

April 2019

Scripture Passage of the Month:
Luke 23:44-47

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole of the land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this he breathed his last. When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, "Certainly this man was innocent." ~ Luke 23:44-47

Dear fellow travelers,

Our Lenten journey continues through the observance of the final week of Jesus' life on earth and culminates with the celebration of the resurrection. We undertake this journey to the cross each year, always with the assurance of Easter. We don't do Lent and Holy Week without knowing the surprise that waits for us at the end.

Our lives are a journey as well. We walk a road that is sometimes easy, bright and cheerful, and sometimes hard and discouraging. We walk not knowing what lies behind the next bend or over the next hill. We walk not knowing how far we will go in the company of loved ones, or how much we must travel alone. We walk knowing that there will be an end to our journey, but not knowing if that end will be sudden or prolonged, welcome or dreaded.

Wherever this journey of life takes us, as Christians we always walk in the light of the Easter Jesus. Just as we don't do Lent and Holy Week without Easter, we don't walk this journey of life without knowing who walks beside us and what waits for us at the end. As Christians, we trust in the promise of the Easter Jesus that he will be with us always, even to the end of the ages, and that he will lead us home to a place prepared for us.

As Christians, this assurance informs our lives and our actions. We can face whatever lies in our path with confidence. We can stretch ourselves to reach out to others with the Good News of the Easter Jesus. We can work to do the will of Jesus as we follow his example in bringing healing and wholeness, welcome and inclusion, forgiveness and love, to all people.

All of our lives are lived out in the light of the Easter Proclamation: Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!

God's Peace,
Pastor Mary

Parking beginning Sunday, April 7

The faith community of Genesis East will hold their first worship service in Lundquist Chapel on April 7. We welcome them to this space and celebrate with them as they gather to worship God and walk in the way of Jesus. As an act of hospitality, beginning in April, we request that St. Mark's members use the main parking lots (west) on Sunday mornings and leave the north lot for our friends from Genesis East.

Coming Up...

April 3: Interwoven Wednesday Worship Service for Lent @ 6 pm. Discussion follows @ 6:30.

April 10: Interwoven Wednesday Worship Service for Lent @ 6 pm. Discussion follows @ 6:30.

April 14: Palm Sunday Pancake Breakfast fundraiser, 9 to noon

April 17: No worship service or dinner

April 18 : Maundy Thursday services at 11:30 am (chapel) and 7:00 pm

April 19: Good Friday service @ 7 pm

April 21: Easter Sunday services at 7:00 am (chapel) 8:45 & 10:15 am (sanctuary)

April 21: Easter Egg Hunt & Activities at 9:55 am (Rees Hall)

April 24: Screenagers movie viewing 5:00 pm dinner (Rees Hall) 6:00 pm worship service (chapel) 6:30 pm movie (sanctuary)

May 4: 40+ Years in Revue: A St. Mark's Cabaret

May 8: CYF End of Year Celebration at 6:30 pm

WHAT'S INSIDE

What's happening	2
Financial Update	3
Children, Youth & Family	4
Women of St. Mark's	6
More News	7
Woven Together	9

What's happening this month

HOLY WEEK & EASTER SERVICES AT ST. MARK'S

Please note time changes from last year.



Palm Sunday, April 14

8:45 and 10:15 am (Sanctuary)

Pancake breakfast youth fundraiser from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm.

Maundy Thursday, April 18

11:30 am (Chapel) and 7:00 pm (Sanctuary)

First Communion will be celebrated at the evening service.

Good Friday, April 19

7:00 pm (Sanctuary)

Easter Sunday, April 21

7:00 am – Sunrise Service (Chapel)

8:45 am & 10:15 am – Traditional Services (Sanctuary)

9:55 am – Easter Egg Hunt & Activities (Rees Hall)

Backyard Church 2019

We're trying something new this summer! Backyard Church provides an opportunity to take church outside of the walls of our building and into our neighborhoods. Here's how it works: members of St. Mark's who have the available space and a willingness to share, host a Sunday evening gathering in their "backyard" (or deck, or nearby park) for fellowship, community building, and a brief worship service (Pastors will provide the worship service!). All people of St. Mark's are invited to attend as well as other friends and neighbors. Attendees bring their own lawn chairs and a dish to pass. Hosts can create a theme for the evening. It's a great way to come together in a relaxed, informal setting, and a wonderful opportunity to invite friends who may not consider themselves "church people" to experience a bit of this wonderful faith community. Three dates have been chosen for Backyard Church 2019: 6/30, 7/21, 8/18. Call Pastor Mary for more information or to sign up to host on one of the dates. Let's take this amazing church out of the building!!

