



St. Mark Lutheran Church

CrossBeams

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

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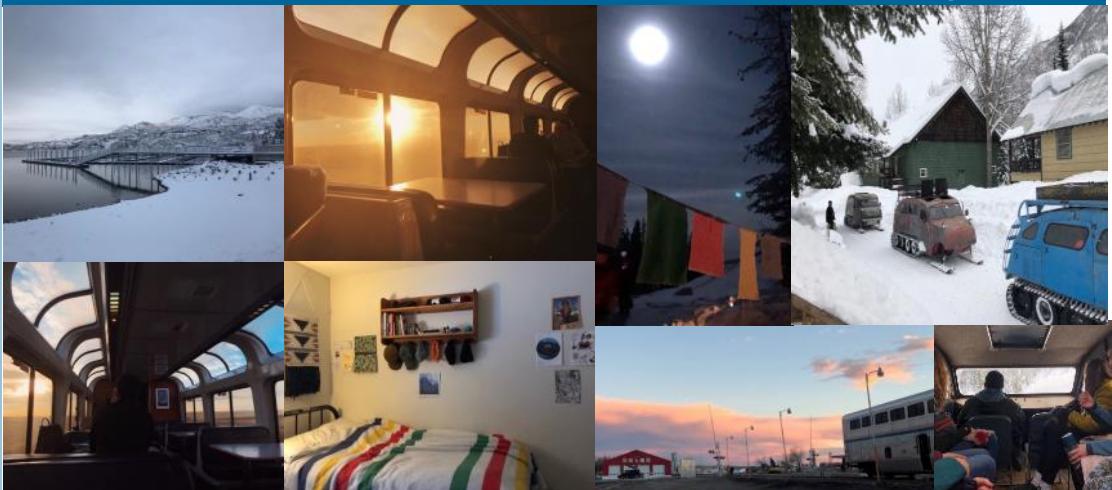
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Dispatches from Holden: A Report on Erin Schultz's Volunteer Stay at Holden Village

By: Deacon David Webb

Erin arrived in Holden Village to start her extended volunteer work in the early part of January. Erin took a fifty hour Amtrak ride from Chicago to Spokane before catching a Gray Hound Bus to Wenatchee, a ferry up Lake Chelan, and a School Bus up eleven switch backs to Holden Village, which sits at an elevation of 3200 feet above sea level in the Cascade Mountains. At Holden, they have 79 inches of snow on the ground at the moment.

Erin's days start early in the village, that is a reclaimed copper mining village that became a Lutheran retreat center in the 1960's. Erin is a floater, who has been trained to do several jobs working in the library, in the house keeping department, food service, and the gift shop. She says she's already cleaned all the bathrooms on the property once.

In her free time Erin gets to live with a community from all over the world who are visiting or volunteering at Holden. January Term students from St. Olaf are taking a class at the village right now. Erin is learning to knit and the Scandinavian art of sauna. Erin reports that they rotate between steam baths and jumping into the snow. Erin quickly had to learn how to snow shoe and what to do in the event of an avalanche. In the coming month, an igloo engineer will teach a class to the volunteers on igloo construction in the wild. It also sounds like riding around in the village's antique Bombadier Snow Cats is also a favorite of the winter staff.

We give thanks for Erin's safe travel and the news that she is settling in to a great winter of spending time with friends in community and serving the church.



Why are we here? What are we here for? These words from our first week of Explore God as we considered "Does life have a purpose?" have been ringing out in my heart and soul ever since. For that week of focus was also paired with a conversation between 5 other Lutheran churches in Des Plaines, Mt. Prospect, Arlington Heights and Rolling Meadows as led by our Metro

Chicago Synod Bishop Wayne Miller. The purpose of the conversation was to seek out ways we can partner and support each other in ministry. Bishop Miller started the conversation by asking us: Why are you here? And then gave us the options of answering in one of the following ways:

- We are here to meet our needs. St. Mark as a congregation and the people within it have needs and we are here with the purpose to meet those needs.
- We are here to meet the community's needs. They have needs, we can meet them.
- We are here to meet God's needs. God is up to something, we are here to help meet what God needs so that God's dreams come into being.

It was fascinating to be faced with those possible answers and to work my way through them. The honest answer for most of us would probably be we are here for our needs. We come to church to fill the God-shaped hole in our hearts and lives, to experience the divine and the gifts of Christian community. If we got really honest, that on some level we are here to keep being here, that St. Mark's need at its base settles on continuing to exist in the future. The problem is that nowhere in scripture does it say the purpose of Christian community is to keep on existing in the way it always has. Nowhere. In fact, that answer sort of misses the point of all that Christ was about, that new life and good news part.

