

# St. Mark's News – February 9

**Annual Meeting Thank You:** Many thanks to everyone who submitted reports, prepared the lunch and who attended last Sunday's Annual Meeting. With about 120 present, we had a nearly full Parish Hall, feasted on delicious food and celebrated the past year as a Parish. New Vestry members were approved, and the Budget for 2020 was received with thanks. Copies of the Annual Meeting Report are available on the Welcome Desk of the Parish House. Blessings and thanks to everyone!

**Announcements on Sundays:** Numerous parishioners have commented on the length of the 10:30 Service on Sundays, especially those with small children. Reports indicate that announcements on Sundays are a significant part of the overall length of the 10:30 Service and can go on for some 15 minutes and more. Worship Ministry has taken these comments seriously and discussed the 10:30 Service and its length on several occasions. Respectfully, we ask that announcements be tailored to one minute in length, and all those making announcements are asked to check-in with the Presider before the Service. Other aspects of the service have been adjusted to ensure that the service does not go over one hour and fifteen minutes. Bulletin announcements need to be no more than a brief paragraph. Ministries are invited to sponsor the Social Hours with the opportunity to share information and events involving their ministry. Extended announcements or articles can be put in eNews as a link. We encourage more of us to read the weekly eNews which is packed with important information. Many thanks to Worship Ministry for their input and ask that every please be understanding. Many thanks. ~ +*Christian & Worship Ministry*

**Wednesdays @ St. Mark's:** *Celebrating Our Tradition*, explores and discusses what it means to be an Episcopalian on February 12 and 19. The sessions provide partial preparation for anyone considering Confirmation, Reception or Reaffirmation and reminders to seasoned Episcopalians of the beautiful Tradition in which we find ourselves. Youth (G.R.E.Y.) and adults will share in the potluck supper at 6:00 p.m. and then retire to separate spaces for the formation opportunities. At 7:45, we will pray Compline (Night Prayer) in the Chancel of the Church, concluding the night by 8:00 p.m. Please, join us and bring a dish to share. Childcare will be available, and all are welcome! ~ *Christian+*

**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

**The next Strategic Plan meeting:** Will be held on Feb 12 at 4 p.m. in the Library.

**A walking tour of ice sculptures downtown Grand Rapids, Feb 16:** The City of Grand Rapids is offering St Marks a walking tour next Sunday at 3 p.m. Meet at Wood TV pavilion outside (near Rosa Parks) Off street parking in the city in most area's is free. Contact Michelle Gordon with your RSVP at 616-443-0596 call or text or email [michellegordon@gordongroupgr.com](mailto:michellegordon@gordongroupgr.com)

**New Parishioners Dinner, Feb 16:** All newcomers, singles and families, to St. Mark's over the last year or so are invited to a dinner in the Parish Hall on February 16 from 5 to 7 p.m. All are welcome. A sign-up sheet is available at the Welcome Desk.

**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](mailto:laurak@stmarksgo.org)

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

**Electronic Giving:** We are pleased to announce that we continue to provide electronic giving. This is a convenient and safe way to make a one-time or recurring donation. Getting started is easy – just pick up a form at the resource table. When you participate, your gift will transfer directly into St. Mark's bank account. If you are a snow bird, away on vacation or just can't make it to church on any given Sunday, you won't have to remember to write a check or stop by the ATM. If you still want to place something in the offertory, just pick up one of our "I gave electronically" cards on your way into church and use that at the offertory time. – Pam Stevenson, Finance Manager

**Micah Project Event:** Join us on February 18th to learn about Broad Based Organizing. There will be two sessions, one if this is new to you and one that will go deeper if you've been coming to previous trainings. The event will take place from 7-9 p.m. at Westminster Presbyterian Church. Please see the eNews for link and registration.

**Wednesday's at St. Mark's during Lent:** Join us for The Story of Jesus in History and Faith presented by Herb Merrill Mar 4, 11, 18, 25, Apr 1. For more information on each this series and a description of each week please refer to the link on the eNews.

**St. Mark's Parish-Wide Dismantling Racism Reading Project:** All St. Mark's parishioners and friends of St. Marks are encouraged to participate in the Parish-wide reading and discussion of Ibram X. Kendi's book How to be an Anti-Racist. None of us sets out to be a racist. None of us believes that we are racist. Yet the sin of racism permeates our social and political institutions. How is that possible? What can we do about it? This parish-wide book reading project is a first step in a long-term journey responding to Bishop Hoagland's charge that we engage in racial healing, reconciliation, and justice as we pledged earlier in Fall 2019. Books can be purchased at the Welcome Desk for \$15.00 after the 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. services on February 9 and February 16, with a limited number of scholarships available as needed. Alternatively, two copies are available for loan through the St. Mark's Library or via direct purchase from Amazon. Multiple dinner and/afternoon discussion sessions will be announced soon with discussions beginning in March. Contact **Wendy Wenner** at [wennerw@gvsu.edu](mailto:wennerw@gvsu.edu) or **Anne Hiskes** at [alhiskes@gmail.com](mailto:alhiskes@gmail.com) for more information. Please notify them when you finish the book so that they may schedule a discussion.

**Driver needed:** We have a parishioner who is in need of a ride to and from church on Sundays who lives in the Alger Heights area. If you are interested in helping please contact Mike Armour who will coordinate a schedule.

**Environmental Care Ministry:** Protecting our planet from harm and ameliorating the damage that has already been done is urgent. St. Mark's is forming an Environmental Care Ministry, and we are looking for parishioners who would like to be part of it. We envision education and action at the personal and church level, and we hope to become involved with other groups that are addressing environmental issues on a larger stage. If you are interested in belonging to this group, please contact Marie McKendall at [mack752@att.net](mailto:mack752@att.net).