

VBS: June 19-22 for students ages 3-11 at St. Mark's

On the Case VBS is June 19-22 from 9:00 am-noon and is for kids in preschool (and potty trained) through entering 5th grade.

VBS IS FOR EVERYONE!

STUDENTS: We want to help kids solve the mystery of Jesus' parables and learn about spiritual habits by digging into these topics:

- Spending time with God is how we grow
- Using our gifts is how we serve
- Spending time with others is how we care
- Sharing our story is how we love

ADULTS: Volunteers are vital to the success of VBS! We're looking for help from students (entering 6th -12th grade) and adults to lead our youngsters through stations, serve snacks, play games, and share the love of Jesus.

DONATIONS: It takes a lot of supplies to feed 200+ students and fill their morning with learning. You can help by donating food and craft items.

Get involved and registered at stmarkscr.org/vbs

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IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

5/7	Senior Recognition Sunday
5/10	Impact Night
5/11 & 5/16	Feedback Forums
6/4	Summer Kickoff
6/19-22	VBS
7/22-31	High School Mission Trip

“Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans.” - Proverbs 16:3

In February I preached three sermons focused on where I feel God is leading our church culminating in a message about changing our name to FaithLife Church. At the same time I presented a “draft” vision containing five points to the Church Council. I also asked each of our directors to present a vision for their area of ministry responsibility which they did in March.

Now I'd like to invite you to one of our Congregational Feedback Forums on **Thursday, May 11 or Tuesday, May 16 at 6:00 pm.**

At each of these forums I will make a short presentation outlining the details and thinking behind each area of our vision and then open up our time to conversation and questions. My goal is to get as much feedback from St. Mark's partners as possible as I look to galvanize some of these goals before presenting them fully to the congregation in the fall.



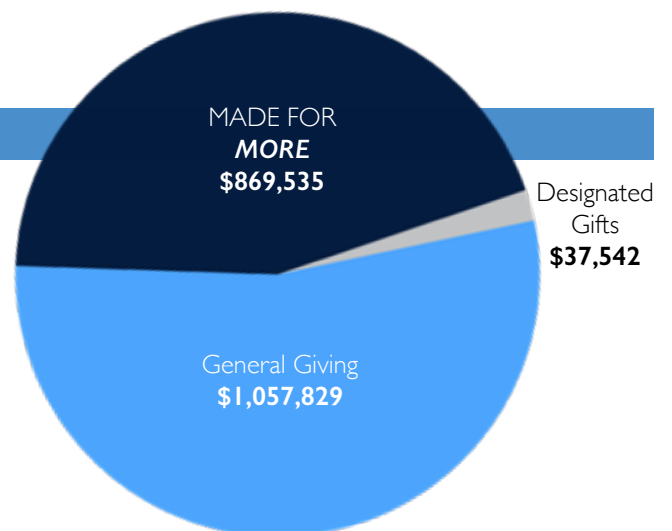
So would you please join me one of these evenings to share your feedback and contribute to the future of St. Mark's? You can register online at stmarkscr.org/events - I look forward to seeing how God will work through each one of us to form a clear vision for the future!

Senior Pastor Paul Hennings

YOUR GIVING

GIVING UPDATE

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. Your generosity supports not only the work we do at St. Mark's, but also dozens of partner ministries in our city and around the globe. **This summary graph shows our giving from July - March 2023.**



Almost exactly a year ago, we officially kicked off the MADE FOR **MORE** Capital Campaign. We could point to the lighthearted celebration: Pastor Paul in a Bob Barker wig and a suit that can only be described as “interesting.” A Plinko board and audience participation (was that really Bob Ross?) preceded the presentation of a BIG check, the first of three to begin reducing our debt.

The bigger picture reveals believers who trust in Jesus. It makes for an impressive narrative:

- ▶ **\$3.4 million** has been pledged or gifted; \$1,914,283 has been received.
- ▶ As we end the first year of a three-year campaign, 56% of the pledged/gifted amount has been received!
- ▶ Nearly one-third of partner families have participated.
- ▶ Three BIG checks have been paid toward the principal and monthly mortgage payments, totaling \$1.14 million!

As we began the MADE FOR **MORE** campaign, the primary focus was that stewardship be a meaningful part of your spiritual journey. Some have given sacrificially while some are just learning the joy of stewardship. All levels are important because all represent placing your trust in God. Now, hang on to your hats! Rumor has it there is another BIG check in the wings!

