



St. Mark Lutheran Church

CrossBeams

A publication of St. Mark Lutheran Church, Mount Prospect, Illinois

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Volume 59, Issue 1

January, 2020





A blessing for the New Year: "For Longing"

Blessed be the longing that brought you here
 And quickens your soul with wonder.
 May you have the courage to listen to the
 voice of desire

That disturbs you when you have settled for something safe.

May you have the wisdom to enter generously into your own unease
 To discover the new direction your longing wants you to take.

May the forms of your belonging—in love, creativity, and friendship—
 Be equal to the grandeur and the call of your soul.

May the one you long for long for you.

May your dreams gradually reveal the destination of your desire.

May a secret Providence guide your thought and nurture your feeling.

May your mind inhabit life with the sureness with which your body inhabits the world.

May your heart never be haunted by ghost-structures of old damage.

May you come to accept your longing as divine urgency.

May you know the urgency with which God longs for you."



— John O'Donohue, **To Bless the Space Between Us: A Book of Blessings**

I wonder what you long for. I wonder what quickens your soul with wonder. I wonder if you have the courage to listen to these longings and go in new directions. This blessing poem by John O'Donahue was presented to me for reflection at a recent meeting. We were asked to spend time with it, reflect on it, see what stirred us, called to us, where our longings lay and to listen to them, maybe even have the courage to speak them out loud. It was a refreshing time to take the space to let my heart open to the longings within it.

As we say goodbye to one year and begin another, I think this is the perfect time to reflect upon our longings. It is the season of New Year's Resolutions after all. And what are New Year's Resolutions but goal setting based on our longings? I wonder what it would look like if we invited God into that process, into that resolution making, into tending to the fresh start of a new year. We've been asking the question lately, "What difference does being a Christian make in my every day life?" What if we considered: "What difference does being a Christian make to my hopes and dreams for this coming year?" What if we recognized God's presence in our longings, saw them as God's divine urgency in our life? Where might the year take us then?

Here is my challenge to you: Find a cozy (hygge!) spot, a piece of paper, pen or pencil, maybe a warm beverage, and invite God to be with you as you read the blessing poem above. Consider first what line or phrase calls to you, shimmers, shines, draws your attention. Then read it again and tend to what images or sensations this blessing brings to you. Read it a third time and consider how it connects to your daily life, what it calls you to do or be. And finally, take time to dig deep into your soul, recognize your longings, have the courage to name them, and see where they lead you this year.

Need a little more direction? Come to worship on January 12 and receive a StarWord, the gift of a word to connect and explore God in your daily life this year.

God's blessings to you in 2020!

Peace,
 Pr. Christie

Thoughts from the Loft

As the hustle and bustle of Christmas winds down, we are met with the celebration of Epiphany and the Baptism of Our Lord. The most well-known Epiphany hymn and carol is “We Three Kings of Orient Are”. Another Epiphany hymn of note is “As with Gladness Men of Old, did the guiding star behold”. Both of these hymns point us to the light of Christ which is further illuminated in his Baptism in the Jordan. Light is an interesting topics found in many hymn texts. Be on the lookout for this word in our hymns and songs throughout the season of Epiphany.

Peace,
Tim



Senior Lunch Bunch

(Or anyone who would like to join us)

Thursday, January 16, 2020
1:00 pm
Little Villa Restaurant
 (660 N. Wolf Rd, Des Plaines, IL)



RSVP to Marilyn Gosell by Monday, January 13



Star Words

Sunday, January 12

Last year, Pastor Christie initiated Star Words for Epiphany. On the day that we remember the star that led the magi to Jesus, we pass out star shapes with a printed word. What direction will this word take you this year?

Come and receive your word!





What's Happening in Youth & Family Ministry?



Classes resume
January 15 & 16,
respectively.



Side By Side Co-Training—Godly Play and Torah Godly Play

Save the date for July 19th- 21st

St. Mark, in collaboration with Congregation Beth Judea, will be hosting an historic training this summer. For the first time, a Torah Godly Play training will be held in the Midwest side-by-side with a Godly Play training. The training is designed to form faith formation teachers in a Montessori-inspired faith formation method, but there will be a public event on July 19th that explores the importance of multi-faith faith formation. St. Mark members interested in participating in the training will receive a significant discount on the registration fee.



Come share a Meal
and Fellowship!
Wednesday, January 22
6pm
All are welcome!

tastefullysimple®

Tastefully Simple Fundraiser

Thank you to all who support our
youth through this fundraiser.



