

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2016**

### **RECTOR'S REPORT AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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*A special thank you to Paula Wheeler for coordinating and assembling all the committee reports!*

## RECTOR'S REPORT

Friends in Christ,

We have had an extraordinary year together. God has been faithful, and the people of St. Mark's have worked and prayed hard. I believe we are in the midst of a renaissance...a rebirth. Which, after all, is what God is all about. With God, all things are possible. With God, all things are made new.

One year ago, I made some remarks at the annual meeting, laying out what I believed at the time were the four main places of attention and energy needed at St. Mark's. Those areas were: **Children's Education, Adult Formation, Excellent Worship/Music and Outreach**. I believe we have done excellent ministry in all areas.

### **Children's Education**

2016 Accomplishments:

- Partnered with Lake Park Lutheran for a successful Vacation Bible School.
- Introduced a Bible Story Time into all summer worship services.
- Started a two-year, rigorous Confirmation program for our older youth.
- Revamped the Church School, including investing in a new curriculum and moving teachers to a rotation schedule to accommodate more teachers serving fewer Sundays.
- Renewed investment in nursery workers for major church functions as well as Sunday morning.
- Revitalized Children's Hospitality Area at the rear of the church.

2017 Goals:

- Create family restrooms on the first floor with changing stations.
- Increased VBS attendance.
- Increased involvement of older kids in serving at church (acolytes, readers, teaching assistants etc.)
- Identify and lift up a Church School superintendent for Fall 2017.
- Plant seeds for a high school youth service trip in 2018.

### **Adult Formation**

2016 Accomplishments:

- The Adult Education committee has worked hard to provide quality programming (a mix of lecture and video) for most Sundays of the year.
- We have identified teachers and theologians in the community who could teach courses on Sunday mornings.
- We received a grant to host movie nights this summer followed by theological reflection. St. Mark's at the Movies was a big hit.
- Two sessions of Episcopal 101

- Strong teaching during the Lenten evenings—Bistro-style lectures with food and fellowship.
- Advent quiet day hosted by the Rev. Scott Stoner focused on simplicity and wellness.

2017 Goals:

- Continue to cultivate in-house talent for teaching at St. Mark's.
- Bring in one or two outside teachers to add some depth and interest to our Sunday morning offerings.
- Add lay committee members with a passion for adult formation.
- Continue to develop programming for adults wishing to be baptized, confirmed or received.

### **Excellent Worship/Music**

2016 Accomplishments:

- Average Sunday Attendance in 2015 was 63. Average Sunday Attendance in 2016 was 79.
- Secured funding for choir section leaders through grants and major gifts. The choir has doubled in one year with a combination of paid professionals and enthusiastic congregants.
- The Vestry approved a 50K+ expenditure which refurbished all the 1926 wiring on the Austin organ. The organ is now in excellent condition and should be in fine electronic shape for many years.
- Investment in Holy Week and major Feast (Pentecost, All Saints') observances—visually and musically with the addition of area musicians. Increased coordination and hard work by both Flower and Altar Guilds.
- Improved worship planning among Rector, Organist and Parish Admin for future worship planning.
- Added a Wednesday Eucharist with an average attendance for the year of 13.
- New floor in the choir room.
- Increased investment in licensing for music.
- Increased investment in continuing education for the Organist.

2017 Goals:

- Continue to raise the quality and leadership abilities of St. Mark's choir.
- Add more complicated vocal repertoire.
- Add a summer kick off Choir Camp—possibly with a master class.
- Continue to declutter and streamline choir room.
- Increase relationships with community musicians.
- Advance leadership profile within the Diocese as a destination for high-quality sacred music.

## **Outreach and Justice Work**

2016 Accomplishments:

- The Outreach Committee continued its strong traditions of the Flower Sale, Corn Roast and Pumpkin sale—raising money to make grants to agencies throughout the year. For a fuller list, see their report.
- The Outreach Committee added two members.
- A parishioner-led Diaper Drive brought in over 4,000 diapers to be given away to Robyn's Nest.
- The Friends of Common Ground Campaign raised well over their goal this year to fund CG initiatives in the city.
- The Rector's discretionary account funded gloves and hats for the Dakota Access Pipe Line water protectors in South Dakota, funded food for dozens of community members in need and sent funds to support pastoral care at St. John's on the Lake as well as theological education at Nashotah House Episcopal Seminary. The fund also helped cover some wedding and burial expenses for two families in serious need.
- The joint Thanksgiving Eve service raised \$311 for Just One More ministry—a group that feeds those in major need in Milwaukee.

2017 Goals:

- Add one or two new initiatives from the Outreach Committee.
- Survey the parish for the kinds of ministries that we feel passionate about: environmental? Missional? Housing? Food? What is the heart of God asking the people of St. Mark's?
- Increase our connection to the diocesan Haiti Project.
- Investigate the possibility of support refugees in our city.
- Build on the success of the diaper drive and dream about ways St. Mark's can amplify that project.
- Involve our youth in some of the above initiatives.

