

**ST. MARK'S  
EPISCOPAL  
CHURCH  
ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2023**



2618 N Hackett Ave  
Milwaukee Wisconsin 53211

# Annual Report 2023

<b>Rector's Report</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Senior Warden's Report</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Formation Programs</b>	<b>10</b>
Adult Formation	10
Bible Study	11
Campus Ministry	11
Children's Ministry	13
Youth Ministry	15
<b>Liturgical Programs</b>	<b>15</b>
Acolytes	15
Altar Guild	16
Be Still	16
Eucharistic Visitors	17
Flower Guild	17
Lay Readers	18
Morning Prayer	19
Ushers	19
<b>Community Mission</b>	<b>20</b>
Common Ground	20
Community Partners/Outreach	21
Giving Garden	23
<b>Community Life</b>	<b>24</b>
20s/30s Group	24
Archives	25
Coffee Hour	25
Cooking Crew	25
Fellowship Group	26
Garden Guild	27
Pastoral Concerns	28
Prayer Team	28
Quilting Circle	28
Shepherd Ministry	29
Thursday Night Book Club	29
Women's Book Group	30
<b>Administrative Programs</b>	<b>31</b>
Building and Building Maintenance	31
Building Capital Campaign Committee	34
Stewardship	35

# St. Mark's Episcopal Church 2023 AT-A-GLANCE

4

Baptisms

3

Weddings

8

Members  
confirmed or  
received into  
The Episcopal  
Church

\*Due to the bishop's  
schedule, these were held  
at other parishes in the  
diocese.

\$1,245,385

Pledged dollars to the  
building capital campaign

99

Pledging units  
to 2024  
operating  
expenses.

123 → 132

2022 Average  
Weekly Attendance

2023 Average  
Weekly Attendance

1

Funeral

10

Church-coordinated  
volunteer  
opportunities

# Rector's Report

January 23, 2024

My friends in Christ, it has been another full year of ministry, fellowship, laughs, and worship at St. Mark's. This month concludes our 8th year of ministry with one another as priest and people, and I'd like to take this opportunity to reflect on some of the wonderful things I see—especially from the last year—and some places where I think we might renew our focus.

## **Staff**

Our staffing has had a tumultuous several months. We bid farewell to Michael Batcho at the organ bench, who is much missed by parishioners and choir alike. And we also said goodbye to Fr. George Arceneaux, a beloved priest who was with us as our associate for two years. Both of these men, in their short tenures, made massive positive impacts on our shared life, and I felt their absence this fall acutely. While we have brought in part-time support for some of their areas of responsibility, the programming this fall has felt more slapdash to me than in years past. I think we have some opportunities for improvement as we continue to keep our laser focus on the welcome of newcomers and the creation of a warm space for those seeking a closer relationship with God and this community.

We also said goodbye to our in-house bookkeeper, and I have heard almost universally good things about our move to a third-party biller. And you'll notice that we no longer have an in-house housekeeper nor do we have an in-house sexton. Additionally, our long-time deacon Michelle Mooney has retired. All of these changes have created large logistical difficulties that may not be apparent on a Sunday morning but are certainly felt among the staff, clergy, and senior leadership. While I very much hope that our new parish hall will be shelled out by the end of summer, we are still in a transitional space that makes it a bit difficult to know what we will actually need staffing-wise for when the building is complete. So, for now, we continue to address physical plant, cleaning, locking/unlocking, snow removal, minor repair, and space usage issues with a much-reduced staff, which has put more pressure on wardens, ushers, clergy, and Sara. Again, I believe these pressures are temporary in nature, but they certainly exist and have added a layer of complexity to our community life.

The diocese has hired Nate Irvine to attend to its reimagined 20s/30s ministry—formerly housed exclusively at St. Mark's and now spreading to other parishes on the east side of the diocese. Nate has been a wonderful addition and has made sure to attend services here twice a month, provide support at Marquette and UWM, and to preach occasionally. The 20s/30s ministry continues to be strong at St. Mark's, and you'll see their contributions to leadership in worship, vestry, ushering, Sunday School, priestly discernment etc., etc. In addition, Veronica Zahn has been brought on to coordinate our Sunday School offerings and once-a-month family nights. Between them, they've taken on some of the responsibilities that Fr. George had been attending to.

## **Music**

As I mentioned, Michael Batcho left in October, which of course has been a blow to our music program. Beginning in October, the choir worked with Joe Dominic, who ended up being an imperfect fit, and I accepted his resignation in early January. At the moment, parishioner Kelly Glostott has been playing the organ and working with the choir as a long-term substitute, and the new vestry is looking to assemble a music task force of vestry, parishioners, as well as choir members to put together a plan for the next months/years of music at St. Mark's. Our music is one of the things that makes us distinctive, and I believe it is one of the engines of our welcome, and I'm glad a group of leaders is interested in figuring out what will be best going forward. In addition to a music director, this task force will take a good look at our organ which is, ahem, 100+ years old. While we are between directors, some of the roles of a director have fallen to the rector—payroll, filling cantor vacancies, some service music and hymn selection.

## **Expanding Welcome**

I have seen a few signs of a trend that worries me a little in the last year. It's been my experience that when a church has a time of stress, its instinct is to contract, when, usually, the better choice for growth is to expand. I have noticed that our reduced staff has made some of our offerings less frequent than they have been in the past. We have had fewer newcomers welcome nights, and we have canceled adult education more than in years past. Our high school offerings have been virtually nonexistent, and we have not offered a confirmation class in several years. In addition, I have noticed that a huge amount of our leadership time has been spent on money and on physical plant/capital campaign and new building. This is all absolutely understandable—these are complex issues that need thought through. My concern, though, is that, even in the midst of handling big issues of money and our physical plant, we stay connected to the reason that we are going through this process in the first place: welcome of the stranger into the community. Our core reason for existing is to love others as we have been loved first, and during this season, this requires a lot of spreadsheets and hard hats. I urge us—as I urge myself, who needs to hear this reminder as much as anyone—to remember that our primary purpose hasn't changed since our founding in 1893.

## **Discernment**

St. Mark's has been unusually blessed with people seeking discernment for holy orders. Currently, we have Caroline Redick and Ethan Vander Leek in parish discernment, Matt Phillips and Nathan Self at the end of their diocesan discernment (as well as seminary) and the Rev. Hunter Farrow, recently ordained to the transitional diaconate. In addition, two members have come to me to request discernment committees. Because so many of our parishioners are serving already on discernment committees, the Commission on Ministry chair suggested that we "farm out" some of our discerners to different parishes, so I expect that a discernment committee will be forming at St. Paul's and another at St. Luke's to accommodate people from our parish who are looking to do that work. In my opinion, this flurry of discernment has been a direct result of years of pointed investment in campus and youth ministry. It takes awhile for these things to pay off, but we spent our first tranche of grant money seven years ago to bring on a lay campus minister, and I believe these are the fruits of that labor. In addition to discernment for holy orders, Bill Florescu did some discernment and eventually decided to make

public vows in an ecumenical lay Franciscan order, and it's my hope that we will see more people deciding to move deeper into their faith in similar ways.