**Wednesday, January 22
5-6pm**

For children 0-3 yrs and their parents!
Gather for songs, stories and free time in the
nursery. Contact Pastor Christie for
more information.

Using the Christian Language System and Talking about Your Faith!

By: Deacon David Webb

One of the big things I love about Montessori-inspired faith formation projects is the idea that the Christian faith is like a language and so, faith formation is like learning a second language. Just like a recipe or a building project, there are pieces and

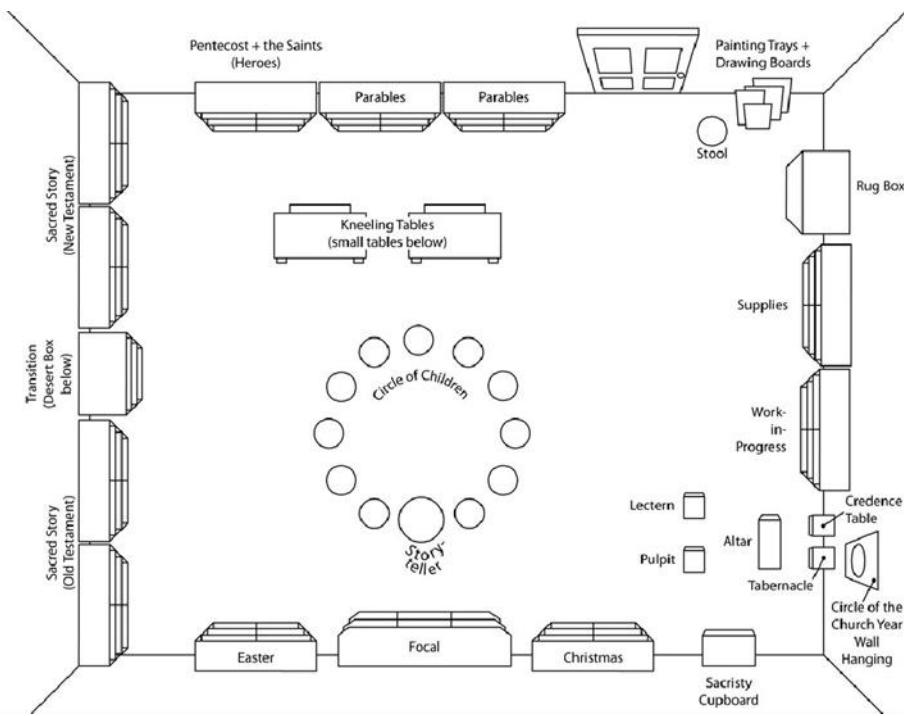
ingredients you can use to make meaning. In the picture above you can see how the Godly Play Foundation and Rev. Dr. Jerome Berryman organize a room to be a living and tangible Christian Language System that you can walk into and immerse yourself in. This helps us get beyond the idea that the Christian Language System is only for experts, must be theologically orthodox, and is not for everyday life.

Sometimes you will hear people say, “It is hard to talk about my faith. I don’t want to get it wrong or say something heretical.” But learning a language cannot be done in such a precise and abstract fashion, it must be done in a messy, funny, and immersive process in which you make mistakes. I don’t know about you, but I still make “mistakes” using my first language! Sometimes the “mistakes” are important moments of learning! The funny thing is that even in trying not to talk about our faith or engage in “theology,” “ethics,” “testimony,” “witness,” or “biblical scholarship” (other names for talking about your faith that carry a certain cultural meaning), we say something about our faith using the Christian Language System, or at least our understanding of that language.

I hope in this new year you find new ways to explore using the Christian Language System to talk about your faith. Young people at St. Mark have suggested these small group opportunities as places we can begin practicing our new language together. Consider whether you might want to join one of these groups and let me know you are interested...



Layout of a Godly Play Room



Star Wars Small Group

Journaling Small Group

Pottery and Clay Small group



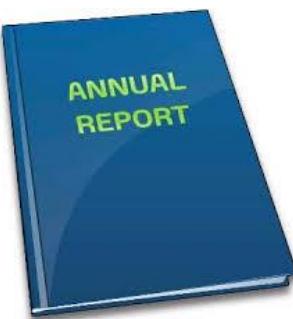
Gratefulness Gatherings: January 27 from 6:30-8PM

St. Mark is hosting Gratefulness Gatherings for the local community. It is a time for sacred space, belonging, and wholeheartedness. Each evening consists of dessert, warm conversation, and chances to listen and be heard as we explore the deep of living gratefully. Learn more at: <https://gratefulness.org/> and <https://gratefulness.org/connect/gratefulness-gatherings/>

RSVP to Deacon David at dwebb@stmarkmp.org

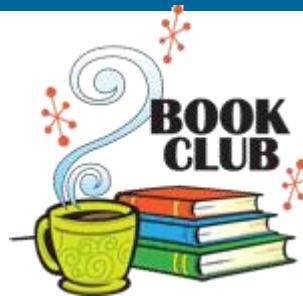


Friday, January 17
7pm in the Great Room
 Bring your own craft or work on
 one of ours.



