a St. Mark's First Communion Youth

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# OUTREACH

The Outreach Committee's focus for April is on local organization: **Emmanuel House**



## Who we are:

Emmanuel House is a non-profit, Aurora-based organization dedicated to helping refugee and working-class families save and break the cycle of poverty through home ownership. In close collaboration with our partner organizations, qualified families are selected and subsequently given the opportunity to live in one of our apartments for 18 months. Families pay market rate rent just as they would anywhere else, but by leveraging a variety of created and existing resources, an entire year's rent (between \$10,000 - \$12,000) is channeled into a trust for the family. This provides a down payment on their first home in Aurora, eliminating the *primary and often sole barrier to homeownership – the ability to save a down payment*.

## What we do: Helping individuals & communities

How Does Home Ownership Help Individuals?	How Does Home Ownership Help Communities?
Families can build equity	Reduces vacancies and foreclosures
Graduation rates improve by 25%	Reduces crime
Increases access to higher education	Increases civic engagement
Reduces mobility — children remain in their schools 4x longer than renters	Encourages business development and strengthens the tax base

## How You Can Help!

- \* Pray for this ministry as we plan for expansion of our program
- \* On-going donorship! Give monthly to help Emmanuel House open 5 more apartments in 2016!
- \* Volunteer! See the bulletin board in the Welcome Center to get connected, and contact Sarah Bredow at 630.440.9919, or [sebredow@gmail.com](mailto:sebredow@gmail.com)

Hope is a home, and it starts with you. Learn more at: [emmanuelhouse.org](http://emmanuelhouse.org)

## OUTREACH

### Your Generosity to PADS Makes a Difference



I first met T'Prinn when she was in third grade. At that time, there were so many young children staying at the overnight shelter, PADS. We decided to do a craft class for the kids after dinner each time we served. We made pillows, warm winter hats, designed T-shirts and so many other fun projects. T'Prinn was excited about everything we did. For Mother's Day, we made and decorated picture frames. Before dinner, we took pictures of all the kids. I was so impressed with T'Prinn's dad. When he saw me taking pictures, he asked if I would take a family picture. It was beautiful. He was so excited and proud of his family. I was very touched. T'Prinn and her 2 brothers were there for several months. Obviously, the dad had several issues that needed to be solved before earning his way into the family area, TLC.. But looked what happened.

As Archbishop Desmond Tutu said, "Do your little bit of good where you are; It's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world."

**Anyone who has ever donated food or warm coats, volunteered at PADS or joined in on so many other PADS projects should feel proud. You had a hand in T'Prinn's success. Thank you St. Mark's for all your bits of kindness.**

~Janet Guinnane

### Marchesani Scholarship Recipients Seizing Opportunities in College

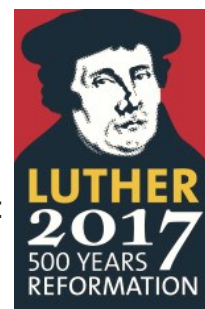
by Karen Swandby, TLC Director

From the time T'Prinn was four years old, her family has benefited from the services available at Hesed House, whether it was case management, the PADS Emergency Overnight Shelter, the Transitional Living Community or the Lighthouse Permanent Supportive Housing program. With the chaos that accompanies homelessness, T'Prinn and her two older brothers struggled with truancy, but never lost the desire to learn and to improve their situation. "My experience with homelessness has been long, and there were ups and downs, but it also instilled in me many lessons that might have taken me years to learn in any other situation," T'Prinn said. "Humility, perseverance, strength in family... the list is endless." In spite of a challenging childhood, T'Prinn has set her educational goals high and is aiming for nothing but the best. She is attending the University of Illinois at Chicago on a Pre-Med track with plans to attend medical school. She wants to show others in her situation that it is possible to be successful and to show the world that no one should be written off at first glance. "There are many people who are homeless that have great things to offer the world. They simply need a chance," T'Prinn said. While recognizing there are financial benefits to becoming a doctor, the benefits T'Prinn expects to receive personally are what draws her to this career. "There is satisfaction in knowing that I can help people and being able to do that is amazing to me," T'Prinn said. "I just hope that one day I can give back to all of the people that have helped me my entire life and contribute to the world in a positive way." Hesed House is honored to award the 2015 Marchesani Scholarship to this exceptional, deserving young woman.

## MUSIC MINISTRY

### Germany Trip 2017 - Celebrate the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reformation

A wonderful trip to Germany is being planned to celebrate the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reformation. **The trip will be two tiered, for those wanting to sing as well as non-singers.** Folks interested in choral singing will travel ahead to Berlin, where they will spend time rehearsing and participate in a mass choir concert under the direction of world famous Bach scholar Helmut Rilling at the Berlin Cathedral as part of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Those not interested in singing will travel in a second group to Berlin in time to attend the concert. **The two groups will then join to embark on an amazing historical tour.** Some of the famous towns we will visit include: Berlin, Wittenberg, Erfurt, Eisenach, Eisleben and Leipzig. Everyone is invited to attend: members, friends, relatives, and non- members of St. Marks. For more information about the trip please contact Kristin Young.