I'm sure there is more to tell. This is, of course, just part of our story. Still, I know without a shadow of a doubt that amazing things are happening here in our little church. We are working hard together to be a beacon of God's love to this community and to the world. The gifts of all of you, joined together, are making the growth of our parish possible. Thank you for such a wonderful year, and here's to many more!

God's blessings on you all.

~Fr. Ian Burch

## **FORMATION PROGRAMS**

### **ADULT FORMATION**

A quiz—In the Bible, what does God want to do with the Laodiceans?

- a) Make them pick up all the seeds they wasted on rocky ground
- b) Pay them one lousy denarius for working overtime in the vineyard
- c) Vomit them out of his mouth

If you're as confused by God's possible actions as the Laodiceans probably were, then you really should try out St. Mark's Adult Formation programs. After all, last year we offered several different opportunities to engage with scripture, theology, movies and, that most challenging of subjects, Other People's Opinions. There were classes on Sunday mornings, Wednesday afternoon Bible Studies and Theology Pub on Tuesday nights—held in a real pub!

Topics ran the gamut from "Lenten Suffering" to "What's Your Heresy?" to "Is True Love Inconceivable?" So, you really have only yourself to blame if you don't take advantage of these special offers and find yourself in the same predicament as the Laodiceans!

These fine programs are brought to you by the Adult Formation Committee: Rev. Ian Burch, Deacon Michelle Mooney, Bill Wainwright, Ginny Schrag, Dan Buckler and Rev. John Hickey.

~John Hickey

### **BIBLE STUDY**

Bible Study meets from 4 to 5 p.m. on Wednesdays in the Library. The schedule follows the academic year, with similar vacation breaks. Refreshments are served and members read and discuss the Bible in an informal fashion. One may join at any time in the study and discussion. Contact Deacon Michelle Mooney for further information. Everyone is encouraged to attend for spirited talks!

~Michelle Mooney

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL**

A team of parishioners, the rector, the deacon and the parish administrator spent hours cleaning the closets in the Church School rooms over the summer. We threw away and organized years of materials, saving what was usable and tossing what wasn't. We were able to begin the fall school year with new teachers (on a four-week rotation), a new curriculum and tidy, ready-to-go classrooms for our young students. The new curriculum is story-based, focusing on the most age-appropriate and central of the Bible stories that can capture the imagination of our youngest members through art, reading, video and crafts. They spent the fall learning about some of the patriarchs and matriarchs of the Old Testament and will spend the spring learning some of the parables of Jesus.

We have seen the school grow by two to three students over the course of the year, and we look forward to improved numbers of attendance through 2017. Our nursery is often empty, though we have seen a few babies in the last few months, and we hope that trend also continues into 2017. We are currently

searching for the right Sunday School Superintendent to take over this vital ministry, but until that person is identified, the rector will continue to exercise oversight of curriculum and volunteer management. Over the summer, we added a Bible Story Time during the church services, reading stories from an illustrated bible by Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

~Ian Burch

## **YOUTH CONFIRMATION**

Have you noticed one of our youths busily writing during a sermon at St. Mark's? Despite what it may look like, this young member of our congregation is not trying to get ahead on schoolwork. Rather, she or he is likely to be writing sermon notes, one of the requirements of Confirmation Classes.

Confirmation is the mature affirmation of the baptismal vows. Youth in 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades are currently included in Confirmation Classes at St. Mark's. The Confirmation process takes two years and has multiple elements.

### **Requirements:**

- Attendance at all monthly classes in both years. One absence per year is allowed. Classes meet in the rector's office at St. Mark's.
- Completion of 18 Sermon Notes. While prompting questions may be provided, the notes have to contain the person's response to the sermon including what s/he believes to be the main message.
- Commitment to one ministry at St. Mark's. Ministries may include being an acolyte or lay reader.

### **Areas of focus to date:**

- Jeremiah's Call: Jeremiah responded to God's call by saying he was but a child. God's response was that anyone of any age can be called and all have a mission from God. God goes with all who are called so it is not walking on a path alone.
- Acolyte Training: The term acolyte comes from the Greek work *akolouthos*, meaning "follower" or "attendant." The earliest known mention of acolytes was in the year 251, when Pope Cornelius wrote in a letter that there were 42 acolytes in Rome. St. Mark's acolyte training was carried out by Marian Byers and Jane Shero.
- The Nicene Creed: As noted in the Book of Common Prayer, "*The Creeds are statements of our basic beliefs about God.*" Confirmation students read about the Council of Nicaea in 325. They also learned some of the history related to the Creed's development.

Youth in confirmation classes helped prepare items for St. Mark's Advent season. They show enthusiasm for learning about the Church and the Episcopal traditions. Throughout their two years, the students will enrich the programs at St. Mark's. It is a wonderful addition to St. Mark's to again be offering the confirmation opportunity to young people.

~Jayne Heffron and Ian Burch

## LITURGICAL MINISTRIES

### ACOLYTES

We continue to have a very small but dedicated group of acolytes. We currently have four adults, Cheryl Johnson, Jane Shero, Marian Byers and recently trained acolyte Alex Cain. These four rotate the responsibility of what we call *cruciserving*; this is crucifer and server combined.