Worship Assistants Needed for Holy Week and Easter

We are in need of many volunteers to serve as greeters, ushers, communion servers, and council hosts on Maundy Thursday (7 pm), Good Friday (7 pm), and Easter Sunday (7:00 am). If you plan to attend one of these services, and would like to serve, it would be greatly appreciated. Please contact the church office at 651-777-7451 to sign up to help as you are able.

Palm Sunday Pancake Breakfast – April 14

Enjoy a delicious pancake breakfast from 9 am to 12 noon. You'll also be supporting the youth of St. Mark's! All proceeds support the youth adventure trip this summer. Cost for the breakfast is a suggested donation of \$10 per person or \$30 for families of 4 or more.

Graduation Scrapbooks

In June we will be recognizing our high school graduates, and St. Mark's scrapbookers will again make a personal memory book for the students. We invite each graduate/parent/grandparent to provide \$15 (for basic materials) 10 photos (to be inserted in the book) and 10 memories to go with the photos. Please contact Karyn Mikel at karynmikel@comcast.net or 651-779-8624 to obtain the form. Pictures and form are due by **April 28**.

Documentary Screenagers: Growing up in the Digital Age – April 24 at 6:30 pm in Rees Hall

The average young person spends 6.5 hours a day looking at screens. The documentary explores how tech time impacts kids' development and offers solutions on how adults can empower kids to best navigate the digital world. This community-wide event will take place on Wed. April 24 at 6:30 pm. Appropriate for adults and kids 10 years of age and older – invite your friends and family. **Tickets are free but we ask that you RSVP** because showings of the movie have sold out in previous locations. RSVP to stmarks@stmarks-nsp.org today or call the church office at 651-777-7451. (Worship on this night will be held in the Chapel at 6:00 pm)

Wednesday Night Dinner

Join us for dinner on Wednesday nights (5-5:50 pm) in Rees Hall. Suggested freewill offering of \$2/person or \$10 max/family. Be sure to follow St. Mark's on Facebook, where we post the menu each Wednesday:

April 3: hamburgers

April 10: pot roast

April 17: no meal (Holy Week)

April 24: Italian dinner

May 1: chicken

Mark your calendar...

Twins game at Target Field – August 11

Ministry Highlight Insert:

Drama Ministry

Please take a moment to read the *Drama Ministry* insert at the back of this month's newsletter. Watch for drama ministry to be present during several worship services this month. This is the last piece of our Woven Together ministry focus.

Woven Together
MANY THREADS ONE FABRIC



40+ Years in Revue: A St. Mark's Cabaret – May 4

We will be having a dinner theater-style performance on Saturday, May 4 to celebrate 40+ years of drama ministry at St. Mark's. Over 15 participants from drama ministry (past and present) will perform and share their experiences being a part of this ministry. And, an event like this could not happen without recognizing Judy Larkins for her talent and commitment to nurturing and growing this ministry throughout the years. Her guidance and support has touched so many lives at St. Mark's. There will be a limited number of tickets available and a freewill offering will be taken to offset costs. Watch for more information about this exciting event!

Save the date...

Wednesday Nights – May 15 & 22

As the Wednesday program year comes to an end and the kitchen crew hangs up their aprons, we are providing a couple more opportunities to chill and chat before Worship at the Farm begins on June 5. Watch upcoming announcements for more details about these two events:

- Fun and Fellowship at Pizza Ranch – May 15, 5:30 to 7:00 pm
- Community Game Night – May 22, 6:30 - 8:30 pm

Morning Receptionist Opportunities

On May 16, Jenn Luong will be leaving her receptionist position at St. Mark's to enter a summer Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) program as part of her seminary studies. We are looking for a few folks who would like to volunteer to fill this position going forward. Main duties include cheerfully answering phone calls and directing callers to the appropriate staff people; being a friendly face for those who stop in to visit; making copies; and other tasks as assigned. Whether you would be able to commit to a weekly shift, monthly, or just be available occasionally as a sub, we have a place for you! For more information, please call Jenn in the church office at 651-777-7451 or stop in to talk. Individual training provided.