## ELECTRONIC GIVING AT ST. MARK'S

Vacation, out of town, forgot your envelope? These are all things that happen that sometimes prevent us from meeting our intentions to share our abundance to do the work of the Lord. **One option that you may want to consider is electronic giving.** When you sign up for electronic giving, the amount that you wish to commit to the work of St. Mark's Lutheran Church is automatically withdrawn from your checking/savings account on either a weekly or monthly basis. **The amount that you designate for electronic giving can either be your full pledge or only a part of your pledge.** If you sign up for the weekly option, the amount you designate will be withdrawn every Thursday. If you sign up for the monthly option, the amount will be withdrawn on the first Thursday of the month.

If you would like to consider electronic giving or have questions on this, feel free to contact me at: [jerickson@stmarksaurora.net](mailto:jerickson@stmarksaurora.net) or (630) 897-0291.

~Jim Erickson, Financial Secretary



## GIFTS OF STOCK TO ST. MARKS



As you finish your 2015 taxes and begin your financial and tax planning for 2016, one option you may want to consider is a direct gift of stock to St. Marks. While the stock market is going through a volatile period right now, one option you could still consider is making a direct gift of appreciated stock or mutual funds. This can create a win-win situation for both you and St. Marks. You will receive a charitable income tax deduction for the full fair market value of the stock or mutual fund and potentially reduce your long term capital gains on the appreciated stock. In order to take advantage of this, you would have to donate the stock directly to the church without selling it. The congregation would then sell the stock to turn the donation into

cash. The congregation does have a process in place to handle such gifts. **If you are interested in moving forward with such an option, please contact our Financial Secretary, Jim Erickson** at: [jerickson@stmarksaurora.net](mailto:jerickson@stmarksaurora.net) or (630) 897-0291.

You should consult with your financial or tax advisor before actually making such a gift to insure that it meets your situation.

## SHARING THE PEACE

In our worship times we have the opportunity to greet one another and share God's peace with those around us. This is a time to remember that we are part of a community that is built on our relationship in Jesus Christ.

**It is not imperative that we necessarily "shake" hands but a simple nod with a greeting, a fist bump, or touching elbows suffices.** The reason is that for some who have compromised immune systems germs and viruses can be transmitted through no fault of anyone. And with the recent influenza and flu bugs that have affected so many we have begun the option of sharing the Peace by either a verbal greeting, a nod, a fist bump, or touching elbows. Health and wellness are important and we need to make sure we do all we can to provide for that for those who come to worship.

**The method of sharing the Peace is not important – the fact that we are doing it, is. Peace be with you.**

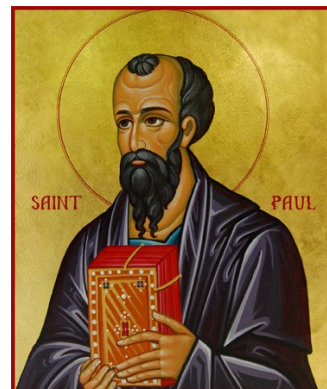




## PAUL'S MINISTRY

You may have noticed Paul's Ministry listed under Prayer Requests section of our weekly Courier. Many people are asking about it and want to know exactly what it is. So here is a brief background:

Two years ago, the Adult Bible Study covered Paul's letter to the Colossians. As with all of our studies, conversation and discussions are lively and this was the case with Colossians. Paul, from prison, was writing to this new church. His purpose was to encourage the new Christians and caution them to follow the Word of God and not to be led astray by the old ways and local gods. Paul told them to trust in God's promises. Times were stressful and dangerous. Christians were in hiding and were fearful. On the last day of this study, the Holy Spirit whispered and a comparison was made between Paul's ministry then and now. In Paul's time it was dangerous and stressful, it was easy to slide back into being like everyone else and worship other gods. Realization dawned that Paul's ministry might again be appropriate. Times are tough! Many have no faith or belief in God, churches are closing.



Therefore, a group of St. Mark's members began Paul's Ministry with the goal of writing to every ELCA church in Illinois. The letters are encouraging, they remind others of our connections and our purpose. We write about being apart of something larger than just our one church. We let them know that our staff, our prayer team, and our congregation has prayed for them and ask that they pray for us. We ask them to be strong and trust in God's promises for he has a plan although it may not be easy to see or understand. Connecting and affirming that they are not alone is the whole purpose.

Are the churches listed under "prayer requests" in trouble? Not necessarily! That is not our purpose. We simply want to reach out and let them know that others are thinking of and praying for them. It's sharing God's peace by letter.

## PRAYER CORNER

Recently I had a wonderful conversation with a young man I've known since he was born. He talked about learning something new, something just for him. He continued that he had his work, his family, and church but that he needed something more. A balance, I said, you are looking for a balance.