Starting in January, Kyle Potter joined the acolyte ranks along with heading up this ministry. If it is within St. Mark's plan to get back to the tradition of having three to four attendants at service, we may need to establish this as a formal goal and potentially include it in our youths' Episcopalian passage (service).

If you know of youth or adults who may be interested in joining this ministry, please contact the church office so we can make sure they get appropriately trained and welcomed enthusiastically to the team!

~Marian Byers

### ALTAR GUILD

The Altar Guild is a ministry which, under the guidance of the rector, helps prepare for our weekly Sunday morning worship services, Advent, Lent and special occasions such as baptisms, weddings and funerals. We prepare the sanctuary for the various services, maintaining the vestments, linens, vessels and candles as well as the supply of wine and wafers.

We work in teams and have the flexibility to meet everyone's needs, usually spending less than an hour each Sunday with preparation and clean up. We enjoy the music of our organist during set up and the camaraderie of St. Mark's Flower Guild and the many parishioners who help make each worship service special.

I want to thank Peter Batchelder, Nikki Domenget, Richard Runkel and Jane Shero for their continued dedication to the Altar Guild and look forward to having more of you involved.

I encourage anyone interested in considering this ministry to talk with me or any other member of our group as you explore ways to become involved in the life of St. Mark's parish or want to try something different.

~Meg Edwards

### CHALICE

The Chalice bearers have added one trained and licensed member to its team of four in 2016 (Frank West). They have served faithfully at all Sunday services and all special services. The ministry is strong, though could use a few more people. If you're interested in being trained and licensed to share the Blood of Christ during the Sunday services, please contact Fr. Ian Burch at [ian@stmarksMilwaukee.com](mailto:ian@stmarksMilwaukee.com) for further information.

~Ian Burch

## **EUCHARISTIC VISITORS**

The Lay Eucharistic Ministry is one that brings communion to those who are shut in or otherwise unable to receive the Eucharist at church. The ministers are sent directly from the Sunday worship service so that those visited are in effect included in our regular services and community. Eucharistic ministers are licensed by the diocese and serve at the pleasure of the rector. Members are appointed by the rector. This ministry is becoming active again now that we have homebound and nursing home parishioners. We do also bring communion occasionally to someone who is hospitalized or home ill.

The Eucharistic Visitors currently licensed to serve are Ellie Moseley, Ron Tunis, Stephanie Dudek, Mark Heffron, Tom and Jane Lacy, and Vince Katter.

~Michelle Mooney

## **FLOWER GUILD**

St. Mark's Flower Guild members obtain and arrange flowers, plants and greens for our services with funds donated by members of the parish wishing to honor or to remember persons or occasions, or in thanks for persons.

Our current members are Jackie Adams, Nikki Domenget, Kathy Katter, Hannah Kiger, Travis Trott, Sandi Tunis and Judy Young. Marie Wolff has begun training. Thanks especially to Georgia Cain who works on special events and holidays and to Bjorn Akerblom, Demetria Cain and Kris Tunis who joined us at Easter and Christmas.

Members are assigned individually on a rotating basis for a specific weekend. Members are responsible for obtaining and arranging the flowers and greens for the two arrangements in church such as we usually see on Sundays. At Easter and Christmas, all members available plus family work together to decorate St. Mark's.

New members are welcome. We provide training, which includes selecting flowers, etc., access to a small library of flower arranging literature, and working together with a current member one or two times before being assigned a Saturday/Sunday of one's own. Please contact us if you would like to be part of our guild.

In 2016 our rector initiated a vase restoration program for our collection of pairs of vases. The plan is to restore one pair per year. The results of the work on the 2016 pair, the tall six-sided brass vases, are impressive. Huge thanks to Ian from the flower people for caring about our vases.

Thanks so much from the Flower Guild for parish members' support for our efforts in 2016. Thanks again to Mary Bellis Williams for her ongoing offer for us to be able to pick flowers from her gorgeous garden on summer weeks without a donor for flowers. We visited Mary's garden several times again in 2016.

~Judy Young

## **LAY READERS**

At Sunday Eucharist and other special occasions, lay readers bring the “word of the Lord” to us by reading the day’s designated Old and New Testament lessons. Our ministry is important for its role in clearly and articulately presenting these texts to the congregation and because in virtue of these readings the laity joins the ordained clergy in bringing the liturgy to life.

The following parishioners participated as lay readers in 2016:

Marj Bjornstad  
Virginia Chappell  
Tom Davies  
Jayne Heffron  
Kathy Katter  
Vince Katter  
Brad Kirschner  
Christine Kuramoto  
Janet Martin  
Marilyn McKnight

Sue Rohde  
Richard Runkel  
Bill Stotts  
Travis Trott  
Ron Tunis  
Sandi Tunis  
Bill Wainwright  
Frank West  
Jamie Zingler

~Kathy Katter

## **MUSIC**

2016 was an unusually exciting year for the Ministry of Music at St. Mark’s. Among the highlights: Work was done on the failing electrical system of the organ console—the part at which the organist sits and from which the keys, pedals, and stops are controlled. The Section Leader Program of the choir was initiated and since which time, in less than half a year, the choir has doubled in size! Also, the choir room floor was retiled.