ANNUAL REPORTS

St. Mark Council members, committee chairs, ministry leaders and staff should send their annual reports to the church office at stmarkmp@stmarkmp.org on or before **January 24**. The Annual Report will be made available to all members prior to the Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 23.



ST. MARK BOOK CLUB

The Book Club has put together a reading list for 2020 which includes lots of variety, interesting, and entertaining books. All are welcome to join on a regular basis or come during the months when particular books grab your attention. The group meets in the Great Room at 1:00 on the fourth Monday each month, except for December.

2020 READING LIST - ST. MARK BOOK CLUB

January 27 - **Beartown** by Fredrik Backman
 February 24 - **The Last Days of Night** by Graham Moore
 March 23 - **Where the Crawdads Sing** by Delia Owens
 April 27 - **The Lilac Girls** - Martha Hall Kelly
 May 25 - **Educated** by Tara Westover
 June 22 - **The Only Woman in the Room** by Marie Benedict
 July 27 - **Cilka's Journeys** by Heather Morris
 August 24 - **The Story of Arthur Truluv** by Elizabeth Berg
 September 28 - **Olive Again** by Elizabeth Strout
 October 26 - **The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell** by Robert Dugoni
 November 23 - (open)

Contact Nancy Snell at 847-431-9116 for more information.



“Blue Card” Update from the Stewardship Team

We initiated the blue pew card last year with a dual purpose. One was to have a card to put in the offering plate that would be a “contribution” to the offering when you have elected to use electronic giving.

The other use was to be a reminder that stewardship living involves the way we live our faith in our regular daily lives –with neighbors, colleagues, friends and family. It is not limited to giving money, important as that is. It’s not focused on going to worship or bible study, important as they are. As a reminder of this broader understanding of stewardship, we provided space to jot down experiences from our weekly activities in which we encountered God, or experienced God’s presence in how we reacted to other people, or how they helped us. It may be how we react to good news or bad, how we solved a problem or faced a challenge. We all do this every day, but unless we have a “steward’s mindset” we might not recognize God’s activity.

We are developing a new blue card with more space for writing and some simple questions to stimulate your thinking of how God was active in your life and how that makes a difference in your spiritual well-being. Recently a neighbor posted a note of gratitude on a local web page regarding a stranger who brought her wallet to her home after she had inadvertently left it behind at the post office. She was so grateful and wanted to let others know how good that experience was. It’s those kinds of experiences that we all need to hear about because we certainly hear a lot of the opposite!

Below there is a compilation of notes from St. Markers in recent months. It is heartwarming to realize the many times and places they have encountered the divine. We hope you will share your experiences with others by reporting on the blue card when you are so inspired, and also in your regular conversations with others.

We’ve decided to separate the electronic giving pew card from the report on daily living encounters. We hope that all of you who give electronically will use the new card that indicates you give electronically. These cards will be recycled back so they will be used repeatedly. We hope this will be a simple reminder to yourselves and your neighbors in the pew of the importance of participating in the offering.

Pr. Carl Anderson from the Stewardship Team

Experiencing God in our Daily Living

The following notes are from the blue cards submitted by our worshippers who experienced God’s presence in their daily routines.

Leigh Schultz gave away some of her garden plants to a neighbor who was very appreciative of her generosity. She also noted how good it felt to volunteer at the Kids Pantry. Vivian Becker had a positive experience of the divine when Turkish friends offered a ride for her to get to her medical appointment and said to her it was “a gift from Allah.” Sue Supergan felt a blessing from a friend who listened and offered encouragement. One of our choir members was moved to gratitude by noting how volunteers decorated the church for Easter after the Good Friday service. Carl Anderson noted that an impromptu chat with a neighbor who was frustrated with a contractor’s performance led to a release of anger. (Continued on pg. 9)

Stewardship of Daily Life Report

As you reflect on interactions you have had in your daily living, note when you were blessed to have an opportunity for doing God’s work by being generous with your feet/hands, your money/things, or time/skills, or ears/mouth. Share an example of how you felt God used you to make the world a better place, or where you had an opportunity to brighten someone’s day, or where you were helped by another who assisted you. This also is your “offering” to God.