Too often we get wrapped up in our day to day lives and we get out of balance. We need the darkness to enjoy the light. When we walk through the desert or the wilderness, and we hope to encounter an oasis or meadow. We need family and community but we also need time alone. We need sorrow to appreciate joy. As humans, as Christians, we need a balance in our lives. Worship, daily prayer, being of service to our own congregation, our community and our world.

Lent, for me, helps bring the need for balance into focus.

In Medieval times, it became too dangerous for Christians to make an annual pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Daily prayer was important but other methods of "physical" pilgrimage needed to be invented. **The Stations of the Cross is one method** (there are purple sheets at the Welcome Desk with information on the Stations of the Cross). Christians could follow in Jesus' footsteps on the way to the cross without traveling to the Holy Land. **Another method was the Labyrinth.** A Labyrinth is like a maze however there is only one way in and one way out. When walking a Labyrinth, the path leads into the center (representing Christ) and back out about again. As you walk the path, you make an equal number of left and right turns. Those equal number of turns, physically do something to your inner ear and sense of balance.

Lent ends with the Tritium: the three days before Easter. During **Maundy Thursday** worship, the last supper, we strip the altar of book, candles, communion ware, altar cloth, and banners. During **Good Friday** worship, we walk the Stations, the Way of the Cross, as if we are walking with Jesus. We listen as Scripture is read, we rest in the silence, we reflect as musical offerings speak to and for our souls. The lights go out, we hear the "tomb" slam shut and the low, lonely bell is rung. Then during the Vigil of **Easter**, we wait.

Yet...we are not left in darkness, in the desert, alone or in sorrow because there is a Resurrection!

**Alleluia! He is risen! He is risen indeed!**

~Sue Hilderbrand

# MOTHER'S DAY DEDICATION

## Fund a Flock Through ELCA Good Gifts

"Good Gifts" grow the Church, fight hunger, and transform lives. **This year St. Mark's would like to raise at least enough to purchase four sheep. Each sheep costs \$125, thus we are hoping to raise at least \$500.** However, the more money we raise the more sheep we can purchase for those in need.



Warm, durable sheep's wool creates a world of opportunity for a family struggling with hunger and poverty. **Wool can be woven into hats, sweaters, coats and blankets to keep families warm and dry.** These products, and even the wool itself, can be sold at the local market for extra income. And to sweeten the deal, sheep's milk is full of protein and is ideal for making cheese and other dairy products. What a marvelous mission to end hunger in God's world. Your donations will become a blessing and a new beginning for many families as well as honor your loved ones.

ELCA Good Gifts: Gifts that grow the Church, fight hunger and transform lives. Consider honoring or remembering your special mother or mother figure on Mother's Day weekend. We will be accepting donations in any amount, and **your donation for each person honored or remembered will place them on our special bulletin insert** of special women recognized the weekend of Mother's Day, May 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. Sign-up sheets can be found beginning the weekend of April 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> on the table by the Outreach bulletin board. You will also find cards to notify loved ones how you honored them. Remittance envelopes are available on the same table. Envelopes can be placed in the offering plate or given to the Welcome Center host **beginning April 16<sup>th</sup>**. Mother's Day is May 8<sup>th</sup> and **we are asking that dedication sheets be turned in by May 4<sup>th</sup> to be part of the Mother's Day bulletin.**

*"For I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink.  
I was a stranger and you welcomed me." - Matthew 25:35*

# FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN

## Feed the Need



We have celebrated our daughter-in-law's birthday for several years with a FMSC packing party with friends and family. We were delighted to have the opportunity to pack in our first mobile event.

Imagine entering a football stadium, you sense the excitement, energy, and determination. There are 1,000 volunteers on the field working around 350 large tables. They are filling bags at the rate of over 14,000 per hour, and there are about 30 volunteers moving about distributing ingredients and hauling boxes packed with meals. The final session is cut short, the warehouse has run out of rice! The volunteers have exceeded the goal of packing 1 million meals in 2 days! They pray over the pallets. Over 99% of the meals will reach their intended destination!

The volunteers have packed more than meals, they have packed life and hope. An image of a baby appears on the orientation screen, only it isn't a baby, it is a 2 ½ year old boy who weighs less than 10 lbs. A new image appears, it is the little boy after 3 months of FMSC meals. He weighs 20 lbs., he is smiling, he can stand and walk. The missionary reports the little boy is now 3 years old and weighs 30 lbs. He is able to run!

We are fortunate to have a permanent packing facility in Aurora. There are jobs for everyone regardless of abilities, and children are encouraged to participate. FMSC will validate service hours for students. The ingredients for 1 million meals costs \$250,000. Donations can be made on line, and gift cards can be printed. We have given these to our grandsons to honor their first communions. The local facility has unique gifts from around the world. They also have popular items like t-shirts.