The Polar Den compliments our partnership with North High School's Polar Packs. This emergency needs shelf is located at the school and supports students who may not qualify for the Polar Pack program, but find themselves in need of various food/hygiene items on occasion. Can you help? Below is a list of suggested items. They can be dropped off in Rees Hall in the collection bin labeled "Polar Den":

- Single serve mac & cheese cups
- Single serve soup cups
- Single serve fruit cups or pull top cans
- Granola bars and fruit snacks
- 100% juice boxes
- Bottled water
- Pouches of tuna or chicken
- Breakfast bars
- Boxes of crackers
- Single size cracker packs
- Deodorant (men/women)
- Kleenex
- Chapstick/Lip balm
- Shaving supplies (razors and cream)
- Mouthwash (travel size bottles)
- Bodywash

Financial Update through February 2019

	February 2019	YTD Budget	YTD 2019	Over/(Under) Budget	YTD 2018
Contributions	\$39,692	\$94,740	\$88,645	(\$6,095)	\$101,257
Other Income	2,681	1,724	2,977	1,253	1,178
Total Income	\$42,373	\$96,464	\$91,622	(\$4,842)	\$102,435
Expense	\$50,353	\$125,836	\$120,032	(\$5,804)	\$128,286
Difference	(\$7,980)	(\$29,372)	(\$28,410)		(\$25,851)

Children, Youth & Family Ministries



This year, we are focusing on Bible stories that teach us how God walks with us through ALL the emotional ups and downs of life. Kids will receive different emoji stickers each week to create a poster!

JAM is our Children's Ministry Program for all kids from Age 3 through 5th Grade and is offered weekly at 6:30pm on Wednesdays and 10:15am on Sundays.

JAM has MOVED!

JAM, our children's ministry has moved completely into the **classrooms of Rees Hall** for the remainder of the program year so that we can test out what it might be like to be housed in this location full time come Fall.

Openings and games: Rm. 203-204 Arts & Crafts: Rm. 205-206
Food and Science: Rm. 102-103 Pre-Teen Class: Rm. 207

- **April 3 & 7:** Parables - Walking with Jesus
- **Wed. April 10:** JAM-centric Stations of the Cross w/ Service Project
- **April 14,17,21:** No JAM due to Holy Week and Easter
- **April 21:** Easter Morning - Join us for worship and the Easter egg hunt and activities. Meet in Rees Hall at 9:55 am.
- **Wed/ April 24:** Pre-teen class and parents attend Screenagers movie in sanctuary.
- **April 24 & 28 and May 1 & 5:** Resurrection & Beyond
- **Wed. May 8:** End of the Year party (6:30-7:30 pm)

First Communion Workshop – Saturday, April 13

3rd graders and their parents are invited to participate in our annual First Communion Workshop (9:30 to 11:30 am) in preparation for them to receive their first communion as part of our Maundy Thursday worship on April 18 at 7pm. During the workshop we'll learn the history behind Holy Communion, bake communion bread and walk through how to receive communion during worship on top of having some fun together. Please RSVP to Pastor Ivy by Wednesday April 10 so we can make plans for you!

Easter Morning Eggstravaganza Egg Hunt Activities

Join us for the celebration of Easter with our egg hunt beginning at 9:55 am in Rees Hall. We hope the weather will be nice enough to even hunt for eggs outside! This event is for children of all ages but especially the youngest among us! Treat bags for the kids will be available throughout the morning. Invite your friends!

5th Graders "Welcome to Confirmation" – April 3

5th graders and their parents are invited to check out Confirmation on April 3 from 6:30-7:30 pm in Rees Hall. 5th graders (i.e. the Pre-Teen class) will be their own small group for Confirmation and will go through the activities alongside the 6-8th graders that night as we explore what Holy Communion is all about. Parents are invited to sit together as small group and have conversations together around communion as well. If you have questions about this, please contact Pastor Ivy.

CYF End-of-the-Year Celebration – May 8

All ages welcome! Come enjoy a meal at 5 pm, worship at 6 pm, and the party goes from 6:30 – 7:30 pm. This year's celebration will include lots of fun games, treats, and more! If you are interested in helping out, please contact Pastor Ivy, Susie Modrow.

