



St. Mark's Lutheran Church

# Messenger

Spokane, WA

Fall 2024

Vol. 2024, No. 3

## MESSAGE FROM PASTOR EDWIN

There are great mysteries of faith, things which we take on faith even if we may not understand them rationally. Each of us has our own relationship with these mysteries, the ones we hold fast to and those we struggle to accept. Over the years, I've found it easier to take some things on faith that others may struggle with—like Christ's presence in the bread and wine of Holy Communion or the power of Holy Baptism that joins us to Christ's death and resurrection. However, there are other things I find harder to take on faith, where I must simply confess mystery—or in other words, admit that I don't fully understand.

One of the great mysteries that still confounds me is my profession of an infinitely loving God, an all-powerful God, and my senses which observe a world suffering in so many ways: the plight of our vulnerable neighbors, loved ones who are unwell or grieving, a world filled with war and conflict, a society divided not just by politics but also between those who are enthusiastic about the upcoming election and those who are weary of it. If God is compassionate and Jesus has won the victory over sin and death, where is the kingdom of God? Why is there still so much that isn't the way we know God intends? The Lutheran Confessions may come easily for me but we all are confronted by the great mysteries of the universe, including the question of suffering and the reality of an uncertain future.

I don't have all the answers, something I am acutely aware of as I have mourned the news Pastor Lori shared with us of her discernment to step away from her call, and I ponder our future at St. Mark's. Since her medical leave began, it's been clear to me that leadership was needed, and, as your pastor, I felt I had to step into the

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## DONNA NELSON REFLECTS

As she retires from eight and a half years as St. Mark's Pastoral Assistant for Visitation, Donna Nelson remembers warmly the staff members she's worked with, and the congregation members who have given her a fulfilling sense of ministry as she brought communion to them in their homes and chatted with them over the phone.

She especially cherishes the communion kit passed on to her by her predecessor, Verna Eucker. As the pieces are unpacked and used, she engages the person she is visiting, encouraging them to use all of their senses and their memory to participate. She finds the result "a wonderful exchange".

Donna grew up on Spokane's north side as a member of Salem Lutheran. While earning a master's degree at Iowa State University she was friends with former St. Mark's pastor Dick Finch and member Barbara Nelson, friendships which continued over the years as life eventually brought all of them to Spokane. In the interim Donna taught child development and family studies to teachers and nurses at Oregon State University.

As Donna circled back to Spokane so did her siblings: Janet Ryden, Caroline Shelton and Rev.

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**PASTOR EDWIN**     *continued from previous page*

breach. I see how I was called for such a time as this, though not one I would have sought, and yet I don't necessarily see any special insight within myself or innate ability other than to simply answer God's call in every hour with humility and trust in our compassionate God.

I have said before I am not your shepherd because Christ is the Good Shepherd, rather I am a glorified sheep dog in this particular metaphor. Even so, I find myself herding a vibrant community of faith through a valley overshadowed by so many worldly cares and concerns, wondering if I am truly capable. While I don't doubt my spiritual gifts or motivation, I know that with Pastor Gretchen's ministry among us, we are better equipped for God's work. I desire now, more than ever, to gather with you around the feast Christ will spread before us, the heavenly banquet we will share together when God fulfills all things. I have great hope in that future! But I still wonder, can I really be enough in the meantime?

Many of you might be nodding along reading this because you know exactly the kind of experience I am talking about. And my point in highlighting this isn't so much to draw attention to my own fear and trembling when it comes to the sacred mission God has called me to through your own call to serve here at your pastor. My point is this: none of us find ourselves worthy enough by our own reason or strength. It's God who is our foundation, and Christ is our head. As we pray using the Holden Sending Prayer, we don't always know where God is calling us but we trust that God is leading us and that, confident in God's love, we are supported along the journey.

I don't know what the national election will hold, or where St. Mark's ministry will be next year, or have all the answers to life's great mysteries, but I am confident in God above all else. And when the world around us seems not the way it ought to be, that isn't a chance to blame God, as if the state of things is due to divine neglect. Instead, God invites us to right the wrongs we can, work for peace and justice, and surrender what we can't control into God's

care, so we can live with this reality. That's the great mystery of faith in this journey to which we have been called that I hope you will ponder in this season. And to know that, while St. Mark's isn't a place of perfection, it is a place where Christ will remain our shepherd. When you need secure pastures for refuge, remember that this house of worship will always strive to welcome all who seek respite, where God's overflowing cup of mercy will always be offered to the thirsty, where hungry souls are fed with God's word and the sacraments, where forgiveness abounds, and where God's love will reign.

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**DONNA NELSON**     *continued from previous page*

Mark Nelson. All now sit together in a pew at St. Mark's, and share dinner every Friday evening.

Donna keeps busy. She reads for pleasure. She volunteers at The Discovery Shop, where resale items support the American Cancer Society. In Oregon she was a Master Gardener, and here she is a member of Friends of Manito, for which organization she waters plants once a week at Manito Park. She's there around 6:30 a.m., enjoying the quiet serenity of the park while she works.

And that "Wuff Da" coffee cup in the picture? That's a tribute to Amos, the doggie who keeps her company on those early morning walks to the park. Donna has trained each of her dogs, five of them over the years.

Tom Fallquist will continue the visitation ministry to St. Mark's members, while our gratitude goes to Donna for her faithful service in that role.