### **Study**

I've completed all my interviews for my doctoral thesis, and I have turned in a first draft to my advisor at The General Theological Seminary in New York City. If I am able to complete the revisions and defend, then I will graduate in May. I'm researching and writing about what it is that makes St. Mark's a place of growth while most of the Episcopal church is in decline.

### **Worship**

Our worship attendance has increased this year, and we have added a new, monthly contemplative service, which has been routinely serving between 15 and 25 people. Be Still was created by Sara, Michael Batcho and me last summer, and the Glostotts, Heather and Heidi Barker, Carolyn Theodorah, and I have all been providing leadership for this simple service. Interestingly, Be Still is bringing in neighborhood faces in a way that our Sunday morning services do not, so I'll be curious if that trend continues and whether it means anything for future possible directions in our worship planning. Things I've noticed that might be of interest is that our 8 a.m. service is routinely serving 12-15 people, which is really wonderful, and our 9 a.m. Morning Prayer service over Zoom continues into its 4th year. Interestingly, our Christmas late service has been declining in attendance for several years now, with the majority of Christmas worshippers preferring the 4 p.m. service or the 10 a.m. service on Christmas morning, and our Easter Vigil, now just two years old, has increased in attendance in a way that makes me think the Vigil is a felt need in the church and that the old Christmas Midnight Mass is declining in its resonance for families.

We have had between one and three people signing in for our Sunday morning service over Zoom, and the feedback has been that the online experience is better but still fairly mediocre compared to some other places. Our new microphone system has helped with the sound online, but at the end of the day, we turn on a cheap tablet and hope for the best.

Some folks noticed (and some didn't!) that we used an approved expansive language version of the Book of Common Prayer Rite II Eucharist for a good portion of the year. In it, words like Lord are typically taken out in favor of less gendered Savior, and the Nicene Creed lacks a few words that bring us into a better ecumenical alliance with our Eastern Orthodox brothers and sisters. Our worship life is fairly eclectic, and so you'll notice throughout the year that we are constantly changing from one kind of approved set of prayers to another, and I anticipate that we will keep this tradition up in 2024.

I could still use one or two more chalice bearers, and the acolyte corps could use one or two more people along with a possible trainer/coordinator.

### **Strategy**

As I mentioned above, a lot of the work at the leadership level has coalesced around finances and the physical plant. It is my hope that our leadership in this next phase of our shared lives

can start looking seriously at what the next few years will look like vis à vis our culture and our mission. Our parish has experienced great growth in the last eight years, which comes with its own set of dilemmas. How do we continue to be a machine of welcome? How do we maintain intimate relationships inside the parish when there are more people coming in and out of our orbit? How do we continue having strong friendships when attendance patterns in the US are changing rapidly—people tend to attend 1-2 times a month rather than 2-3 times a month. Our friendship dinners over the summer and fall were one way that we sought to address the church's need for continuing to form community and friendship even in a bigger organization. Additionally, I think that issues of style will likely rise over the next several years as our percentage of people who have been Episcopalians their whole lives dwindles and the overwhelming majority of new members are coming from other traditions. What parts of the Episcopal identity are deeply held and what parts are less so? I think these are big questions for leadership in the year to come.

### **One Room Schoolhouse**

With the taking down of the old 1949 building, we found ourselves going from multiple Sunday School classrooms to one. So, we decided instead of fighting that, we'd make it a strength and create a one-room school house approach to Sunday School. We applied for and received a \$5,000 grant, and you'll see all the great work that Veronica Zahn (and Matt!) has been putting into the chapel space to make it good for parents and kids.

### **Worship Space Transition**

The coffee hour in the back of the church has been working well—even during large weddings, funerals, and Christmas Eve services. A special thank you to Marilyn Hamilton who has been keeping coffee hour going strong even in our reduced space. And a big thank you to the altar guild, flower guild, and fellowship breakfast folks who have all made a point to keep our worship space reverent and beautiful while also making sure that we have a good space for fellowship. I long for a time when we have a larger fellowship space again, but for now, I'm deeply grateful for everyone who has made this space work so well.

### **Leadership Needs**

I've been really impressed with some of the leadership that has arisen in the last year—from the vestry to the capital campaign committee to worship and preaching leadership to kids' education and financial leadership. There is an embarrassment of wonderful leaders in our church, and your willingness to tend to this place that we all love is inspiring. Even so, in this age of a lean staff, I believe there are a few places that require new leadership, and I would ask that you think and pray about whether any of these might be places where you can exercise your gifts.

### *Junior Warden*

While I am absolutely delighted at the slate of new vestry members coming on board, and I'm so grateful that Vince Katter has agreed to run for Sr. Warden, we do find ourselves with the Jr. Warden position open. I think it would be an enormous help to Vince (and to me!) to find someone who has good administrative and people skills who would be willing to serve as the Jr. Warden. It is a one-year term, with the possibility of running again for up to three total terms.

*Capital Campaign*

Jane Shero has ably lead us to a dramatic 1.245 million dollars of funds raised, and I want to thank her for her fantastic service. It's now time to go into a different phase of the campaign where we spend the next couple of years closing the gap between what we have and what it will take for a fully-usable building. We are lucky enough to have professional help from a campaign consultant from the Catalyst construction company, but we definitely need a point person on the parish side.

*Flower Guild Leader*

The wonderful Judy Young is looking to step down from flower guild duties and is looking for someone to take her place.

*Community Partners Leader*

Currently, we do not have a point person for the church's Community Partners ministries. Last summer and last fall, Sara and I put together the service opportunities for the whole church, but really, this should be a lay-led job that helps coordinate our benevolent efforts out in the world.

*Common Ground Team Leader*

We do not have a point person for Common Ground, and while there has been excellent turn out from our younger members, we haven't had someone come forward who is willing to take on the task of being a leader for this ministry.

*Acolyte Teacher/Coordinator*

Self explanatory

*Teenage/Confirmation Liaison*

We have a pretty small group of teens, but it would be nice if we had someone planned something, say, quarterly for them.

*Newcomer Coordinator*

Bekki Schmitt and I plus a handful of other folks have been pretty good at putting together newcomers events 2-3 times a year, but it would be good to have someone who was able to keep newcomer needs front and center in our parish.

Friends, thank you for all you have done this year in service of this parish and of the God we worship. Both our outreach to the world and out inreach to the parish have been remarkable, especially given we are in the midst of a once in a generation transition. I still see new faces every week, and that delights me. Keep St. Mark's in your prayers, and here's to an amazing 2024.

