



September 2016 CROSSMARKS

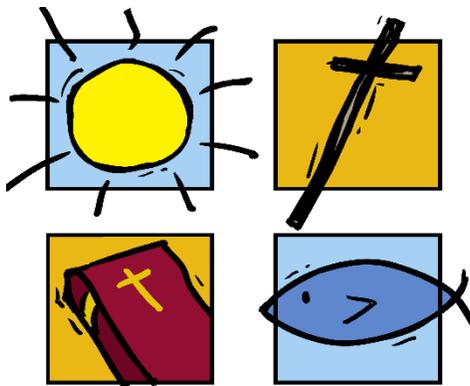
St. Mark Lutheran Church (ELCA) of Charlottesville, VA • www.stmarklutheran.org • 434-293-3311 • office@stmarklutheran.org
A Reconciling in Christ congregation • Lutheran Campus Ministry at UVA • St. Mark Lutheran Preschool

AN IMPORTANT INVITATION

You are invited! Yes, it's that time of year again when we seek a few good people to lead our Faith Formation classes for children and youth. Many changes in staffing have led to several openings. One class that could use your help is the class for children in grades 1-5. This broadly graded class functions well together; the older students assist the younger ones. The classroom has beautifully painted murals which can be used for reenacting the lessons. Curriculum and craft supplies make this an easy class to lead. Ideally, we are looking for two teachers to lead this class.

We also need a couple people to lead the Senior High discussion class. Get to know the great youth of our congregation; challenge yourself and you will not regret spending time with these great young people. You might find you learn a few things yourself.

No experience necessary; please consider if this is a place where you might us help keep the promises we make to families when children are baptized.....contact Susan Seehaver for more information or to say "YES!" to this invitation to teach.



St. Mark Lutheran Church, with Christ Jesus as the cornerstone, is a people called by God to be servants of all people; to experience God's saving grace through faith; to come together as the body of Christ in worship and celebration of the gifts of God; and to reach out to those outside the church with witness to the loving grace of God through Christ Jesus. To answer this call, our mission will include reaching out to and beyond the members of St. Mark.

WORSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

September 4 – Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost: Called to contemplate the cost of discipleship today, we might be helped by translating Paul’s request to Philemon into our prayer of the day: Refresh my heart in Christ. Strengthened by the company and forgiveness of the Christ in the blessed sacrament and recalling God’s grace in remembrance of baptism, we can be strengthened in this hour to “choose life”—to choose life in God as our own.

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 • Psalm 1 • Philemon 1-21 • Luke 14:25-33



September 11 – Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost - God’s, Work, Our Hands Sunday; Rally Day; Installation of Sunday School teachers, Youth Advisors and Preschool teachers: The grumbling of the Pharisees and the scribes in today’s gospel is actually our holy hope: This Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them. That our God wills to seek and to save the lost is not only a holy hope, it is our only hope. As Paul’s first letter to Timothy reminds us, “The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” Thanks be to God.

Exodus 32:7-14 • Psalm 51:1-10 • 1 Timothy 1:12-17 • Luke 15:1-10



September 18 – Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost: As we are invited today to consider what it means to be managers (rather than owners) of all that we have, it is crucial to recall that we are bought with a price. “Christ Jesus, himself human, . . . gave himself a ransom for all.” Apart from the generosity of God we have nothing—we are nothing. By God’s gracious favor we have everything we need.

Amos 8:4-7 • Psalm 113 • 1 Timothy 2:1-7 • Luke 16:1-13



September 25 – Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost: Consideration of and care for those in need (especially those “at our gate,” visible to us, of whom we are aware) is an essential component of good stewardship. It is in the sharing of wealth that we avoid the snare of wealth. It is the one whom death could not hold—who comes to us risen from the dead—who can free us from the death grip of greed.

Amos 6:1a, 4-7 • Psalm 146 • 1 Timothy 6:6-19 • Luke 16:19-31

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

Calling All Kids, Youth, Parents, Friends, & Neighbors: Join in the activities of the morning on **Rally Day, Sunday, September 11** for a morning of reconnecting, learning, and celebrating what it means to be a community of faith. Our theme is "What Does It Take to Follow Jesus?" We'll gather in the Fellowship Hall at 9:00 am, hear a bit about the upcoming year of Faith Formation at St. Mark, enjoy a few snacks, meet your teachers, work together on a craft project. This is a great opportunity to invite friends or neighbors to join us. Questions? Contact Susan Seehaver.