I. One of the most notable events of 2016 was the much needed and long talked about repair of the electrical system of the Austin Pipe Organ console. You may remember that during a previous period of renovation, some 25 years ago, the electrical system of the console—including the combination action and the relay system—had been poorly repaired and the wiring within the console had been left in a spaghetti-like mass, which subsequently caused frequent erratic performance of the stop selection apparatus—for example, among many other such oddities, the Swell trumpet would suddenly play when only flutes were engaged. (Interestingly, on the other hand, the re-leathering of the organ chests, undertaken at about the same time, again 25 or so years ago, was accomplished competently and with excellent craftsmanship.)

Last spring, then, the Vestry approved the repairs and, after a competitive bidding process, contracted Berghaus Pipe Organ Builders, an organ building and refurbishing firm in the Chicago suburbs, to perform the work. In the first week of June, technicians from that firm began the job and finished in the first week of July. The whole project took about a month. The problems that had plagued the organ since 2002 were gone, and the anxiety which I had experienced almost every Sunday, not knowing what crazy thing the organ might decide to do, was replaced by equanimity and peace.

This was, indeed, a great event for the music ministry at St. Mark's.

**II.** Meanwhile, the Ministry of Music at St. Mark's continues to be unusually active and various for a church of our size, and, of course, thanks for much of this activity goes to the **Artist in Residence Program** (now in its 13th year). Sadly, this year, Mark Niehaus, Artist in Residence, Trumpet at St. Mark's and former principle trumpet of the Milwaukee Symphony retired—almost completely—from playing trumpet. He had become the Executive Director of the MSO the year before; his new responsibilities made it difficult to maintain his desired level of practice; and he asked to resign his St. Mark's Artist in Residency, a residency of more than 15 years here! At this time, therefore, let me express publicly our deep thanks for Mark's long and excellent music contributions to our Communion Services. The heights of praise to which we were inspired by the splendor of his playing will not be soon forgotten. And although Mark Niehaus is no longer at our church, we have begun working with the new Principal Trumpet of the MSO, Matt Earnst, who played last fall on the Feast of All Saints' and who is contracted for Easter Sunday 2017.

At this time the number of Artists in Residence stands at six: Mike Keegan, Artist in Residence, Horn; Evan Taucher, who began residency last fall, Artist in Residence, Classical Guitar; Steve Rohde, Composer in Residence and Organist in Residence; Bob Estlund, Artist in Residence, Flute; Aaron Zauner, Artist in Residence, Cello; and finally, Todd Domenget, Artist in Residence, Bass, whose musical contributions are, as always, significant and extensive. These musicians have all wonderfully enriched the liturgies of St. Mark's in the last year and during their tenures, and we have been enormously blessed with such great talent and in such quantity. I am fortunate and honored to work with and to accompany these outstanding musicians, and the congregation wishes to deeply thank our artists for their beautiful contributions to the liturgical life of St. Mark's. [Please note, however, that is not unusual for Artists in Residence to come and go. Every two years, for example, the graduate student Artists in Residence tend to move on to doctoral programs or to other cities for jobs and greater financial opportunities. And since the AIR program at St. Mark's includes no financial component (although it is wholesomely beneficial to both parties), paying jobs and gigs tend, on occasion, to draw our artists in other directions. For that matter, Artist in Residence Programs in general tend to have a cyclical rhythm.]

**III.** Also in 2016, our choir took a great step forward. With the establishment of the Section Leader Program, made possible by a significant contribution from an anonymous donor, and a grant which our pastor was able to acquire, a foundation for excellence was quickly established during the first months of the choir season, and subsequently, in addition to two paid Section Leaders, other members of the parish joined: Joe and Kelly Glosstott, Brian Miracle and Sarah Melstrom, and Christine Kuramoto. The choir has doubled in size since this same time last year. We have 16 regular members. And on Christmas Eve we were 18.

At the same time, we are eager to welcome new members. Do consider joining us. If you are concerned that you don't have the skills to sing in a choir, be not afraid. I can teach you whatever you need to know. (Joining the choir at St. Mark's always includes some free voice lessons from me.)

**IV.** We are in the 11th year of the concert series **Music at St. Mark's**. The Fall Concert involved most of our Artists in Residence and was a celebration of their talents and their contributions to the life of our parish. The concert was a success with around 15 attendees. Look for announcements about our Spring

Concert. Performers and program to be announced soon!

**V.** The choir room floor has been retiled, but finishing work was temporarily halted during the busy-ness of Advent and Christmas. What is left is merely to apply final coats of sealant and to set the room in order. Of course, thanks again to all those who generously helped in that endeavor. Special thanks to Alex Cain, the project leader for that good work.