In Christ,  
Ian+



# Senior Warden's Report

Dear St. Mark's,

To prepare for this year's report, I first reviewed the report I prepared for you at this time last year. At that time, I asked for you to bring your courage and creativity as we embarked on our transitional period without a parish hall. You answered the call in droves. Coffee hour at the back of the church feels natural. The chapel is doing double duty as both a Sunday School room and an adult education room (not to mention a staging area for this year's charming Christmas pageant). Even without a full kitchen, the capital campaign committee held a lovely fundraiser that made use of our beautiful courtyard. Weddings and baptisms have continued, and Family Fun Nights have given our families with young children chances to socialize. I am immensely grateful for all the work that has gone into maintaining and growing our parish, much of which happens behind the scenes—coffee hour volunteers, altar guild, flower guild, and more.

As you may recall, we closed on the sale of the north portion of our land in February 2023. Following demolition (phase 1), the buyer began construction on an apartment building. As you can see, significant progress has been made on that building. The church world, however, moves at a slower pace than the for-profit world. The Vestry voted in September to authorize the construction of the core and shell of the basement (phase 2), and construction began in December 2023. The Vestry voted in December 2023 to authorize the construction of the core and shell of the first floor (phase 3). Construction of this phase will continue seamlessly after the completion of the basement. As the Vestry's recent update explained, completion of phase 3 will give us accessible restrooms, but the space will otherwise not be built out. The church has not been spared by inflation, and rising labor and materials costs have forced us to adjust the scope of construction. We will continue to raise funds in order to complete the interior build-out (phase 4), which will likely happen in chunks.

I am incredibly proud of all the work this congregation has done to raise the funds to make this possible. I want to acknowledge the work the building committee has done with the architect and contractor. I am especially thankful that our Vestry has had the courage to take these steps. It is particularly important that we proceed with getting the exterior walls of the new parish hall built at this time. Our church sits within a city-designated historic district, and all designs must be approved by the city's Historic Preservation Commission. HPC approved a design for our parish hall that has, among other features, a brick façade on the north wall. Once the apartment building and the driveway are completed, installing brick on our north wall becomes incredibly difficult. Proceeding with construction of the core and shell of the first floor, even as we work toward funding the interior build-out, ensures that we can complete the exterior of the building without incurring the costs of new architectural plans or returning to HPC to approve a different design.

When I began as senior warden two years ago, I knew that the building project would require a significant amount of my attention. I am not sure I was prepared for how all-consuming it would be. There were a few other things I had hoped to achieve as senior warden, but my time and energy primarily have been spent on meetings with architects, contractors, and lawyers. I am grateful to the Vestry for hiring our owner's representative, Gina Spang, to serve as a project manager. Her expertise has been invaluable, and I know she will continue to be an asset as we proceed with construction.

I end my time as senior warden humbled by the knowledge of how much work it takes to make a parish like St. Mark's run, grateful for all of those who make it happen, and honored to have been a part of taking these next steps toward our future. I offer my gratitude and prayers for our next Vestry and wardens.

Faithfully,  
Brooke Frizzell

## Formation Programs

### Adult Formation

Making sure that St. Mark's provides regular opportunities for deepening our understanding of the Christian faith is an important part of our holistic ministry. With the loss of the Library in the 1949 building, Adult Education had to be creative this year about meeting space. After Easter, we have met nearly every Sunday after the 10 a.m. service in the chapel, usually hosting between 6 and 12 members. We have had guest teachers teaching on a variety of topics, mainly from the Marquette theology department, the Rev. John Hickey has taught classes, as well as a very popular session on shame by our postulant Hunter Farrow.



For the fall, the class worked through a DVD series on the history of Christian worship that was well received, and an especially large group attended a documentary showing the life of Pauli Murray. For 2024, the ministry could really use some new leadership, with either an adult ed chair or an adult ed committee taking over the scheduling of the classes. If you have a gift for this work and are interested in planning our adult education offerings, contact the rector.

Submitted by Ian Burch

## Bible Study

During 2023, Bible Study was held on Wednesday afternoons from 4-5 p.m., facilitated by Michelle Mooney and John Boyland. The readings were discussed by the group during the meeting time, with no homework or preassigned reading necessary. The group had folks from St. Mark's and some as far away as California with a variety of knowledge of the Bible.

The Zoom Bible study at St. Mark's is in some ways a para-ministry of the church. The scheduling of the study does not happen through the office or the rector, and though many members are from St. Mark's, and it originated many years ago as a ministry of this church, it does not currently have St. Mark's leadership, and we do not actively advertise it or host its Zoom links. With the retirement of the Rev. Michelle Mooney this year (who has been an active co-leader for years), it seems an appropriate time in 2024 to let the Bible Study stand as its own entity and to look for other ways for continued Bible study in other ways at St. Mark's.

Submitted by Michelle Mooney and Ian Burch

## Campus Ministry

The campus ministry at Marquette University—Canterbury Fellowship—only continues to show signs of new growth. The rhythm this past fall was to meet for Evensong three times a week (Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday) in the historic Joan of Arc chapel, and then to meet for weekly fellowship immediately following Evensong on Wednesday evening at the Marquette Annex. This has been the cornerstone of the Fellowship for some time, and it is clear offering the office to close a long day of study is very valued by the 15 of us in the community. We continued our ecumenical partnerships at Marquette, as I presided over the Blessing of the Animals to celebrate the Feast of St. Francis.



Building on a strong foundation, a couple of new opportunities also developed this past semester. First, with the support of the office of Campus Ministry at Marquette, we were able to celebrate the Eucharist on campus for the first time in the Fellowship's history. We have met monthly at the Chapel of the Holy Family, and it has been a very valuable addition to our community. Second, our group was able to offer a field trip to Nashotah House Theological Seminary (the Anglican/Episcopal seminary in Wisconsin). In addition to a tour of the lovely grounds, we attended Evensong and High Mass, and enjoyed a meal with Dean Gar Anderson, Fr. Jason Terhune (Sr. Director of Operations), Deacon Rebecca Terhune (Alumni Associate), and board member the Rev. John McCard.

We closed the year with a lovely Christmas party hosted by St. Mark's parishioners and Marquette residents Ethan and Catherine Vander Leek.

For the spring semester, we will continue to provide Evensong Monday through Wednesday, as well as monthly Eucharist. Additionally, we are participating in the first-ever prayer service for the week of Christianity Unity at Marquette. This is an ecumenical gathering planned by the office of Campus Ministry, ourselves, the Orthodox fellowship, and InterVarsity. Plans are also underway for an ecumenical Ash Wednesday service in February. We are also planning to take a field trip to St. Paul's Episcopal Church for a special Evensong for Candlemas on February 4. I will also offer a Tenebrae service on the Wednesday of Holy Week in Joan of Arc. Last, I plan to focus on setting up one-on-ones with students, as well as gearing up for new ways to engage undergraduates at the start of the Fall 2024 semester. We are indebted to the leadership of Fr. Michael Cover, professor at Marquette, who started the Canterbury Fellowship some years ago and leads this ministry in addition to his responsibilities.