DATE CHANGE FOR BEER & HYMNS: Please note that due to the Labor Day holiday, **Beer & Hymns** will be held on **Monday, September 12th**. Meet us at Trinity Irish Pub on the Corner from 7-8pm to sing our favorite songs and enjoy a pint and great fellowship! Hope to see you there!



The Women's Book club will meet in the church library **Monday, September 26** at 7pm to discuss *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah. This story captures the epic panorama of WW II and centers on part of history seldom seen: the women's war. *The Nightingale* tells the stories of two sisters, separated by years and experience, by ideals, passion and circumstance, each embarking on her own dangerous path toward survival, love, and freedom in German-occupied, war-torn France--a heartbreakingly beautiful novel that celebrates the resilience of the human spirit and the durability of women. It is a novel for everyone, a novel for a lifetime. Read the book and come join us as we discuss our likes and dislikes. All women are welcome.

INFORMATION NEEDED FROM OUR COLLEGE

STUDENTS: It's "back to school" time, and the Congregational Care Team would like to be able to stay in touch with our St. Mark members who are attending college, at home or away; this includes undergraduate and graduate students. Please send that information, and the date of their birthday and their postal address to Charlotte Owen. If they would prefer to receive the Crossmarks and other church mailings by email, please also include their email address. For "returning students", please reconfirm or update their information. Thank you.



FALL MUSIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE

ST. MARK CHOIR – If you enjoy singing, consider joining this great group of people who so wonderfully support our worship in liturgy and song. Practice time is on Wednesday evenings from 7-8:30 p.m., beginning on September 14.

ST. MARK BRASS – This fine group of brass players, under the very able direction of Tom Teisberg, play for our festival Sundays and seasonal services.

INSTRUMENTALISTS – Whatever your instrument of choice, we can always use your talent in Sunday worship, whether it be a special solo, or help on a choir anthem.

Please consider being a part of our music program at St. Mark. Contact Kristi Van Doorn.



Please consider sponsoring our Sunday flowers to commemorate an event or a person. The cost of flowers is **\$35.00 per vase** or \$70.00 for the 2 vases. You may then take both bouquets to use for yourself, but we ask you to let us use one of the bouquets to deliver to our shut-ins and people with special things happening in their lives. Please sign on the chart in the hallway outside of the office.

THANK YOUS

Thank you to all who so generously donated **school supplies** for the students at Mary Carr Greer Elementary school. Kristen Wray was welcomed with many thanks and a very grateful staff when she dropped off the supplies. You have made a huge difference in the lives of these students.



Also posted on the bulletin board are **thank you notes** from two **preschool families**, who are very grateful for the gifts given to them from the preschool committee upon the birth of new siblings for the preschool children.

YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY with Anne Carter

When I was a child, we had one hard fast rule in my family about Sunday mornings: if you were too sick for church, you were too sick to do anything else that day. Although I loved the church where I grew up and loved being a part of that community, there were days where I longed for more sleep, or just a chance to be lazy on a Sunday morning. But because there were very few actual rules in my home, I knew there was no getting out of Sunday School and worship, unless I wanted to spend the entire day in complete isolation.

Today, as a mama of three, I grapple with how to navigate my young-yet-growing-older boys through the many demands on our time and resources. Recently, Leo expressed interest in trying out for travel soccer. When we looked into the commitment, we discovered that games were mostly on Sunday mornings. Leo was a little disappointed, yet mostly understanding, when I told him that travel soccer was no longer an option because it conflicted with Sunday School and worship.

Sometimes, compromise can be reached. Aidan will be playing fall ball for lacrosse this year, and practices are held on Sunday afternoons. When I pointed out that, at times, the practice would conflict with youth events and youth group, he said, "In that case, Mom, I'll just go to practice late, if that's okay, and I'll be there for the youth events."

The mounting pressure and expectations on **all** of us can be overwhelming, and I know I am not alone in feeling this way. And yet, as the new school year begins and fresh pages of the calendar stretches before me, I cannot help but want to put the brakes on all of it - the demands, the pressure, the unrealistic expectations and commitments of time that we simply do not have. I long for simpler weeks and slower days. I want Sunday School and worship to remain a priority for us, a time of the week that is protected and honored. Indeed, the rule has carried over to my own children as well.

