

# OUTDOOR WORSHIP

**EACH SUNDAY** MAY 9 - SEPTEMBER 5, 2021

[stmarkscr.org/outdoorworship](http://stmarkscr.org/outdoorworship)

## SPRING/SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE BEGINS MAY 9

The opportunity to worship outside on our stunning campus provides us with the chance to be reminded of God's beautiful creation, to be thankful for the new life we have in Christ, and to worship together.

Our contemporary worship service will meet **EACH** Sunday at 10:00 am in our "backyard" beginning May 9.

Our 8:30 traditional service will be inside, **however the third Sunday of each month (May-August), we will host our traditional service outside at 8:30 am.** Please note, we will not have our 10:00 am traditional service through the summer.

If it is raining, the service(s) will be moved inside, where masks are currently required. We'll let you know of weather changes by 8:00 am each Sunday morning on our Facebook and Instagram pages, as well as our website.

If Outdoor Worship isn't for you, that's okay! You can join us inside for traditional worship at 8:30 am or we will be livestreaming our Outdoor Worship at 10:00 am. Enjoy the outdoors... inside! Learn more about Outdoor Worship at [stmarkscr.org/outdoorworship](http://stmarkscr.org/outdoorworship)

## ROAD MAP TO **REGATHERING** 2021\*



Our staff is making plans as we move towards a safe "regathering". This past year we have focused our COVID-19 mitigation strategies to lessen the chance of virus spread and to keep others safe. As vaccinations in our local area and state continue to increase and virus positivity rates decrease, we are prayerfully and thoughtfully moving towards a new normal, with high hopes for a Fall 2021 Regathering.

Learn more at [stmarkscr.org/covid19](http://stmarkscr.org/covid19)

\*Please note: all details and dates are subject to change based on current data and COVID-19 numbers.

One of the challenging aspects of the Bible is that the authors are unafraid to air everyone's dirty laundry. From Genesis to Revelation, no one comes off smelling rosy (except Jesus - but he wasn't that rosy smelling to people at the time). For example, read through the Apostle Paul's letters to churches he ministered to and you'll notice some unsightly behaviors and attitudes in those churches. Especially as you read 1 Corinthians, what our current series "One Love" is focused on, you'll read about some jaw-dropping scandals, internal strife, and general malfeasance among the congregation.

I like that. Not the malfeasance that is, but the fact that we get insight into the struggles of one of the earliest church communities.

Have you ever heard someone say, or maybe you have thought this yourself, that things were better in the past? You know, something like, "If we could just get back to simpler times," or in regard to the church, "I liked it better when the church \_\_\_\_\_ (you fill in the blank)?" We have this kind of nostalgia when thinking of the past, don't we? The irony is that if you really dig into the history of the church you'll find there's no better time in church history than any other time. Sure, the church grew in certain places quicker at certain times, but it wasn't because the church somehow figured out the formula for solving all its issues. Churches have always had issues and always will.

Why? Because the church is not a place for perfect people, but sinful ones. It's not a hospital of healthy people, but of sick ones. It's not a flawless body, but a body of flawed people. Paul doesn't soften his rhetoric toward people in his churches, but he also doesn't leave them without direction, delivering the solution for their struggles: one love. The one love of Jesus for flawed people, sick people, and sinful people. Flawed people for whom Jesus died.

Sick people for whom Jesus came to heal. Sinful people for whom Jesus redeemed.

That's why Paul starts his letter to the Corinthians with these encouraging words: "I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. For in him you have been enriched in every way." (1:4-5a)

What he's saying is that the Corinthians, though they have issues that he will deal with in his letter, by God's grace are not how they are behaving, they are something much more - enriched in every way. Literally it's like Paul is saying, "Even though you Corinthians have issues, the riches that have been bestowed on you in Christ Jesus by his grace far outweigh these issues you face!" And the same message Paul shares with the Corinthians is the same message God shares with all churches of all time - even St. Mark's!

How then do we as a church wrestle with and overcome our issues? Answer: **One Love.** The one love of Jesus poured out upon us by his grace. And his one love lived out in our lives for one another. When we remember that we have been "enriched in every way" by the one love of Jesus, it gives us the strength to change not only ourselves, but our church as well.