### **WORSHIP TIMES CHANGE**

**Sunday, September 1**, one service at  
**9:30 am.**

The fall/winter schedule begins on  
**Sunday, September 8** with services at  
**8:30 and 10:45 am.**

**Saturday evening** services continue at  
**5:30 pm.**



## NOTE THIS

### **CHURCH OFFICE CLOSURES**

- **Monday, September 2**, for Labor Day
- **Monday, October 14**, for Indigenous People's Day
- **Thursday and Friday, November 28 & 29**, for Thanksgiving Day

### **CHANCEL CHOIR**

The Chancel Choir is led by the very capable Ann Benson. Practices take place **Thursdays at 7:15 pm** in the sanctuary, starting **Thursday, September 5** for the fall. Call the church office for more information. New members are always welcome.

### **NEW MEMBER CLASSES**

If you, or someone you know, would like to learn more about St. Mark's and possibly join our church, we will be holding inquiry classes over the course of three Sundays this fall:

- **November 3**
- **November 10**
- **November 1**

These classes run from **5:00 – 7:00 pm** at St. Mark's. We will begin with dinner prepared by congregation members, followed by an informational class. This is a wonderful time to learn more about St. Mark's history, what it means to be a Lutheran, and get to know the pastors in a small group capacity.

The new members will be welcomed into the congregation on **Sunday, November 24 at the 10:45 am service**. If you would like to join, or know someone who may be interested, please contact Katie Kadlec in the church office at 509.747.6677.

### **STAYING CONNECTED**

Want to get in the loop as to what is happening at St. Mark's? We send out an email every Friday morning with all that is going on around here. Please email [office@stmarks-spokane.org](mailto:office@stmarks-spokane.org) to get on that list.

### **DO YOU LOVE GOING TO COSTCO?**

We have a volunteer opportunity for you! Once a month we need cleaning and kitchen supplies for the church. You do the shopping and we pay you back! Call or email Jane Somers in the office (509.747.6677 or [office@stmarks-spokane.org](mailto:office@stmarks-spokane.org)) if this is something you would enjoy doing.

### **CHURCH COUNCIL RECOGNITION**

On **Sunday, September 15, at the 10:45 am** service, we will recognize our Congregation Council and give thanks for their direction and work.

### **VOLUNTEER SUNDAY**

On **September 22** we'll have information about various volunteer opportunities and some folks available to answer your questions. Learn about the many volunteer opportunities available at St. Mark's and sign up for those that best suit you!

### **REFORMATION SUNDAY and CONFIRMATION**

Reformation Sunday is **October 27**, and we will be celebrating Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation) at the **10:45 am** service. We invite you to wear red that Sunday, join us for a jazz liturgy, and support our young folks who will take this momentous step in faith.

### **ST. FRANCIS DAY/BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS**

St. Francis Day is **Sunday, October 6**. St. Mark's tradition of Blessing of the Animals will take place at the **10:45 am** service that day. Bring your animals for a special blessing as we celebrate the life and ministry of St. Francis and God's goodness in creation which includes our pets.

### **OKTOBERFEST**

Save the date! We will celebrate all things German on **Sunday, October 13, starting at 5:30 pm**. The German American choir will start us off with a musical show, then we'll eat brats with all the fixings. The Danowski family has graciously agreed to head up this event again. Watch for more information in the Sunday bulletin.

*more Notes next page*

## MONEY MATTERS

General Fund	July 2024 Giving	Year-to-date 2024 Operating Budget			
		Giving	Expenses	Budgeted	Net YTD
	\$ 57,835	\$ 413,844	\$ 418,807	\$ 515,158	\$ (4,963)

We are so grateful to all members for their regular contributions. This really helps with budgeting and planning. Seeing the 80+ youth and many, many volunteers at the busy VBS week points to a thriving and growing community. As the start of the school year approaches, so does the startup of many groups and activities for youth and adults alike. This results in an increase in expenses, but this is planned for in our budget. Included in our expenses, we have completed some improvements to our aging building and the grounds which were all overdue.

Thanks to the several members who have taken on a lot of the landscaping work. Volunteers help and add to the life of our church in so many ways. Also, thanks to all those who shared their musical talents over the summer when our Chancel choir is on break.

Please consider giving to St. Mark's through Vanco Online Giving. It's a quick and easy process and helps with our planning and budgeting. I can get you set up with it by gathering a few bits of information you can share with me by phone. And rest assured, it is easy to change giving if that becomes necessary.

I'm always happy to help with any changes or additions to your giving.

Loris Stupel  
Financial Secretary  
[finance@stmarks-spokane.org](mailto:finance@stmarks-spokane.org)  
509.747.6677

### **ALL SAINTS SUNDAY**

All Saints Sunday is **November 3** this year. We will send out letters to families who have lost a loved one in the previous year.

### **KEEPING YOU IN THE LOOP: The MESSENGER AND BEYOND**

We publish the St. Mark's church newsletter, the Messenger, on a quarterly basis. It's available both online and as a hard copy. If you would like to change the way you currently receive it - online or in the mail - just let the church office know at 509.747.6677 or [office@stmarks-spokane.org](mailto:office@stmarks-spokane.org).

Many of our congregation rely on email and web-based information. Our Friday email "This Week at St. Mark's" does a thorough job of keeping everyone up to date on what is

happening from week to week. If you don't already get it, please email [office@stmarks-spokane.org](mailto:office@stmarks-spokane.org) with your preferred email address.

Did you know that several years of the Messenger are posted on the St. Mark's website [www.stmarks-spokane.org](http://www.stmarks-spokane.org)? The newsletter along with the calendar are listed under the "Connect" tab.