~Don and Claudia Cossairt

# STEWARDSHIP

## Some Questions About Our Giving For All of Us

"When I grasp that I'm a steward, not an owner, it totally changes my perspective. It's the ultimate paradigm shift. Suddenly, I'm not asking, 'How much of my money shall I, out of the goodness of my heart, give to God?' Rather, I'm asking, 'Since all of 'my' money is really yours, Lord, how would you like me to invest it today?' ... When I take to heart the truth that God has a claim, not merely on a few dollars to throw in an offering plate, not on 10% or 50%, but 100% of 'my' money, it's revolutionary. Suddenly, I'm not God. I'm simply God's money manager. Money isn't God. God is God. He is in His place; I am in mine, and money is in its place too."

~Randy Alcorn

## Have You Been to Yellow Springs?

You may not have ever heard of or traveled to a small town in Ohio called Yellow Springs, but it has a rather fascinating and unbelievable history and present day reality.

Today in Yellow Springs, Ohio, people are still receiving Christmas presents from an Earth Angel -- an ex-slave named Wheeling Gaunt, who was born in 1812 and who died in 1894. Just before he died, he deeded nine acres of land at the south edge of town to the village of Yellow Springs, the proceeds from the sale of which were to buy perpetual Christmas gifts for "poor widows," which the village continues to buy to this day.

Yellow Springs has renamed those nine acres Gaunt Park and it now serves as a place for people to enjoy nature and for children to have fun. However, still to this day 10 pounds of flour and 10 pounds of sugar arrive at the home of every widow in town just in time for holiday baking, thanks to this former slave. The inscription on his plaque reads: "Not What We Have But What We Share"



As a pastor greeted persons at the door following a stewardship sermon in which he discussed pledging, a disgruntled member asked accusingly, "Where in the Bible do you find anything about pledging?" Like many of us this man was uncomfortable being challenged to pledge to his church.

Instead of being defensive about his sermon the pastor answered good-naturedly, "That's a good question. Let's get together over lunch and talk about it this week." The gentleman agreed; a time and place were set. Later that week the two of them did get together for lunch. After they had ordered, the pastor brought up the subject.

"You know, your question is a good one." The pastor said the question forced him to do some thinking. "The Bible is full of references to pledging," he told the reluctant church member. But the member remained unconvinced.

"Come on now, Pastor," he said. He knew that sometimes pastors have a way of exaggerating.

The pastor told him that he looked up the word, "pledge," in a Bible dictionary.

He had written down some of the words he found there that pertained to pledging: "Commit, promise, dedicate, devote, covenant, vow" — very familiar Biblical words. That made the man think more about stewardship. His pastor explained, "Christian stewardship is merely a reflection of our spiritual commitment to Christ. Stewardship is, first of all, our response to God." The man's attitude about pledging changed as a result of their lunch together.

During these Easter Season days, we are reminded of the great hope and promise that we share in and through the Resurrection of Jesus. It is because of that powerful event in which God defeated the powers of death and the devil that you and I can respond in joy and thanksgiving.

Our stewardship, not just our giving of money, but our whole life is a celebration of what our God has done for us in and through Jesus' Resurrection! May the power of that first Resurrection morning give you hope and confidence and energy and power to live your life in grateful response to the God who has given us all.

~Pastor Olson, Interim



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# April C

Sun	Mon	Tue	W
<b>3</b> <b>2 Easter</b> Coffee Sales <b>9:00a Worship</b> 9:00a Sunday School <b>10:30a Worship</b> <b>10:30a First Communion</b>	<b>4</b> 7:00p Naomi Circle - Arlene Flynn 7:30p Fox Valley Festival Chorus	<b>5</b> 10:00a Adult Bible Study 1:00p Staff Meeting 7:00p Glory Ringers	<b>6</b> 9:30a Bread Wrapp 1:00p Office Volunt 5:00p Roaring Ring 5:30p FDL & High s 5:30p First Commu 5:30p Joyous Prais 6:00p Confirmation 7:30p Academy Ch 9:15p WVMTA Me
<b>10</b> <b>3 Easter</b> <b>9:00a Worship</b> 9:00a Sunday School <b>10:30a Worship</b> 11:45a Council Meeting	<b>11</b> 9:00a Faith Circle - Judy Conant 7:30p Fox Valley Festival Chorus	<b>12</b> 10:00a Adult Bible Study 1:00p Staff Meeting 5:00p Stewardship Meeting 7:00p Glory Ringers	<b>13</b> 9:30a Bread Wrapp 1:00p Office Volunt 5:00p Roaring Ring 5:30p FDL & High s 5:30p Joyous Prais 6:00p Confirmation 7:30p Academy Ch
<b>17</b> <b>4 Easter</b> Coffee Sales <b>9:00a Worship</b> 9:00a Sunday School <b>10:30a Worship</b> 11:45a New Member Orientation 3:00p Fox Valley Youth Ensembles	<b>18</b> 9:00a Ruth Circle 10:30a Spiritual Journaling 7:30p Fox Valley Festival Chorus	<b>19</b> 10:00a Adult Bible Study 1:00p Staff Meeting 7:00p Glory Ringers	<b>20</b> 9:30a Bread Wrapp 1:00p Office Volunt 5:00p Roaring Ring 5:30p FDL & High s 5:30p Joyous Prais 6:00p Confirmation 7:30p Academy Ch
<b>24</b> <b>5 Easter</b> <b>9:00a Worship</b> 9:00a Sunday School 9:30a Blood Pressure Screening <b>10:30a Worship</b> 11:45a New Member Orientation 2:15p Hoepe Piano Recital	<b>25</b> 8:30a Life Line Screening 9:00a Lydia's Piecemakers & Knit Pickers 7:30p Fox Valley Festival Chorus	<b>26</b> 10:00a Adult Bible Study 1:00p Staff Meeting 7:00p Glory Ringers	<b>27</b> 9:30a Bread Wrapp 1:00p Office Volunt 5:00p Roaring Ring 5:30p FDL & High s 5:30p Joyous Prais 6:00p Confirmation 7:00p Hope Circle 7:30p Academy Ch