VBS is Set to ROAR June 24-28, 2019

Sooner than we realize, we'll be embarking on an adventure where we will ROAR! – Life is Wild and God is good! We're in the planning stages now and are looking for leaders who can help us get this moving! Rachel Ericson and Pastor Ivy will be spearheading this endeavor. If you are interested in serving, let them know. Watch for more details regarding registration and volunteer needs in upcoming announcements.

Confirmation Ministries Grades 6–8

We meet on Wednesday nights, 6:30-7:30 pm in Rees Hall.

Wed. Apr. 3: Teaching Night: Holy Communion – Taste and see; Welcome to Confirmation for 5th Graders

Wed. Apr. 10: Senior Mentor Visits

Wed. Apr. 17: No class (Holy Week)

Wed. Apr. 24: Parent/Youth Night, Screenagers movie at 6:30 pm

High School Youth Group Calendar

Youth Group meets regularly on Wednesday nights from 6:30 to 8:00 pm in the Youth Room.

April 10: Stations of the Cross (Youth Group only)

April 14: Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser from 9-noon

Wed. Apr. 17: No gathering (Holy Week)

Wed. Apr. 24: Parent/Youth Night, Screenagers movie at 6:30 pm

April 25: Young Adult Collaboration from 6-8 pm.

April 26: Late Nighter! 7 pm to Midnight

Parent/Youth Night: Documentary Screenagers: Growing up in the Digital Age – April 24 at 6:30 pm in Rees Hall

The documentary explores how tech time impacts kids' development and offers solutions on how adults can empower kids to best navigate the digital world. Tickets are free but we ask that you RSVP because showings of the movie have sold out in previous locations. RSVP to stmarks@stmarks-nsp.org today or call the church office at 651-777-7451. *Appropriate for kids 10 and up.*

Summary of Feedback from CYF conversations/survey

Over the past month we've been engaging in conversations regarding the shifts which are occurring in the Children, Youth and Family ministries at St. Mark's due to declining participation, staff changes, and adjustments to the 2019 budget. Here is what we've learned from the three Listening Posts and the online survey which went out to parents and leaders:

- 54 people responded between both Listening Posts and online (16 people gave feedback in both ways). This is almost triple the response we had last time we did a survey (2016). Responses included a good cross section of families who are participating in all CYF ministry areas.
- A wide range of emotions (worry, excited, curious, uncertain, fear, concern, nervous, frustrated about the changes, positive, optimistic, understanding, apprehension) were shared about what is taking place within the CYF ministries but overall people were willing and open to engage in the conversation.
- Across the board, ministry areas met or exceeded expectations 80% or more of the time according to survey results.
- We have an incredibly high ratio of adults without kids in the program participating in leading and offering feedback which is a huge resource.
- Many of the changes/suggestions are things we can begin implementing immediately including greater communication of needs; setting framework and letting leaders, lead; leveraging technology for communication purposes.
- There was little to no push back on shifting Sunday mornings to have education hour between services (i.e. JAM) and kids present in worship as long as we create meaningful and intentional opportunities for the kids to engage in what they were hearing.
- Families are incredibly busy and are having a hard time committing to weekly engagement. Top Three obstacles to participating: (1) schedule/time (2) other (3) I need a break/down time
- Roughly a quarter of those who responded to the question answered "I prefer someone else teach my children or I worry that by volunteering, people will start expecting me to help with other things"
- This is the same amount of people who responded with "Other" – which ranked #2
- Focus areas for all ministries to be mindful of moving forward:
 - Relationship Building - do it often and early
 - Real world engagement with faith - if not grounding in real life experience, faith means little
 - Service projects - family friendly and more of them
 - Worship together as families with ways to engage the kids in meaningful ways so that parents can focus on worshipping as well.

During Lent, Pastor Ivy, Susie and key leaders will be discerning the best way forward and hope to share what the future framework will look like for Fall 2019 by early May. If you have questions or concerns about these pieces, please contact Pastor Ivy.