*If you have not yet participated in the campaign and wish to do so, please contact Lisa Pritchard, Stewardship Director at lpritchard@faith-life.org or 319-447-0100.

OUR CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES



**MORTGAGE
REDUCTION
(85%)**



**MISSIONS
(10%)**



**CAMPUS
IMPROVEMENTS
(5%)**

CHURCH BUSINESS

FAITHLIFE HOMES LLC

In March, the Congregation voted and approved the purchase our first low-cost rental home which will move us towards our big picture mission which began to form during the MADE FOR **MORE** Campaign. Currently, we will close on the property on May 1!

This will be a self-sustaining mission called “FaithLife Homes” to help address the need of affordable housing in our community. It has a relational ministry component and a potential pathway to home ownership creating a generational change for a family while contributing to the well-being of the Wellington Heights neighborhood. The FaithLife Homes Team was formed by St. Mark’s partners who became interested during the MADE FOR **MORE** Campaign. This team includes a realtor, real estate appraiser, landlords of rental property, contractor, and those with nonprofit experience.

We anticipate hosting work days this summer and fall as we prepare the property and home for use. Stay tuned for more information!

UPCOMING SABBATICAL

Pam Schulz will be on sabbatical April 24 - July 18. Pam joined St. Mark’s staff in June 2017 as the Director of Family Ministry and currently serves as the Executive Director. A sabbatical or extended leave is designed to provide time for rest, renewal, and rejuvenation. The Harvard Business Review reported that employees return to work after a sabbatical with an increase in overall well-being and a decline in stress and these benefits remain long after returning to work. In addition, other employees expand their knowledge base, skills, and expertise. During the time of sabbatical Pam will participate in the Footsteps of Paul Tour to Greece and Rome April 24 - May 6. This will be an excellent opportunity to be immersed in the writings of Paul and see the locations that are mentioned often in the Bible.



The sabbatical will also allow for time for her to write and edit a memoir of God’s provision during times of strife and challenge. This project may never be shared beyond family and friends, but will be a reminder of God’s faithfulness. The most important part of the sabbatical will be rest and time with family and friends. It will also be an opportunity to work on healthy and sustainable rhythms of devotional, work, and family life. A sabbatical is designed to completely disconnect from the workplace. Please know that other staff members and council members are taking on typical tasks of the Executive Director and individuals should refrain from contacting Pam during this time. Please keep her in your prayers, that she may be filled with peace, comfort, joy, rest, and return to St. Mark’s in July filled with God’s love and spirit ready to serve joyfully.

FOUNDATION UPDATE



But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.

I Chronicles 29 NIV

Please prayerfully consider a planned gift to the St. Mark’s Lutheran Church Foundation. Visit stmarkscrfoundation.org for more information

May 2023

Sunday Services each week

8:30 am traditional in Faith Worship Center and 10:00 am modern in Life Worship Center | watch live at stmarkscr.org

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 SENIOR RECOGNITION BOTH SERVICES We will honor our graduating high school and college seniors.	8	9	10 IMPACT NIGHT AT 6:00 PM If you serve in any way at St. Mark's, we want to celebrate you!	11 FEEDBACK FORUM @ 6:00 PM Pastor Paul will present his ideas for our vision and wants to hear from you.	12	13
14	15 LAST DAY to register for Dinner For Eight!	16 FEEDBACK FORUM @ 6:00 PM Pastor Paul will present his ideas for our vision and wants to hear from you.	17	18	19 MISSION OF HOPE MONTHLY MEAL	20 BIKE RIDE Riders of all abilities are welcome to participate!
21	22	23	24	25 50+ POTLUCK AT 11:30 AM	26 LAST DAY to purchase a VBS volunteer t-shirt (\$12/each). You can still register to serve past this date!	27
28	29 MEMORIAL DAY Church office closed.	30	31			

COMING THIS SUMMER

TEN COMMANDMENTS FAITHLIFE GROUP STUDY

We will offer a church-wide Bible study that goes along with our summer sermon series on the Ten Commandments. Gather with your existing FaithLife group or gather a group of St. Mark's friends for this series...just don't miss this opportunity to dive deeper into God's excellent guidelines for living a life pleasing to Him!