Our strong partnership with the Corner House at UW-Milwaukee continues to solidify and grow as well. The Corner House is the campus ministry of the ELCA and is the only progressive

Christian ministry on campus, and we are proud to continue doing ministry with them. Our goal was to support their weekly worship services monthly wherein I helped to lead worship in some way and provided the meal that followed. We also provided food during the week of finals, providing a place for students to rest and connect during a stressful week. It is so wonderful to have such a solid and beautiful expression of the church to point students and families to on campus.

If you have any questions regarding the ministry or would like to support it in some way, please don't hesitate to reach out. I'd love to talk with you! You can connect with me at [nate@diomil.org](mailto:nate@diomil.org).

Respectfully Submitted,

Nate Irvine  
Young Adult & Campus Minister

## Children's Ministry

I was honored to be hired by Ian to step in on certain children's ministries for the 2023-24 program year.

One of my responsibilities is recruiting and scheduling Sunday School leaders. I come early to the 10 a.m. service to make sure the chapel is tidy, to welcome the leader for that day, and to make sure they are good to go. From September to November (when rehearsal for the Christmas pageant took over), a pool of about four adults have served as Sunday School leaders, and we have been welcoming leaders who haven't done it before.



Ian created a one-sheet with an outline for Sunday School content, including movement, a Bible story, creative time, and reading from *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. I'm sure families are grateful that we can adapt and continue this ministry while our church space is in transition.

In order to make the chapel more welcoming for children, Ian asked me to decorate the space. The theme for the first half of the program year is inspired by “fruits of the spirit” and is an abstract representation of a garden. First I layered in greenery, then signs with “crops” such as respect, love, and forgiveness, and then vines, flowers, and fruits were installed. Feel free to take a peek at how it looks! The second half will be inspired by water-related Bible stories.



I have also been planning monthly Family Fun Nights, held on Tuesday evenings. Thank you to Marilyn Hamilton for sharing the coffee hour resources for these events. Our first one in October was pizza and Halloween activities, attended by one family who enjoyed decorating a trick-or-treat bag and Halloween-themed puzzles.

The November night was tacos/quesadillas and a movie, which was attended by four families; Disney’s animated *The Sword in the Stone* was a big hit with the kids while fellowship was enjoyed at the adults’ table. Though there was interest in December’s Starbucks and Candy Cane Lane, the date may have been a challenge since it was scheduled for the week before Christmas. I’ll keep this in mind when scheduling events in 2024

Meg Boyd led the Christmas pageant, and this was my second year volunteering for that program. An additional three adults helped, and about eighteen children participated, including some that were new this year. I wasn’t able to attend the 4 p.m. Christmas Eve service with the performance, but I heard it was a packed house and the kids did a great job.

We have room for more Sunday School leaders, and I welcome suggestions regarding food/activity ideas for the Family Fun Nights. If you are interested in either of these programs, please email me at [veronica.zahn@gmail.com](mailto:veronica.zahn@gmail.com). Thank you for the opportunity to get more involved at St. Mark’s and to get to know more of my fellow church members! (A special shoutout to my unofficial assistant, my husband Matt Norby!)

Submitted by Veronica Zahn

## Youth Ministry



This fall, the priests of St. Thomas of Canterbury, Christ Church, St. Paul's, Trinity, St. Christopher's, and St. Mark's came together under the leadership of the Rev. Melesa Skoglund to put together monthly opportunities for teens and tweens to gather monthly for fun, fellowship, and a youth-group style experience. We have had between 3 and 5 youth attend, though with the absence of Fr. George, St. Mark's participation as a planning agent has been perfunctory. We are approaching a time when a confirmation course, more robust acolyte training, and steadier participation in the city-wide youth group would be advantageous for our youth, but with our current staffing, that likely won't be the case for 2024. This is an area of opportunity for lay leadership in the future, and if you feel like you have gifts or a passion for this kind of work, kindly contact the rector.

Submitted by Ian Burch

## Liturgical Programs

### Acolytes

Fr. George set up and trained our 2023 acolytes, and then Sara cleverly placed their rota into a SignUp Genius, which means that in many ways the acolyte corps is self-run right now. As always, we could use a few more volunteers to acolyte as well as someone who would be interested in making sure all the children who would like to acolyte are invited to do so as well as trained up in the work. It's a fantastic opportunity for young people to be involved, and at the moment, we have at least five youth acolytes as well as seven adults. A few of our acolytes have also done additional training in chalice bearing, and that's been a big help as the congregation grows coupled with the retirement of Deacon



Michelle. If you're interested in acolyting, working with youth acolytes, or chalice bearing, contact the rector.

Submitted by Ian Burch

## Altar Guild

The Altar Guild is a ministry that serves under the direction of Fr. Burch and our primary role is to prepare the sanctuary for the worship services. This includes maintaining the vestments, linens, vessels, candles, and the supply of communion wine and wafers.

I want to thank our members Peter Batchelder, Marian Byers, Jayne Heffron, and Jane Shero (Michael Weinert, ad hoc) for their commitment and dedication to making the various services run smoothly as well as assisting our visiting clergy. I am especially grateful for their help and collaboration with the Flower Guild by creatively enhancing our worship space and helping set the tone for the seasons of the church to include Lent, Easter, Advent, and Christmas.

We have had an exciting year and along with our usual preparations for the Sunday morning and Wednesday evening services, we were delighted to assist with preparations for four baptisms, three weddings, one Celebrations of Life, and a visit from the Rev. Canon Scott Leannah, canon to the ordinary.

My goal for 2024 is to recruit new members to join the Altar Guild. Please contact Meg Edwards at: [ms\\_edwards@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ms_edwards@sbcglobal.net) if you are interested or would like more information.

On behalf of Altar Guild, we have enjoyed working with our clergy, parish administrator, Flower Guild, and many other parishioners to serve St. Mark's.

Respectfully submitted,  
Meg Edwards

## Be Still

If you come to church on a Sunday morning at the 10 a.m. service, you'll notice newcomers being welcomed, old friends saying hello to one another, the choir warming up, and the clergy out front on the stoop greeting people. What you won't notice is silence. St. Mark's on a Sunday morning is bustling, and, while that's a wonderful thing, it also means that there isn't a lot of space for contemplation, quiet, introversion, and meditation.

One Lent a few years ago, we tried to begin services in silence, and while that was a nice addition for Lent, it wasn't something that seemed like a good fit for the rest of the year. To meet what felt to me like a need in the parish, I worked with Michael Batcho and Sara Bitner, and among the three of us, we cooked up a once-a-month contemplative prayer service that we called Be Still (from Psalm 46). We modeled it after a Taizé service in Chicago that we were aware of, and we launched it at St. Mark's, agreeing to take it through Advent and to see where



it leads. It's been decently attended —between 20-30 people—, and the Glostotts and the Barker sisters have taken a great deal of musical leadership, while Carolynn Theodorah has taken to working with our icons and altar candles to create a meditative experience.