**VI.** Finally, let me thank sincerely all those who have contributed to the Liturgy and Music program at St. Mark's. First thanks go to the choir members who have worked so hard and so well to provide edifying and moving music at the 9:30 service Sunday after Sunday. You are profoundly appreciated by everyone at St. Mark's! And thanks to our section leaders, Julianne Frey and Elizabeth Smith. Thanks to Alex Cain, Anna Katter, and Kris Tunis, who joined the choir for Christmas, to the many musicians who contributed the gift of music at Eucharist or other events, and to all who made suggestions or comments of appreciation or well-meant criticism. Thanks, particularly, to Todd Domenget who is so generously ready to play his string bass at any time and who contributes so much to setting a joyful tone to the services. Thanks to Terry Smirl, percussionist for the Percussion Passion on Palm Sunday, a tradition now in its thirteenth year. Thanks to Matt Ernst, trumpeter on the feast of All Saints' and to Louis Menchaka, trumpeter on Christmas Eve. Thanks to Ian Burch for his violin music on Christmas Day and thanks, most of all, to Ian, for his wise leadership, his understanding and appreciation of the enormous consequence of music to lead hearts to God, and to Ian again for his joyfulness and capacity for work and his ability to simply get things done!

~ Steve Wolff

## **USHERS**

Ushers are our parish's front line for newcomers who come through our beautiful red doors. They also offer a welcoming greeting to those who have been part of St. Mark's for decades. Our service is a privilege. Five teams rotate to serve weekly and for special services, always being present in the nave to welcome all, hand out bulletins, guide newcomers to their seats, collect offerings, call Sunday school children to join their families, help all to the communion rail and clean up the nave as people leave for coffee. It is a noble calling that is pleased to welcome new members into its ranks. To that end, we were pleased to welcome the Cain family, Marilyn McKnight, Christine Kuramoto and David Miyama to the ushering team this year, replacing Don Green, Kris Kreuziger and Bill Wainwright who were unable to continue to serve.

St. Mark's parishioners who served in 2016 were Sandy Boltz, Steve Butcher, the Cain family, Virginia Chappell, Barbara Costanzo, Mark Heffron, Bill Hunt, Christine Kuramoto, Janet Martin, Steve Martinie, Marilyn McKnight, Ellie Mixter-Keller, David Miyama, Harry Moseley, Mary Ross, and Jamie & Ron Zingler.

I encourage all those who may be interested in being a regular or alternate usher to contact me about the service of the ushers. Ushering involves becoming part of a four-person team assigned to a five-week rotation. On the job training is offered as you become part of a key part of St. Mark's hospitality to new and long standing parishioners.

~Harry Moseley

## LIVING BEYOND THESE WALLS

### COMMON GROUND

Common Ground is an organization of 51 congregations, neighborhood groups, non-profits, schools and small businesses. Members live in the four counties in Southeastern Wisconsin. We have about 50,000 members in all our groups combined.

We believe that people working together have the power to change their communities and their country for the better. Too many people don't realize that they have the potential to join together and create change in their neighborhoods and beyond.

The best example of this is the Milwaukee Rising project, which has brought together government, banks, housing developers, and neighborhoods, all working in concert to acquire foreclosed houses and renovate them. Plans are underway to complete 100 houses in the Sherman Park neighborhood.

We are now in the midst of a new initiative titled, Neighborhoods Now, which is seeking to gain \$80 million in capital investments from the City of Milwaukee to do much needed revitalization work.

If you would like to become active in the St. Mark's chapter of Common Ground, contact Deacon Michelle Mooney, Janet Martin, Jennifer O'Hear or Harry Moseley for meeting times of our Core Group, and to hear more about the Common Ground projects that are currently underway in neighborhood development, school reform, and a medical insurance cooperative for small businesses and individuals. We held very successful Friends of Common Ground this year. Over \$9,500 was raised from 27 parishioners.

~Michelle Mooney

### OUTREACH MINISTRY

In 2016 the parish, through initiatives of the Outreach Committee raised a total of \$10,237 from the Flower Sale, Corn Roast and Pumpkin Sale. In addition, \$1,165 was received from an endowment. At its November meeting, your Outreach committee decided to support Common Ground, East Side Senior Services, The Gathering, Haiti Project scholarships, Meta House, Hunger Task Force and Sojourner Family Peace Center with gifts totaling \$9,300. There are other agencies whom we have supported in the past that may receive gifts in 2017 from uncommitted funds. We are grateful for the leadership efforts of Ellie Mixter-Keller and Ron Zingler in the fund-raising projects.

We acknowledge that many in our parish (youth and adult) provide additional financial support not enumerated above and volunteer time to many agencies that is not recognized here. For example, in a separate initiative, members of St. Mark's committed financial support for Common Ground totaling \$9,532 and are actively engaged in many of its projects including improving housing, making streets safer by encouraging governmental units to purchase service weapons with safety features and building stronger family units by facilitating intergenerational dialogue in all areas of our cities and towns.

The Outreach Committee believes strongly that those agencies that are supported financially also need to have St. Mark's parishioner engagement. For example, many parishioners have cooked and served at The Gathering and actively deliver services to clients of East Side Senior Services. We encourage all

parishioners to join us in serving our neighbors in need by volunteering and helping others, perhaps for one or more of those we currently support financially.

In addition, we began considering discussions with Habitat for Humanity to undertake a project that could involve parishioners in building or restoring housing in Milwaukee. We also agreed to explore with Lutheran Social Services the possibility of helping resettle refugees. Both projects would likely require funding and certainly need volunteers from the St. Mark's community to support them.

