

THE VOICE

St. John is called by Christ to be a Sanctuary that Welcomes and Serves All

AUGUST 2020

Pastor Mark's Reflection

Hello Friends,

Today is July 17th so I am a few weeks from starting at St. John and wrapping up my work at Transfiguration. It is a bittersweet time but I guess a life well lived is often bittersweet! In any event I am excited to begin our journey together and know that The Spirit will guide us into a new expression of God's love for each other and the world in which we serve! These are extraordinary times for each of us. Whether we are experiencing the challenges of Covid-19, race-relations or any number of issues in our personal lives. One thing is for certain, we are called to be the Church, to be the hands and feet of Christ no matter what the circumstances!

I know that each of you are sacred and gifted with the ability to experience and share God's love. Over the next few months, I hope to begin to learn about each of you. I will be calling from 248-207-1312. So please put that number in your phone. It is important that you know I am ready to be your Pastor from day one and that you are my first priority.

Beyond servicing the needs of our membership, I am excited to explore our relationship with Renaissance Homeschool Group. There is great potential for all of us as this relationship is strengthened. I along with the board will make decisions on what community groups we will begin to engage with. Being local, I have many ideas about this and will share them in future issues of The Voice.

In addition, I will be meeting with our staff and leadership to fully understand where we have been and where we are in St John's various avenues of ministry. It will be important to listen and learn as I/we help shape a vision for our future.

Finally, please know that we will continue to worship via zoom for the time being and that within this service the sacrament of Holy Communion will be shared. Leadership will be reviewing worship options regularly with the hope of getting safely back to the pews as soon as possible.

In closing, I thank you for extending to me The Call to serve St. John and look forward to our future!

Peace,
Pastor Mark



Meet Pastor Mark!

by Kris O'Brien and Elaine Pearson

We are pleased to welcome The Rev. Dr. Mark Fisher as our new settled pastor. It will take Pastor Mark some time to get to know all of us, but we thought we would share some information to help you get to know him.

Mark Fisher was born and raised in Detroit. After graduating Cody High School, he attended Wayne State University, where he earned a BA in Political Science and an MA in Public Administration. He was also a Teaching Fellow there, in the Political Science department.

After leaving Wayne State, he went to work for the United Foundation/United Way in Detroit as a representative to labor unions, mostly in the auto industry, doing fundraising and community organizing.

From there he went to WTVS Channel 56 (PBS) as Director of Corporate Development, working primarily in the area of fundraising and strategic planning. During his time there, he was involved in several important developments at the station, including *PBS Late Night*, PBS's first nationally broadcast talk and viewer phone-in television program.

After several years at WTVS, he became the Director of Development for the University of Detroit, primarily working on fundraising. It was there, in close contact with the Jesuits, that he began to be drawn to theology. One of the projects he is most proud of was the creation of a Muslim prayer room on the campus, in recognition of the large Muslim community interfacing with U of D.

He established his own consulting practice, focused on fundraising and strategic planning for non-profits, asking the question: "how do we build communities of compassion?" And from that work he decided to return to seminary in 2004 to explore the issue of Mission Drift.



Pastor Mark

He received his Doctorate in Ministry from the Ecumenical Theological Seminary in Detroit in 2007. He completed his Lutheran Studies at Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary (now known as United Lutheran Seminary). His first call was to Transfiguration Lutheran Church (charmingly known as "TLC") in Fenton in 2013.

Of his work at Transfiguration, Pr. Mark is most proud of the *Pathways in Compassion* program, a nursing home visitation program that recruits and trains volunteers to spend time with people in nursing homes who have no one else to visit them. He says, "On any given day, there are about a million and a half people in nursing homes in the United States, and on any given day, there may be as many as three quarters of a million people who have been largely abandoned."

The program directs attention to the caregiving staff as well. "They are often overworked and underpaid. We want to be a supportive presence to these very important workers. This is compassion in action." Although the program is on hold right now due to COVID-19 concerns, he would like to see this become a national movement. "The hope is that at some point, every nursing home will be contacted by someone."