In all, I'm pleased with how it's going, and I see it in the future as an entirely lay-led enterprise. The service also received a \$900 grant from the diocese for icons to create the worship space feel we were envisioning.

Submitted by Ian Burch

## Eucharistic Visitors

Eucharistic Visitors are lay members who take Communion to those who, because of sickness, surgery, or other needs, want Communion wherever they are. This assures that members who can't be in church or strongly feel the need for the Eucharist before a coming event can be served.

It is a beautiful ministry that members can be considered for. Contact Michelle Mooney, for the present, if you are interested.

Submitted by Michelle Mooney

## Flower Guild

Our Flower Guild in 2023 managed to adapt to functioning with the building project and even to have a new member join us. We still have flowers on the altar and the coffee hour tables each week, plus holiday decorations, while sharing our tiny room with the parish. We survived the water being turned off for three weeks by bringing in jugs of water.



Again this year we are grateful to the Fellowship Group for help with Christmas trees, wreaths of all sizes, and for bringing things such as the creche and its figures, from storage. This year for the first time some young members of the parish helped with the trees, too.

We now have six members plus we are truly grateful to Marian Byers for joining us to do Christmas flowers when members were away with their families.

For 2024, we are going to do our best to continue to adapt to circumstances as they arise. We hope a couple of you would like to join us, even if it's not being on our regular schedule. You could work with one of us at some convenient time to see what we do, then join us when you are able. Just contact me, Judy, and we can arrange something.

Flower Guild Members: Kathy Katter, Doris Kiely, Matt Norby, Donna Whittle, Carolynn Theodorah, Judy Young

Submitted by Judy Young

## Lay Readers

At Sunday Eucharist and other special occasions, lay readers read the day's designated Old and New Testament lessons according to The Episcopal Church's Lectionary, which we hold in common with a number of other Christian denominations. Our ministry is to clearly and articulately present these texts to the congregation. By virtue of these readings, the laity joins the ordained clergy in bringing the liturgy to life.

The following parishioners participated as lay readers in 2023:

Lucy Cooper Tom Davies Kathie Eilers	Sean Larsen Michael O'Hear Paul Pasquesi	James Steiner Sarah Marie Streed Maryclaire Torinus
--	--	---

Bill Florescu James Flynt Jayne Heffron Kathy Katter Vince Katter	Kyle Potter Emily Rohde Susan Rohde Bekki Schmitt Linda Steiger	Travis Trott Catherine Vander Leek Graicey Van Spankeren Genevieve Vassell
---	---	---

Submitted by Kathy Katter

## Morning Prayer

Morning Prayer held over Zoom, another holdover from the pandemic, continues Monday through Thursday mornings at 9 a.m. Leaders are the rector, Hunter Farrow, and Ethan Vander Leek. We were a group that also met on Fridays, but over the last three years our attendance has dwindled to 4-6 each morning, and we do not have as many leaders as we once did. Each morning, we pray the morning prayer service in the Book of Common Prayer or the New Zealand Prayer Book; we pray for our church, for the needs of the group, for the sick, and those in any kind of trouble. It's a perfect way to begin the day, and we would warmly invite anyone to join us. In 2024, we may have new members coming from St. Luke, where Hunter, now a deacon, is planning to serve.

Submitted by Ian Burch

## Ushers

Hello! A big thank you to all our volunteer ushers this year!

If you would like a role in our Sunday morning worship service, please consider becoming an usher. It's also a great way for a couple to serve St. Mark's. Ushers greet people, pass out Sunday bulletins, bring the bread and wine to the altar, pass the collection plates, and a few other duties. There is a list of assignments at the back of the church for reference, and we will provide training. Ushers are assigned one Sunday a month. However, if you need to switch Sundays, we are a very flexible team. The ushers help provide a warm atmosphere at St. Mark's and stability during our building project. If you're interested, please speak to Ian or Mary Ross, or call Sara at the office at 414-962-0500.

I would like to thank our volunteers Alex Ballwanz, Sandy Boltz, Marian Byers, Bill Florescu, Bobby Gilbert, John Johnson, Dwight Maynor, Marilyn McKnight, Ellie Mixter-Keller, Andrew Muriuki, Caroline Redick, Linda Steiger, and Elizabeth Willis. Joining our team this year are Sarah Marie Streed and Roger Luhn.

Peace,  
 Mary Ross

# Community Mission

## Common Ground

Common Ground (CG) is an organization of over 40 churches, small businesses, and universities. St. Mark's was one of its first members and has remained active in its work for over 13 years.



The volunteers of Common Ground strongly feel that their work is part of their answer to the Gospel call: to work beside those in the community who need help so that we can make changes in our Milwaukee area together, for greater justice for all.

Recent program successes include:

- Getting driver's ed class funding from insurance companies across the state to help all high school students who otherwise wouldn't have driving courses in the schools.
- Renovation of school and community athletic facilities at Washington High School in Milwaukee.

Current programs we are involved in are:

- Tutoring young people to read in the MPS school system.
- Working to address maintenance and governance problems in the Housing Authority of Milwaukee system. Many thanks to Kyle Potter for his work in this area.

There is always work to fight for justice for the greatest number of people in the Milwaukee area, and we look for new ways to include and harmonize the callings of St. Mark's volunteers with Common Ground goals - and this includes new leaders. The church of the future doesn't seem to want to work by standing committees, and yet some kind of lay structure is needed, and some focal leadership is currently missing. Could it be that you are being called to this kind of work at St. Mark's? There is a lot of passion in our parish and indeed a great deal of willingness to be of service to our neighbors, though what we seem to be missing going into 2024 is that higher level of vision and leadership to keep the church focused on our responsibilities in the

community. If you find that you have a passion for this work and would like to discuss it further, contact the rector.

Submitted by Michelle Mooney and Ian Burch

## Community Partners/Outreach

Long-term members of St. Mark's will remember a time when our church had an Outreach Committee that met regularly to discuss the disbursement of funds to area charities as well as other fundraising opportunities, as well as volunteering at places such as The Gathering and organizing with our Common Ground partners. We have been in a growing/discerning time for the ministries that live outside the walls of the church for a couple of years now, and that discernment continues. Two summers ago, we attempted to bring together some folks who were interested in work outside the church under the heading Community Partners—the idea being that we want to support our main community partners with both money and volunteer hours: Common Ground, the Milwaukee Diaper Mission, The Gathering, Eastside Senior Services, and Kinship Community Food Center. This Community Partnership group did meet a few times, though it didn't coalesce into a permanent group, nor did a group of leaders arise out of that group to provide logistical support for these efforts.