The study, [The 10 Commandments](#) by Pastor Albert Tate, can be found on RightNow Media. If you are not currently in a group or if your group is not planning to participate, sign up for a weekly summertime FaithLife group by June 1 at stmarkscr.org/events

June 2022

Sunday Services each week

8:30 am traditional in Faith Worship Center and 10:00 am modern in Life Worship Center | watch live at stmarkscr.org

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
				1	2	3	
HAITI MISSION TRIP 5/31-6/9							
4 SUMMER KICKOFF @ 11:00 AM Let's celebrate summer with good food and friends! Register at stmarkscr.org/events	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11	12 LAST DAY TO REGISTER YOUR STUDENT FOR ON THE CASE VBS! Register at stmarkscr.org/vbs	13	14 VBS DECORATING DAY 12:00 - 6:00 PM Help us decorate the building for our VBS students!	15 50+ POTLUCK AT 11:30 AM	16 MISSION OF HOPE MONTHLY MEAL	17 BIKE RIDE Riders of all abilities are welcome to participate!	
18	<div style="border: 2px dashed gray; padding: 10px;"> <p style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;">On The Case VBS</p> <p style="margin: 0;">9:00 am - noon for students ages 3-11</p> </div>			21	22	23	24
25	26	27 VOICES OF HOPE PATRIOTIC CONCERT @ 7:00 PM	28 VOICES OF HOPE PATRIOTIC CONCERT @ 7:00 PM	29 WELCOME CLASS @ 6:00 PM Learn about St. Mark's, meet our staff, and how to use your strengths. Register at stmarkscr.org/events	30		



IMPACT NIGHT: MAY 10

Do you volunteer your time and talents here at St. Marks? Do you realize what an IMPACT you make on your church family? Well, we know what an IMPACT you make and we want to CELEBRATE you! We could not do what we do as staff without all of you so ... St. Mark's staff want o thank and celebrate all our volunteers.

Mark your calendars for Wednesday, May 10 from 6:00-7:30 pm. We will have a time of worship, a devotion, a dessert bar and time to have fellowship and celebrate. We are so thankful for all of you! Please RSVP at stmarkscr.org/events so we know you're coming!

DINNER FOR EIGHT

We're going to kick off a summer session of Dinner for Eight ...but with a summertime twist. In June, July, August, and September, groups of eight will be paired up geographically to meet once a month for dinner. You can choose when and where you eat...a restaurant for a meal out, a potluck at someone's home, a progressive meal in your neighborhood, or maybe for a brat



and chips at Veterans Memorial Stadium! There's no wrong answer when you gather with your neighbors. Register to take part in this fun activity at stmarkscr.org/events by May 15. Questions? Contact Sarah Bartlett, Director of FaithLife Ministries at sbartlett@faith-life.org

HOSPITALITY

The Hospitality Ministry is on the move at St. Mark's. We recently implemented a new way to schedule all of our volunteers on Sunday mornings and it is off to a great start.

Greeters, ushers, communion assistant and cafe help are essential parts of our Sunday mornings. It is a great way to meet people and be an encouraging smile to our regular attenders and guests. You can volunteer for a whole month at time, a week every month, or offer to be a sub when we need a last minute volunteer. If you want to join the team please email Alice Murray, Director of Care & Hospitality (amurray@faith-life.org), to be added to the list.

We have also started our **STUDENT SERVE SUNDAYS**, the 4th Sunday of every month. It is AWESOME to see all of our students and families serving in all the hospitality roles here on Sundays.

CARE MINISTRY

We have a great team that visit and take communion to those who can't come to church, visit people in the hospital, create and send greeting cards, and pray for all of us. This team is the hands and feet of Jesus and we are so grateful for their servane hearts and time they give.

We want to meet all of you in your care needs. Please reach out to Alice Murray, Director of Care & Hospitality if you or your family need a listening ear, resources, prayers or a visit. Alice meets with people one on one, couples, and families to listen and assist you in your seasons of need. You are not alone. You are seen and loved by God.

The biking team is making plans for this season and will host a bike ride on the third Saturday of each month. Riders of all abilities are welcome and encouraged to participate. Please keep in mind that these rides are fellowship-centric. We'd like to keep the group together as much as possible as we ride. We will generally have a destination in mind where we will meet to have coffee and pastries, lunch, or a beverage and snack, depending on the time of day and the distance that we ride.

