



The Vineyard Press

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ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
Sharing Christ's Abundant Love

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

Symbols of Easter



What do a lily, a lamb, and an egg have in common with a candle? They are all symbols for Easter.

The early church needed symbols so they could be safe in times of persecution, recognize each other, and profess their faith. Centuries later, symbols continue. It is good for us to retrace their connection to the risen Christ.

THE PASCHAL CANDLE

On Holy Saturday night, the paschal candle is lighted while the people wait in darkness. As the candle is slowly carried up the aisle, the ancient proclamation is sung: "Christ our light." The candlelight reminds us that the darkness of death did not overcome Jesus. It is a sign of giving ourselves to serve others, to be light.

THE PASCHAL LAMB

My grandmother had a lamb mold, and each year she would make banana bread in it. For years my mother used that mold, and now it is my turn. The lamb was a symbol of the Passover, representing the blood of the slain lamb that was smeared over the doorposts. The lamb was a symbol of sacrifice and freedom. Later, John the Baptist called Jesus the "Lamb of God." A symbol of the risen Christ is a lamb with visible wounds, holding a victory banner.

EASTER LILIES

Each fall, we plant bulbs that burst forth in the spring with flowers. Jesus, too, was buried, in a borrowed tomb. On Easter Jesus, like a lily, came bursting forth with new life. On Easter, churches are decorated with flowers that come from bulbs, and their beauty and fragrance fill the room.

THE EASTER EGG

Throughout the ages, the egg has been a symbol of new life for people of many religions. Ancient people from the East believed that the world itself began with an enormous egg! Years ago, people gave up eggs during Lent, so, for Easter, the faithful painted Easter eggs in bright colors, had them blessed, gave them to friends as gifts, and ate them. For us, the unbroken egg is a reminder of the tomb of Christ. Out of the tomb emerged the Risen One!

THE EASTER BUNNY

This all-popular symbol had its origin in pre-Christian fertility lore. In Germany, the Easter bunny was believed to lay red eggs on Maundy Thursday and eggs of other colors the night before Easter! The Easter bunny has never had a close Christian connection, but serves as a symbol of abundant new life.

Still we find meaning and power in these symbols. With the candle, we share the light. The lamb sets us free. Like flowers, eggs, and bunnies, new life comes, again and again ... for us and the world.

Together we sing *Alleluia*.
Thanks be to God!



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Saturday, Mar 24
5:00p Worship

Sunday, Mar 25*
PALM SUNDAY
9:00a Palm Sunday Worship
9:30a "Pillowcase" pancake breakfast (served until 11:30)
10:30a Palm Sunday Worship

Wednesday, Mar 28
(SPRING BREAK - NO FDL)

Thursday, Mar 29
MAUNDY THURSDAY
7:00p Worship & Communion**

Friday, Mar 30
GOOD FRIDAY
3:00p Stations of the Cross
7:00p Service of Shadows**

Saturday, Mar 31
HOLY SATURDAY
5:00p Worship**

Sunday, April 1*
EASTER
7:30a Festival Worship**
8:30a Easter "Mission Trip" breakfast (served until 10:30)
9:00a Festival Worship**
10:30a Festival Worship**

* No Sunday School
** Nursery care available

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Easter breakfast

Sunday, April 1, 8:30-10:30 a.m., Sanctuary Hall

On Easter morning, our high school students will be serving a delicious breakfast of casseroles, coffee, juice, milk, fruit and other goodies. Come early before worship, or join us after worship. The meal is a free-will offering to support our high school mission trip. These trips are incredible experiences for our young people and help them grow stronger in their faith. People like you make these trips possible! Thank you for those who have donated casseroles. Thank you in advance for your support by attending.



First Communion
Sunday, April 8, 10:30 a.m.

During the months of February and March, fourteen St. Mark’s students have been studying and learning about Holy Communion. On April 8th they will have the opportunity to experience Communion for the first time. They have worked very hard and are excited to join us at the Lord’s Table.

Please join us in welcoming these students. Remember to keep them in your prayers that they would remain faithful to God, who nourishes them in the gift of Holy Communion.