# Calendar



Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<b>1</b> 6:30p Al-Anon	<b>2</b> <b>2 Easter</b> Coffee Sales <b>5:00p Worship</b>
ers eers ers School nion Class e Bells  oir eting	<b>7</b> 7:00p Lion's Voice Choir	<b>8</b> 6:00p Young - Vasconcelos Wedding Rehearsal 6:30p Al-Anon	<b>9</b> <b>3 Easter</b> 2:30p Young - Vasconcelos Wedding <b>5:00p Worship</b>
ers eers ers School e Bells  oir	<b>14</b> 7:00p Lion's Voice Choir	<b>15</b> 6:00p Howey - Walden Wedding Rehearsal 6:30p Al-Anon	<b>16</b> <b>4 Easter</b> 10:30a Gene Johnson Memorial Service 2:30p Howey - Walden Wedding <b>5:00p Worship</b>
ers eers ers School e Bells  oir	<b>21</b> 7:00p Lion's Voice Choir	<b>22</b> 6:00p Whitson - Rosa Wedding Rehearsal 6:30p Al-Anon	<b>23</b> <b>5 Easter</b> 8:00a St. Mark's CDC Mulching 9:00a Women's Wellness Morning 2:00p Whitson - Rosa Wedding 4:15p Blood Pressure Screening <b>5:00p Worship</b>
ers eers ers School e Bells  oir	<b>28</b> 7:00p Lion's Voice Choir	<b>29</b> 6:30p Al-Anon	<b>30</b> <b>6 Easter</b> <b>5:00p Worship</b>

# FELLOWSHIP & MINISTRY

## Newsletter Submission Information Update

Submissions for the **weekly Courier** are due **each Monday by noon for that weekend's publication**. Submissions for the **May Vineyard** are due **by noon on Monday, April 11<sup>th</sup>**. Submissions will be added in the order in which they are received. Early entry of your submissions is welcomed!

Please email articles for the Vineyard and Courier to Nicole Ferrier at: [nferrier@stmarksaurora.net](mailto:nferrier@stmarksaurora.net) or place handwritten articles in her mailbox. If you have any questions please email or call Nicole at: (630) 897-6891 ext. 27.



## Adult Fellowship - Race Relations in Aurora



Please join us at **St. Mark's on Thursday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at 10am** for an interactive panel discussion on: **"After Charleston... Where were we in 1965? Where are we now? Where do we want to be in the future?"**. St. Mark's parishioners Matt Hicks, teacher in District 131, and Maxine Dilworth, as well as Juan Thomas of the Thomas Law Firm in Aurora, and Mae Smith will join us in leading the panel discussion on race relations in Aurora. **Please bring a dish to share, either salad or dessert, for our potluck lunch** following our discussion. Beverages will be provided. Any questions, please call Karen at: (630) 801-0979.

## Women's Wellness Morning - "Caring for Yourself"

**Please join us on Saturday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> from 9:00-11:00am at St. Marks** for this presentation. As women, we tend to care for everyone except ourselves. Learn about the importance of physical, emotional, spiritual, social, and environmental wellbeing. Discover why finding balance is important, and explore strategies for self-care. There will be a light continental breakfast, complimentary chair massages beginning at 8:30am, and a suggested donation of \$5. **Reserve your place by signing up at the Welcome Center, calling Jean Clementz @ (630) 897-6891 X-23, or by email: [jean.clementz@presencehealth.org](mailto:jean.clementz@presencehealth.org).**

## St. Mark's CDC Mulch Removal & Spreading - April 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup>

Attention members, friends, and all able bodies. Our property and landscaping team will be **raking, digging up, and removing mulch/dirt from both playgrounds at the St. Mark's Child Development Center on Downers** and then replacing with new mulch. If you have rakes, shovels, and/or wheelbarrows, please bring them with you. We will start this project on **Saturday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 8am**. Many hands make light work! **There is a sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center**. Thank you to all our volunteers. If you have any questions please contact **Ed Malert** via email at: [emalert@stmarks.net](mailto:emalert@stmarks.net) or by phone at: (630) 897-6891 ext 12 or (630) 815-6194.