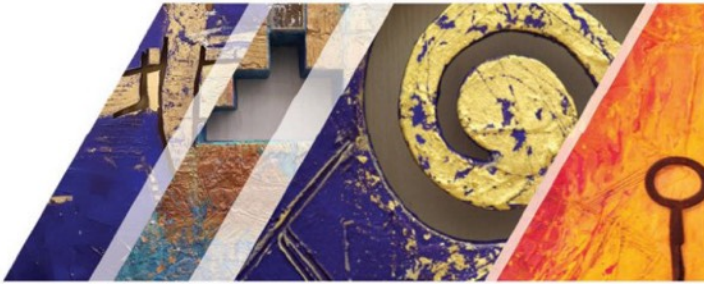
### **BIBLES and CATECHISMS**

On **Sunday, September 22 at the 10:45 am** service St. Mark's youth in specific grades will receive these special books:

- Bibles for third graders
- Bibles for eighth graders
- Catechisms for ninth graders



## ICONS IN TRANSFORMATION



St. James Episcopal Church, in Pullman, WA, is hosting a dramatic 100+-piece art exhibit, *Icons in Transformation*, featuring the contemporary work of acclaimed Swedish abstract expressionist Ludmila Pawlowska.

Pawlowska's work is influenced by traditional Russian icons, and the exhibit will include icons on loan from Vasilevsky Monastery in Suzdal, Russia. Her grandfather, deported to a gulag in Siberia, her father a dissident, Pawlowska was raised by her mother in exile in Kazakhstan, in the former Soviet Union. Her artistic talent was recognized early and at the age of 15 she moved to Moscow to study at the Kalinin Art Academy. She now lives in Sweden with her husband, Jan Lech, creating and exhibiting with the Galleri Odenslunda, an artist cooperative.

Pawlowska says "Icons became inspirational to me as an expression of unconditional love and a new way of seeing the divine. My art is my way to capture the divine light, allowing people to experience a contemporary approach to spiritual art." Exhibit viewers will encounter ancient Icons and multi-genre contemporary art inspired by them that touch the heart, mind, and soul.

**Join us on Tuesday, September 24, from 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm to explore this art exhibition.** We will carpool from St. Mark's using the church bus (and private cars if we need them). Sign up at [https://stmarkslutheranchurch.formstack.com/forms/icons\\_in\\_transformation](https://stmarkslutheranchurch.formstack.com/forms/icons_in_transformation), or in the St. Mark's narthex.

For more information about this artist and the exhibit go to <https://youtu.be/BNAlYL7Dd-A>.



**PASTOR LORI** has a new mailing and email address:

Pr. Lori Cornell  
Queen Anne Rodgers Park  
2900 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave W, No. 353  
Seattle, WA 98119  
Email: [revloricornell@gmail.com](mailto:revloricornell@gmail.com)

For updated information about Pastor Lori's health, go to <https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/loricornell>

There are still pages left to be filled in Pastor Lori's scrapbook. If you missed a chance to make a page, now is a wonderful time to create one and let her know the many reasons she has been a blessing to St. Mark's. There is a table in the narthex with supplies to make a unique page. **Please have completed sheets back to the church by Sunday, September 22.**

Please save the date: **Pastor Lori's final day at St. Mark's will be Sunday, September 29**, when she will serve as Presiding Pastor, with a ritual of Thanksgiving at the Conclusion of a Call, with a reception to follow.



# Youth

## **WONDERFUL WEDNESDAYS:** **CONFIRMATION and MORE**

The first Confirmation classes take place on **Wednesday, September 11 at 7:00 pm** at the church. Parents are asked to come at the end of the class at **7:50 pm** for some orientation details.

Classes for eighth and ninth graders will take place **each Wednesday evening through October 30.**

Classes for tenth graders will take place **each Wednesday evening through October 23.** On **Saturday, October 26** there will be a Confirmation practice and dinner beginning at **6:30 pm.** Confirmation will take place on **Sunday, October 27 at the 10:45 am service.**

On **September 18 - October 30,** Confirmation will classes will take place as part of Wonderful Wednesdays. This includes a potluck meal from **6:00 – 7:00 pm,** games for children and youth led by Calvin and Rachel from **6:30 – 7:00 pm** and Confirmation from **7:00 – 8:00 pm.**

## **ACOLYTE TRAINING**

Have you ever wanted to help out in worship as an acolyte? Or are you a seasoned acolyte who is unsure of everything that you need to do on a Sunday morning?

If you are in seventh through tenth grades, and are interested, please join us for acolyte training on **Sunday, September 22, at 12:00 noon.** We will gather after worship over pizza, talk about what being an acolyte is all about, and practice a few things to help you become more comfortable in the role.

This is an event both for those who want to learn or learn more about being an acolyte. RSVP to the church office, including dietary restrictions.

## **ACTIVITIES YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS**

By Calvin Moore, Youth Program Leader

Greetings from St. Mark's youth! My name is Calvin Moore and I am one of the Youth Program Leaders here at St. Mark's. Our focus is on consistent

relational programming: providing a space and time at the church for youth sixth through twelfth grades to build community and call their own. We are gearing up for the new school year and wanted to share some of the exciting programming coming up for the youth group.

First up, **Sunday Cool returns on Sunday, September 8.** This is weekly programming that takes place at the church between first and second service (**9:45am - 10:30am**). We will meet in the fellowship hall after the early service, participate in an icebreaker activity, and then head back to the youth room as a group. In the youth room we have donuts, share highs and lows, and play a game or do a quick devotional. If you are a youth interested in checking out our programming, Sunday Cool is a fantastic way to plug in and get to know the youth group in a low stress environment.

