

THE WAY

The Newsletter of
St. Mark the Evangelist Episcopal Church
1612 W. Genesee St. Syracuse, NY, 13204
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WINTER 2022



After a year hiatus, St. Mark's Christmas Closet was back with homemade help from Hazard Branch Library! ...Pgs. 4-5



AccessCNY volunteers to the rescue! ...Pgs. 6-7



Special birthday celebrated...pg. 11

Table of Contents

Rector's Update/Security PSA.....p. 2	St. Mark Artist Update.....p. 9
Search Committee Update/Report from our Treasurer.....p. 3	Grateful & Blessed.....p. 10
Hazard Branch donate.....p. 4	Milestone birthday.....p. 11
Christmas Clothes Closet.....p. 4-5	CWS Update.....p. 12
AccessCNY/Food \$en\$e team up.....p. 6-7	Share your light.....p. 13
Youth Group/My Journey.....p. 8	Kids in Church.....p. 14-15

Updates from Fr. Gaetz



Dear St. Mark the Evangelist Family,

I can only begin to express my appreciation for all your cards, greetings and gifts during this past Christmas season. They are so much appreciated.

In addition, I so much appreciate all that each of you do to make St. Mark's the loving family that it is. It's a pleasure to serve among you.

Wishing you all the blessings of the new year.

*Sincerely,
Fr. Gaetz*

Well, here we are at the beginning of another new year. It's an unusual new year in that all too many vestiges of the COVID pandemic hang on all around us. But, as they say, there is light at the end of the tunnel. That means we need to begin to bring life back to pe-endemic order. There are a number of things that we'll need your help with:

- People willing to serve as readers and greeters. If you can help here, please be in contact with Gary Neddo.
- Live Stream broadcast has become a critical ongoing part of our life. If you would like to know more about this, please contact Kathryn Woods through the office.

Thanks for your loyal support.

VPOD AND SECURITY

One of the roles of the VPOD or the Vestry Person on Duty is to secure and monitor the activity in the building before, during and after the service. In order to be reasonably sure that the building is secure yet still open to anyone wishing to attend services, the ramp door on West Genesee Street and the main doors of the church on St. Mark's Ave, where there is a chair lift if needed, will remain open throughout the service and locked by the VPOD at the end of the Coffee Hour once all parishioners have left the building. All other doors will be secured by 10:15 by the VPOD.

Note: Both of these entrances are handicap accessible.



Brief Note From Our Search Committee

The Search Committee continues to meet and discuss our prospects. Please continue to keep the Search process in your prayers; we welcome any thoughts of possible candidates.

Thank you for your thoughts!

As a parish, please continue what you are doing:

- Praying regularly.
- Telling others that we are looking. Use your "network" to help find a leader who will work to return us to full time ministry.
- Keeping your pledge up to date to keep our present financial situation stable. (Remember: You may pledge any time of the year).



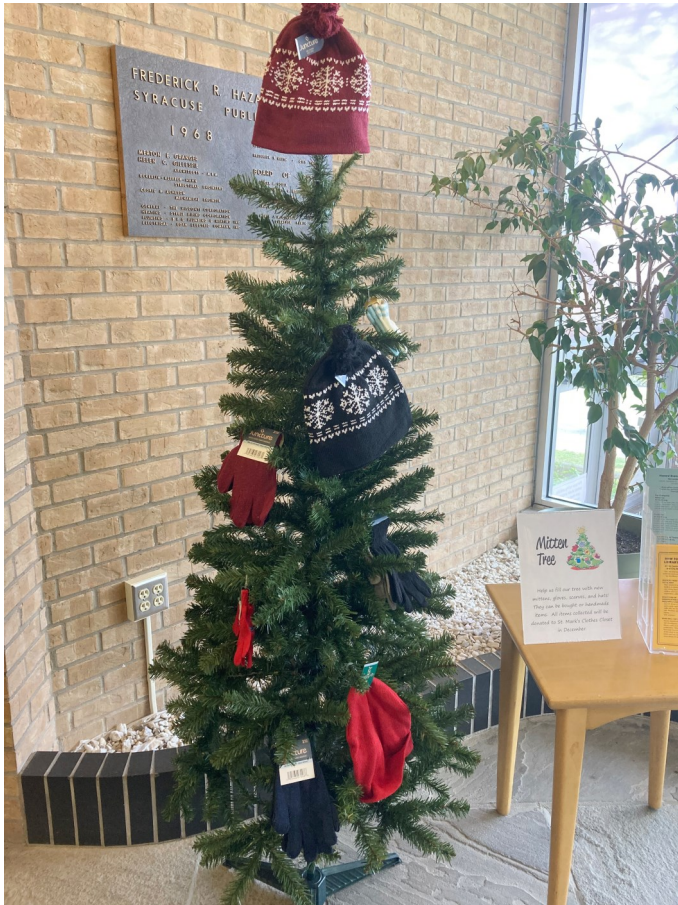
Jim Miller
Search Committee Chair

BUDGET REPORT for Jan. 1-Dec. 5, 2021

Treasurer, Pat Dunn

	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Difference</i>
<i>Income</i>	\$85,365.00	\$152,859.28	\$67,494.28
<i>Expenses</i>	\$157,694.40	\$130,403.89	-\$27,290.51
<i>Deficit</i>	-\$72,329.40	\$22,455.39	\$94,784.79
<i>Pledges</i>	\$49,000.00	\$47,974.00	-\$1,026.00

Thank You, Hazard Branch Library! Your donation left everyone feeling Warm & Fuzzy!