## Calling All Bakers - Donations Needed For Mutual Ground



The Outreach Ministry is looking for several volunteers to bake cookies for Mutual Ground. **April is Sexual Assault Awareness month and Mutual Ground sends thank you notes and cookies to first responders who have provided assistance to their residents and clients**. Would you and your family be able to bake cookies to thank some of our local police officers, EMT's, etc. who are often the first to provide support to women in crisis?

Here are the particulars:

- Drop off **2 – 3 dozen cookies** before worship on **April 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup>**.
- There will be a box behind the Welcome Center for the cookies.
- If possible, please bring them in a container or Ziplock bag that doesn't need to be returned. Other containers should be labeled and will be available for you to pick up the following weekend.

We will be making up the platters of assorted cookies. Our goal is to have 12 dozen cookies. **If you are able to bake cookies or have questions, contact Katie DeSotell** at: (630) 907-0314 or [kmadesotell@aol.com](mailto:kmadesotell@aol.com). Thank you for your participation!

# THANK YOU

## Lutheran World Relief Thank You

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your generous gift to Lutheran World Relief's Quilt and Kit Shipping Fund! Your donation ensures that LWR Quilts and Kits get into the hands of a person who needs them.

The generosity of people like you reached Nepal at a critical moment. The country had just been hit with two devastating earthquakes that claimed more than 8,700 lives, injured 20,000 people, and destroyed a half-million homes.

Because so many homes were destroyed, warm blankets were an urgent need and the 9,240 quilts that were shipped were a godsend to families struggling to cope. Through gifts like yours we also sent Personal Care Kits, similarly critical in times of emergency when access to sanitation and hygiene facilities is not certain. Your gift will help families stay warm and healthy as they work to rebuilt their lives. Thank you!

Warm Regards,

Daniel V. Speckhard, President and CEO

## Feed My Starving Children Thank You



Dear St. Mark's Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your financial donation to the 1602-186AU Naperville, IL Feed the Need Event with Feed My Starving Children. Your contribution will go a long way in the fight against world hunger.

As an organization, FMSC is well on our way to producing more than 270 million meals this year.

The meals will nourish starving children in countries such as Kenya, Haiti, the Philippines, Uganda, and Honduras.

Thank you for helping us to "Feed God's Starving Children - Hungry in Body and Spirit"

*"Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."* - 1 John 4:9-11

Onward in God's service,

Mark Crea, Executive Director

## Augustana College Concert Thank You

Thank you, thank you to all who helped make the recent visit and concert by the Ascension Ringers of Augustana College such a successful experience! To **Deb Friend and the Glory Ringers** for dinner and clean up; to the host families: **Dotty Johnson, Matt & Faith Greising, Mark & Rebecca Walker**, and **Rosemary & Dick Hauser**; to Ushers: **Katie Swickert** and **Brady Reiseck** (from Joyous Praise Bells) and **Josie and Keagan Reiseck** (from Roaring Ringers); and to those who attended the wonderful concert. Thank You!



# FUNDRAISING AT ST. MARK'S

During the course of a year's time many ministries put forth an effort to raise funds for their ministries. These fundraisers bring in capital for those little extras that are not covered by the annual budget. Over the past few years St. Mark's Congregational Council has established a policy that any fundraising event gives the first 10% to the capital reserve fund for future building repairs. As our building ages the repairs will slowly increase and we need to save for those future repairs. If you should have any questions please feel free to contact any member of the council.

# CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRY

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## Spring Schedule



There will be no FDL or Sunday School the week of March 20<sup>th</sup> or the week of March 27<sup>th</sup> because of Holy Week and Spring Break. **Classes will resume on Sunday April 3<sup>rd</sup>!** Hope to see you all after Spring Break!

## CDC - Spring Happenings

At the Child Development Center, we are so excited to see warmer weather arrive, it is exciting to go outside and look for signs of Spring. We are collecting pennies for God's Global Barnyard and are anxiously looking forward to picking an animal or animals to send to families in another country. We are learning about helping others in need and how to share with others.

## Surf Shack VBS Coming to St. Mark's in July!

Catch the Wave of God's Amazing Love this summer at Surf Shack VBS at St Mark's from July 25<sup>th</sup> -29<sup>th</sup>, 9am- 12pm daily. At Surf Shack students will:

- Experience God's Amazing love
- Explore God's mission for their lives
- Encounter powerful water stories from the Bible
- Discover ways to live out God's amazing love



Mark your calendars so you can be a part of this awesome week. Last year we had a **wonderful** cross-generational experience at VBS. There were volunteers of all ages and abilities and so many of them didn't want the week to end! It is truly an opportunity to give of your time and talents, but you receive so many gifts in return.

We are forming a planning committee and need more help! Please contact Kari Reiseck ([kreiseck@stmarksaurora.net](mailto:kreiseck@stmarksaurora.net)) if you'd like to be a part of our fun team!