On most Sundays, there is also some sort of youth event happening after second service, usually beginning around noon. This programming will vary from month to month, so please watch out for our youth activities emails or check the youth board in the narthex for more details. At least once a month we plan a fun, field-trip style adventure. In the past we've gone to the arcade, played laser tag, visited Green Bluff, or volunteered at Second Harvest Food Bank.



Finally, we have some larger retreat events that take place throughout the year. On **Friday, November 22** we will have our yearly youth group lock-in at the church. This is an overnight event jam packed with games, treasure hunts, late night diner trips, and other surprises. In **February** we will head to Lutherhaven for their winter retreat, and in **May** there is the Holden May Youth Weekend to look forward to. These are just a few of the fun opportunities coming up this year.

Thank you for the opportunity of working with the youth here at St. Mark's.

*more Youth next page*



## **NEW YOUTH LEADER**

Hi! I'm Rachel, and I am so excited to be working with the youth program here at St. Mark's. I studied graphic design at SFCC. I am a freelance designer, as well as the Stage Manager for the Ridgeline High School theater program. I love to sing and perform on stage, but I also enjoy working behind the scenes, helping kids build confidence through music and theater.



Calvin and I are thrilled to work together and to give the St. Mark's youth fun and engaging activities and programming. In addition to working together, Calvin and I will be getting married right here at St. Mark's in October. We cannot wait!

Thank you for welcoming me into your community and giving me this opportunity, I am truly honored to be here.

Rachel Peterson (soon to be Rachel Moore)  
Youth Program Leader

## **SILVERWOOD OUTING**



## **YOUTH and FAMILY MINISTRY ... IS YOUR PLACE HERE?**

As our search for a Faith Formation Minister has been put on hold, we are looking for ways to encourage and support this important ministry in our church right now. We are currently forming a Youth and Family committee which will act as a support system for Youth and Family ministries that are already taking place in our church community, i.e. Sunday School, VBS, Confirmation, youth groups, and parent groups.

We are looking for members who have a passion and concern for what we as a church can do to support our youth and families: singles, parents of ANY aged children, grandparents, empty nesters...**YOU perhaps?** Please consider this important opportunity to be involved! For more information, please contact Michelle Phelan, 406.599.4215, or Pastor Gretchen in the church office.

# Learning for All Ages



## Calling all young artists!

We will have a youth art show at St. Mark's in **October**. This show will be open to all youth from preschool to twelfth grade. Watch the bulletin for more information in the next couple of weeks.

## **RALLY SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 8**

**Blessing of Backpacks** will take place during **both services**. Bring your backpacks and supplies for a special blessing from the pastors and receive a small gift to help guide you through the school year. This is a great time to bring friends to be part of the fun. We will have opportunities to register for Godly Play Sunday School, Alleluia Choir and Confirmation.

## **ALLELUIA CHOIR**

Lily Miller is back this school year leading the choir. Our first practice is **Sunday, September 15**. Alleluia Choir practice starts at **10:45 am** in the choir room.

Moving from Godly Play to the choir room, Lily will accompany Godly Play kids from the Parish House to the choir room each Sunday, arriving at the choir room no later than **10:40 am**. Parents whose children have not been at Godly Play should plan to wait with their children in the choir room until Lily arrives.

Practice ends at **11:30** and Lily then walks all the children into the sanctuary, and they find their families to join.

## **GODLY PLAY SUNDAY SCHOOL**

A new school year means a new Godly Play Sunday School year. Please join us on Rally Day, **Sunday, September 8**. There will be parent information and Godly Play registration. Classes begin on **September 15 in the Parish House from 9:45 - 10:30 am**. All children ages three years through grade six are welcome. On **September 15** we will also bless the Sunday School teachers at the **8:30 am** service. Godly Play registration is also available on St. Mark's website.

At St. Mark's, we nurture the faith of our youngest people through worship, relationship, VBS, choir, and through **Godly Play**. **Godly Play** is an approach to Sunday School that invites children of all ages to encounter the mystery of God through story, wonder and play. This video <https://youtu.be/wvfVf13GhYA?feature=shared> gives you a flavor for it.

Are you intrigued? Might you feel called to join the teaching team?

A volunteer team takes turns teaching **Godly Play** stories on Sunday mornings (fall through spring) in two classrooms (age 3 - 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> grade). Eight individuals currently serve in that teaching rotation, and **we're seeking more teachers who feel called to this ministry**. With just three or four more teachers we could return to providing three age-based classrooms of Godly Play, allowing teachers to serve about one Sunday a month.

Training is available and encouraged to help you feel fully equipped. All training costs would be covered by St. Mark's. If you're interested, please reach out to Pastor Edwin or Pastor Gretchen by phone or email for more information.

We look forward to welcoming you to this vital ministry!

## **THURSDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY**

Thursday evening Bible study returns **September 19 at 6:00 pm** for a deep dive into the life and teachings of the Apostle Paul.

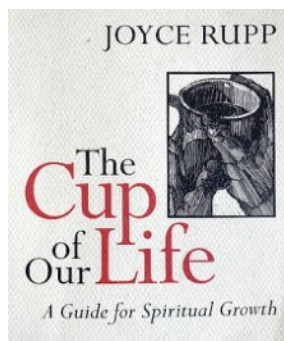
Over several weeks we will look closely at his biographical details contained in the New Testament but also how personal experiences shaped perspectives on his developing faith in the resurrected Jesus.