- Lily Anderson
- Lily Davenport
- Owen Dodson
- Avery Garrett
- Ashlyn Gregait
- Christopher Hopkins
- Aidan Mandel
- Ben Miller
- Daniel Miller
- Lukas Mueller
- Sara Rogers
- Peter Schmidt
- Ella Shemansky
- Megan Villarreal



St. Mark’s Day
April 25

Mark the Evangelist, the author of the second Gospel, was one of the early Christian missionaries. Though he traveled widely and lived for many years in Alexandria, it is believed that his relics were taken to Venice, Italy. Venice has named Mark as its patron saint and observes April 25th, St. Mark’s Day, as a public holiday. The winged lion that is Mark’s symbol comes from Mark’s description of John the Baptist as a “voice of one crying out in the desert,” which artists have compared to a roaring lion.



“Grace upon Grace”
Spring confirmation retreat
Friday, April 20 - Sunday, April 22

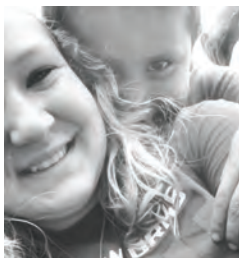
On the third weekend in April, our 7th and 8th grade students will have the chance to go to a weekend confirmation retreat at Lutheran Outdoor Ministry Center (LOMC) in Oregon, Illinois.

This year’s theme is “Grace Upon Grace,” and the focus will be on recognizing the abundance of God’s grace for us, based on the Gospel of John:

“From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.”—John 1:16 (NRSV)

They’ll be busy with lots of activities, including:

- Morning prayer/Bible study
- Ropes course/team-building activities
- Zip line (Midwest’s largest!)
- GaGa court
- Worship time
- Human foosball!



High school summer mission trip

This July, the high school youth group will be traveling to the Blue Ridge Mountains in North Carolina for the annual mission trip. We will have

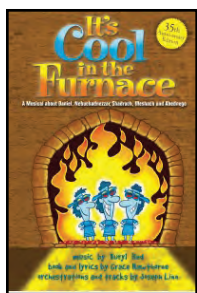
18 teenagers and three adult chaperones attending, which makes this one of our largest mission trips ever! During the trip, our kids will be running a children's day camp, painting houses, and engaging with the local community in various ways. In addition to service, the teens will participate in morning devotions, nightly worship, and small church group time each day at the mission site. The mission site will be hosting multiple churches, including St. Mark's, which will give the teens an opportunity to interact with youth from other churches around the country. Our teens loved meeting new friends last year, and they can't wait to do it again this year!



Giving Tree Fundraiser

From March 15-April 15, we will host a **Giving Tree Fundraiser** to raise money for the high-school mission trip. Look for the Giving

Tree in the narthex. Each small leaf has a different dollar amount on it. Select one with the amount you would like to give and remove the leaves from the tree. Write your check for the amount on the small leaf (made payable to St. Mark's Lutheran Church with 'youth group' as the memo). Use one of the provided envelopes and drop it in the box. Then write your name(s) on the larger leaf and return it the tree to show your support. Please give as you are able. Our youth look forward to the mission trip each year, and it would not be possible without the love and support of this congregation. Thank you so much!



"It's Cool in the Furnace" Wednesday, April 25, 7:30 p.m.

Our first through fifth graders have been rehearsing for weeks, and on April 25th, they want to share with you one very COOL musical! This lively production tells the story of Daniel and his three side-kicks—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—as you've never heard it before. *All are welcome to attend this production!*



"Shipwrecked" July 16-20

As you are making summer plans, remember to plan for VBS! This year's theme, "Shipwrecked," will take kids to an uncharted island and anchor them in the truth that Jesus carries us through life's storms. We'll also be needing adults to help with this important week. Look for the signup sheet at the Welcome Center.



Welcome Children!

To the parents of small children, may we suggest...

- Relax! God put the wiggle in children; don't feel you have to suppress it in God's house.
- Sit toward the front where it's easier for them to see and hear.
- Quietly explain the parts of the service. Kids are curious!
- Sing the songs, pray, and say the responses. Children learn liturgical behavior by copying you.
- If you need to leave the service with your child, please feel free to do so, but please come back.
- Remember that the way we welcome children in the church directly affects the way they respond to the church, to God and to Jesus. Let them know that they are at home in this worship setting.

To our members who have grown children...

A smile of encouragement is always welcome to parents with small, active children.

"Let the little children come to me for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:14

New pew cards

In the coming weeks, take note of the new cards in the pews that affirm our welcome of children. Read the card and encourage families around you!