*"Remember that the Lord is great and awesome!" - Nehemiah 4:14*

## Nursery/Community Room Noah's Ark Mural



You may have noticed that our Nursery/Community Room has turned into Noah's Ark! **Kari Reiseck got the idea for the mural after attending the ELCA Youth and Children's Ministry conference last February where she went to a workshop on evaluating your space from a kid's perspective.** What do our little ones see when they are approaching the Nursery? Well – it was a big white wall where they couldn't see any of the wonderful toys, books, and games that are waiting inside. So we thought it would be great to have a mural painted on the half wall to welcome in our littlest members.

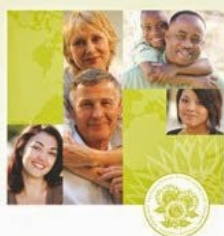
Recently we found out that **Aurora Christian High School Visual Fine Arts Students have painted similar murals at various places around Aurora** including: Hesed House, First Presbyterian Church Aurora, Mooseheart Child City, and Orchard Valley Baptist Church, amongst others. The high school art department, led by Graham Wilkin, donates their time as a service project, and the local organizations only need to provide the base paint. St Mark's member, Katie Mayhew was amongst the students working on the project. Students arrived at 7am on Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup> and completed their efforts by late that afternoon. **We are so thankful for this wonderful service project and the beauty that it has brought to our Community Room.**



# NURSING THE SPIRIT

## April is IBS Awareness Month

### APRIL IS IBS AWARENESS MONTH



**If you have IBS, you're not alone.**

If you have irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), you are not alone. IBS is common with worldwide prevalence estimated at 9% to 23%. Yet many people remain undiagnosed and unaware that their symptoms indicate a medically recognized disorder.

**Facts About IBS:** Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a disorder characterized by abdominal pain or discomfort, and altered bowel habit (chronic or recurrent diarrhea, constipation, or both – either mixed or in alternation).

- IBS affects between 25 and 45 million people in the United States (10 to 15% of the population). IBS affects people of all ages, even children.
- Worldwide it's estimated that between 1 in 10 and nearly 1 in 4 people (9% to 23% of populations) has IBS.
- Most persons with IBS are under the age of 50. But many older adults suffer as well.
- The exact cause of IBS is not known. Symptoms may result from a disturbance in the way the gut, brain, and nervous system interact. This can cause changes in normal bowel movement and sensation.
- Stress does *not* cause IBS. However, because of the connection between the brain and the gut, stress can worsen or trigger symptoms.
- The impact of IBS can range from mild inconvenience to severe debilitation. It can control many aspects of a person's emotional, social and professional life. Persons with moderate to severe IBS must struggle with symptoms that often impair their physical, emotional, economic, educational and social well-being.
- IBS is unpredictable. Symptoms vary and are sometimes contradictory. Diarrhea can alternate with constipation. Long-term symptoms can disrupt personal and professional activities, and limit individual potential.
- Treatments are available for IBS to help manage symptoms. Not all treatments work for all people. Through research, better treatments may be found.
- Although IBS is common in the general population, few seek medical care for their symptoms.
- Approximately 20 to 40% of all visits to gastroenterologists are due to IBS symptoms.
- For those with IBS an additional burden comes from living in a society where the word "bowel" may scarcely be spoken. Individuals must cope with multiple symptoms that affect every aspect of their lives. Those around them may be unaware of the impact, or even the existence, of the disorder.
- IBS can only be diagnosed by a medical professional.

For more information about IBS, speak with your health care provider and visit: [www.aboutibs.org/site/what-is-ibs/](http://www.aboutibs.org/site/what-is-ibs/)

*"Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord rescues them from them all. - Psalm 34:19*

If I can be of assistance to you or someone you know, please call me, 630- 897-6891, ext. 23.

Jean Clementz, RN

Presence Mercy Medical Center

Faith Community Nurse at St. Mark's Lutheran Church



# THRIVENT CHOICE DONATIONS

We are pleased to let you know that a deposit of **\$1,318.00** was made in St. Mark's account on behalf of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans' Thrivent Choice Program. Thank you for supporting St. Mark's with your Thrivent choice dollars. If you have any questions contact Thrivent Representative, Brent Bartell at 630-598-2103.



**THRIVENT**  
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**Thank you to: Alvin Bergh, Paul Hagen, Edward Hunter, Peter Krentz, Scott Mayhew, Sharon Nord, Maybelle Rygh, and Eleanor Rzeminski**

## FEBRUARY MONTHLY FINANCIAL RECAP

Monthly Budget Goal	\$ 72,448.58
Monthly Offering Information	
Envelopes – General Fund	\$ 64,315.76
Envelopes – Mortgage/Building	\$ 5,845.00
Other (loose, miscellaneous, Sunday School, interest)	\$ 3,328.64
Total General Fund Income	\$ 73,489.40
Monthly Surplus/Shortfall	\$ 1,040.82