Finally, your Outreach Committee is interested in receiving input on agencies that parishioners are involved with or know of which might be supported (with funding or volunteer hours) in the future. Please contact me or members of the Outreach Committee with your thoughts along with rationale. In all that we do, we are guided by the Outreach Ministry Mission Statement, a portion of which is: St. Mark's seeks to reach beyond its walls to bear active witness to the peace and promise of Jesus Christ. We work to transform lives and bring healing to the community and the world by focusing on the following issues:

- fighting poverty, racism and economic inequality;
- providing food and shelter to people in need;
- promoting education, jobs and affordable health care for poor and marginalized people; and
- caring for elderly people, people who have mental illnesses or addictions; and people who are victims of violence.

~Harry Moseley

### **THRIFT SHOP**

The economy may have rebounded, but the Thrift Shop is still earning less than it did before 2007. However, our regular customers still come in and we have managed due to our savings to meet our monthly pledge of \$300 to St. Mark's. The Treasurer's Report by Jan Rhodes, below, will give the details.

Many thanks are due to the treasurer and our other shop volunteers who gave their time and efforts to staff the shop: seasoned volunteers Marian Byers, Michelle Mooney, Ellie Moseley, Ivon Steffen, and Jamie Zingler; and our new volunteers in 2016, Georgia Cain and Isabel St. Arnold. Molly Canary has taken a leave from assisting as she is currently in a wheelchair.

We always welcome new volunteers to help in the shop. The only requirements are the ability to make change, unpack donations, put clothing on hangers, and place items on shelves. You would participate in a real ministry, as many of our customers' incomes limit them to shopping at thrift shops or Good Will stores. Additionally, for some of our lonely elderly customers, the shop staffers are an important part of their social system.

~Sue Rohde

### **THRIFT SHOP TREASURER'S REPORT**

The Thrift Shop ended the year with a small surplus in 2016. The Thrift Shop earned \$3,700 and paid its pledge of \$3,600 to the church in full. As of December 31, 2016, the Thrift Shop had a net balance of \$2,420 in its checking account.

The Thrift Shop's monthly pledge to St. Mark's in 2016 was \$300 per month. The 2016 monthly pledge amount was lower than in recent years because the Shop's revenues have been declining every year since 2011. In 2014 and 2015, the Shop had to dip into its surplus to pay its pledge of \$350 per month. For 2016, the Shop reduced its monthly pledge in order to avoid drawing down on its surplus. The Shop maintains a surplus for urgent needs.

~Jan Rhodes, Thrift Shop Treasurer

#### **RIVERWEST FOOD PANTRY**

For several years, St. Mark's has supported this food pantry with donations of non-perishable foods and other household personal hygiene items that are weekly brought to the altar by the ushers at the offertory. In 2016, a total of about 500 pounds of food along with personal items and empty egg cartons were brought to our church services and brought forth as offerings to God along with our tithes and offerings. We continue to work with Samantha Vosters and Vincent Noth, leaders of the food pantry, who alert us of the changing needs of the Riverwest-Harambee neighborhood and how our weekly food offerings are distributed from two sites, St. Casimir Church and Gaenslen School. Notices appear regularly in the Sunday bulletin as to those items that are especially needed. Bill Stotts and Harry Moseley regularly take the collected food to the pantry. Those interested in getting involved as volunteers can contact the food pantry for information at [www.riverwestfoodpantry.org](http://www.riverwestfoodpantry.org).

~Harry Moseley

## COMMUNITY LIFE

### ART GALLERY

St. Mark's Art Gallery features revolving art exhibits that change every two months. The five shows we had this year had many beautiful and unique art work.

In January, Skrauss, St. Mark's sexton, exhibited colorful, captured, and dynamic comic renditions.

In May, the colorful paintings by Ruth Vonderberg, and the intricate wood burnings of nature by Ken Vonderberg graced our gallery walls.

In July, Suzanne Garr exhibited colorful, candid photographs she had taken in many countries all over the world.

In September, Ann Powell, Mara Pozorski, Daniel Stauff, and Bridget Wolf exhibited intriguing paintings of *Images of Wisconsin*.

To bring the year to a close, in November, a group of artists known as *The Fine Art Montage* showed paintings varied style, media, and subject matter

The Gallery charges a one-time fee for use of the Parish Hall and the gallery and takes a 10% commission on all sales. Steve Wolff and Todd Domenget have provided music for some of the artist's receptions. Opening exhibitions are published in our church website, *Lion* and service bulletin.

It is an honor and joy for us to continue to develop the Gallery and interact with artists and St. Mark's members who have given us such great support. Thank you all.

~Todd and Nikki Domenget

### COFFEE HOUR

Mid-year, I took the coffee hour reins from Jane Sher. She devoted many years heading up this ministry. Thanks for your dedication Jane.

St. Mark's parishioners and guests enjoyed fellowship and tasty treats in record numbers on Sundays throughout 2016. This weekly get-together is a wonderful way to stay connected with longtime friends as well as to meet newcomers. We thank the Coffee Hour hosts who volunteered both food and time to make this happen!