Pastor Mark has been married to his lovely wife Beth for 30 years. They had known one another for some time before they started to date. For their first date, he was her plus-one at her 10-year high school reunion! (*no pressure...*)



Beth and Pastor Mark

They have four children, the two eldest from Pastor Mark's first marriage. He's quick to add: "There are no half-siblings. They're all ours."

- Ryan currently lives with them, though he will be moving into a group home soon. He has competed in the Special Olympics, and if you shop at Busch's on Grand River, you might have met him, as he used to work there bagging groceries.
- Lauren lives in Chicago with her wife June, where she works in theater, acting and serving as a consultant to several fine arts groups. She has just presented them with their first grandchild, Tali.
- Joel attended Michigan State on a baseball scholarship. He graduated in 2014 with a BA in Economics. He played 4 seasons in the Phillies farm system and has recently moved to Cleveland with his girlfriend, who is completing her residency in dermatology at Case Western while he figures out life after baseball.
- Kara will be a junior at Michigan State in the fall. Her plan is to go to law school and eventually get into civil rights law.
- Also living in their house is Benji, a Terrier mix who is 5 years old and has a lot to say.

Pastor Mark says he always felt called to ministry. His late brother George, who was 20 years his senior, was a pastor and civil rights activist in the 1960s. (Fun coincidence: he went to seminary with Pr. Charles Fox pastor of St John for 33 years!) George left the ordained ministry as he felt it hampered his ability to do the civil rights work he felt called to do. Pastor Mark notes that, as a young man, the influence of his brother's experience discouraged him from pursuing the path to ordained ministry. But he also points out that

most of his work through the years was ministry oriented.

And speaking of Ministry, Pastor Mark says that "One of the key things in ministry is the need to consider the context in which you are working and the experience of the people you are working with and ministering to."

Pastor Mark, Beth and their family live in Independence Hills near Heritage Park. He will be enjoying his new commute.

Pastor Mark's first Sunday with us will be August 2. Join us for Zoom worship at 10:00 am!



From front: son Joel; daughter Kara; Beth; Joel's girlfriend Paige; daughter Lauren; daughter in-law June; Pr. Mark; and son Ryan.

RHG's big plans for the fall!

Kim Dennis RHG Director

Greetings members of St. John. We hope that this finds you all safe and healthy.

What a very strange time we are all experiencing. It seems that every week brings a new set of "firsts" to be puzzled through. We know that St. John has been progressing through with caution and is working towards the day when you will be able to meet and worship together in person. We are hopeful for you that the day will come soon. Our sincerest congratulations on your new pastor. We are looking forward to meeting him and working together to the benefit of all.

We wanted to give you an update on what RHG has been up to as well as our plans for the Fall semester at St. John on Wednesdays and Fridays.

St. John has been such a wonderful host to our 200+ families. Can you believe we are beginning our 8th year together? The entire RHG community is so grateful to St. John for opening your doors to our program.

Every year, we attempt to show our appreciation by giving back in some way, whether with improvements to the facility, helping hands and feet, and/or monetary gifts on top of our annual rent. Looking back to the 2019-20 school year, RHG has fixed the heating/cooling system in the narthex, put carpet in 2 rooms, helped redesign 2 of the classrooms, purchased new entry mats, made monetary donation, and have just finished partnering with St. John to have all of the carpeting cleaned throughout the building.

Our future plans include replacing the carpeting in 4 classrooms, cleaning windows, and possibly replacing some light fixtures and painting of some parts of the building. We look forward to working with St. John on these projects and more!

In addition, we were happy to be able to continue our full rent payment to St. John while we were all unable to use the building. We anticipate the same if the state again moves us back to a phase where we cannot meet in person. We take our partnership very seriously with St. John and we hope you know from the depth of our hearts how much we appreciate and care for all of you and your beautiful building.

Planning for the future has certainly taken a new meaning this year. With the release of Governor Whitmer's Safe School Roadmap on June 30th along with countless hours spent talking to families and working out as many scenarios as possible, we have been able to retain a good number of our families and add new families for the Fall semester - though with the daily changes that seem to come our way, we won't truly know until we actually begin - or perhaps later!