Inspiration, only 75-cents a month!



Following the daily news can be addictive. It's *everywhere*: online, on TV, on our phones. And it can also be overwhelming, even depressing. How do you balance the stories of casualties and war, anger and enmity with your life? With your beliefs? With your faith?

Living Lutheran Magazine offer an antidote . . . through stories that connect us with people who care and strive for a better world. It offers a consistent voice of daring confidence in God's grace.

In a recent issue, editor Jennifer Younker wrote about attending a conference for religious journalists, where the keynote speaker was asked how he deals with the negativity and anger of the news. His response? **"Tell better stories."** And that is the joy of this intriguing, hope-filled magazine. Here's a sample of some recent articles:

- **"The ultimate comfort food"**—the story of a church that started making large batches of frozen meals to have available for times when people need sustenance and comfort.
- **"Past experience not necessary"**—the story of two churches that launched job-training programs.
- **"A welcome home"**—the story of a church that opened a housing facility for low-income seniors.
- **"Called and chosen"**—first-person accounts from women of color who encountered silence, delays, and obstacles to their call to ministry ... and still pursued their goals.

St. Mark's wants to make it possible for you to receive this inspiring magazine on a monthly basis. If we can gather 25 subscribers, we can get the cost down to \$9 a year. That's only 75-cents a month! Put your pocket change to good use!

Subscribe at the Welcome Center by April 30, using the envelope for your \$9 check.



Handy around the house?

Saturday, April 28

Rebuilding Together Aurora (RTA)

Every year, people in our community are in need of home repairs, but sometimes those repairs just aren't feasible. That's where Rebuilding Together Aurora (RTA) comes in. RTA is a ministry that has a tremendous impact by helping our neighbors improve their living conditions and their lives. Volunteers give their time and skills to provide critical home repairs, home safety modifications, and energy efficiency upgrades for people in need.

On Saturday, April 28, RTA plans to service and repair 25 homes. We are hoping to have a St. Mark's presence that day to repair one of those 25 homes. Since this is our first year being involved with RTA, **our goal is to get 12 people**, young and old, from St. Mark's to commit to giving their time on April 28th. Matt Greising (mpgreising@sbcglobal.net) is our team leader and would be happy to answer any questions you might have. **Sign up at the Welcome Center.**



Interested in becoming a member?

Sunday, April 29 and Sunday, May 6, 11:45 a.m., Sanctuary Hall

If you are interested in learning more about St. Mark's ministry and mission and what it means to be a person of faith in our day and time, please join us for lunch, introductions, presentations and conversation. We would like to share with you and learn more about you. Our new member orientation is in two parts, and we encourage you to attend both sessions. Lunch will be served and child care will be available. **Please sign up at the Welcome Center. The reception of new members will be Sunday, May 20 at 9:00 a.m.**



“Heaven, Hell and Life after Death”

Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m.

Six-week Adult Study starting April 10

Jesus is risen! He is risen indeed! During this Easter season, we proclaim and live more fully into this truth. This truth gives hope. This truth provides comfort. It helps us as we navigate the fragility and uncertainty of life here on earth.

That being said, many of us still struggle with questions surrounding mortality and death. What does Jesus' death and resurrection mean for us when we die? What happens when we die? Is that our end? Is that our beginning? What awaits us in life after death? Is heaven real? Is hell real? Many of us have these questions brewing in our minds.

Our Easter Adult Study is designed to help us discern these tough issues. Together, we will examine what the Bible has to say in response to these questions:

April 10 : Why do we have to die?

April 17: What does the Bible say about heaven and hell?

April 24: Is heaven a place?

May 1: What is the Kingdom of God?

May 8: What comes after death for us?

May 15: What do the cross and resurrection have to do with Christian life?

We hope you will join us for these important conversations, led by Pastor Patrick.

A final resting place

The St. Mark's Columbarium

Historically, Christians have often been laid to rest in churches, where they could be remembered and honored by parishioners. Several years ago, a group of St. Mark's members wanted to investigate the possibility of adding this ministry to our church. After much research, and the commitment of this dedicated group, our columbarium has become a reality.

Set in our beautiful courtyard, the columbarium offers a sacred space for our loved ones. The garden and benches provide a serene spot for remembering, prayer, and thanksgiving. The choice of a niche at St. Mark's is symbolic of the life cycle of faith, and it simplifies the end-of-life planning process. There is no need to shop for a burial plot, casket, or monument. Services can be held at the church, and family can walk just steps to the columbarium.