And because Paul wrote so much and influenced so many, his ministry and teachings have been integral to our understanding of who Jesus is and what God is doing in the world. Come and learn more about the "Apostle to the Gentiles."

*more Learning next page*



## **THE CUP OF OUR LIFE: WOMEN'S SMALL GROUP**



Last spring's Women's Retreat grew out of themes in Joyce Rupp's book *The Cup of Our Life: A Guide for Spiritual Growth*. The book guides a reader through a practice of daily prayer and reflection, using a cup as a metaphor for one's life.

This fall we're kicking off a six-week women's small group to accompany one another as we each engage in daily prayer with a cup of your choice. We'll gather weekly to share and reflect on our prayer experience during the previous week.

Facilitated by Pastor Gretchen and Gail Lancaster, we'll meet **Sundays from 6:00 - 8:00 pm from September 22 through October 27** at St. Mark's. (Come with a full stomach 😊). Sign-up by **Tuesday, September 10** using the QR code above, in the narthex, or by calling the church office, then pick up a copy of the book from the church office before **September 15**. Cups will also be available for you to choose from in the church office, or you can use a cup of your own.

Guided by the book's daily readings, you'll start praying with your cup on September 15. During our first session on September 22, we'll share about our cup selection and reflect on our individual experiences of the book during the previous week.

All women are welcome! Ages 15 to 115, whether you were at the retreat or not, whether you are new to St. Mark's or have been here for years. We look forward to connecting more deeply with God's presence in our lives, including God's presence through each other!

## **SUNDAY FORUM**

**Sunday mornings at 9:30 am** in the conference room.

**September 1:** *Labor Day weekend, no Forum.*

**September 8:** *Rally Day, no Forum*

**September 15: Recreating God's Corner with Stewards of Creation.** Xeriscaping is a landscaping method designed for those who want to conserve water and involves selecting plants that are well-adapted to dry conditions and require minimal water. Susan Plummer will join us to share what our neighbors at Manito United Methodist have done and discuss what water-wise landscaping is possible around St. Mark's grounds and in our own yards.

**September 22: The Work of the People: Helping with Worship.** Join us for a fun, interactive Sunday Forum for all ages as we learn a little more about how volunteers contribute to make our vibrant worship services possible. Come and learn all about this ministry at St. Mark's and how to help out with some basic roles you may be called upon to do any given Sunday.

**September 29:** *Pastor Lori's last Sunday, no Forum*

**October 6: Thrive International with Kelsey Kimball.** Begun in 2021 by a diverse group of innovators who share a vision for thriving multicultural communities, Thrive International is a Spokane based nonprofit that provides temporary refugee housing, education, and empowerment programs all under one roof, with the goal to move refugees from surviving to thriving.

**October 13: Why Courageous, Compassionate Communication Matters More than Ever, and How We Can Get Better at It, with Rachelle Strawther.** From social media threads to neighborhood meetings to discussions over family dinners, ideological differences often create rifts through misunderstandings. But what if we had the tools to engage differently with each other – our family members, neighbors, friends and even strangers – and have better outcomes? Dr. Rachelle Strawther is the founding director of the Center for Lifelong Learning at Gonzaga University, and in this forum she will share personal stories and communication tools to help us lean into hard conversations and bridge divides, one conversation at a time.

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## **SUNDAY FORUM** *continued from previous page*

**October 20: Dignified Workday and Career Path Services**, with *Kathy Hammonds and Andy Dwonch*. Dignified Workday creates opportunities for those experiencing houselessness to re-enter the workforce and to stabilize their lives, providing meaningful work and wraparound support. Career Path Services defines their purposes as “breaking the spirit of poverty through the dignity of work.” They aspire to empower individuals to access meaningful employment and financial sustainability.

**October 27:** *Reformation/Confirmation, no Forum*

**November 3: Hope Beyond the Horizon II - Funeral Planning**, with *Pastor Edwin*. Last winter, Pastor Edwin shared with us the traditions of God’s faithful people as we gather when someone has died. This forum will take us on the next step in the journey as we gather to plan our own funeral service. We will discuss hymns, readings, and rites which can be used to plan our own passage from this life into the next.

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## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **MARRIAGE**

Blessings on the marriage of **Whitney Longie and Thomas Johnson** on May 18.

### **SYMPATHY**

Prayers for the family of **Sacha Kopp**, husband of Pastor Gretchen Olson, at the time of his death.

Prayers for the family of **Henry Sanderson** at the time of his death. Henry Sanderson, a longtime member of St. Mark's, is the father of Linda Bromme, Molly Chapman, Eric Sanderson, and Henry Sanderson, III.

Prayers for the family of **Vern Severud** at the time of his death.

Prayers for the family of **Joyce Cutler** at the time of her death.

### **FUNERAL**

Funeral for **Joyce Cutler** on July 20.

## **PRAYER FOR THE NATION**

One of God’s greatest gifts to us is our ability to pray for all things in all circumstances. Those who have come before us have passed along a tradition of praying for the nation, our leaders, and the needs of our shared civic life (for such examples, check out the propers for the occasion “National Holiday” on ELW pg. 63, and the prayers for “Civic Life, Government, Nations” on ELW pg. 76-78).