That's what Paul is eventually going to get to in his letter to the Corinthians. At the end of probably the most famous chapter in 1 Corinthians, Paul will write: "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." (13:13)

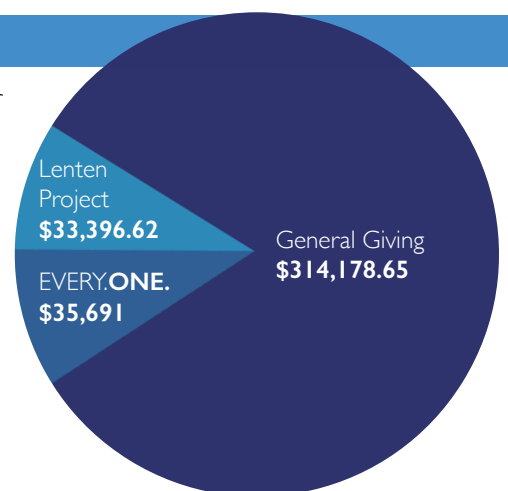
Faith is what we believe about Jesus. Hope is our confidence in a better future because of Jesus. Love is the outpouring of Jesus in our hearts and lives. And our church, though it has issues like every other church in history, is the expression of all three.

GIVING UPDATE • JANUARY-MARCH 2021

Bible-based giving isn't about guilt or pressure. It's about discovering the joy of cheerful generosity in response to God's amazing grace. All we have is a gift from God, and we're created to give, not just consume.

Continually throughout the New Testament we see Christians sharing generously and being encouraged to give to the mission of the church locally and globally (Acts 2:42-47; Acts 24:17; 1 Cor. 16:1-3; Phil. 4:10-19).

THANK YOU, St. Mark's, for your continued generosity and support. This summary graph to the right shows our giving through March 31, 2021.





## FAMILY MINISTRY UPDATE

### SCHOOL YEAR RECAP

It is hard to believe we are nearing the end of the school year and Wednesday and Sunday night ministries! We have felt the spirit moving within our students this year and saw relationships grow! Some highlights: over 230 students involved in ministry, witnessing a small group's presence at a fellow student's baptism, the Cultivate HYPE TEAM, and an incredible group of over 50 volunteers pouring into our students each week.

Thank you, families, for sharing your children with us. We are truly blessed to get to speak into their faith journey. We also want to thank RJ Hojka and his family and crew of volunteers for feeding our students a yummy meal each week!

### UPCOMING DATES

**Senior Recognition:** May 2 at all services

**VBS:** July 18-22

**Backpack Blessing:** August 22

**School-Year Programming Begins:** September 8

**Confirmation:** October 30

### VBS - SUMMER 2021

Families, parents, volunteers, EVERYONE! Mark your calendars for **July 18-22** - it's VBS Week!

At **Rocky Railway VBS**, kids explore Jesus' power and how we can trust Jesus to pull us through when life feels like a valley or a mountaintop.

Kids will rotate through stations while they are here: Worship with our live band, Bible Adventure, Chew Chew snacks, Imagination Station, KidVid Cinema, Loco Motion games, and finally Rocky Wrap Up.

### NEXT YEAR PREVIEW

Currently our Family Ministry team is making plans for Fall 2021 - we are most excited about returning to all students 2nd-8th grade here every Wednesday night.

Leader training will be Wednesday, September 1.





# HOLY WEEK AND EASTER RECAP

## TRAIL TO TOMB

- \$3436.62 raised for WHCC
- 1214 people in our parking lot
- 500 Easter eggs for kiddos
- 420 cars
- 75 volunteers each night
- 15 members of the planning team
- 8 narration tracks featuring St. Mark's partners
- 6 scenes
- 2 incredible nights
- 1 donkey

We've heard many stories of Trail to Tomb's impact - including a carload who drove from 2.5 hours away to see our church in action! Our narration tracks are still on our website at [stmarkscr.org/trailtotomb](http://stmarkscr.org/trailtotomb) if you'd like to listen again.

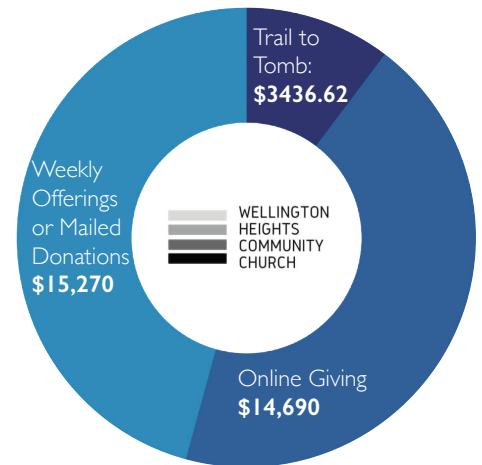
Thank you everyone for making Trail to Tomb an incredible community event!



## LENTEN PROJECT

Thank you St. Mark's! We officially raised **\$33,396.62** for the Lenten Project - benefitting our friends at **Wellington Heights Community Church**.