Currently, the cost of a niche, which can hold the remains of two people, is \$1200, which includes the urns, the stone, and the engravings.

If this is something you'd like to consider, pick up an information packet at the Welcome Center or make an appointment with a member of the committee, who will be glad to answer any questions. Contact Paul Pavesich, 630-800-7190, or Roger Matson, 630-939-8545.



Preparing for your future

Wednesday, April 18, 6:00 p.m.
Sanctuary Hall

Attorney Katie Lenert will share answers to these important planning questions:

- Who will make my healthcare decisions if I am unable to do so?
- What are “advance directives”?
- What is a living will and do I need one?
- What kind of medical treatment do I want if I am seriously ill?

- Who should I pick to handle my estate if I am unable to, or after my death?
- Who will care for my minor or dependent children in the event of my death?
- Do I need an attorney to prepare a will/trust and power of attorney for healthcare and property?
- What is the difference between a will and a trust? Do I need both?
- What do I want my loved ones to know?

All are welcome to attend!

Sign up at the Welcome Center.

Opportunities ahead . . .

Ready for warmth and green?



Adult Fellowship
Thursday, April 26
Nicholas Conservatory
Rockford, IL
(leave church 9:00 a.m.)

Ready for a trip to the tropics? Join the Adult Fellowship for a trip to the Nicholas Conservatory and Gardens in Rockford on Thursday, April 26. It has benches for relaxing indoors and out, and is handicapped-friendly.

We will enjoy a small group butterfly garden tour, followed by a docent-led tour of the greenhouse. Lunch is at Prairie Street Brewing Company, an 1849 historic brewery on the Rock River (also handicapped-friendly). Conservatory cost is \$6. See brochures and menu by the sign-up sheet at Welcome Center. Call or text Claudia Cossairt, 630-967-4971, with questions.

SAVE THE DATES:

Thursday, May 24: Lovejoy Homestead, Princeton

Thursday, June 28: White Pines Dinner Theater - lunch buffet and "A Tribute to the Carole Burnett Show" musical

Learn about the "mother of Aurora"



St. Mark's Book Club
Friday, May 11, 10:00 a.m.
(books must be pre-ordered by April 15th)

For May, we are reading *Gentle Spirit: Memoirs by Marie Wilkinson*. Known for the food pantry she founded, Marie is considered the "mother of Aurora." It is amazing how much this one woman accomplished for people struggling to make ends meet! (You can see her legacy on display at the Santori Library in Aurora during the month of May.)

The book is sold only by the Marie Wilkinson Legacy Fund. Normally, the cost is \$20, but we can get them for a bulk rate of \$12, if we have an order of at least 20 books.

We will be taking orders the weekends of April 7-8 and 14-15 after the 5:00 p.m. service and between 9:00 and 10:30 a.m. services. (Pay \$12 with cash or check, made out to CFFRV/MW Legacy Fund.) You can pick up your book the weekend of April 21-22. If this doesn't work for you, call Marge Gugerty before April 16 at 331-262-2784.



Coffee sales

Sunday, April 15

April 15th is the ONLY date in April to pick up your favorite coffee and chocolates. The Coffee Team will be in the narthex between services. If you attend the 10:30 service, please come a little early to make your purchase.



Blood pressure screenings

Sorry . . . no blood pressure screenings in April. Next screening is Sunday, May 20th. Stay healthy!



PADS dinner

Saturday, May 12

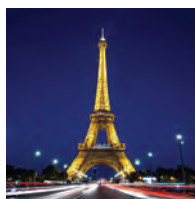
If you've been thinking about helping out at St. Mark's bi-monthly dinner service at PADS, put this May date on your calendar. The smiles you get will be a satisfying reward.



Wednesday, May 23

Life Line Screening will be at St. Mark's in May, offering important preventive health screenings. Pick up a flyer at the Welcome Center for details. Pre-registration is required.

Join the choir tour to France next June





Information meeting

Tuesday, April 10, 6:30 p.m.