As the national election approaches, we see within our community different responses. Some are enthusiastic about parties and campaigns, and others seek refuge from continuous debate. But regardless of personal political persuasions, we are all still called by God to pray for the welfare of our nation and to do so with humility and compassion, something often quite foreign to the world’s way.

**St. Mark’s will gather Monday, November 4 at 7:00 pm** to pray for the nation, state, city, and neighborhood, those who are in authority and who seek public office, and for the wellbeing of all God’s children. Join us for this special worship service, where we come together as people of God above all else to answer God’s call to pray for all things.

## **BENEDICTION**

Go forth into a world divided. Yet know that God dwells even there, in all places, in this time. And also know that there is no real division for everything is in God and God is with all. We are one in God’s oneness. Be aware of that sacred presence. Let it strengthen you. Let it transform you.

Go with a tender and grateful heart, remembering that you may be the only gospel that your neighbor reads. You are blessed by the grace, love and friendship of our Creator, and now you are commissioned to share it by being a blessing in this world.

Build shalom. Love with abandon. Abide in peace.

## THANK YOU

Dear Friends in Christ,

Your warm welcome has testified again and again to the generosity of the St. Mark's community and to the Spirit alive among us. From the moving installation service and festive reception to the planned and unplanned conversations in which you've shared your stories and your lives, thank you for these invitations to become one of your pastors not just in "word or speech but in deed and truth" (1 John 3:18). Thanks also to Pr. Edwin, the staff and to all of you for the ordination gift of the stunning stole you see pictured! It will be a treasured reminder that our first weeks together were spent in shared, vital observance of a Season of Creation.

If we haven't had a chance to connect yet for coffee or a meal or the recent hymn-sing potlucks, feel free to reach out directly or watch for future sign-ups. I look forward to getting to know you all more deeply. As I continue putting more names to faces, your good-humored grace when I stumble has been much appreciated.

With gratitude and humble anticipation of what God is up to among us,  
Pastor Gretchen

+++

Dear Ladies that Care at St. Mark's,

Thank you for the pretty birthday cards. I know it takes time and thought to send all the cards that you do. Not one alike!

I hope to be at St. Mark's more often and pray for Pr. Lori. And thanks again.

Marilyn Stocker



**Sue Brueggemeier**

(pictured) and **Sandy Fink** were kind enough to take on the monumental task of organizing and cleaning the music room. They spent countless hours going through each file cabinet, sorting music from

many, many years. No one can remember when this was last done, and Ann Benson, the Director of Choral Music, especially appreciated that her mother, Sue, agreed to work on this huge job. Thanks!

+++

Dear Mary Cares & Friends of St. Mark's,

Thank you so much for all the cards & letters & encouragement while I was in rehab at Touchmark. All of your prayers were greatly appreciated. I feel so blessed. I should soon be walking without a boot!

Thank you,  
Janet Ryden



### ST. MARK'S ICON APP

Did you know that you could have the most up to date version of our picture directory right in the palm of your hands? It's true! Go to your app store on your cell phone and download the IconCMO app. Then contact Jane Somers in the office ([office@stmarks-spokane.org](mailto:office@stmarks-spokane.org)) and she'll get you set up with your own username and password.

This will give you access to our entire directory with the most up-to-date information on our members. This way, when we are notified of a change with a member (move, phone number change, etc.) you will automatically have the updated information right at your fingertips.



# VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

**Thank you, thank you, thank you!** What an incredible success our Vacation Bible School has been. VBS was such a fun and rewarding experience, probably as much for the volunteers and it was for the youth who participated. We had over 80 children sign up to attend, and the church was buzzing with excitement all week long. Thank you to the many folks of all ages who helped in a multitude of ways. Whether you donated snacks, prepared crafts, or helped set up, it all played in to the positivity of the week. **An extra special thank you to co-chairs, Kendra Chapman and Kate Bassett**, without whom this wonderful week would not have been anywhere near as uplifting.

Our fundraiser this year was for Thrive International. Their mission is “to empower multicultural communities to THRIVE.” Thrive International is innovating how local communities respond to the refugee crisis in America. They have two transitional housing centers in Washington State, one of which is in Spokane, that serve refugee families while providing on-site programming and education tailored to their needs. We are so pleased we were able to send this worthwhile organization \$728 thanks to all of you. To learn more about this worthwhile Spokane based organization, go to [www.thriveint.org](http://www.thriveint.org).



## PHOTOS:

*The whole VBS gang.  
Co-chairs Kendra & Kate.  
Underwater at VBS.  
Teen helpers.  
Snack helpers.  
Story time.  
More underwater fun.  
VBS barbeque.  
Two registration helpers.  
Multi-talented Pastor Edwin.*





# Social Ministry

## Opportunities to Serve

### **BITE2GO at Franklin Elementary 2024-2025**

By Patti Berg

So many of you at St. Mark's have been so generous in past years in supporting the children at Franklin Elementary in the Bite2Go program. This program, in conjunction with Second Harvest Food Bank, allows children on the free lunch program to take a bag of shelf stable food, (a carton of milk, a small box of cereal, juice, fruit and a granola bar, with a different selection halfway through the school year) home every Friday during the school year.

Cost is \$180 per child for the year. The school year 2023-2024 started out with 34 children in need. By the end of the year, the number was 54. Luckily, we had a little reserve from the pandemic that allowed us to support the extra 20 children.

Once again, I'm asking everyone at St. Mark's to consider this program as one of your charity options. When you think about how much it takes to purchase a coffee, or movie or a snack at the ball game, \$180 for a full year to support one child should be a strong consideration.