Sign-up lists are in the Parish Hall (next to the Library door) and online ([signupgenius.com](http://signupgenius.com)). We ask all members of St. Mark's to consider hosting, or help host, a coffee hour in 2017. You don't have to do it alone; we can help out or find a "seasoned" host to work with you.

Thanks for joining in. See you at Coffee Hour!

~Jamie Zingler

## **COMMUNITY GARDENS**

The community gardens on the church's green space have had another very successful year. A record number of church and community members produced a bounty of fruits and vegetables. Plots are available to members for a nominal fee each spring for the summer growing season.

Contact Michelle Mooney if you have an interest in a plot for the 2017 season. Notices in *The Lion* and the church bulletins will go out in April and May with the sign-up times. Parish member requests are filled from our waiting list before those of community members.

~Michelle Mooney

## **GARDEN GUILD**

We had a great time in St. Mark's gardens in 2016, and did a lot of hard work, too!

Many thanks to Michelle Mooney, Meg Edwards, Judy Young, Ginny Schrag, Mark and Jayne Heffron, Jamie and Ron Zingler, and Marilyn McKnight. And thanks to all of you who contributed money which paid for some major garden renovations. We planted four trees, several dozen perennials, reconfigured two garden beds on Hackett and Bellevue, and planted the containers around the church.

In 2017, I have plans for reworking the garden around the St. Mark's sign and for making all our entrance gardens look their best. All are welcome, so get in touch if you are interested or want more info. You can email me at [janeshero@yahoo.com](mailto:janeshero@yahoo.com), or catch me during coffee hour. We meet Tuesdays evenings at 6 p.m. starting about mid-May.

~Jane Shero

## **MEN'S FELLOWSHIP GROUP**

The Men's Fellowship Group meets the third Saturday of every month at St. Mark's for breakfast. We share in fellowship and breakfast with an average attendance of about a dozen people. This group is not limited to men only, and we invite anyone engaged in early setup or additional events to join us. We have plenty to share in both breakfast and fellowship.

Our group supports the parish life in many ways. We are asked by the Building and Grounds Committee to organize the spring and fall work days. We assist with many church activities including the setup of the Annual Flower Sale, the Summer Bike races, Pancake Breakfast, and Christmas tree setup and greening of St. Mark's.

We also support each other through our Annual Retreat, which in 2016 was held at Harry Moseley's cottage named "The Knob" on the first weekend of June. Our retreat weekend includes spiritual reflection, prayer, and ends with a worship service on Sunday. This is a spiritual weekend during which we also find time to relax with refreshment and fellowship. We are looking forward to the 2017 retreat and we welcome all men to join us.

Several of the men have supported our clergy with a prayer ministry. We support Father Burch with Sunday morning prayer. We normally pray with our clergy before Sunday's worship service and invite anyone who would like to join us. I would like to thank the following dedicated prayer ministers who have continued this ministry along with me since the early 1990s: John Cain, Ron Tunis, and Vince Katter.

~Frank West

### **PASTORAL CARE MINISTRY**

The Lay Pastoral Care Ministry is made up of individuals who contact and visit parishioners who need a bit of extra support at any given time. Members of this ministry are chosen by the rector and deacon of the parish. Members meet bi-monthly under the supervision of the deacon, Michelle Mooney. Their ministry may take the form of meeting with the parishioner or writing notes of encouragement. Members of this ministry include Janet Martin, Ellie Moseley, Sue Rhode, Mark Heffron and Vince Katter.

~Michelle Mooney

### **PRAYER TEAM**

The following people are members of the Prayer Team: Virginia Chappell, Todd Domenget, Barbara Franczyk, Janet Martin, Ellie Moseley, David Platcow, Norman Reynolds, Mary Ross, Virginia Schrag, Skrauss, Sandi Tunis, Frank West, Mary Bellis Williams, Stephen Wolff, and me, Sue Rohde. Our task is to serve your prayer needs.

The team members offer intercessory prayers on a daily basis for anyone who wishes prayer, which includes those who are ill, either temporarily or chronically; having medical tests; facing surgery; in the hospital; and in the process of dying. These people are generally members of St. Mark's and their friends, co-workers, and relatives; but no request is turned away.

We'd also like to pray for joyful occasions such as weddings, anniversaries, and births, but those requests come less often. As St. Paul reminded us to give thanks in all circumstances, please let us know about the happy events as well as the ones that cause serious concern.

~Sue Rohde

### **QUILTING CIRCLE**

Quilting Circle is a group for people who enjoy exercising their creativity in a supportive social setting. Members bring their own projects to work on (sewing, knitting, beading, painting, scrapbooking, etc.) Some of the group members also make baby quilts to present to the newly baptized babies at St. Mark's. If the newly baptized person is not an infant, age-appropriate gifts are made, such as a pillow or bookmark.

We meet at 9:30 a.m. on the third Saturday of the month in the Parish Hall. Current members include Jane Shero, Barb Franczyk, Kris Kreuziger, Sandi Tunis, Jamie Zingler, and Michelle Mooney. New members are always welcome to join.