Next summer, travelers and singers from St. Mark's will head to France from June 30 to July 10, 2019, to commemorate the 75th anniversary of D-Day. During the trip, we will experience all that Paris has to offer, and the choir will be a part of a huge festival at L'eglise de la Madeleine, where Gabriel Faure was the musician. We will also visit the beaches at Normandy and be a part of a special wreath-laying ceremony at the American Cemetery. If you are interested in learning more about this trip, a representative from Music Celebrations International tour company will be here April 10th to answer your questions. Please join us.

St. Mark's Calendar April 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 EASTER 7:30a Festival Worship 8:30a Easter breakfast (thru 10:30) 9:00a Festival Worship <i>(no Sunday School)</i> 10:30a Festival Worship 	2 OFFICE CLOSED 7:00p Fox Valley Festival Chorus Naomi Circle	3 10:00a Adult Study 1:00p Staff meeting 7:00p Glory Ringers - HS & adults rehearsal	4 9:30a The Bread Wrappers 1:00p Office volunteers 5:00p Roaring Ringers gr 3-5 5:30p FDL gr 1-5, HS 5:30p Joyous Praise Bells gr 6-8 6:00p Confirmation classes gr 6-8 7:30p Endowment Board meeting	5 7:00p AA meeting Lion's Voice Choir	6 7:30a CDC Picture Day Al-Anon	7 2 EASTER 5:00p Worship
8 2 EASTER 9:00a Worship 9:00a Sunday School 10:30a FIRST COMMUNION 11:45a Council meeting 	9 9:30a Faith Circle 7:00p Fox Valley Festival Chorus	10 9:30a WVMITA mtg 10:00a Adult Study 1:00p Staff meeting 5:00p CDC Board meeting 6:30p France tour information mtg 7:00p Glory Ringers	11 9:30a The Bread Wrappers 1:00p Office volunteers 5:00p Roaring Ringers gr 3-5 5:30p FDL gr 1-5, HS 5:30p Joyous Praise Bells gr 6-8 6:00p Confirmation classes gr 6-8	12 10:00a CDC St. Jude's Trike-a-thon 7:00p AA meeting Lion's Voice Choir	13 6:30p Al-Anon	14 3 EASTER 9:30a Women of the ELCA Board meeting 5:00p Worship
15 3 EASTER 9:00a Worship 9:00a Sunday School Coffee sales 10:30a Worship	16 9:30a Ruth Circle 7:00p Fox Valley Festival Chorus	17 10:00a Adult Study 1:00p Staff meeting 7:00p Glory Ringers - HS & adults rehearsal	18 9:30a The Bread Wrappers 1:00p Office volunteers 5:00p Roaring Ringers gr 3-5 5:30p FDL gr 1-5, HS 5:30p Joyous Praise Bells gr 6-8 6:00p Confirmation classes gr 6-8 6:00p "Preparing for Your Future" presentation	19 7:00p AA meeting Lion's Voice Choir Youth & Family Ministry meeting	20 CONFIRMATION RETREAT 9:30a WVMITA meeting Al-Anon	21 4 EASTER CONFIRMATION RETREAT 5:00p Worship
22 4 EASTER CONFIRMATION RETREAT 9:00a Worship 9:00a Sunday School 10:30a Worship & Baptism	23 9:00a Lydia's Piecemakers & Knit Pickers 7:00p Fox Valley Festival Chorus	24 10:00a Adult Study 1:00p Staff meeting 7:00p Glory Ringers - HS & adults rehearsal	25 9:30a The Bread Wrappers 1:00p Office volunteers 5:00p Roaring Ringers gr 3-5 5:30p FDL gr 1-5, HS 5:30p Joyous Praise Bells gr 6-8 7:00p Hope Circle 7:30p "It's Cool in the Furnace" performance	26 9:00a Adult Fellowship (Nicholas Conservatory) 9:00a LSSI meeting 7:00p AA meeting Lion's Voice Choir	27 6:30p Al-Anon	28 5 EASTER Rebuilding Together Aurora (RTA) 5:00p Worship
29 5 EASTER 9:00a Worship & Baptism 9:00a Sunday School 10:30a Worship 11:45a New member orientation	30 7:00p Fox Valley Festival Chorus					

Spring into action



“Hear instruction and be wise,
and do not neglect it.”

Proverbs 8:33

Spring and warmer weather are finally here! Now is the time to “spring” into action. Let’s get moving!

All of us need assistance occasionally to live more healthful lives. I’ve listed some suggestions for working different types of exercise into our Christian lifestyle.