Moving forward, I am going to be intentional with the time that I spend, that we spend as a family. I want to create Sabbath rest for us all, because we work too hard with so many demands on us for too many days of the week. On a recent and gorgeous Sunday afternoon, my house was a mess. I needed groceries for the week, and I needed to pay bills and make a to do list. The car ride to and from church was filled with bickering siblings who simply didn't want to quit. I felt stressed, unhappy, and overwhelmed. I recognized that despite the list of to-do's and the children who probably should have spent the afternoon alone in their rooms, what my family needed even more was rest, and respite. We packed a bag and headed over to the lakefront where we spent several hours in the glorious sunshine, recharging and coming home renewed. My gratitude for that rest and that re-connection to my children carried me through the week. A simpler day, a slower pace - and a lasting peace and calm that evening.

As you add dates and upcoming events to your calendar, consider blocking out more time than usual on Sundays. Time for Sunday School, for worship, for youth events. Time for Sabbath rest, and respite, and renewal. Be intentional with what you plan, and protective of that time. As I often remind myself as the mundane threatens to take over the meaningful, *we make time for what is important.*

What are you making time for, sisters and brothers?

PRESCHOOL



“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” Galatians 6:9

My dear friends, I must confess that I’m feeling a bit emotional today as I write this note to you. Standing at the brink of the beginning of our 3rd year with the full-day program, I feel compelled to share this verse from Galatians with you, as it is what sustained me through the difficult days of opening the school. It was the screen saver on the front desk computer, it was posted on my bathroom mirror and it was written upon my heart. A reminder that all I had to do was stand firm in the faith that we had been called to do this and to persevere in doing the good we’d been called to do.

In the beginning, when all we had were a few small seeds of hope, I could imagine the harvest: a full school with a community of children, families and teachers. But now, now that we are standing in a field of rich vines that are laden with full, ripe fruit, I find that I am completely overwhelmed by the grace of a generous God who has surpassed my imagination with a harvest that is almost beyond measure. I say almost because I’m going to attempt to count it for you now:

- We’ve hired Patty Peterson to open the 5th classroom as a Pre-K program for our Young Investigators. Patty and I worked together at Charlottesville Day School and she’s one of the most gifted teachers I know. Patty has almost 30 years of experience and her roots are firmly planted in play-based, developmentally appropriate programs. She’s excited to join our faculty and said to me today “I feel like I’ve come home!”
- We’ve also hired Kate Wisbey to join Ms. Charley in teaching our younger Young Investigators. Kate is a trained Montessori teacher and a music major. She is excited to share her love of music with the children and is looking forward to enriching our curriculum with drama, art and Montessori math. She is a recent transplant from Maine and enjoys swing dancing!
- We’re super excited to have Kristen Wray return in the fall as a resource teacher! Kristen will be working to support teachers with project work, small group activities, assessment and program enrichment. She’ll provide individualized instruction as needed and provide support for children with special needs. This is one of those “beyond my wildest dreams” ideas that I believe will enrich our program in ways that we can’t even imagine.
- We’re also going to add a Spanish special that will be taught by Debbie Jo McGowan. Debbie Jo is well known in Charlottesville as an amazing Early Childhood teacher and as a swim instructor. Debbie Jo will also be working as an afternoon assistant teacher and as a sub. In her words, “I’m not quite ready to work full time, but when I am, I want to work here!”
- By December 1st we’ll have 54 children enrolled in the program, with a waitlist into the 2017/2018 school year.
- Our current enrollment represents 7 different spoken languages, including several children who will be learning English as a second language.
- We’re partnering with Jefferson Area CHIP to provide a scholarship for a family from Honduras. This will be a larger scholarship than we’ve provided in the past and the family will pay only what they’re able to pay.
- We hope to finish up the playground by October (thank you for your patience with the pile in the parking lot!)

I could go on and on! I’m so blessed to work in this special place, with these amazing teachers, doing what I love to do as a ministry of your congregation. I look forward to meeting the new pastor and am praying for you as you move forward in the search process. God’s mercies are new every morning and the evidence of this surrounds us!

Blessings to each of you as you move into the lovely days of fall. I look forward to seeing each of you soon!