You can write a check, use your credit card, or direct deposit to St. Mark's, or direct deposit to Second Harvest with the notation for Franklin Elementary.

If you have any questions about this program, feel free to contact me at 509.499.9120.

Thank you.

### **CROSSWALK**

Crosswalk is an outreach of Volunteers of America which serves homeless youth in the downtown area.

St. Mark's is committed to providing meals for them on the fourth Thursday of every month. We pass around a signup sheet the prior Sunday, but please note that even if you don't attend to sign up in person, you are welcome to

bring any of the following items to church on the **fourth Thursday of the month by 3:00 pm.**

- Milk
- Juice
- Fruit
- Sandwich fixings (sliced meat, cheese, and bread)
- Cookies (homemade are especially appreciated)
- Salads

Please bring any of these items in containers that you do not need back, and our volunteer coordinator, Gina Bloom, will get them down to where they will be used. Thanks to all who contribute to this worthwhile program regularly.

### **SHALOM MINISTRIES**

The summer months were busy for the Dining with Dignity ministry.

Continued overwhelming numbers of hungry people were served, especially toward the end of each month. The homeless poetry group met biweekly, with talented homeless poets sharing their experiences and coming together to create an inspirational poem.

A free 'shopping' clothing distribution occurred once weekly with breakfast, and once or twice a month with dinner coordinated by Shalom volunteers and Community Health Association of Spokane (CHAS) homeless outreach staff. Emergency clothing needs were met as needed or requested.

The ministry closed for two weeks in August for deep cleaning and a week vacation for the four dedicated employees who work so hard. Meals were provided in the interim by CHAS homeless outreach and Gonzaga's campus kitchen.

A letter of intent was submitted to ELCA Domestic Hunger for a hunger grant. A subsequent interview occurred with the Intermountain Synod committee and recommendations have been forwarded to the national board for review.

Plans for the gala event Dining with Dignity on **Saturday, October 26**, at the Southside Community Center, are well under way. We have wonderful donations for our live auction including a 14-passenger van, a boat trip with a four-course



dinner and overnight at MacDonald resort, a night at a condo on Schweitzer, horseback riding and dinner for four.

We are asking our friends for additional items. Do you have tickets to Gonzaga or other local sports teams? Do you have Best of Broadway or symphony tickets you could share to support Shalom? We are collecting items for the silent auction also.

We can provide a procurement letter if you know a business that might donate to our event.

We are also looking for table hosts and attendees. Kurt Stephan has tickets he will gladly provide. Cost is \$60 per ticket. Underwriting for ticket cost is available.

**Contacts:**

- Mike Connelly 509-723-3883 [mfcyaak@gmail.com](mailto:mfcyaak@gmail.com) (Event chair- live auction coordinator)
- Kurt Stephan 509-881-8710 [lenrocco@hotmail.com](mailto:lenrocco@hotmail.com) (Ticket coordinator)
- Deidre Jacobson 509-710-0204 [healingpen@comcast.net](mailto:healingpen@comcast.net) to answer general questions.

## **SPEAR**

Members of the SPEAR board have been meeting with Ben Stuckart from SLIHC (Spokane Low Income Housing Consortium) to explore ways to convert the SPEAR property into low-income housing. The board has decided to dissolve our non-profit status in ways that will still benefit the neighborhood we have served for so long. We plan to continue to operate until the end of November.

St Mark's has other programs for feeding the hungry in Spokane. It is much harder to serve the need for low-income housing. Although the board feels some sadness in dissolving, we feel contributing to more housing is a wise use of our assets.

*Norilee and Kent Kimball are two of the many volunteers who enhance the wonderful St. Mark's music program.*

## **Volunteers**

Opportunities to Serve



### **SUMMER THANKS AND SEPTEMBER VOLUNTEER FAIR**

Thank you, volunteer friends, for your service over the summer months! Because of our condensed Sunday worship, lots of you served less. It was a deep breath, a break, a true rest.

As is usually the case, some of you were left out of this respite, so special appreciation to you if you served more intensely. Our service coordinators and altar guild took on more duties because they were opening and closing on Sunday mornings. Saturday worship volunteers enjoyed no change of routine but were faithful in their service as always. Our grounds kept growing and were tended endlessly.

September will be the perfect time to say, "Thank You!" in person. **Sunday, September 22** marks the beginning of the Volunteer Fair, complete with sign-up sheets. Sunday Forum, led by Pastor Edwin, will focus on Sunday worship volunteering with particular emphasis on Communion assisting, and carrying the cross. Please come for a lighthearted celebration of our many volunteer ministries and those of you who serve in so many ways!





## STEWARDS OF CREATION

Stewards of Creation is a welcoming group at St. Mark's that focuses on acknowledging our call to creation stewardship and environmental justice in five areas: Worship, Campus Life, Education, Outreach and Advocacy. We meet monthly, fall through spring, via Zoom on the first Monday of the month. Our first fall meeting takes place on **Monday, October 7 at 6:00 pm**. Contact the church office for the Zoom link at [office@stmarks-spokane.org](mailto:office@stmarks-spokane.org).

The **SUNDAY FORUM** on **SEPTEMBER 15** will feature the theme "Recreating God's Corner" about waterwise landscaping. See page 9 for more information.

On **Saturday, October 12 from 10:00 am to noon** we'll be putting the gardens to bed. Volunteers are welcome!