After running a program-wide survey, we found that our community was split - some wanting to meet in person, some not, some wanting masks, some not. It definitely made the decision making very challenging! In the end, we have been able to provide as many options as possible including on-site classes, live online classes (teacher teaches remotely and all students are together with the teacher online at the same time), and online classes (teacher records and students log in and learn at their convenience). We do have many families who have cut their number of classes, or decided to not attend onsite, so our overall numbers are down while our expenses have increased greatly. This is true for almost every entity that serves people. Our hope is that we will be able to weather the storm and bounce back for 2021-22.

Being on-site will look a little different than it has in past years. First, the number of bodies in the building will be greatly reduced as many of our families will not be onsite and parents will not be permitted in the building.

This will make for some heavy traffic at 9 am and 2:30 pm, but we have a system in place to hopefully make it run smoothly. We are arranging for students to be distanced and, per the state mandate, teachers & students will be wearing masks and/or face shields. RHG will be cleaning throughout the day and prior to and after our classes at St. John. We will be keeping our staff busy and are looking to hire additional staff to meet the need. We don't anticipate significant changes if we are able to

move to Phase 5 but we do look forward to the day when we are at Phase 6 so that life can return to a bit more of a "normal"!

All of this comes with a renewed purpose to work together with St. John to ensure a bright future for our students and your congregation. Thank you again and again for the opportunities you have provided to our program.



Victoria, Kim, Heidi and Debby from our year end material drop off.



Our Wednesday kids 'fun' photo shoot.



IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN!

It has not yet been determined if the Lutheran World Relief Kits collection can go forward in October. Since now is the time when the supplies we need go on sale, though, I think we should go ahead and start purchasing them. We can always save them until 2021, when hopefully the world will be back to normal. Meijer is one good source. Check their weekly sale paper. These are the items we need:

School Kits (we've been sending at least 100):

- ✓ 70 sheet spiral notebooks (approx. 8" x 10 1/2 "); **4** are needed in each kit (Meijer has these on sale for \$.25)
- ✓ 24 count boxes of crayons
- ✓ pencil sharpeners
- ✓ #2 pencils; **5** are needed in each kit
- ✓ round-tip scissors (we cannot send the more pointed ones)
- ✓ 2" x 1" pink erasers (not the narrow ones, please)

Keep your eyes out for bargains in these items as well:

Personal Care Kits:

- ✓ bath-size towels (approx. 52" x 27", lighter weight, dark colors preferred)
- ✓ bath-size bars of soap in original wrapping (4-5 oz.); **2** are needed in each kit
- ✓ wide-tooth combs
- ✓ nail clippers
- ✓ adult- size toothbrushes

Since the church building is not open, please keep what your purchase at home with you, or call Marie (248-474-0584) to find a time when you can leave your items in the office foyer area.

Thank you for your continued support of this important ministry. If you have any questions, contact Patty Oates (248-473-0816) email rpoates@sbcglobal.net or Joanne Hagen (248-474-8521).



Rev. Dave Hendricks
The Church Council of St John Lutheran Church
23255 Gill Rd.
Farmington Hills, Mi 48335

May 26, 2020

Dear Pastor Hendricks and St John Council Members,

The Farmington Musicales has had a wonderful long-standing relationship with St John since the early 1970's when Marie Walck was active in St John as organist choir director, director of bells and a talented bell ringer as well, a wonderful alto in the choir, pianist extraordinaire, and who was active in Fish and meals on wheels and a wonderful Christian woman full of faith in the Lord. We've enjoyed many countless concert performances, recitals and board meetings, chorus and performance rehearsals and terrific luncheons which have been enjoyed by all. The Musicales has greatly appreciated all the co-operation the church has given us through the years and is truly grateful.

However, it is with regret that the Musicales must come to an end of our relationship with St John Lutheran Church. Because of the smaller membership number in the Musicales, it has become necessary to consider changes in the Club budget. Therefore, in looking toward the future, the Musicales must look for other strategies and will no longer be able to hold meetings at St John Lutheran Church.