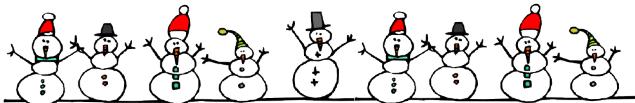
Name: _____

OK to Share? _____



CALENDAR

Wed. & Tues., Jan. 15 & 21 9:00 am
Quilting
2nd floor Education wing



THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!!

Thanks to all those who helped to decorate our church for the holidays – setting up and decorating the Chrismon trees, hanging the wreaths, garland and banners, setting up the Star Tree, arranging the poinsettias and assembling the creche in the narthex. On Tuesday, January 7 at 7PM, we will be taking it all down and storing them for next year. Come by and lend a hand!

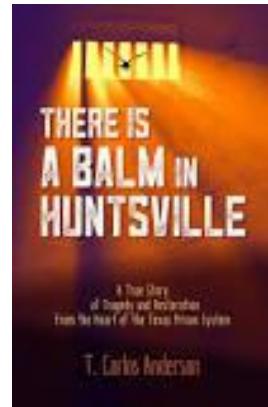
THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!!

Thanks to all those who took and returned a star or ornament from this year's Star Tree. Many gifts were provided to brighten the holidays for Holy Family School students, Concordia Place clients, and PADS guests.



TIME FLIES . . .

Before you know it, we will be looking forward to the Mardi Gras Potluck and Lenten Soup Suppers. Watch for details in the February CrossBeams.



There is a Balm in Huntsville: A true Story of Tragedy and Restoration from the Heart of the Texas Prison System, by T. Carlos Anderson.

Many of you have read this compelling and intense true story of how Andrew Papke's life was dramatically changed when he was convicted of killing two teens in a drunk driving accident in Texas. Sentenced to a 40-year incarceration in the Huntsville prison, he was transformed by the Victim Offender Mediation/Dialogue program. The book is hard to put down once you've started, and stimulates deep thought on the nature and consequences of addiction, restorative justice, forgiveness, punishment, and accountability.

There will be two sessions scheduled for Tuesday nights, January 28 and February 4 at 7PM, to discuss this book. It will be most helpful if you read the book prior to the discussion classes. Books are available at a special congregational price of \$8.00. Contact Carl Anderson or the church office for purchase.

CHANGE IS JUST Another Word For Opportunity

We've all heard people say, "I don't like change." And yet, accepting and embracing change can often be some of the most rewarding aspects of growing older. At The Moorings of Arlington Heights, we see it all the time.

People often say they're just not ready to leave their family home for an independent living community. Then later say, "Oh, I wish I had done this sooner," once they've experienced for themselves all The Moorings has to offer.

So, even if you're not thinking about making a move to The Moorings, we'd like to offer you the opportunity to change your mind.



To RSVP for both or either event, call Tamora at 877-960-2358 or email tskelly@presbyterianhomes.org



EVENT ONE

Opening To The Gifts Of Change with Uma Girish

Successful aging is all about embracing change and finding excitement in new challenges. Award-winning author Uma Girish takes us through some ideas on viewing change as a natural part of our growth and development.

Sunday, January 19, 2020
1:30 – 3:30 PM

*Uma Girish lecture followed by
breakout discussions and
light refreshments*

Experiencing God in our Daily Living (Continued from pg. 7)

Sharon Stobe shared a thoughtful reflection on death. Three years ago, her husband died suddenly after a neighbor noticed him motionless on the lawn tractor. She writes:

The first few times I mowed the lawn I was a "dripping faucet." But time passes on and I have "adjusted." However, I have come to realize that there is one spot in my yard that triggers some anxiety in me. There is a rock garden in the back of my yard. It seems almost without fail, that when I go behind it I find myself thinking, "I could drop dead on this thing and no one will see me." But then I come out of the area and I think, "I have survived. It must not be my time." Soon the mowing season will be over and I will not need to get on the tractor until next spring, but I think I will miss it. It makes me come face to face with putting "life" and "death" in perspective.