Children, Youth, and Family Ministries: Pastor Ivy Huston

Email: privyh@stmarks-nsp.org

Tel: 651-777-7451, ext 232

High School Youth Ministry: Susie Modrow

Email: susiem@stmarks-nsp.org Cell: 320-279-0905

Women of St. Mark's

Mother-Daughter-Friend Spring Luncheon "Writing My Life Story" Saturday, May 11 at 10:00 am Rees Hall

Our speaker will be writer and author Gloria VanDommeltraadt. Gloria's passion is helping people capture their memories, and she has worked with more than a hundred hospice patients and others to document their lives. She teaches classes on life story writing. She is the author of 4 nonfiction books, including "Memories of Lake Elmo," the history of Lake Elmo. She recently won an award for her first fiction novel "Danger in Deep Lake" and has a sequel in progress. She will have her books for sale at the luncheon.

Tickets will be available on **Sundays, April 28 and May 5** in Rees Hall. Cost is \$10.00. The last day to purchase tickets is Wednesday May 8.

All Women and their mothers, daughters and friends are welcome to attend. Come for a meaningful program, good food and wonderful fellowship! Contact Virginia Collier 651-777-0584 for more information or to purchase tickets.

Prayer Shawl Ministry – No April meeting

The next meeting will be on Tuesday May 21 at 7:00pm in the Fireside Room. Prayer shawls wrap people in love and caring. All are welcome to share in this ministry. Contact Sue Fletcher 651-770-1271 for more information.

The Women of St. Mark's Board Meeting – April 22

We meet at 6:30 pm in the Fireside Room. All board members and circle representatives are asked to attend.

32nd St. Paul Area Synodical Women's Convention "Hospitality" Based on 1 Peter 4:9-11

You are invited to join women from around the St. Paul Area Synod for Bible Study led by Bishop Patricia Lull (worship with communion, learning sessions and business meetings) on Friday and Saturday, **May 3 & 4** at St. John's Lutheran Church in Lakeville. We will be collecting new socks and underwear for women and children. Please leave your donation in the collection cupboard in Rees Hall, or bring it with you when you come! This is a time of learning, fellowship, entertainment and good food with other Christian women. All women are welcome. Registration forms are in Rees Hall on the Women's Board. Deadline is April 17. Scholarships are available for first time attendees. Deadline is April 7. Call Virginia Collier 651-777-0584 for more information.

Thank You to all the St. Mark's Quilters!

To everyone who assembled and tied quilts for Lutheran World Relief as well as for those in our community...thank you! 90 quilts were completed this year These quilts provide comfort and warmth, often in difficult times. The last quilting session was on March 28. We are so blessed to have these faithful caring people at St. Mark's.



Who are the Saturday Stewards?

The Saturday Stewards team focuses on providing:

- opportunities for fellowship while serving.
- opportunities for individuals to leverage the gifts God gave them.
- repair and maintenance services for our facility and campus.

The volunteers meet the first Saturday of the month from 9 am to about noon. Come when you can and leave when you must. We see God in the volunteers who step up each month to patch/paint/clean/repair... "God's house". Even though it's not always easy to give up a Saturday morning these servants come with a positive and willing attitude to take on whatever project is waiting. We could use more participants at any skill level whether you are good at organizing and cleaning, patching and painting, or any level of repair—we have tasks available to meet your gifts. Our volunteers are willing to work on almost any task that needs to be done and one volunteer is always ready to share the "joke of the week". We have folks from age 15 to 85 and they all have a good time working together. Coffee and treats are provided to enjoy during a break. Saturday Stewards is a great place to get to know people while serving God & the congregation in productive ways. If you would like more information or would like to be added to the email list, please contact Mark McKenzie at kiltboarder@gmail.com or Sherry Berry at slberr65@gmail.com.

Council Corner: March 21 Meeting

Liaisons from various committees gave updated reports to council:

- Kelly Kleppe reported on the finance audit, most of which consisted of clarifying policy
- language and reconciliation.
- Pastor Ivy Huston updated on the Thrivent Action Team grant policy going forward.
- Pastor Ivy also discussed the CYF committee's internal reports on the listening sessions
- and surveys. Information highlighting those findings will be coming out soon.
- Pastor Mary Froiland shared her vision for continuing summer worship on the farm,
- worship time options, and backyard worship, all of which will be further discussed at the
- upcoming Council retreat.
- Genesis East Covenant Church begins their worship in the chapel, April 7.
- The Council will hold their retreat April 6 for continual planning for the year.