The second answer seems like a good one, possibly the right one in some ways as we are called to love our neighbor, to meet Jesus in the needs of the community--based in scripture and important. And yet, what this often translates into in ministry is what do "they" want, and how can we meet that need. As in, what do young families want? How can we be that to bring them in? What do people want in terms of music in worship? How can we do that? It creates a consumerist set up, where the church is a product to meet people's "needs" which are often really their wants. And the truth is wants are constantly in flux. It creates a situation where people consume a product, not build a community.

And so we come to the third answer. God is up to something, and God wants to partner with us in that endeavor. God needs something from us to accomplish God's work, because God has chosen to work through and with people. What does God need from us in this time and place? Asking this question leads us deeper into relationship with God, into discernment, and I would propose would meet the needs of the community and ours along the way. And yet, we are so often more likely to focus on what we need or even what the community needs. I wonder, what are we missing out on by not looking for what God needs from us. I wonder what answers you hear and see when you consider what God needs from us in this time and place. I wonder what powerful mission and ministry we have right before us as we consider and follow that question wherever it leads. I'm excited to find out, for us to find out together.

Peace in Christ,
Pr. Christie



exploreGod™ CHICAGO | 7 WEEKS 2019 JAN-FEB

**JOIN US FOR A
7-WEEK SERIES
WHERE WE WILL
EXPLORE THE
BIG QUESTIONS**

- 1 Does Life Have a Purpose?**
- 2 Is There a God?**
- 3 Why Does God Allow Pain & Suffering?**
- 4 Is Christianity Too Narrow?**
- 5 Is Jesus Really God?**
- 6 Is The Bible Reliable?**
- 7 Can I Know God Personally?**

Sermon Series and Discussion Groups starting January 13



Gratefulness Gatherings: Monday, February 11th from 6:30-8PM

In 2019, St. Mark is hosting Gratefulness Gatherings for the local community. It is a time for sacred space, belonging, and wholeheartedness. Each evening will consist of a simple meal, 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



What's Happening in Youth & Family Ministry?

By: Deacon David Webb

Youth Ministry has been full of great joy, already in this new year. So far we have upwards of 60 young people participating in St. Mark ministries and new students continue to join us every week.. Join us at WOW! on Wednesdays from 4:30-6 most

Wednesdays and 4:30-7 on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Join us for Faithwalk on Thursdays from 4:30-6. Or check out the bulletin board for more information about all the other work we're up to elsewhere.

February 3: Souper Bowl of Caring (for All) The St. Mark Youth will be collecting canned food items and cash donations. All food donations will be taken to the Mount Prospect Food Pantry and all cash donations will be sent to ELCA World Hunger. Please help us Tackle Hunger.



Playgroup, Stories and Snacks, and Preschool Chapel- The Christmas and Epiphany stories have been a huge part of our focus in Playgroup, Preschool Chapel, and Advent Peace night for kids. Students have thoroughly enjoyed this festive time of year and these well-known stories.



February 27: Playgroup & Community Meal

Playgroup at 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.

Community Meal at 6PM. All are Welcome! Come share a meal and Fellowship.

WOW!- Students have been learning about "The Sheepfold" which is a Montessori-inspired learning space for students in the Education Wing. Students have the chance to pray together and engage in many work projects that are supported within the space. The time in the Sheepfold deepens students' relationship with God and helps them develop focus and concentration in prayer. Students have been collecting canned goods and money for the Souper Bowl of Caring.



Faithwalk. Students are engaging the "Explore God" series and planning their offering projects and service projects for the new year.



February 17-18: Peace Camp (for Middle School) A gathering that stretches over 2 days. Participants will get the chance to meet other middle schoolers from the suburbs that are part of other faith traditions—forming friendships, visiting Jewish, Muslim & Christian faith communities, learning about the richness of traditions. Contact Deacon David for details and to sign-up.



Shine! And Leadership Development- High School students are working very hard on weekly leadership development projects. Students have been invited to join an Interfaith Youth Council hosted by the Niagra Foundation. Summer trip planning is underway!



February 15-16: 30-Hour Famine Retreat (High School) Spend Friday night and Saturday at the church learning about hunger and justice related issues. We will pack backpacks and visit Feed My Starving Children. Contact Deacon David for details and to sign-up.



Worship Assistants and Young People in Worship- Students of all ages have been taking on greater responsibility within Sunday worship services. Church is the work of the people and our youngest members have been sharing their gifts with us and making church a richer more meaningful experience. Students are reading the lessons, serving as assisting minister, preaching, serving communion, helping with children's church, and doing their weekly work (playing, crafting, singing, being joyful, etc).



