

## **WE WELCOME RODNEY LONG, OUR NEW DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES!**

We are pleased to share that the Pastor-Staff-Parish Committee has approved the hiring of Mr. Rodney Long as St. Mark's new part-time "Director of Youth Ministries." Rodney brings great gifts and experience to this role. Originally from Georgia, he is a graduate of Columbus State University, where he double majored in Music Education and Voice Performance. Rodney was a high school music teacher in Maryland for five years before moving to Bloomington this past fall to pursue a Masters of Music degree in voice performance at IU.

Rodney has a warm personality, encouraging spirit, welcoming energy, and a passion for working with youth and families. He is especially strong in engaging youth, creating positive relationships, and fostering healthy community. His vision is to connect with families & to create opportunities for youth to engage in all areas of Christian education, service, and worship, while building a strong youth presence in the church. A gifted and talented musician, Rodney landed his first official job in ministry playing piano for a Baptist Church when he was 14 years old.

We are very grateful to the Search Committee for their dedication, thoughtfulness and wisdom throughout this process. The Committee members include youth (Steven Fort, Zach Hitchcock and Christian Smith), parents (Alayna Gray and Minjeong Kang), Pastor-Staff-Parish representative (Ellen Bell), Director of Children's Ministries (Sarah Gettie McNeill) and pastors (Jimmy Moore and Mary Beth Morgan).

We will officially welcome Rodney on Sunday, January 14th, and will be announcing other opportunities for youth, families and the St. Mark's community to get to know him. If you have any questions, contact Mary Beth Morgan. Please welcome Rodney to St. Mark's!