Many thanks for all that the church has done for us through the years.

Judith Reger, President
The Farmington Musicales



Member of the National Federation of Music Clubs



August 1 Zachary Switzer
 August 2 Elaine Anderson
 August 4 Barbara Dilland
 August 6 Christopher Blaker
 August 9 Hannah Nelson
 Jessica Palarchio
 August 11 Gilda Bingham
 Landon Roell
 Dave Stenson
 August 12 Laura Roell
 August 17 Ryan Nelson
 August 18 Sarah Taube
 August 19 Kim James
 August 20 Carolyn Elias
 August 21 Carol Sterling
 August 23 Graham Pardonnet
 August 24 Larry Craig
 August 25 John Dilland
 August 27 Allie McDowell
 August 29 Rob Stauffe
 August 30 Anna Boczkaja

Happy Birthday!!

WE'RE ALL IN THIS *Together*



**American
Red Cross**

Blood Drive

St. John Lutheran Church

23225 Gill Road
Farmington Hills

**Monday, August 17, 2020
1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.**

To schedule an appointment, log onto RedCrossBlood.org
(sponsor code: stjohnc) or call 1-800-RED CROSS
(1-800-733-2787).

Streamline your donation experience and save up to 15 minutes
by visiting RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass to complete your
pre-donation reading and health history questions on the day of
your appointment.



Special offer from our partners at Amazon: To thank
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[101] - Order ID: 1075001 - Item ID: 4533005 - Qty: 1 of 1 - 013248922 - 2020-APL-00899 - ARCL - 210834

This is a add on requested by Red Cross
because of the great need for blood donation
during this time.

The St John sponsored Blood Drive is
September 15, 2020 @ 1:00pm



GARY ROBERT ESKELINEN
Saturday, April 19, 1941— Friday June 19, 2020

Gary Eskelinen, 79, a resident of Dearborn passed away on Friday June 19, 2020 at Providence Ascension Hospital in Novi. He was born on April 19, 1941 in Calumet to Arthur and Gertrude (Lepisto) Eskelinen. He attended the local schools and graduated from Calumet High School with the class of 1960. Following high school, Gary enlisted with the United States Army and was honorably discharged in 1966. Gary was an avid hunter and commercial fisherman. He loved this country and his honorable service to it. He worked for Detroit Diesel in Detroit Michigan for 35 years. Although he accomplished many great things in his life, he was most of all proud of his family. He left behind a wonderful wife Barbara who he was united in marriage with in Ahmeek Michigan on October 21, 1967. He was preceded in death by his father Arthur Eskelinen and his mother Gertrude Eskelinen.

He had two loving daughters Renee and Melissa, two loving son in laws Pat and Chip, seven grandchildren Matt, Justin, Derek, Sheehan, Josh, Ryan, Brooke, and one great grandson Mason. Gary also left behind one brother Gerald, one sister Sue, two nephews and ten nieces. Gary's humor always brought people together with laughter and friendship. He will be dearly missed and his memories will be held in everyone's heart. A graveside service will be held on Saturday September 5th, 2020 at 1:00 pm at the Calvary Cemetery in Ahmeek with Pastor Jared Howard to officiate. Online condolences for the family may be left at www.ericksoncrowleypeterson.com The Erickson Crowley Peterson Funeral Home in Calumet is assisting the family with the arrangements.



Barbara Eskelinen
611 McMunn St
South Lyon MI 48178

Mr. and Mrs. David Zatolokin
22230 Meridian Lane
Novi MI 48375

Deb Stanek
30049 Stockton Ave.
Farmington Hills, MI 48336
stanek4@sbcglobal.net

Diana Canup
Wellbridge of Novi
48300 West 11 Mile Road
Room 206
Novi MI 48374



If you have any changes to the directory they can still be made before it is published. Because of the pandemic everything as you know practically shut down. But I have been in contact with Cathedral Directories and they have promised me a proof file soon. I can make changes at that time before it goes to print. So please call the office or email to let me know any address, email or phone number changes.