## Summer of Service/Serving Our Neighbors



St. Mark's did field a successful Summer of Service, which was planned largely by Sara and Ian in the office. There were six opportunities during the summer to serve at The Gathering, Kinship Community Food Center, and the Milwaukee Diaper Mission. We added several service dates throughout the fall as well, though there were fewer volunteers available during the fall months.

## Collection Drives



As has been our custom for many years, we collected food and household items weekly for the Kinship Community Food Center. The items the center needs most are printed in our weekly newsletters and Sunday bulletins. Thank you to Ellen Hatfield, Marian Byers and Kevin Hanus, and Vince Katter for transporting items to the donation site.

In January 2023, we collected items to support children and families involved in foster care for OneHope27. We collected:

- 50+ clothes items sized from newborn to youth
- Approximately 50 personal hygiene items, including toothpaste, toothbrushes, travel deodorant, and soap
- More than 90 pairs of socks or undergarments
- Additional items including books, stuffed animals, a blanket, and a sippy cup
- Seven gift cards for teenagers to purchase an outfit

Thanks to Ashley Dallman for coordinating this drive.

Additionally, John and Linda Cram suggested both a coat drive and a sock drive this fall, and they did a really wonderful job arranging for both and coordinating deliveries. We collected a total of 481 pairs of socks during Socktober that were given to The Gathering. And in addition to collecting coats, we also collected warm winter clothing and blankets. Our December Diaper Drive also happened and was led ably by Mike Greuel.

## Pumpkin Sale

For 2023, we continued our contactless pumpkin sale. Between the pumpkin sale and a distribution from the Archer Endowment for Outreach, the congregation raised approximately \$6900 for outreach efforts. At the January 2024 meeting, the Vestry chose to allocate the funds as follows: \$2900 to pay our Common Ground dues, \$1600 to Eastside Senior Services, and \$800 each to The Gathering and Kinship Community Food Center.



Thank you to everyone who helped unload and set up for the pumpkin sale, and a huge thank you to Leslie McCormick for all her work on it! If you are interested in helping organize the 2024 pumpkin sale or other outreach efforts, please reach out to Vince Katter or Fr. Burch.

Submitted by Brooke Frizzell

## Giving Garden

2023 was a great year for St. Mark's Giving Garden. With the help of a grant from the diocese, we built a new raised bed and increased our garden size and vegetable production by a third! From early June through late October, we made weekly deliveries of two large bags of organically grown veg and herbs to the Kinship Community Food Center for distribution to those in need.



Seeds are ordered for the 2024 season, and we will be back in the garden (just outside the chapel doors) in April. You are welcome to join us this spring, Wednesdays at 4 p.m. Call or email me with any questions.

Submitted by Jane Shero

# Community Life

## 20s/30s Group

It has been a major blessing to minister to the 20s and 30s group at St. Mark's! Since I started this role on September 1, the plan was to establish monthly gatherings for our group to foster fellowship and connection with one another. In September, Fr. Burch held a nice pizza party at church both to welcome me and to launch a new school year of programming with 18 in attendance. In October, we had a wonderful bonfire at our home with 12 lovely folks, and in November we held a game night at our home as well with 11 in tow. In December, an anonymous donor provided 15 tickets to see *The Black Nativity* at the Marcus Center, and a handful of us met for dinner beforehand at Pilot Project Brewery. And finally on January 14, a couple of brave souls fought the snow and ice for an intimate Evening Prayer style worship and prayer gathering, followed by a delicious meal. At each event, a different crowd has shown up, and I continue to meet new St. Mark's people this way. It's so wonderful to keep getting to know you all!



In addition to events, I've been able to meet up with young adults for coffee or a meal to build relationships on a more personal level and learn how St. Mark's can best serve them. It has proven to be a beneficial way to deepen connections and get to know people.

Moving forward into the new year, not only will the above continue, but on January 16 we will be launching a Pub Theology. This is a ministry hosted by the diocese and developed by the hard work of a couple of St. Mark's parishioners (Kyle Potter and Caroline Reddick). Invitations have been sent to our 20s and 30s group, a handful of individuals from other Milwaukee area parishes (Trinity in Wauwatosa and St. Luke's in Bay View) have been invited as well, and we hope folks invite their friends. We are intentionally doing this for only four months (through April). The goal is to curate a space for genuine conversation about big ideas. No agendas or forgone conclusions. Just curiosity, drinks, and community. We are very excited to see what the Spirit will do!



If you have any questions regarding the ministry or would like to support it in some way, please don't hesitate to reach out. I'd love to talk with you! You can connect with me at [nate@diomil.org](mailto:nate@diomil.org).

Respectfully submitted,

Nate Irvine  
Young Adult & Campus Minister

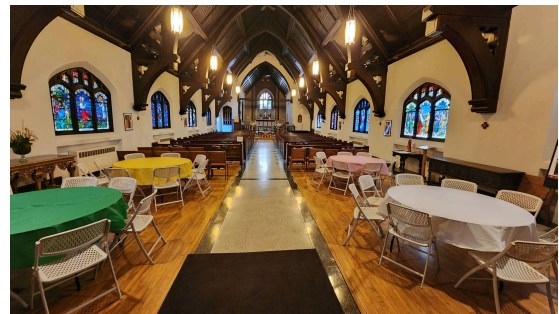
## Archives

The archives were moved from the 1949 building to available storage. Thanks to everyone who helped with the project.

Submitted by Mary Ross

## Coffee Hour

Coffee hour remains a time of fellowship at St Mark's. Indeed, a person cannot leave the church without walking right through coffee hour! Sign-ups have been filled. With our limited kitchen resources, coffee hour has been simplified by using mostly finger food. It is no longer an Olympic competition to see who can do "the best coffee hour." People, who previously felt they could not contribute to a coffee hour due to limited financial resources, can now do so and do. I want to thank Jane Shero, Meg Edwards, and Kathy Katter for providing backup help not only physically but also spiritually.



Submitted by Marilyn Hamilton

## Cooking Crew

The cooking crew has in the past provided food for church events as well as to individuals or families who have a new baby arrival, a death in the family, a hospital stay or anything else that requires some help with meals.

Anyone who knows of someone who needs meals should contact the office and see who will be in charge of this ministry in the future. Advanced cooking skills are not needed, just the willingness to provide a good, mostly homemade meal to an individual or family in need. It's really one of the best feel-good ministries that have. Come and join us.

Submitted by Michelle Mooney

## Fellowship Group

The Fellowship Group meets on the third Saturday of each month at St. Mark's for breakfast and conversation. We meet at church at about 8:30 or so, to make some coffee, and sample donuts and breakfast pizzas from Cranky Al's and some pastries from Rocket Baby. We have a brief prayer of intercession and thanksgiving at about 9, and then dig in. We catch up with each other for about an hour and then clean up. If there are seasonal tasks related to the life of the congregation, we help get those accomplished.