Celebrating Christmas: Keeping the Decorations Up! And “The Season of Light and Dark”

By: Deacon David Webb

Celebrating Christmas as a professional Christian who works for a church that celebrates a typical liturgical observance of Christmas is a funny thing. My celebration and my immediate family's celebration of Christmas, happen primarily at church and with whatever time and energy are left we celebrate at home and with extended family. It's fun even though it's taken some getting used to. My main way of celebrating is doing nothing, wearing pajamas, and drinking tea. Those are not really things I can do during Christmas worship at St. Mark.



Thankfully January is a quiet moment in the church year and Christmas is 12 days long on the calendar, even if the radio station goes back to playing other music right away. Either way, there's plenty of time for celebrating, family, sleeping in, staying up late, candles, warm sweaters, cookies, pajamas, doing nothing, and tea.

Last year I was happy to continue the celebrating and leave the tree and decorations up until Candlemas (The Feast of the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple) on February 1. That's a little bit absurd even by goofball standards such as mine. I just love the festival and magic of Christmas. Time has an extraordinary quality in that week between Christmas and Epiphany. The lights, the decorations, and the celebration bring a certain life to the winter months that I have grown to love.

We celebrated with a live/cut Christmas tree this year so our décor had a certain life span this year that was not going to make it to February. I also got tired of finding Christmas tree ornaments everywhere but on the tree, because Thomas loved them all so much that he would take them down and play with them everywhere. The stairs were his favorite place. So we put the decorations away after Epiphany, but around the same time Christie and I both found books from Scandinavian writers who espoused obviously essential truths. #1 Candle light in a room is essential for happiness. #2 During the winter months, one should stop for a warm drink and a cookie at least 4 times a day.

So, my formal Christmas celebration was shorter this year than in past years, but after we read these obvious human truths we began celebrating this season of January and February called: “Ordinary Time” or “The Time After Epiphany,” under the new title, at our house anyway, “The Season of Light and Dark.” At dusk we light all the candles in the house and turn the main lights off. We put on warmer, comfier clothes. We say prayers about how God comforts us and keeps us warm and gives us the dark to help us rest and grow. We have been intentional about having warm conversations with each other or making phone calls to loved ones and savoring our conversations. Of course, I didn't have to work in the warm drinks into my daily schedule as they have been there all along.

It has been a great joy to do something so simple as light candles and celebrate warmth. It has also seemed like a natural extension of Christmas and continuation of Epiphany. I don't know why we didn't start this earlier. Anyway, I wonder how you've been continuing to celebrate? How have you used the “gifts” of Christmas, the tangible and intangible gifts you received this year? Have you been putting decorations away and tidying up? Have you been reflecting on your star word? Are you shoveling snow and doing maintenance on your snow blower? Maybe you're planning to go to Florida a few weeks earlier this year. I hope your celebration has been rich and continues to gift you with the new life and love that is born every year at Christmas.

Thoughts from the Loft

As we continue to “Explore God” throughout the month of February, I would like to suggest it is possible to explore God in music. Each Sunday the music that is chosen attempts to reflect the lessons for that day in some way. Sometimes the connections with the lessons are more obvious than others. The vocal choir anthems reflect general themes for the day while bell choir anthems are often times based on hymns that reflect a theme. I admit we sometimes need to adapt, but it is my hope that each Sunday the music feeds our spirit as we worship God. So, be sure to explore God in our musical hymns and offerings throughout the year!

Peace!
Tim



Senior Lunch Bunch (or anyone who would like to join us)

Thursday, February 21

1:00 pm

Le Peep Cafe

(10 E. Northwest Hwy., Mt Prospect)

RSVP to Marilyn at 847-508-5512 before Monday, February 18.



**Friday, February 15
7pm in the Great Room
Smorgasbord of Crafts**

Come make mats for the Homeless or tie a fleece blanket for Project Linus or bring your own personal craft to work on. No Snacks for February because High Schooler participating in the 30-hr Famine will be joining us.

**Come and join the
Fun & Fellowship!**

(Recommended for 6th grade through adult)



**Sunday, February 24
Immediately following
10 am worship**

Copies of the 2018 Annual Report will be available beginning Sunday, February 10



Calendar

Tuesday, February 6	7:00 pm
Mary Circle in the Great Room (Note: Date Change)	
Wednesday, February 20 &	
Tuesday, February 26	9:00 am
Quilting in the Ed. Wing	
Saturday, February 23	9:00 am
St. Mark Women's Retreat in the Great Room	
Saturday, March 2	9:30 am
Morning of Dialogue and Prayer at St. Edna's Catholic Church in Arlington Heights	
Tuesday, March 5	5:45 pm
Mardi Gras Potluck Dinner in Fellowship Hall	



Date Change

Mary Circle is changing its regular meeting night to the **first Tuesday** of the month. If you are interested in women's fellowship and Bible Study, please join us in the Great Room at **7 pm on February 5**.