Members:

Carl Kangas, Diana Canup, Donna Tupper, Ward Varns, Eva Paulson, Lois Makee; Dick Rudorffer; Audrey Riley; Donna Judd; Ellen Zatolokin; Delores Winqvist; Carol Sterling; Prudence Hogrefe; Selma Ballach; Eunice Gould; Jim Grudt; Tammy Kilpatrick; Lillian Niemi; Jodi Oulette; Joan Simonson; Howard Skovlund.

Friends, and Family:

Sharon Godfrey, Tony Cologne (Sailus); Doug Wellbaum (Judd), Mary Rellinger (Switzer); Nancy Kowalski (Niesyto); Rev. Ken Bomberger, who is in dire need of a kidney donor (brother-in-law of Don Stauffer). Duane Stibal, Jared Behmlander, Cindy and Mark Borsvold, (Sailus); Carol Collins (sister of Earl Hagen); Linda Knapp, (Craig); Jackie Williams (Blaker); Louis Bremer, (Pr. Hendricks father in law); Sandra Altemann, (Ashleigh's mother);

Alexander Lewis, (Locke) ; Evelyn Tenbusch, Mardee Thomas, Mackenzie Lynn Chambers, Marg Mueller, (Galloway); Jeffrey Wetzel, (Merrell).



Serving in the Military including overseas:

Adam Craig

Jessica Moilanen

Jacob Stanton

Please send prayer list updates to the church office at om@stjohn-elca.org.

Many Thanks to Pat Gransee and Marlou Grudt for sending out cards to the people on our prayer concerns list. If you have someone on the list to whom you would like a card sent, contact the office. Thank you!

The work of the church continues! Your gifts are still important.

You can mail your offering to the church, or give online using the link in your eNews or on the St. John website.



AUGUST 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Worship Service: Sundays at 10:00 am - Meeting ID: 753 4674 0584 Virtual Coffee Hour follows service. Men's Breakfast: Thursdays at 8:00 am - Meeting ID: 780 8045 5135 On your computer, tablet or mobile phone: Go to https://us02web.zoom.us/ or open your Zoom app and click "Join a Meeting" at the top. Fill in the Meeting ID. A password will not be required. Audio only on your land-line or mobile phone: Dial one of these numbers and punch in the Meeting ID. 929-205-6099; 312-626-6799 <i>(long distance charges may apply)</i>						1
2 10a Worship	3	4 7a State Primary Elections	5	6 8a Men's Breakfast 11a RHG Teachers Meetings	7 7p RHG Teachers Meetings	8
9 10a Worship	10	11	12	13 8a Men's Breakfast	14	15
16 10a Worship	17 1p RED CROSS Blood Drive	18	19	20 8a Men's Breakfast	21	22
23 10a Worship	24	25	26	27 10a RHG Orientation	28 VOICE ARTICLES DUE	29
30	31	Church Office Hours: Monday—Thursday 9:30am—3:30pm Friday Closed				



23225 Gill Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48335,
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email: om@stjohn-elca.org
www.stjohn-elca.org

STAFF

Pastor
Office Manager
Dir. of Community Outreach
Dir. of Youth and Family Ministry
Choir Director
Organ/Piano
Handbell Choir

Rev. Dr. Mark Fisher
Marie Cook
Stella Weller
Ashleigh Altemann
Troy Nelson
Carla Likich
JoAnn Adams

BOARD MEMBERS

Tom Bosanko
Nancy Janik
Diane Stanton
Mark Switzer
Tom Taepke
Larry Urevig

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Inspiring Worship
Christian Care
Lifelong Faith Formation
Compassionate Service
Community Outreach
Faithful Stewardship Of Resources
Communications

Janet Henkel
Ashleigh Altemann
John Dresden
Stella Weller
Ed Kramer
Elaine Pearson

The Staff at St. John is here to serve you. If you have questions or concerns, please give us a call; we will be happy to talk to you

This issue was mailed on July 30, 2020

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