~Michelle Mooney

## **SHEPHERDS MINISTRY**

The mission of the Shepherds Ministry is to visit with new members to the parish so that we can better know them and their expectations. We also seek to acquaint them with the many programs and opportunities that St. Mark's offers.

Present Shepherds include Brooke Frizzell, Kyle Potter, Janet Martin, Ellie and Harry Moseley, Vince Katter, Jamie Zingler, and Jayne Heffron.

Anyone interested in this ministry is encouraged to contact Deacon Michelle Mooney for more information. Requirements are an interest in getting to know new parishioners, and helping them feel welcome. We would specially love to have some younger members join this ministry.

~Michelle Mooney

## **WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP**

The Women's Book Group had another successful year, ending the year with 18 members. We read a variety of books, both fiction and nonfiction. We had some great discussions but also had a lot of fun. The following is the list of books we read in 2016.

*Someone* by Alice McDermott

*The Heart of a Woman* by Maya Angelou

*My Brilliant Friend* by Elena Ferrante

*Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson

*The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry* by Gabrielle Zevin

*Elizabeth and Hazel: Two Women of Little Rock* by David Margolick

*The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak

*The Little Paris Book Shop* by Nina George

*Our Souls at Night* by Kent Haruf

~Ellie Moseley

## **THEOLOGY PUB**

Theology Pub started about two years ago and has since met every second Tuesday of the month at Paddy's Pub on Milwaukee's east side for delightful discussion in a casual atmosphere. Events like this have sprung up around the country and they offer great opportunities to discuss myriad topics informally. The premise is simple: gather together, grab a drink and chat. Theology Pub is open to all, whether you are "religious" or not, as long as you are respectful to your fellow explorers of existence. Every meeting also features great food from local restaurants.

Attendance has averaged 8-14 people at each Theology Pub. We hope that you all come out for a drink and a conversation.

~Dan Buckler

**ADMINISTRATIVE**  
**BUILDING AND GROUNDS**

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Unanticipated building expenses pushed Minor Repair/Maintenance costs to 213% of budget. Repair and Maintenance projects for the year included:

- **Trees** encroaching on east side of building removed and chipped for covering “dog run.”
- Non-functioning **emergency lights** repaired/replaced.
- Completed **insurance audit** on property.
- Apartment & Kitchen **Plumbing**—Various leaks and grease trap issues addressed. Expensive repair of commercial dishwasher completed. Non-functioning (and leaking) drinking fountain outside rector’s office removed. Leaking toilet in basement restroom shut off due to cost to repair; could be brought back on line at a later date.
- **Boiler** maintenance—In addition to routine start-up costs, two igniters required replacement.
- Lawn and Garden **Equipment**—New lawn mower purchased and annual maintenance on snow blower completed.
- **Signage**—New way-finding signs installed. Gold lettering on doors redone.
- **Lighting**—Additional/upgraded security lighting installed at parking lot entrances. Energy saving CFL lamps installed in sanctuary pendant light fixtures; spotlights on high altar retrofitted with LED lamps and re-aimed.
- **Flooring**—New vinyl floor tiles installed in music rehearsal room. Parish Hall parquet floor extensively repaired to help eliminate buckling in humid weather. Several broken floor tiles in kitchen replaced with “found” asphalt tiles.
- **Accessibility** – East door from parking lot converted to ADA compliant entrance with touch activated door hardware and appropriate signage installed. (Financed by special grant.)
- **Security**—Improved motion sensitive flood lights installed at parking lot entrances.
- **Garage Door**—Door and opener motor repaired.
- **Appearance**—Parking lot entrance doors upgraded with new decorative moldings and fresh paint. Large holes in ceiling and walls of first floor restrooms patched and painted.
- **Lintels**—Extensive, expensive repair deferred. Less costly repair technique to be tested later this year.

Thanks to the many **generous volunteers** who shared their time and expertise to help significantly defray maintenance and repair expenses.

~ Ron Tunis

### **STEWARDSHIP**

The 2017 Stewardship drive, **Open Doors + Giving Hearts**, kicked off on October 9 with a special coffee hour, and concluded on November 20 with a champagne celebration.

The committee began working in September, first selecting a theme and creating materials to promote the campaign, as well as establishing goals for the campaign. Committee members were Ashley Luthern, Bill Stotts, Cheryl Johnson, Dan Buckler, Georgia Cain, Ian Burch, Meg Edwards, Travis Trott, and Vince Katter. Throughout the campaign, there were updates in the bulletin as well as the November *Lion* and through table tents at coffee hour. All committee members made phone calls on November 3, either a reminder of the November 20 deadline or a thank you to those who had already pledged.

In addition, each week during the service, members spoke about what St. Mark's means to them. Presentations were made by Dan Buckler, Christine Kuramoto, John Cain, Jamie Zingler, Vince and Kathy Katter, Marcus Lacy, and Bill Wainwright.

2017 Campaign goals included 62 pledges for a total amount of \$225,000. **Results exceeded this goal with 72 pledges (including 15 new pledgers) for a total amount of \$231,134.**

A big thank you to the ministry minute presenters and to the committee members!

~ Sandi Tunis