Quilters

Join the quilters on **Wednesday, February 20, and/or Tuesday, February 26** as they make quilts for Lutheran World Relief. They meet at 9 am on the second floor of the education wing. No sewing experience needed.



Knowing God

A Women's Retreat

WOMEN'S RETREAT Saturday, February 23

Treat yourself to some special reflective time on Saturday, February 23, at our warm winter women's retreat. The doors will open at 8:30 am, with the program, led by Pastor Christie, running from 9am-2pm in the Great Room. Lunch is included. The cost is just \$10. Please register beginning on Sunday, February 3 in the narthex, or contact Gail Radtke at 847-255-2977. Hope you can be there!

30th Annual Women's Morning of Dialogue and Prayer "Embracing Faith in Action"

The women of the Metro Chicago Synod ELCA and the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago will hold their 30th annual joint gathering on Saturday, March 2, at St Edna's Catholic Church, 2525 N. Arlington Heights Rd., Arlington Heights. Coffee and treats will be available at 8:30 am, with the program running from 9:30am-1pm, including lunch. The program features a keynote speaker, discussion and a worship service. The cost is \$20. Contact Gail Radtke 847-255-2977, by February 15, if interested.

Mark Your Calendars NOW!
Ladies Night Out at the Movies
Friday, April 12



thank you!

Dear St. Mark,

This is to thank you for the beautiful flowers, prayers, thoughts and pastoral visits while I was in rehab at the Lutheran Home. I continue to heal at home.

God's Peace,
Edah S. Grobe

Dear St. Mark Lutheran Church,

Thank you very much for the beautiful poinsettia plant. It was a big surprise to find it in my room (Highlands Assisted Living) along with the wonderful card and greeting. It has been many years since I was

a member of St Mark, but have many fond memories as a member. Thank you again. Blessings in the New Year.

Fondly,
Adeline Syme

Update on Columbarium/Memorial Garden Project

As of late January, 17 niche reservations have been completed, and there are 9 more in process. The donations received through reservations and other gifts total about \$27,000. Adding in the memorial funds (\$16,440) for Mary Ann Anderson, Len Bazan, Joni Beaudry, and LeRoy Reents results in a total of \$43,500 in donations to date. We anticipate that new reservations will bring this to a total of \$57,000 by early summer which will cover the cost of the columbarium and the construction. A very special thanks to all who have given money as well as volunteer labor and materials to this new ministry.



The manufacturer of the columbarium, Armento, is so pleased with the design and appearance of our installation that they have included a photo of it in a new ad that they are running in the March issue of *The Living Lutheran*, the monthly periodical of the ELCA.

The columbarium brochure is being updated to provide current information. If you have any questions regarding the use of the columbarium, please call the church office, or contact one of the committee members.

We are now working with a landscape architect, Gage Berger, from Gary R. Weber Associates in Wheaton to develop a final plan for a memorial garden. We had a preliminary meeting with him in November to hear his rationale for the initial sketch proposal and receive input. The committee will have a second meeting **Monday, February 18 at 7:00 p.m.** to respond to his revised plan. All who are interested in this project are invited to attend.

This project will provide a significant upgrade to the external appearance of our property and provide a setting for meditation and reflection, as well as a place where a loved one's ashes can be incorporated into the soil. Once the committee agrees on the final plan, actual construction will depend on sufficient funding from memorials, donations, and the columbarium fund.

by Carl Anderson for the Committee: Nancy and Gary Snell, Lynn Istwan, Marilyn & Lars Gosell, Keith Youngquist, Dick and Dianne Quast, and Julie Wenzel



ASH WEDNESDAY

SAVE THE DATE

March 6, 2019

11am, 7pm

6pm Family Worship

Join us as we remember that we are dust, and to dust we shall return. Gather for worship, the giving of ashes, and communion as we begin our Lenten journey.



**Plastic grocery bags needed
for Backpack Ministry &
Craft Connection**



MARDI GRAS POTLUCK DINNER Tuesday, March 5

5:45 pm in Fellowship Hall

Start thinking about what favorite dish you will bring to pass. Last names beginning with

A-M: Bring a pasta or meat dish

N-Z: Bring a salad or dessert

Pop, coffee & lemonade provided.

Palm burning service to end the night.



The Office Staff is excited to welcome the newest addition to our team!!!

