

St. Mark's News – January 12

Cassie Gonzales Baptism: Today, we baptize Cassandra Rowan Gonzales, daughter of Cat and Josh Gonzales, into the Christian Tradition and into our family of faith. Please, join in giving thanks for her life and the commitment being made on her behalf as she is sealed as Christ's own forever. A special Baptism Cake will be at the 10:30 Social Hour for the celebration.

Beloved parishioner, Lee Stodtman, will be 101 years old on January 13. Several of us from St. Marks are planning to be present to wish him a very happy birthday as we did last year. If you would like to send Lee a card, his address is as follows: 115 BECS 2565 44th St. Grand Rapids, MI 49512. Please, keep Lee in your prayers as we celebrate his special day. Lee is St. Mark's oldest living parishioner for whom we are most grateful. Happy Birthday, Lee! ~ Christian+

Reminder if you have requested Offering Envelopes: They are available for you to pick up at the Welcome Desk.

Cold and Flu Season: As we all know; we are in the midst of the cold and flu season. Please, wash your hands as often as possible. Hand sanitizer lotion can be found at both entrances of the Sanctuary. Please, feel free to use it when entering and leaving Church. Thank you.

Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Service Jan 20: Fountain Street Church will host their annual MLK Jr. Service and Celebration on Jan. 20 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Episcopal 101, Wednesday, January 22nd: Episcopal 101 is a presentation followed by a discussion on all things 'Episcopal'. We will have a desert and tea at 6:30 p.m. followed by our formation session open to adults and youth. A signup sheet is at the Welcome Desk so we can prepare for the evening. Come for fellowship and learning. ~Christian+

Stewardship Matching Grant: A generous parishioner has offered \$5,000 toward the *Shining Our Light* Stewardship Campaign for 2020. If you have not yet pledged, now would be a golden opportunity to pledge, so that matching dollars would be available to match your pledge. Please, consider this opportunity and make a pledge for 2020. Please, see the back page for Budget 2020 information. As of Friday January 10, we have 150 pledges totaling \$505,417 toward the Stewardship need of \$525,000 for 2020. ~ *Stewardship Ministry*

Lenten Devotional writers: Please consider writing a devotional entry for our collaborative 2019 Lenten Devotional. The Deadline is three weeks away and we are in need of sixteen writers total. Scripture choices and reminder sheets are available on the Welcome Desk. Thank you for being a part of this meaningful booklet.

'Panhandling' at St. Mark's: Please, consider 'not' giving cash to anyone who asks either in the parking lot or in the Parish House, as that perpetuates expectations of further contributions on Sundays and during the week. A reminder that St. Mark's offers assistance to our neighbors and the broader community through our various programs which includes financial assistance to twelve local agencies and organizations, the list of which can be found on the Parish's website. In addition, the Parish's Discretionary Fund enables us to offer assistance to individuals by helping with such things as pharmacy bills, energy bills or rent assistance. We do not give cash or checks to individuals and ask that none of us give money to anyone requesting it. Many thanks.

Parish Annual Meeting and Parish Lunch February 2 following the 10:30 Eucharist: The Parish Annual Meeting is a shared experience unlike any other during the year. Those who attended last year's Annual

Meeting experienced a presentation of the state of the Parish, elections of new Vestry persons and Delegates to Convention and a wonderful potluck lunch. A signup sheet is on the welcome desk to sign up for a dish to pass as well as to help with the clean up after the meeting. If you are the Chair of a Ministry, please, submit your annual meeting report by so that we can gather all the reports and have them ready as soon as possible. All ministries are expected to be part of the Annual Meeting Report. If you wish to be considered as a delegate to Convention, the first Friday-Saturday of November, please let Christian know. We will elect four delegates and two alternates to represent St. Mark's. Only the Rector's report will be given but all the other reports and financials will be available in hard copy and online. Please, 'save the date' and plan to be with us. Childcare will be provided. Blessings and thanks. ~ *Christian+*

Volunteer with Children's Ministry: Our Children's program is growing and we need more Sunday volunteers! You can sign-up to help just one Sunday a month or more as it fits with your schedule and interest. We need help during our 9:30 Formation Class and our 10:30 Children's Chapel. You can pick the time that works best for you! All volunteers must attend "Safeguarding God's Children" training and undergo a background check. Please contact Laura Kozminski if you are interested: laurak@stmarksgo.org

Youth events and information: Happy New Year. Our Wednesday night Oasis program for middle and high school youth will return next week Wednesday, January 15. More details to come on that later this week. In the meantime, our annual volunteer opportunity at Soup's on For All, the annual fundraiser for God's Kitchen, held at The B.O.B. in downtown GR, is Monday evening, January 27th. We have 12 volunteer slots available for our group, split between two shifts. Parents, you are definitely encouraged to sign up for any available slot, too, as this has traditionally been a family volunteer event for G.R.E.Y. Bonus: you will get to sample the soups and other goodies before or after your shift. There is a volunteer training session on Saturday the 25th from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at The B.O.B., however it is not required as I know many of us have volunteered at this event for a good number of years. Please do let me know if you plan to attend the orientation; it does not typically last that entire time. Catholic Charities values our support of this event over the years and always ask us to come back. Funds raised at this event cover the annual cost of food for the lunch God's Kitchen serves to those in need every day. Thanks in advance! Peace, Jeff Jeff Brown, Director of Youth Ministries

Soups on volunteer Opportunity Available for all - Jan 27: Please see the information listed above for this Catholic Charities event at the B.O.B. We would love to have a large representation attend from St. Mark's. Please sign up at the Welcome Desk if you are interested in attending.