### Summary Information as of 2/29/2016

Annual Budget	\$ 869,383.00
Percent of Year Completed	16.67%
Offerings/Commitments received year to date	\$ 145,268.43
Actual Expenses Year to Date	\$ 135,225.52
Actual Expense Shortfall/Surplus Year to Date	\$ 10,042.91
Budget Shortfall/Surplus Year to Date	\$ 371.27

### Mortgage Balance as of 2/29/2016

Balance Due on Church (not including CDC)	\$ 2,501,276.58
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## ST. MARK'S STAFF

**Pastor Patricia Geiseman**, Pastor

**Pastor Paul Olson**, Interim Pastor

**Kristin Young**, Director of Worship & The Arts

**Kari Reiseck**, Director of Children's Ministry

**Sue Hilderbrand**, Director of Bell Choir

**Nicole Ferrier**, Director of Communications

**Deb Arcilla**, Office Manager

**John Themanson**, Finance Administrator

**Ed Malert**, Facility Manager

**Jean Clementz**, Faith Community Nurse

**Jim Erickson**, Financial Secretary

**Merrilee Parkhurst**, Director of Child Development Center

**Terese Ruppel**, Nursery Coordinator

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Ext. 13

Ext. 16

Ext. 22

Ext. 24

Ext. 27

Ext. 10

Ext. 19

Ext. 12

Ext. 23

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(630) 466-1036

ter60554@gmail.com

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**Lindsay Meyer**

Member

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lindsay.meyer84@gmail.com

# SERVERS FOR WORSHIP

April 2 & 3	Saturday, 5:00pm	Sunday, 9:00am	Sunday, 10:30am
Acolytes	TBA	TBA	TBA
Adult Worship Assistants	Bob Johnson	Anna Themanson	Anna Themanson
A/V Desk	Kathy Walz	Scott	Mark
Altar Care	Don Bryant	Team A	Team A
Bread Baker	Pam Krasinski	Pam Krasinski	Pam Krasinski
Hospitality Team	Joe J., Sheila J., Don B., Brett D.	Team A	Team A
Reader	Bob Johnson	Team A	Team A
Welcome Center Hosts	TBA	Team A	Team A
April 9 & 10			
Acolytes	TBA	TBA	Bradley Rehg, Sam Walker
Adult Worship Assistants	Bob Johnson	Anna Themanson	Anna Themanson
A/V Desk	Kasey Minard	Fred	Fred
Altar Care	Erik Egeland	Team B	Team B
Bread Baker	Jens Jensen	Jens Jensen	Jens Jensen
Hospitality Team	Dave & Nancy Clark, Jens Jensen	Team B	Team B
Reader	Erik Egeland	Team B	Team B
Welcome Center Hosts	TBA	Team B	Team B
April 16 & 17			
Acolytes	TBA	TBA	TBA
Adult Worship Assistants	Bob Johnson	Greg Jackman	Greg Jackman
A/V Desk	Nancy Clark	Dan	Melvin
Altar Care	Al & Vicki Lettow	Team C	Team C
Bread Baker	Susan Manning	Susan Manning	Susan Manning
Hospitality Team	Shell & Lynida T., Kasey M., Brett D.	Team C	Team C
Reader	Pat Larson	Team C	Team C
Welcome Center Hosts	TBA	Team C	Team C
April 23 & 24			
Acolytes	TBA	TBA	TBA
Adult Worship Assistants	Bob Johnson	Don Friend	Don Friend
A/V Desk	Sheila Johnson	Matt	Jill
Altar Care	Virgil Ostreng	Team D	Team D
Bread Baker	Matt Greising	Matt Greising	Matt Greising
Hospitality Team	Virgil O., Kathy W., Jim & Clare T.	Team D	Team D
Reader	Clare Toynton	Team D	Team D
Welcome Center Hosts	TBA	Team D	Team D



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## **St. Mark's Lutheran Church**

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Web: [www.stmarksaurora.net](http://www.stmarksaurora.net)

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Church in America**

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the Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America.**

**We're on the web!**  
**[www.stmarksaurora.net](http://www.stmarksaurora.net)**  
**[www.facebook.com/stmarksaurora](https://www.facebook.com/stmarksaurora)**

## **PASTORAL ACTS**

### **Baptisms**

Olivia Marie Priebay ~ 2/21/16

Aria Lynn Flinkow ~ 2/28/16

Owen Wade Lungren ~ 3/13/16

### **Weddings**

Brent Allen Fairbanks & Lauren Ashley Garrett ~ 3/11/16

### **Planning a Baptism?**

Visit the Welcome Center for a  
Planning for a Baptism at St. Mark's brochure.

### **Planning a Wedding?**

Visit the Welcome Center for a  
Planning for a Wedding at St. Mark's brochure.

### **HOSPITAL STAYS**

Under the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), hospitals are greatly restricted in their ability to disclose patient information. Consequently, the pastor or church office may not be notified that a parishioner has been admitted to the hospital. In the event you are hospitalized or ill and you would like the pastor to know, we please ask that you or a family member inform the church office directly. We care about you! (630) 897-6891