St Mark Preschool's

6th Annual Pasta Dinner Night



Silent
Auction

Children Singing
Performance



Raffles
Prizes

Prizes Include:

Bears Tickets, Cubs Tickets, Bulls Tickets, Wolves Tickets, Ride to School in a Fire Truck or Police Car, Various Raffle Baskets, Gift Cards, 50/50 Raffle and much much more!

Advanced Meal Tickets

Adults: \$10 Seniors: \$8 Children (ages 3-12): \$5 Children 2 & under: Free

Adult & Senior meal tickets are \$2 more each at the door.

Dinner includes: Pasta, Salad, Bread, Dessert

Lemonade & Wine

50/50 Tickets

\$5.00 each or 5 for \$20.00

Tickets for the raffle will be sold at the door for \$2 each

Questions? Contact Maggie Parniak: maggieparniak@gmail.com or Kerry Weaver kewaco@gmail.com



2019 Pasta Dinner Ticket Form

Please fill out the form and return to St. Mark Preschool with payment.

Checks payable to *St. Mark Preschool and Enrichment Center*

Return by January 25th

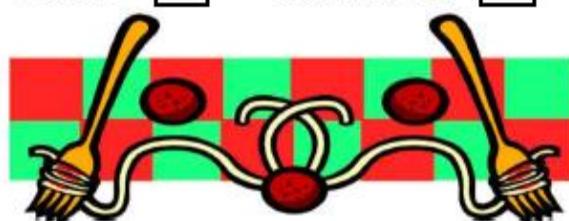
Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Number of Dinner Tickets: Adults Seniors Children (3-12)

Number of 50/50 Tickets:

Total Amount Included: _____





Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 9 am Preschool Gym 4:30 pm Basketball 6 pm Basketball	2 10 am Preschool Open House 6:30 pm Nibblers
3 <i>Explore God Series</i> <i>Is Christianity Too Narrow?</i> 8 am Worship 10 am Worship SouperBowl of Caring Collection 9 am Discussion Group 11 am Discussion Group	4 12:30 pm Bridge Club 6:30 pm PADS	5 11 am Private Event 5:30 pm Basketball 7 pm Mary Circle 7 pm Foundation	6 9:30 am Volleyball 11 am Bible Study-Discussion Group 4:30 pm WOW 6 pm Basketball	7 4:30 pm FaithWalk 6 pm Basketball 6:30 pm Bell Choir 7:30 pm Vocal Choir	8 9 am Preschool Gym 4:30 pm Basketball 5:30 pm Preschool Annual Pasta Dinner	9 3 pm Private Event
10 <i>Explore God Series</i> <i>Is Jesus Really God?</i> 8 am Worship 10 am Worship 9 am Discussion Group 11 am Discussion Group	11 6:30 pm PADS 6:30 pm Gratefulness Gathering	12 9 am Preschool Gym 5:30 pm Basketball 7 pm Worship/Music	13 9:30 am Volleyball 11 am Bible Study 4:30 pm WOW 6 pm Basketball 6:30 pm Power Your Home with Solar Energy	14 4:30 pm FaithWalk 6:30 pm Bell Choir 7:30 pm Vocal Choir	15 9 am Preschool Gym 4:30 pm Basketball 6 pm 30-Hr Famine Retreat 7 pm Craft Connection	16 30-Hr Famine Retreat Continues, ending at 6 pm
17 <i>Explore God Series</i> <i>Is the Bible Reliable?</i> 8 am Worship 10 am Worship 9 am Discussion Group 11 am Discussion Group 11:30 am Peace Camp	18 10:30 am Peace Camp 6:30 pm PADS	19 9 am Preschool Gym 5:30 pm Basketball 7 pm Church Council	20 9 am Quilting 9:30 am Volleyball 11 am Bible Study 4:30 pm WOW 6 pm Basketball	21 4:30 pm FaithWalk 6 pm Basketball 6:30 pm Bell Choir 7:30 pm Vocal Choir	22 9 am Preschool Gym 4:30 pm Basketball	23 Women's Retreat
24 <i>Explore God Series</i> <i>Can I Know God Personally?</i> 8 am Worship 10 am Worship 9 am Discussion Group 11 am Discussion Group	25 1 pm Book Club 6:30 pm PADS	26 9 am Preschool Gym 9 am Quilting 5:30 pm Basketball	27 9:30 am Volleyball 11 am Bible Study 4:30 pm WOW 5 pm Playgroup 6 pm Community Meal 6 pm Basketball	28 4:30 pm FaithWalk 5:30 pm Basketball 6:30 pm Bell Choir 7:30 pm Vocal Choir		