In 2023, we prepped the parish hall and church for the move out of the 1949 Parish Hall in preparation for the building project's first phase of demolition in April 2023. We celebrated our last breakfast in the old parish kitchen in March. We added additional workdays before and after Easter to get things ready—things we wanted to keep from the parish hall got packed for storage or moved to new spots in the church and curate's apartment. We created a new coffee hour gathering place in the back of the church, by moving 12 pews into the parish hall for the movers to take to storage. Lots and lots of additional folks showed up for these workdays and made the work go quickly (a partial list includes Meg Edwards, Jayne Heffron, Marian Byers, Kevin Hanus, Ellen Hatfield, Donna Whittle, Bekki Schmitt, John Schmitt, and John Johnson). These folks and many more helped make the move on April 11 (Easter Tuesday!) a success.

Our December meeting was a great example of what we do—donut, pastry, and pizza breakfast followed by tree wrangling and lighting, creche setup, and wreath hoisting in preparation for Christmas services, with the guidance of our Flower Guild folks. Many thanks to Paul Pasquesi and his daughters, Elyanna, Ilesa, and Naomi, for their assistance with the trees this year!

A huge thank you to all the folks that have come to breakfast to make it a wonderful gathering, and have helped out at the work days, with hearty thanks to regulars Bill Florescu, Marilyn Hamilton, Kyle Potter, Micheal O'Hear, Andrew Muriuki, Sue and Steve Rohde, Michael Roberts, and Linda and Tom Piacentine.

If you're looking to have a bite to eat on a Saturday morning, and to connect with folks at church, you are most welcome.

To get on the mailing list for the group, so you can get breakfast reminders about a week out, send me a note at [vkatter@gmail.com](mailto:vkatter@gmail.com) or give me a call at 414-403-4596.

Respectfully submitted,

Vince Katter

## Garden Guild

Sunflowers in the church courtyard were the Garden Guild's signature achievement this past summer judging by the many compliments from parish members. My thanks to Gretchen Ponzer and Meg Edwards for making that happen!



Our group also planted about 200 native plants in the Bellevue flower bed, part of the grant from the Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee Commission on Creation Care. We expect that within the next year, the garden will be filled with flowers and humming with bees and other pollinators.

With the help of Maia Shimko (pursuing city paperwork and designing graphics), our church also participated in Milwaukee's No Mow May program. Last May's shaggy church lawn provided emerging insects with nectar early in the season, a crucial aid to pollinators. We plan to be part of this program going forward.



The Garden Guild continues its many other duties in maintaining the gardens around the church, including planting and tending flowering annuals in containers and in the gardens, weeding all the flower beds, and pruning as needed. In the spring, we will make our final plans for the church gardens affected by construction. Lots to look forward to!

Please join us! We are looking for new members. Meetings are on Tuesday evenings from 5 to 6:30 p.m. (late spring to early fall). No gardening experience is needed, and we always take time for fellowship (food and drink)! Please call or email me if you have questions. See you in the gardens!

Submitted by Jane Shero

## Pastoral Concerns

Pastoral Concerns is a small and gentle ministry that helps members receive help whether it be a short-term need or a chronic one. Members are chosen currently by the pastor and the deacon. It is a group that deals with sometimes confidential problems and thus their work is private and rarely shared with other parish members.

They are very devoted to providing cards, phone calls, and visits to those who are in need. Sometimes more public work which can be shared with the parish such as sending cards and letters to new college attendees is also taken on.

Submitted by Michelle Mooney

## Prayer Team

The Prayer Team has 18 members and in this formation has existed for 20 years. We added a new member, Alexander McMiller, in 2023. Sixteen members are parishioners and two are past members of the parish.

The duties of the Prayer Team members are to pray as requested for St. Mark's parishioners, their family members, and friends in situations such as illness, death, hospitalizations, surgeries, and joyous occasions such as weddings and births. We pray on a daily basis until informed not to do so.

We are always looking for new members. No special requirements are needed. As Paul wrote in his letter to the Romans, "We do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit itself intercedes for us in sighs too deep for words."

To request prayers, please contact Fr. Ian Burch, Sue Rohde, or parish administrator Sara Bitner.

Submitted by Susan Rohde

## Quilting Circle



The Quilting Circle makes quilts for newly baptized babies in the parish. Some older children usually receive pillows. The group used to meet once a month to work on quilts. It now has members working on them from home until the new church work spaces return. Anyone interested in joining us can still be useful and would be welcome. No advanced or really any quilting skills are necessary. Members are willing to get you started with their help.

Submitted by Michelle Mooney

## Shepherd Ministry

Before the pandemic, our Shepherd Ministry was a committee that met regularly to follow up with newcomers. Post-pandemic, we have streamlined the ministry to a small group that meets three times a year to host a party for newcomers. In 2023, we met twice at the rector's house on Sunday evenings to welcome new members into the church and to introduce them to some more long-time members.



Special thanks to Bekki Schmitt who has been helping the rector with these evenings for a couple of years now, and thanks to the Katters, Heidi Barker, Brooke Frizzell, and others who have been willing to come and help round out the numbers for these events. Newcomers to St. Mark's are always invited to coffee with the rector, as well as this Shepherd event and an Episcopal 101 class. This is a place where some more intentional lay leadership could benefit this ministry. If you have a heart for this kind of ministry, let me know if you'd like to help Bekki and me make this ministry a little more thorough.

Submitted by Ian Burch

## Thursday Night Book Club

2023 saw the end of our Thursday Night Book Club—a club that began over Zoom during the pandemic lockdown as a way to connect while we were still not meeting in person. Over the years, while we have continued to read amazing books, our membership dwindled to just three members this fall when we read *Ancestor Trouble* by Maude Newton. This group has read

amazing books—fiction, autobiography, theology, popular science, devotional—and I will miss it though I know that it is in the nature of ministries to come and to go based on need.

Submitted by Ian Burch

## Women's Book Group

The Women's Book Group has continued to meet this past year. Given the circumstances of members' health, we have gone back and forth between holding book discussions over Zoom and meeting in person in people's homes (with snacks and beverages!).

This year's books discussed were:

*Five Tuesdays in Winter* by King  
*Nomadland* by Bruder  
*Chocolat* by Harris  
*The Architect's Apprentice* by Shafak  
*The Door* by Szabo  
*Fresh Water for Flowers* by Perrin  
*The Violin Conspiracy* by Slocumb  
*Lucy by the Sea* by Strout



We select books for the following year in November and set a schedule, reading eight to nine books yearly. In the coming year, we are scheduled to read:

*The Sweetness of Water* by Harris  
*Kindred* by Butler  
*The Wizard of the Kremlin* by da Empoli  
*Brown Girl Dreaming* by Woodson  
*Our Missing Hearts* by Ng  
*Horse* by Brooks  
*While You Were Out* by Kissinger  
*The Postcard* by Berest  
*The Cat Who Saved Books* by Natsukawa

Books can be purchased at a discount at Boswell Book Company on Downer Ave. The selections are also posted on the church website.