- MAY 20**
Czech Village to Ely ride
- JUNE 17**
- JULY 15**
- AUGUST 19**
(tentative Des Moines ride and Iowa Cubs game)
- SEPTEMBER 16**
(tentative Lanesboro, MN Root River Trail ride)
- OCTOBER 21**

APRIL RECAP

April has been a busy month for missions at St. Mark's! On April 15, we hosted a **Poverty Simulation** in partnership with the Catherine McAuley Center and had over 40 people attend. Participants were able to gain new insights into the difficult decisions people living in poverty have to make every day.

The very next day, April 16, we were blessed with the stories of how God is reaching the nations through Gabe and Maddie Smith with **YWAM** (Youth With a Mission). If you would like to follow their journey as they equip others and lead teams to share the love of Jesus, sign up for their newsletter at: gabe@ywamlouisville.org



Gabe and Maddie Smith

Finally, to finish up April we will join our partners at Hope CDA as they host their 3rd Annual **Second Chance Prayer Walk**. The walk begins at 2:00 pm at Westminster Presbyterian Church and will end at Redmond Park with speakers, testimonies, and prayer along the way.



SUMMER OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

This summer, in addition to our monthly **Mission of Hope** meal, we will continue to serve our local community with **Feeding Lunches to Youth (FLY)** in Marion. School lunches are vital to many kids who face food insecurities. FLY fills that gap during the summer months.

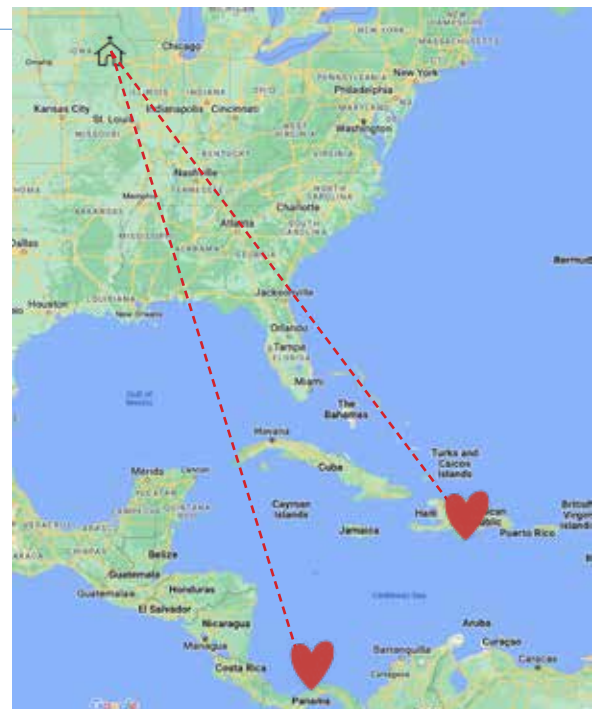
On Thursdays throughout the summer, St. Mark's will prepare, pack, and deliver sack lunches to 11 sites in our community.

Sign up to serve at stmarkscr.org/events

UPCOMING MISSION TRIPS

HAITI Our Haiti Mission team's trip from October 2022 has been rescheduled to May 31 - June 9, 2023. Our mission partners, UCI, have been blessed with peace in their community located in rural central Haiti. Please keep Sarah Bartlett, Julia Christensen, Michele Jones, Gary Pribyl, and Crystal Schwandt in your prayers as they travel to Haiti.

PANAMA Our next Panama mission trip date is set: November 3-11, 2023! Join us to serve with our mission partner, CALMS, in Tierras Altas, Panama. We will spend the week learning about the culture of Panama and sharing the love of Jesus with the students of Las Pearles elementary school. God has been opening doors in the community and we are excited to see what new things He has in store!





\$8,879.36

raised during our
Lenten Project to support
our friends in Panama!





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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

Phone: 319-447-0100

Text Alerts: Text **STMARKSCR** to **94-000**

Current Worship Schedule:

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

10:00 am | **Modern:** joyful worship in a casual setting
- in Life Worship Center

WATCH LIVE: A livestream of each service is available by
clicking the **WATCH LIVE** button at stmarkscr.org

Summer Celebration

Sunday, June 4 at 11:00 am

Inflatables * Food * Games * Service Project

Main dish provided - bring a side or dessert to share.

RSVP at stmarkscr.org/events