- Commit your health and lifestyle choices to the Lord and ask for strength and guidance. This would be a great way to start off the new church season of Easter!
- Consider exercise as part of an overall plan of stewardship, and aim for balancing your choices in terms of your relationship with Jesus.
- Develop a plan and set goals that are realistic, do-able, and convenient, as well as ones that meet your own needs.
- Set aside a regular time and be consistent.
- Share your plan with someone else and allow them to support you through prayer and/or partnering.
- Enjoy living an active healthy life with God’s blessings.

Here are some suggestions for different “exercises” that incorporate all of the areas of wellness: physical, mental and emotional, social, and spiritual.

—Jean Clementz, RN
Presence Mercy Hospital Medical Center
Faith Community Nurse at St. Mark’s Lutheran Church

If I can be of assistance to you or someone you know, please contact me, 630-897-6891, ext 23, or jean.clementz@presencehealth.org



Physical* – Walk! It’s free; you can do it alone or with someone else; you can listen to reflective music, pray, or just enjoy God’s presence in the beauty of nature. Studies have shown that walking is the best and easiest type of exercise and causes a minimal amount of stress on the joints and back. If you have mobility issues, there are chair exercises you can do. Visit the Go4Life section of the National Institute on Aging website for more information. (go4life.nia.nih.gov)



Mental and Emotional – Laugh often! Laughing releases “feel good hormones” that uplift your mood. Watch a funny movie or comedian, read humorous cards at the grocery store, try to see the comical side of daily life.



Social – Spend time with family and friends. Get out the old board games or play cards. Ask your parents or grandparents to teach you some of the games they used to play



Spiritual – Spend some extra time with your God. Reflect on the Sunday readings. Use the daily reflections from “Christ in Our Home” or “The Upper Room” found at the Welcome Center. Try meditation to re-center and clear your mind.

* Always check with your health care provider before starting any exercise program or activity.

Capital Campaign update



The first chart shows the status of capital campaign giving as of 2/28/2018. The pledges are divided into regular pledges and legacy pledges. The legacy pledges are pledges that giving units have made in their estates, so no giving is expected from them at this time. For the regular pledges, here is a summary of the numbers in the graph:

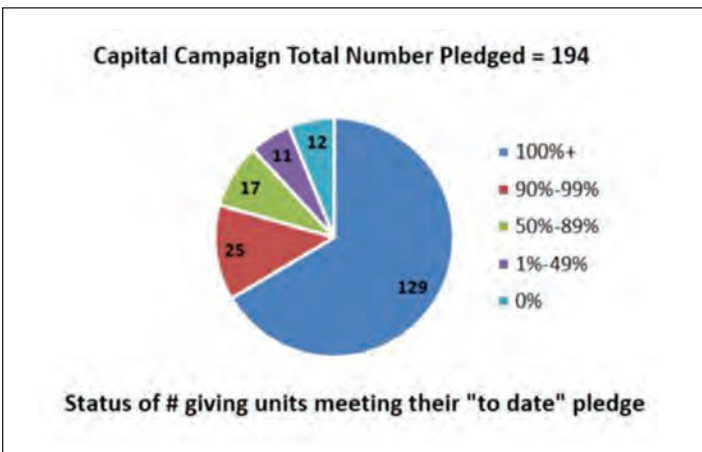
Total Regular Pledges	\$644,673.04
Giving from Pledged Giving Units	\$388,433.08
Giving from Non-pledged Giving Units	\$9,896.40
Total Giving to date	\$398,329.48

As of this date:

# Months into 3-year campaign	14
% of campaign	39%
% of Pledged Amount Received	62%

The second chart shows how many giving units are current with their giving against their pledge. A total of 194 giving units have pledged to the capital campaign. Of those 194, 154 are either current or at 90% of what they should have given as of this date.

Total Number of Pledges	194
Number at 90% or better	154
% of pledges at 90% or better	79%



Thrivent Choice

Eligible Thrivent Financial members can use the Thrivent Choice grant program to direct their "Choice Dollars" to St. Mark's or to another participating nonprofit organization or congregation. Last month, Thrivent deposited \$1,288.00 in our account, thanks to Rachel Bachman, George Huensch, Phyllis Jessick, Colleen Mielke, and Mary Siebert. These gifts help St. Mark's in its ministries. Thank you for directing your Thrivent Choice Dollars here!