The complete meeting minutes are available in the church office after they are approved at the following meeting. The next Council meeting is scheduled for April 25, 2019 at 6:30 pm.



Did you know . . .

The latest issue of the Foundation's quarterly newsletter is included in this month's Markings mailing. Please take a look to find out what's happening. If you want to find out more about the work of the Foundation, visit the website at www.stmarksnsfoundation.com or email stmarksnsfoundation@gmail.com.

Coffee Hour Sponsorship

Members of the congregation are invited to consider sponsoring coffee on a given Sunday. \$30 will cover the cost of the coffee for our fellowship time for one week. Sign up in Rees Hall. An anonymous gift covers coffee through April 14 (thank you!). But there are still dates open in May!

Bob Murphy Scrapbooks in Library

There are two large scrapbook/photo albums that were made for Bob M Murphy: one covers his years here at St. Mark's (a great 30+ year history of music at St. Marks), and the other one is compiled of notes/letters and pictures from St. Mark's members and friends that was put together at his last Sunday with us. The family asked us to keep them and they are on a shelf in the library. They are available for anyone to look at, however they are not be available for check-out and must remain in the library.

Have you subscribed to St. Mark's weekly eNews update?

It's a fun way to keep in touch with what's happening at St. Mark's, in the community, and the world. If you would like to receive this weekly "mini-newsletter" just email anm@stmarks-nsp.org. You can unsubscribe at any time.

Church Office Hours

Mon - Thurs
8:30 am - 4:00 pm
Closed on Fridays

Weekly Worship Services

Sundays
8:45 and 10:15 am (Sept-May)

Wednesdays
6:00 pm (Sept-May)

Visit us online

At www.stmarks-nsp.org you will find lots of resources such as the current newsletter, the most up-to-date online calendar and downloadable forms.

St. Mark's Prayer Line & Community Prays Email

Prayer is Powerful. A Community Prays email is sent weekly to staff, council, the prayer line group, and anyone who would like to be part of this ministry! Contact the church office at 651-777-7451 to sign up or ask questions. If you do not use email, we will mail the weekly prayer lists to your home. You may also continue to contact Dawn at 777-7693 with Prayer Line requests.

Follow us on Facebook



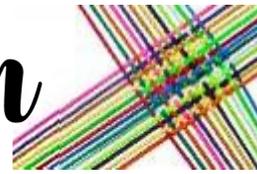
Fun pictures from events and around church, inspiring updates, and timely event reminders are posted often. Find us at facebook.com/stmarksnsp to get status updates on your timeline!

Staff Directory

Church Office.....	(651) 777-7451
After Hour Pastoral Emergency.....	(651) 274-9708
Lead Pastor, <i>Mary Froiland</i>	primaryf@stmarks-nsp.org , ext. 222
Pastor of Faith Formation, <i>Ivy Huston</i>	privyh@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 232
Music Director, <i>Neil Lubke</i>	neill@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 225
Organist/Choir Director, <i>Dorothea Jirsa</i>	dorotheaj@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 227
Morning Receptionist, <i>Jenn Luong</i>	jennl@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 221
Office Coordinator, <i>Heidi McKenzie</i>	heidimc@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 231
Communications, <i>Ann Mott</i>	anm@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 235
Youth Director, <i>Susie Modrow</i>	susiem@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 233
Finance Associate, <i>Helene Doran</i>	helened@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 238
Custodian, <i>Neil Knutson</i>	neilk@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 237
Custodian, <i>Hunter Winner</i>	hunterw@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 237
Custodian, <i>Heather Winner</i>	heatherw@stmarks-nsp.org , ext 237

Woven Together

MANY THREADS ONE FABRIC



March Highlight: **Drama Ministry**

No other congregation that I know of has a ministry like St. Mark's Drama Ministry. When I first arrived at St. Mark's in July last summer, rehearsals were well under way for the summer production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. Four or more evenings a week, Rees Hall was filled with about 30 young adults singing, dancing, and enjoying one another's company. The energy was infectious. Karen Biedermann, the director of the production, graciously gave me space and time to meet and interact with the cast and we even spent some time during one of the rehearsal sessions looking together at the biblical story of Joseph on which the musical was based.