Composting efforts center around our **RESURRECTION GARDEN** (the compost bins outside the kitchen door). They produce wonderful amendments for the vegetable beds and other areas around the church. In addition to food scraps and coffee grounds from the kitchen, we compost coffee cups, stirrers, napkins, and even the Sunday bulletins and worship folders. **Thanks for using the clearly marked waste baskets inside in the fellowship hall** to collect these items during fellowship times. We even hope to extend this effort to the smorgasbord this year!

A **GROUPS PLANNING TEAM** has been looking at a bigger picture for the church campus. Currently we are focusing on these values:

- **Low water usage.** Our aquifer is stressed with water usage from our growing population, and we must do our part to be good stewards.
- **Pollinator friendly choices including native plants where possible.** We are called to do our part to be a good neighbor to insects, birds, air and soil.
- **Low maintenance.** Mindful of our financial resources, we also cannot burden our volunteers.
- **Edible where practical.** Bring joy to walkways and nooks for humans and fellow creatures.
- **Think 'forest floor' not immaculate English garden.** Transform our sensibilities to see and mirror the beauty of the diversity and wildness of God's creation.

With thanks to **Eric Allen, Laren Sunde, Joyce and Don Vannoy, Janet Farness, Bob Palrud, Dan Heinen and Peggy Patterson**. Others are welcome to lend their thoughts and expertise. Contact Jane Somers in the office at [office@stmarks-spokane.org](mailto:office@stmarks-spokane.org) or 509.747.6677 to





## VOLUNTEER TO HELP LIGHT UP SPOKANE!

This last January St Mark's put together the first public luminaria walk around Manito Pond which was a wonderful success. People from around Spokane came to enjoy the candlelit walkway. A few families brought their kids to run about the lights, while a newlywed couple spent their first evening married walking among the candles. In a space of healing, one person who recently had a family member pass spent time grieving and healing in the quiet. The event was a gift to the community.

We're doing the luminaria walk again this January and are looking for a few volunteers to help with pre-event activities. These include advertising, soliciting donations from local vendors, and recruiting day-of volunteers.

If you're interested or want to learn more, please contact Eric Allen by email [ericballen@gmail.com](mailto:ericballen@gmail.com) or phone at 253.278.2708. Thank you and we're looking forward to another successful luminaria walk!

## Faith and Fellowship Groups

*We use the church office telephone number for all our groups; this is to avoid scam texts. If you have a directory, you can phone leaders directly.*

### SCRIPTURE & COFFEE

Every Tuesday, 10:30 am

This group meets at church for a Bible-based conversation with a pastor to study the scripture texts for the following Sunday. **All** are welcome.

### EAT, PRAY, LAUGH

First Tuesday, September 3, 7:00 pm

Questions: Pastor Gretchen at 509.747.6677

**All women** are invited to this fellowship group for conversation, laughter, prayer and refreshments.

### SUNRISE SAINTS & SINNERS

*\*See photo next page*

Second & Fourth Wed., September 11 & 25, 7:00 am

Questions: Dave Troyke, 509.747.6677

This **men's group** has lots of laughs and interesting discussions about a variety of topics. All men are welcome, saints and sinners! We meet at the Chalet Restaurant at 2918 S. Grand Blvd.

### THEOLOGY ON TAP

Third Tuesday, 7:00 pm

Questions: Pastor Edwin at 509.747.6677

This group has great conversation and fellowship with **adults in their 30s** rotating through local brewpubs and wineries.

### THE MEANDERING GROUP

Second Friday, 10:00 am at St. Mark's

Questions: Martha Harvie at 509.747.6677

This group plans regular outings of walking along with others while socializing. Sometimes we eat at a location to be determined. On Friday, September 13, we'll meet at St. Mark's and head over to Kendall Yards. There are several options for lunch; we'll decide then.

### STEWARDS OF CREATION

Varying Mondays, by Zoom, 6:00 pm

Questions: Janet Farness at 509.747.6677

This small group meets to learn more about care of the earth and our divine calling to be good stewards of creation. Our next meeting is **Monday, October 7**. Call the church office to get a link.



## TWO GREAT FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

### For MALE SAINTS and SINNERS



*This men's group meets for breakfast twice a month. See page 17 for details.*

### FOR EVERYONE

Join us for the return of a Wednesday night St. Mark's community night for all ages!

This fall beginning on **September 18** and running through **October 30**, **WONDERFUL WEDNESDAYS** will kick off with a:

**6:00 – 7:00 pm** Potluck meal,

**6:30 pm** All-ages youth games divided by age group with Calvin and Rachel.

Then, while Confirmation classes meet from **7:00-8:00 pm**, everyone else can choose from hymn singing in the sanctuary, a small group meeting in the Parish House or Fellowship Hall, or just time to connect with others.

Plan to come out for some weekly food, fun and fellowship at church this fall!

### **ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH**

316 E. 24th Avenue  
Spokane, WA 99203

#### **SERVICES**

Sunday 8:30 and 10:45 am  
Saturday 5:30 pm  
Nursery provided all services

#### **OFFICE HOURS**

Monday-Friday 9 am-noon, 1-3:00 pm  
(Friday -noon)

#### **PASTORS**

Gretchen Olson  
Edwin Weber

Phone: (509) 747-6677

FAX: (509) 458-2757

[office@stmarks-spokane.org](mailto:office@stmarks-spokane.org)

[WWW.STMARKS-SPOKANE.ORG](http://WWW.STMARKS-SPOKANE.ORG)

**MISSION STATEMENT:** To share the gospel through worship and service. To be an inclusive community for justice and peace among diverse peoples.

#### **MESSENGER**

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