Monthly budget recap for February 2018

Monthly Information

Monthly Budget Goal	\$ 71,753.33
Monthly Offering Information	
Envelopes – General Fund	\$ 73,884.06
CDC Rent.Administraion	\$ -
Miscellaneous	\$ 528.00
Other (loose, Sunday School, interest)	\$ 565.35
Total General Fund Income	\$ 74,977.31
Monthly Surplus (Shortfall)	\$ 3,224.08

Summary Information as of 2/28/2018

Annual Budget	\$ 861,040.00
Percent of Year Completed	17%
Offerings/Commitments received Year to Date	\$ 172,878.88*
Actual Expenses Year to Date	\$ 111,200.02
Actual Expense Surplus (Shortfall) Year to Date	\$ 61,678.86
Budget Surplus (Shortfall) Year to Date	\$ 29,372.21

* NOTE: \$27,445 of this income came from 2018 pledges prepaid in 2017

Share and Secure Capital Campaign

Giving to Share and Secure to date	\$ 398,329.48
Transferred to Outreach	\$ 42,452.87
Principal payments to Mortgage	\$ 283,925.57**

** NOTE: waiting for mortgage refinance before paying additional principal

Mortgage Balance as of 02/28/2018

Balance Due on Church (not including CDC)	\$1,978,319.44
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Council highlights March 2018

The St. Mark's Council approved a 2018 contract with Andy's Landscaping.

The Council voted to proceed with new phone system installation to replace our 1984 phone system.

Council voted to approve two fundraising requests from the Youth Group: the Easter Breakfast Fundraiser and the Giving Tree Fundraiser.

The appointment of three-year terms on the Columbarium Board for Paul Pavesich and Lynida Tomlin was approved by the Council.

The council voted to support the outreach opportunity for St. Mark's congregation and clergy to participate and/or attend the Aurora Pride Parade on June 17th. The decision is following the ELCA social statements, and St. Mark's Priorities and Principles established during our visioning process.

New Member Orientation is scheduled for April 29 & May 6, and reception of new members on May 20th at 9:00 a.m. worship.

After the first three weeks of Lent, the "40 Bags in 40 Days" challenge had 23 members dispose of 104 bags.

Tax season tip

Tax season for 2017 is here, and for many of us it is also an opportunity to review tax planning for 2018. With the stock market doing well, you could consider making a direct gift of appreciated stock or mutual funds to St. Mark's. This can create a win-win situation for both you and St. Mark's. You would receive a charitable income tax deduction for the full fair market value of the stock or mutual fund and potentially reduce or eliminate any capital gains on that appreciated stock. If you are interested in initiating such a gift, please contact the Financial Secretary, Jim Erickson, at jerickson@stmarksaurora.net or 630-235-6510.

If you are 70½ or older and have an IRA account, another option is to initiate a QCD—Qualified Charitable Donation—from your IRA. Be aware that QCDs have tax implications different from a regular donation, so make sure you check with your tax advisor.

Pastoral Acts

Memorial service: John Carlson, March 9, 2018

Baptism: Piper Lyn Johnson, March 11, 2018

Council members

Don Friend Council President	630-892-6616 donaldfmd@yahoo.com
Charlie Brummet Treasurer	630-466-7087 cbrummet@aol.com
David Albers Property	219-477-7250
Austin Bredow Member	773-988-1231 a_bredow@yahoo.com
Jeanne Flynn Member	630-896-6312 flynn64sq@sbcglobal.net
Chad Gooch Member	630-466-0742 cgooch@cleo.com
Ginny Pavesich Member	630-337-7004 alinenow@reagan.com
Heather Rehg Member	630-801-4121 rehg@comcast.net
Carol Reiseck Member	630-554-4255 carol.reiseck@cuchicago.edu
Pastor Patrick Fish	Ext. 13 pfish@stmarksaurora.net
Pastor Pat Geiseman	Ext. 15 pgeiseman@stmarksaurora.net

Have information to share? Cutoff time for the weekly *Courier* is **noon each Monday**, and for the monthly *Vineyard*, the **15th of the month**. Email your article to news@stmarksaurora.net, or drop it in Marcia Broucek's mailbox.