Carla

SOCIAL MINISTRY

God's Work, Our Hands: Throughout the year we at St Mark participate in a variety of ways to share God's love and grace with our neighbors – particularly those in need --whether locally or globally. We collect food for the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank; provide food and shelter for two weeks in the winter for homeless women through PACEM; raise money for malaria nets for Papua New Guinea; collect and send health kit and school kit supplies to Lutheran World Relief; collect backpacks and school supplies for local school children; support the Alliance for Interfaith Ministry. All are part of our efforts to do God's work through our hands and hearts and feet throughout the year.

Once a year however the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America invites us on God's Work Our Hands Sunday "...to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) ..." We are reminded together that "... all of life in Jesus Christ– every act of service in every daily calling in every corner of life– flows freely from a living daring confidence in God's grace...."

The Virginia Synod expands that day to a Week of Service and together with the Virginia Lutheran Partners in Mission invites all congregations to participate in a service project. One of our Mission Partners is Lutheran Family Services, which has a Day Support Center for Adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities here in Charlottesville. We have worked with them before-- stocking their snack cabinet and at Thanksgiving providing the food for a Thanksgiving feast.

This year they have requested that using a list provided by the staff we collect and pack supplies into Birthday Baking Kits to be used each month for a celebration at the center recognizing all the birthdays that month-- Look for the signup poster in the narthex for the needed items starting August 28th. We will need all the materials by Sunday, September 11. Thank you---God's Work Our Hands



The **45th Annual Charlottesville-Albemarle Crop Walk** is **Sunday, October 9th**. The Crop Hunger Walk is a community based hunger education and fund raising event sponsored by Church World Service (CWS). 25% of the funds raised by the local CROP Walk are used to support the local hunger relief work of Community Meals on Wheels and Emergency Food Network. CWS uses 75% of the funds to provide disaster relief and recovery, food and medical supplies, refugee resettlement, training and other self-help development activities through partner agencies in more than 80 countries. If you want to participate in the Charlottesville-Albemarle CROP Hunger Walk on October 9th visit <http://www.crophungerwalk.org/charlottesvlewa> to register, form teams, and make individual donations.



There are two **local Gap Ministries** that need our help and support. Both of these churches provide their services to those in need so that their neighbors can use the money they save on these ministries, they can apply to rent and utilities. This is a way you can participate in reaching out to those in need in our community.

Belmont Baptist has been providing **free laundromat service** vetted through Love Inc. (who purchased and installed commercial washers and dryers) and could use your help by providing them with laundry supplies safe to use with high efficiency washers: detergent-pods or liquid, dryer sheets, bleach, and stain removal spray.

Connect Church (was Word of Faith, next to Albemarle High School) has taken the Gap Ministry of **personal care items**. They are collecting the following items: toilet tissue, paper towels, laundry soap, deodorant, shampoo, and bar soap.

ELCA NEWS

Voting members of the ELCA approved a number of **key actions** during the **2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly** in New Orleans August 8-13:

- The 945 voting members elected William B. Horne II of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Clearwater, Fla., vice president of the ELCA.
- They voted to accept "Declaration on the Way," a unique ecumenical document that marks a path toward greater unity between Catholics and Lutherans.
- The voting members approved AMMPARO – the ELCA's strategy for Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities.
- The assembly also voted to unify the three lay rosters into one Ministry of Word and Service roster.

Learn more and read about additional actions taken by the highest governing body of the ELCA at <http://elca.org/News-and-Events/7852>.

MISSION COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

At its August 9 meeting, Mission Council:

- MC agreed to allow Prosami to hold a second yard sale in September or October
- MC agreed that the St. Mark website should be updated and redesigned to coordinate with the preschool website
- Preschool Committee reported that enrollments are high enough to allow for the opening of a fifth classroom
- Property Committee reports that the Library has been repainted and that pews have been cleaned
- Property Committee is investigating contracting for normal maintenance with a service company
- MC approved guideline for the use of debit cards for small purchases by the Office and by the Preschool
- St. Mark will be collecting school supplies for students at Greer Elementary and food for the Day Support Center of Lutheran Social Services
- The Call Committee reports that they are continuing to meet regularly to review candidates



CHURCH BUSINESS

	Offering	Attendance
July 3	\$17,163	94
July 10	2,479	72
July 17	3,817	66
July 24	5,617	70
July 31	6,004	72