

Community Church Stand



More than a new building ... it's a new way of working together in the kingdom of God

An Update on the Process for St. Mark's Members

The foundation is laid. The building is beginning. Workers are signing up...and everywhere people are excited about what the future holds. Donations are coming in but there is still time for you to step and 'bite off' a piece of this delicious ministry.

-by Pastor Tim Koester

The new "Community Church Stand" is taking shape and now's a good time to be sure everyone has good information about the process. The rain this spring really compressed the timetable but we are still on track for a **dedication** and chili cook off on **August 4th at 5:00 p.m.** Save that date!

This is a unique undertaking. Three small town churches, each with their own history and tradition, pool their resources and construct a new joint venture. It started out of necessity. The old stands were in bad shape and in danger of shutting down for lack of workers. But now something more is 'cookin'. We are building a place for cooperation and mutual ministry. We laying a foundation for future generations to serve as members of one body.

Scott Ober Construction is the general contractor on the project and the fair stand board used a bid process to select other local companies to provide materials and labor. It truly is a community project from the ground up and if you want further info. about the construction details, one of the board members will be happy to answer your questions.

When our congregation authorized spending \$40,000 on the stand, it was unclear how much the Knox Co. Fair Board would contribute. They have since added \$25,000 to the total effort which makes the estimated cost to each church around \$30,000. This is good news! We have raised almost two-thirds of that amount and additional commitments have been made. If you have not helped support this project, it may soon be too late...and that would be a shame because this only happens once in a lifetime!

The Community Church Stand Board

Richard Eisenhauer, Brian Eisenhauer, Sandra Kaiser - First Trinity LCMS, Ben Lauck, Jody McFarland, (one yet to be named) - Christ Memorial UMC, Les Jessen, Phil Schroeder, Travis Loecker - St. Mark's Evangelical. ELCA

One person from each church serves as an officer (President, Manager, Sec./ Treas.) Each church has equal ownership and investment but the fair stand operates independently of any one congregation. With approval of the board, the fair stand may be used for other events but only congregation members or board members may operate it. A written agreement covers each of these policies and also includes a process if any congregation wishes to withdraw from the agreement.

How we share the proceeds.



Jesus said, “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”. The point is that what we do with our finances has spiritual consequences. I like to say this about the fair stand profits: **100% of them will be used to do God’s work.** That’s because all the profits flow back to the churches and churches do God’s work. Everyone has tried very hard to make contribution and distribution fair, but trusting we all labor in the same harvest makes sweating the small stuff irrelevant.

Here’s the breakdown: 1] The first 10% of profits are retained to start things up the next year. 2] For ten years, each church receives \$3000 each (approximately half the anticipated profit) since each church invested equally in the fair stand. 3] The balance of the profits are distributed in proportion to the number of workers each congregation provides, including those who prepare chili and taverns. Baking pies and brownies also contributes to the formula.

Sign up to work a shift soon. You’ll be a charter member!

Because people from three churches are together in one working unit, signup will happen a little differently. Each church has the opportunity to supply 1/3 of the workers for each shift. You can preference what you would like to do but the final roles will be assigned by the committee (but I’m sure some swapping will go on:) The deadline is July 22nd so don’t delay. This is so exciting! I’ve talked with a lot of people who also have talked with a lot of people and the OVERWHELMING feeling is so positive.

August 4th 5:00 pm. Dedication and Chili Cookoff. Save the date!

A side note about “Dreaming”

Every living thing changes. The church is alive. It will change. The question is how.

In recent weeks a group has again started “dreaming” about possible changes to the sanctuary. Change can evoke strong emotions, but thoughtful conversation moves us past fear to a place of trust, even if we don’t always agree in the end. For some time now, we’ve talked about how we might install multimedia in the sanctuary. Three years ago we invited the Center for Liturgical Arts at Concordia University to give us some ideas. Recently we made up an ‘unofficial’ survey and had it available during worship to get even more ideas. It’s posted on our website www.fgcchurch.org under the resources tab. Print it out and give your ideas too!

Change is not new. We have made many significant changes over the past several years and I believe they are contributing to something quite remarkable. **St. Mark’s is a growing church!** Membership has **increased every year** since 2006. Worship attendance has gone up every year since 2009 and giving per member has increased 25% over the last eight years...even AFTER accounting for inflation! We’ve seen tremendous growth in children’s and adult education. God has been shaping us to be disciples in changing times.

There are new generations of people to reach. This past year, one-half of the children in the VBS program were in kindergarden or preschool. The dream team is asking how we can best tell the gospel message in a world that is increasingly visual and “unchurched”. The funds for this project are already sitting in the bank. Now we need to discern God’s will then humbly and boldly follow. We may not all get what we want but this is not about “us” anyway. It’s about the Message we have been given and the people who are waiting to hear it.