St. Mark's staff

(phone is 630-897-6891, unless indicated otherwise)

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Terese Ruppel Nursery Coordinator	630-466-1036 ter60554@gmail.com

Do you get your copy of the *Vineyard* in the mail? Want to receive a digital copy instead? (You'll be helping save printing and postage!) Do you get the weekly email news? If not, let us know. Email news@stmarksaurora.net, and we'll make sure you get what you need.

Servers for worship

Please let Melvin Smith know if you can help with the 7:30 a.m. Easter Worship.

March 31 & April 1-Easter	Saturday, 5:00pm	Sunday, 9:00am	Sunday, 10:30am
Acolytes	Kai Veeder	Shaelin, Louis, Cara, Elliott	A. Hobson, M. Hobson, D. Simpson
Adult Worship Assistants	Bob Johnson	Greg Jackman	Don Friend
A/V Desk	Nancy Clark	Scott Thompson	Jill Fox
Altar Care	Erik Egeland	Team A	Team A
Bread Baker	Pam Krasinski & Emma Albers	Pam Krasinski & Emma Albers	Pam Krasinski & Emma Albers
Hospitality Team	K. Walz, S. & L. Tomlin, E. Egeland	Team A - Mark Perry	Team A - Deb Steinheimer
Reader	Kathy Walz	Team A	Team A
Welcome Center Hosts	TBA	Team A	Team A
April 7 & 8			
Acolytes	Katie Ulrich	Cara Davenport, Isabelle Jones	Jordan Bjork
Adult Worship Assistants	Bob Johnson	Anna Themanson	-
A/V Desk	Sheila Johnson	Jill Fox	Matt Greising
Altar Care	Don Bryant	Team B	Team B
Bread Baker	Jens Jensen	Jens Jensen	Jens Jensen
Hospitality Team	Don Bryant, Dave & Nancy Clark	Team B—Bruce Wood	Team B - Youth Group
Reader	Nancy Clark	Team B	Team B
Welcome Center Hosts	TBA	Team B	Team B
April 14 & 15			
Acolytes	TBA	TBA	Shaelin Dunn, Delaney Hopkins
Adult Worship Assistants	Bob Johnson	Sheryl Campen	-
A/V Desk	Kathy Walz	Dan Hawks	Melvin Smith
Altar Care	Erik Egeland	Team C	Team C
Bread Baker	Matt Greising	Matt Greising	Matt Greising
Hospitality Team	D. Bryant, J. Jensen, S. Kuhn	Team C - John & Terry Thorsen	Team C - Mike Flynn
Reader	Erik Egeland	Team C	Team C
Welcome Center Hosts	TBA	Team C	Team C
April 21 & 22			
Acolytes	TBA	TBA	TBA
Adult Worship Assistants	Bob Johnson	Jill Fox	-
A/V Desk	Nancy Clark	Mark Hipp	Matt Greising
Altar Care	Debra Haddad	Team D	Team D
Bread Baker	Susan Manning	Susan Manning	Susan Manning
Hospitality Team	Jim & Clare Toynton, Sheila Johnson	Team D - John & Terry Thorsen	Team D
Reader	Clare Toynton	Team D	Team D
Welcome Center Hosts	TBA	Team D	Team D
April 28 & 29			
Acolytes	TBA	TBA	TBA
Adult Worship Assistants	Bob Johnson	Angel Frank	-
A/V Desk	Sheila Johnson	Dan Hawks	Melvin Smith
Altar Care	Virgil Ostreng	Team A	Team A
Bread Baker	Emma Albers	Emma Albers	Emma Albers
Hospitality Team	V. Ostreng, M. Hicks, K. Walz	Team A - Mark Perry	Team A—Deb Steinheimer
Reader	Miriam Hicks	Team A	Team A
Welcome Center Hosts	TBA	Team A	Team A



St. Mark's Lutheran Church
 27 South Edgelawn Drive
 Aurora, IL 60506

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 Web: stmarksaurora.net
 Facebook: facebook.com/stmarksaurora

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April highlights



Symbols of Easter
 The power of symbols
 (see pg 1)



First Communion
 Welcoming our students
 (see pg 2)



Giving Tree
 for high school mission trip
 (see pg 3)



"It's Cool in the Furnace"
 A "cool" musical by our kids
 (see pg 3)



**Rebuilding Together
 Aurora**
 (see pg 4)



Adult Study
 "Heaven, Hell, and Life after Death"
 (see pg 5)