We have 16 people on our membership list, though attendance varies. If you're interested in joining, please see the church bulletin's announcement section or contact Kathy Katter. We welcome new members!

Submitted by Kathy Katter

# Administrative Programs

## Building and Building Maintenance

We are in the midst of a Parish Hall construction project, with four main phases.

Phase 1 - Demolition of the 1949 Parish Hall. This is complete as of May 2023.

Phase 2 - Construction of the foundation walls and basement for the new Parish Hall. This is in process as of December 2023.

Phase 3 - Construction of the Parish Hall shell with walls, roof, and accessible bathrooms for immediate parish use on the first floor. This is slated to begin in early 2024 and to be completed later in the year.

Phase 4 - Build out of interior spaces in the Parish Hall basement and first floor, with suitable lighting and HVAC for complete occupancy. This is slated to begin as funds are available.

Here are the following significant changes to the existing 1911 Sanctuary and 1949 Parish Hall structures in 2023:

- The 1949 Parish Hall was demolished to make way for the new Parish Hall in April and May 2023. This involved significant asbestos abatement throughout the building—floor tiles, floor tile mastic, and pipe insulation for the hydronic heating system—prior to demolition. Notably, we had minimal to no insulation in the Parish Hall exterior walls as such, except for the pipe insulation.
- The 1911 sanctuary was modified to allow coffee hour by removing six rows of pews and sending them to storage at Coakley Brothers with the balance of the items kept from the 1949 Parish Hall for future use. The Chapel of the Bread of Life was set up for use by Sunday School and Adult Education, with the chapel seating used to supplement the existing pews in the sanctuary. Two new condensing boilers were installed in the basement room under the Chapel of the Bread of Life to provide heat.
- The Curate's Apartment on the 2nd floor of the sacristy wing was converted to meeting and storage areas. There are no current on-site residents at St. Mark's.

# PHASES OF THE PARISH HALL CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

## PHASE 1

Demolition of the 1949 Parish Hall.  
Completed May 2023.

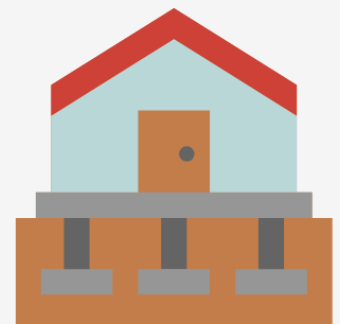


## PHASE 2

Construction of the foundation walls and basement for the new Parish Hall.  
In process as of December 2023.

## PHASE 3

Construction of the Parish Hall shell with walls, roof, and accessible bathrooms for immediate parish use on the first floor.  
Beginning in early 2024 and to be completed later in the year.



## PHASE 4

Build out of interior spaces in the Parish Hall basement and first floor, with suitable lighting and HVAC for complete occupancy.  
Will begin as funds are available.





Future maintenance needs for the 1911 sanctuary and sacristy wing include:

- Courtyard door resurfacing
- Repair of roof decking, roof membrane replacement, and rectification of the roof drain for the upper sacristy roof/Curate's Apartment patio
- Interior plastering and interior/exterior painting of the sanctuary
- Terrazzo repair in the sanctuary

Building and Maintenance duty division:

The sexton duties are divided up as follows: opening and closing the building for services is done by clergy (typically the preacher) and for events by specific volunteers. Minor maintenance is done with the assistance of volunteers, typically at parish workdays after Fellowship Breakfast. Lawn care and sidewalk shoveling are contracted out. The Garden Guild takes care of external plantings, including the courtyard. An on-call list of parish volunteers shovel walkways if a snowfall occurs on a Wednesday, Saturday afternoon, or Sunday morning just before or during services.

Housekeeper duties are divided up as follows: staff and ministry heads empty the trash cans in their areas as needed. General cleaning of the sanctuary is done weekly by Jyoti (our previous housekeeper) on a fee-for-service basis.

If you are interested in assisting with building and maintenance tasks - please contact me at [vkatter@gmail.com](mailto:vkatter@gmail.com) or by phone at 414-403-4596.

Submitted by Vince Katter

## Building Capital Campaign Committee

Thank you, St. Mark's! Together we have pledged \$1,237,000 (as of 1/4/24) for our new parish building.

Our parish also has the support of the diocese through a matching grant of up to \$80,000. The grant kicks in once we have paid pledges of \$1 million which gives us all an incentive to pay our pledges as soon as we can.



Raising this money has meant the commitment and sacrifice of many individuals but we had some fun along the way with a celebration/fundraiser last August. It was quite the party with music from our very own St. Mark's musicians, fabulous portraits, great food, and lots of super auction and raffle prizes. Thank you, Heather and Heidi Barker, Emily Rohde and Christian Wandzala, Rebecca Good, and everyone who helped make it happen!

The St. Mark's Capital Campaign Committee deeply appreciates the generosity of each of the 87 donors to this project which includes parishioners, former rectors and parishioners, neighbors, and friends of our parish. Our new building will represent the commitment of many people to a parish that looks to take care of the needs of all who come through the doors.

It's been a pleasure to talk to so many of you about your hopes for this new building, and I appreciate the many words of support. I am especially grateful for all the hard work of the committee: Lucy Cooper, Kathy Katter, Bekki Schmitt, and Mary Claire Torinus. It's now time for me to pass the baton of the campaign chair to someone else.

I am so looking forward to watching our new parish hall go up!

Respectfully submitted,  
Jane Shero

## Stewardship

I asked several folks if they would like to chair the stewardship drive this year, and I did get a fair number of “no thank yous.” I do know that a lot of the leadership at our church has been working on the building project and capital campaign, as well as the vestry and two discernment committees. So, in light of being in the middle of a capital campaign as well, we decided that we would try what we called a “simple campaign.” With the help of Sara Bitner and Meg Boyd, we put out the most streamlined campaign we could imagine—everything was done in-house, and we tried to make giving as simple as possible by using the first entirely online pledge form (in past years, we had both online and paper options). We set a goal for between \$332K and a stretch goal of \$358.5K. We hit a goal of \$344K with 99 families giving! Many thanks to everyone at St. Mark’s who gave. One downside of doing a campaign this way is that a good deal of the clean-up falls to the rector and vestry, which can be a heavy lift without a proper stewardship committee to help out. Special thanks to Sue Rohde and Vince Katter who did a lot of calling at the end of the campaign and to Jason Shimko who moved our results into our church management system, Breeze, so that people can track their pledges all year long.

Submitted by Ian Burch