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born and a time to die... (Eccl 3:1-2)



*For everything there is a season, and a
time for every purpose under heaven.
Eccl 3:1*



Save the Date
Preschool Pasta Dinner
Friday, February 28

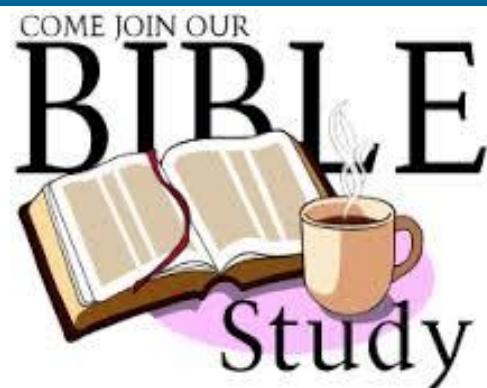


Counters Needed

Are you good with numbers or just like to count money? We need YOU!

Sunday mornings after 10am worship. No experience necessary.

Contact Jack Adams at
janjake@comcast.net



COME JOIN OUR BIBLE Study
Bible Study is back.
Join us again on January 15
at 11am in the Great Room.



Poinsettias for delivery to our homebound members



Dear Pastor Christie, Kim, and the members of St. Mark Lutheran Church,

Grateful thanks for the many gifts and gift cards you contributed to the Wishing Stars project to make a meaningful Christmas for the children and teens we serve. Your gifts are most appreciated and helped make Christmas brighter for our Avondale and North Center Chicago families. Thank you for your generous support. God's Peace to St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Mount Prospect in 2020.

Kathleen West, Outreach & Engagement Coordinator
 Concordia Place | www.concordiplace.org

To St. Mark—

Thank you for thinking of me with the lovely flower arrangement. That they were on the altar made them extra special! Wishing you all a joyous Christmas time. In Christ— Lois Ennes

Thank you for the altar flowers. They were so beautiful! Best regards—Marge Brix



2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 NEW YEAR'S DAY OFFICE CLOSED	2 12 pm Basketball	3 10 am Basketball 6 pm Basketball	4
5 8 am Worship 10 am Worship	6 12:30 pm Bridge Club 6:30 pm PADS	7 11 am Private Event 4 pm Basketball 5:30 pm Basketball 7 pm Mary Circle 7 pm Take Down Christmas Decorations	8 9:30 am Volleyball 4:30 pm Basketball 6 pm Basketball	9 4 pm Basketball 6 pm Basketball 6:30 pm Bell Choir 7:30 pm Vocal Choir	10 Hal Eggert Funeral 9:30 am Visitation 11:00 am Service 4:30 pm Basketball 6 pm Basketball	11 12 pm Basketball
12 8 am Worship 10 am Worship	13 6:30 pm PADS	14 4 pm Basketball 5:30 pm Basketball 7 pm Worship & Music	15 9 am Quilting 9:30 am Volleyball 11 am Bible Study 4:30 pm WOW 4:30 pm Basketball 6 pm Basketball	16 1 pm Senior Lunch Bunch 4 pm Basketball 4:30 pm FaithWalk 5:30 pm Basketball 6:30 pm Bell Choir 7:30 pm Vocal Choir	17 4:30 pm Basketball 6 pm Basketball 7 pm Craft Connection 8:30 pm Ultimate Lock-In	18 12 pm Basketball
19 8 am Worship 10 am Worship	20 6:30 pm PADS	21 4 pm Basketball 5:30 pm Basketball 7 pm Church Council	22 9:30 am Volleyball 11 am Bible Study 4:30 pm WOW 4:30 pm Basketball 5 pm Playgroup 6 pm Community Meal 6 pm Basketball	23 4 pm Basketball 4:30 pm FaithWalk 6 pm Basketball 6:30 pm Bell Choir 7:30 pm Vocal Choir	24 4:30 pm Basketball 6 pm Basketball	25 12 pm Basketball
26 8 am Worship 10 am Worship 8:30-11:30 am Fair Trade on Sale	27 1 pm Book Club 6:30 pm PADS 6:30 pm Gratefulness Gathering	28 9 am Quilting 4 pm Basketball 5:30 pm Basketball 7 pm Book Study	29 9:30 am Volleyball 11 am Bible Study 4:30 pm WOW 4:30 pm Basketball 6 pm Basketball	30 4 pm Basketball 4:30 pm FaithWalk 5:30 pm Basketball 6:30 pm Bell Choir 7:30 pm Vocal Choir	31 4:30 pm Basketball 6 pm Basketball	

