

Rector's Remarks
The Rev. Ian Burch
Annual Meeting | January 31, 2016
St. Mark's Episcopal Church | Milwaukee, WI

Hello friends!

I do not have a report, as such. A Report is about what has happened in the previous year. And, as you might imagine, I don't know very much about that. But I did want to say a few words about where I see us going in 2016. I formed them into a few statements about what I believe.

1. I believe that we are a community with an embarrassment of riches: financial, personal, spiritual, physical. We have a gorgeous church full of whip-smart, faithful people sitting on the prettiest block in Milwaukee. There is no reason under heaven that we will not attract newcomers who want to be in community with the fantastic people who are already here—who want to deepen their relationship with God and with each other.
2. I believe that we have an incredibly strong social justice ministry—the Gathering involvement, Common Ground, the Pumpkin Sale Outreach monies etc.. I believe these ministries will continue just as strong as they have been in 2015.
3. I believe we are not as intentional as we could be about including our youth and families with young children into every possible aspect of church life. This will be one of my priorities in 2016.
4. I believe our music program is a massively underutilized source of evangelism in our neighborhood. I will be pushing for us to allocate time and resources to our music and liturgies and to let the whole city know what we have to offer. Music and worship are antidotes to over-frenetic lives.
5. I believe there is no good reason why we do not have the finest Christian formation/education programs for adults in this city—from Confirmation age until well into retirement. Given who our parishioners are, St. Mark's should be have the most compelling Christian education around. And we will. So, look for it in these next months.
6. Attention to these pillars—justice, worship and music, Children's Formation and Adult Formation will absolutely strengthen our parish for the days to come. We're going to grow, and I look forward to giving you a report on these four pillars of our shared life in 12 months' time.

Thank you for all the work and love you put into this place. Everyone who walks into those doors is going to be able to feel what a special parish this is. I certainly can.