For many current members of St. Mark's, the Drama Ministry was their introduction to this congregation. Even those who never joined created lifelong friendships and deep relationships (even a couple of marriages!). In addition, the quality productions have been a gift to the greater community for decades. This is a ministry to be proud of!

~ Pastor Mary Froiland

Background

St. Mark's Drama Ministry was started in 1978 to help St. Mark's children become better acquainted with one another. The efforts of this ministry have expanded many times since then. Drama ministry provides a healthy place to discover and celebrate each person's unique gifts in a safe environment. Today, players of all ages communicate God's word in bold ways by staging several theatrical productions each year that tell stories of faith and the human condition in new and inspiring ways.

Elementary & Middle School Ministry



Finian's Rainbow, Jr.

This ministry (Hot Buttered Popcorn) is designed for our youngest players – K through 8th grade. This is often a child's first exposure to live theatre. They have the chance to be a Bible character, a hero or a villain, wear a costume, sing, dance, and play! As they get a bit older, participants enjoy taking on roles that challenge them and still allow lots of time for fun, music and fellowship. No experience is required and there is a place for everyone. Parent volunteers play an essential role in this ministry: they work behind the scenes, rehearse lines, and chauffeur them to and from rehearsals. Shows are typically presented in the October/November and tickets are always free of charge. Productions have included: *Nehemiah*, *Life is Good*, *Once Upon a Parable*, *Esther*, *Annie Jr.*, and *Finian's Rainbow Jr.*

High School & Adult Ministry

This talented group of high school and adult actors brings great stories to life. Along with St. Mark's members, many students and adults from the surrounding communities participate. No experience is required. If you have always wanted to be involved in a musical production, but thought it was too late to start, you are mistaken. While there is a tryout process for these shows, there is a place for everyone! Productions have included *Jesus Christ, Superstar*; *Godspell*; *West Side Story*; *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*; *Footloose*; *Hairspray*; *Whistle Down the Wind*; *Children of Eden*; *Fiddler on the Roof*; and *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*. Coming August 2019: *Big Fish*.



Children of Eden



Saint Mark's
Evangelical Lutheran Church

Behind the Scenes

Volunteers

The Drama Ministry program could not exist without many, many talented and committed volunteers. In addition to directors and choreographers, there are people working behind the scenes that contribute to the success of each show: lighting, sound, music, stage design & construction, costumers, concessions, ticket sales, publicity, and hair & makeup. If you don't want to be on stage (yet), you can still find many ways to be involved.

40+ Years in Revue: A St. Mark's Cabaret Saturday, May 4

We will be having a dinner theater-style event on Saturday, May 4 to celebrate 40+ years of drama ministry at St. Mark's. Over 15 participants from drama ministry (past and present) will perform and share their experiences being a part of this ministry. And an event like this could not happen without recognizing Judy Larkins for her talent and commitment to nurturing and growing this ministry throughout the years. Her guidance and support has touched so many lives at St. Mark's. There will be a limited number of tickets available and a freewill offering will be taken to offset costs. Watch for more information about this exciting event!

For more information

Whether you aspire to be on stage or behind the scenes, there are great opportunities to express yourself in Drama Ministry. If you are interested, contact the church office at 651-777-7451—we'll make sure to put you in touch with the right people!

God Moments

"Our family has been involved in the drama program at St. Mark's since 2006. I have always been impressed that children and young adults dedicate their summer break to come to church, multiple nights a week, to learn their lines, sing and dance, make costumes and build sets. They work hard and put on wonderful shows! Some of the most memorable shows were Hairspray and Children of Eden."

"The St. Mark's drama program has been a wonderful opportunity for people of all ages to present a Bible story or a show with a good theme to the audience. They really understand the story on another level and can share the message with people in a unique way. For those who are a little more hesitant to get up on stage, there is such growth in their confidence. They sing louder, dance more, and have more flair than ever before."

"The friendships that develop through the St. Mark's drama program are life long. The actors all have different strengths and abilities which grow through the production process. They support each other and lift each other up to put on a great show that shares a biblical message to the audience."

"Drama Ministry tells great stories, but even more importantly, creates lifelong bonds between its participants. As a young performer, I found my best friends through this program, and it gives me such great joy to see these same types of connections continue to be made."



You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown



West Side Story



Footloose