Between your generous giving, donations taken at Trail to Tomb, Easter flower donations, and a matching gift of \$25,000 - we are blown away at your generosity and support.



+ \$25,000 gift!

**= \$58,396.62 TOTAL!**

## EASTER MORNING

What an incredible morning celebrating Christ's resurrection! We began bright and early with our SONrise service. How beautiful to be together in God's creation. Inside the church building, we hosted eight separate services in the span of 3.5 hours! In total we had over 1,000 people join us for Easter services.

We can't forget our online Easter service featuring St. Mark's musicians and volunteers. As of this printing, it has over 850 views! Watch it (again!) at [stmarkscr.org/videoservices](http://stmarkscr.org/videoservices)







**SECOND CHANCE**  
M O N T H

**SECOND CHANCE MONTH**


The St. Mark's Prison Ministry Team exists to share the love of Jesus to prisoners and returning citizens through advocacy, education, and action. Together as a congregation, during Second Chance Month and beyond, we can help open the door for approximately 70 million Americans to live up to their potential after paying their debt to society!

This past month the Prison Ministry team hosted a screening of the movie *Just Mercy*. Currently they are hosting an Alpha program with the men of Hope CDA on Tuesday nights here at St. Mark's. Their final 'event' for the month is a Community Prayer Walk on Sunday, April 25.

**44,000**



**LEGAL BARRIERS TO SECOND CHANCES**



**1 IN 3**  
AMERICAN ADULTS HAVE A CRIMINAL RECORD

**APPROXIMATELY 70 MILLION**

**UNLOCK**



**SECOND CHANCES!**

**SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE - BED BUILD**

Join us on **Saturday, May 1 from 8:30 am - 12:30 pm** for a bed build! We're excited to partner with Sleep in Heavenly Peace to help kids in our community. Learn more and register at [stmarkscr.org/inourcity](http://stmarkscr.org/inourcity)



**HAITI MISSION TRIP**

Mark your calendars for **October 13-22, 2021** - we are putting together a team to head to Haiti! We are so excited to see our friends in Haiti and to make some new ones. We will work with missionaries JeanJean and Kristie Mompremier and their organization UCI-Haiti. More information about our Haiti trip coming soon!



**IF: GATHERING • WOMEN'S CONFERENCE • MAY 14-15, 2021**



*IF: Gathering 2021*

**SAVE THE DATE!**

*May 14 & 15*

**IF: GATHERING**

Women of St. Mark's - join us for a re-cast of the IF: Gathering virtual conference at St. Mark's on May 14 and 15! The theme of this year's IF: Gathering is "Even If." Even if the worst happens, we won't lose hope. Come join us as we remember that together:

We will meet Friday, May 14 from 6:00 - 9:30 pm and Saturday, May 15 from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm. Cost is \$20 which will cover your provided lunch on Saturday. Nursery is available!

Questions? Contact Sarah Bartlett, Director of FaithLife Ministries at [sbartlett@faith-life.org](mailto:sbartlett@faith-life.org)

Register at [stmarkscr.org/evenif](http://stmarkscr.org/evenif)



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Marion, IA 52302

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**Church office hours:**

Monday - Thursday: 8:30 am - 4:30 pm  
Friday: 8:30 am - 12:30 pm

Website: [stmarkscr.org](http://stmarkscr.org)  
Phone: 319-447-0100  
Text Alerts: Text **STMARKSCR** to **94-000**

**Sunday Worship:**

8:30 and 10:00 am | **Traditional:** the majesty of liturgy, pipe organ, & choral music - in Faith Worship Center

10:30 am | **Contemporary:** joyful contemporary worship in a casual setting - in Life Worship Center

**WATCH LIVE:** Our 8:30 am and 10:30 am services by clicking the **WATCH LIVE** button at [stmarkscr.org](http://stmarkscr.org)

**ST. MARK'S FOUNDATION UPDATE**



**WAYS TO SUPPORT ST. MARK'S FUTURE**

Did you know you can support St. Mark's Lutheran Church for generations to come? The St. Mark's Lutheran Church Foundation provides interested donors with a way to use planned gifts, such as wills, trusts, gift annuities, and life insurance to support the church's future mission and works.

If you have interest in making a gift to the St. Mark's Lutheran Church Foundation, simply contact the church at 319-447-0100 or [info@stmarkscrfoundation.org](mailto:info@stmarkscrfoundation.org) to indicate your interest. A member of the Foundation Board will meet with you to discuss your specific interest.

Update provided by: Tim Wuest - St. Mark's Lutheran Church Foundation, Chair

[stmarkscrfoundation.org](http://stmarkscrfoundation.org)