St. Mark the Evangelist would like to sincerely thank Hazard Branch Library for their generous and thoughtful donation to our December Clothes Closet!

In November, Hazard Branch Library set up a “Mitten Tree,” collecting hats, gloves, mittens and scarves (many handmade) from the library patrons to donate to St. Mark’s Christmas Clothes Closet. The photo of the tree was taken at the very beginning of the fundraiser, which shows only a very small portion of what was donated.

A week before the Christmas Clothes Closet, Lauren Cox, the Adult Service Librarian at the library, who coordinated the tree and delivered the beautiful items, which even included warm, crocheted slippers! These were all be so much appreciated by our Clothes Closet families.

Christmas Clothes Closet & Green Café receives warm welcome back

Although this year’s Christmas Clothes Closet and Green Café were not as busy as previous years, those who attended and hosted it agreed it was so good to be able to open it up to our neighbors once more after last year’s was canceled due to COVID-19.

“Everyone who did come had a great time,” said Gary Neddo, Green Café co-coordinator along with his wife, Cheryl. “Everyone went home with a gift bag that included three boxes of Girl Scout Cookies and a bag with two loaves of bread – one a regular loaf and the other a swirled bread.”

Those who attended this scaled-down version of the Christmas Clothes Closet and Green Café were able to enjoy a delicious holiday breakfast with Santa and most importantly, some good fellowship over a cup of hot coffee or cocoa.

In the Clothes Closet, shoppers were able to find all sorts of warm winter and seasonal clothes along with all types and sizes of much-needed winter coats, hats, scarves, gloves and mittens and even some boots.

For those shopping for others, the Vestry Room was transformed into a small gift boutique for Christmas shopping.

And everything – clothes, winter gear and gifts – were only a quarter donation! Of course, those who couldn't afford it were not turned away. All monies raised through the Clothes Closet go to fund our Food Pantry which is available to our 13204 neighbors.



This collaboration makes great \$en\$e!

Recently, St. Mark's [Food \\$en\\$e](#) program was blessed with some enthusiastic and much-needed volunteers from [AccessCNY](#) who made it their mission to help out during the busy December *Food \$en\$e* delivery. Sponsored and operated by the Food Bank of CNY, the *Food \$en\$e* program offers the community the opportunity to stretch their food budget dollars by offering a significant unit of food each month for only \$20.50. St. Mark is one of 40 sites for ordering and for delivery of the food within the Food Bank's 11 county region and one of just 3 in Syracuse.

Earlier this year, Onondaga CASA, one of [AccessCNY](#)'s programs that connects community volunteers, known as Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), with neglected and abused foster children, learned about *Food \$en\$e* and began ordering through our site.

"The *Food \$en\$e* program benefitted Onondaga CASA," said Nikki Bomasuto, Director of Development, Communications and Advocacy for [AccessCNY](#). "Foster kids are often deprived of a 'normal' childhood and lack a strong parental figure who can advocate for their best interests. So, *CASA*'s step in to be that advocate. *CASAs* are dedicated to advocating for each child's best interests, both in and outside of the courtroom." She explained that the volunteers who attended the *Food \$en\$e* delivery day to help unload and pack up orders were from their Day Habilitation program. This program is for adults with developmental disabilities who want to build life skills and explore their interests alongside their peers. She said together with staff, the group chooses activities that help build independent living and relationship skills. The program is also designed to build knowledge on how to effectively advocate for oneself.

"Initially, *CASA* partnered with St. Marks for convenience for the people we serve," Nikki



said, “but now we stay for the friendliness and the organization making our distribution days seamless. Our families are so grateful for the food and the reliability of the monthly deliveries, and our volunteers are grateful to have something to consistently provide to the families which allow increased access and support to the children.”

This collaboration is a win-win all around. St. Mark *Food \$en\$e* co-coordinator, Jim Miller, said, “We were pleasantly surprised when an unexpected ‘gift from heaven’ showed up on the December 15th delivery day. That gift, 7 young people from *AccessCNY*, showed up in a van to help us unload the truck and package the ‘units.’ Each unit contains 12 food items and are boxed for distribution. The arrival of these young people was a total surprise. What our parish volunteers who tend toward ‘mature’ status need is young people to help with this task!”



Nikki pointed out collaborating with *Networks* was a natural way to bring our programs together. Their participants get to join in on the support for families in need while getting some fresh air. The participants who chose to volunteer did so as an opportunity to work on volunteer goals, communication and socialization.

“They liked getting out into the community and giving back to others,” she added. “They also stated how welcoming and friendly the staff at the church were to them.”

“Working with the four volunteers and the *AccessCNY* staff members (also young!) was delightful,” noted Jim. “The volunteers took on the unloading and sorting with eagerness and are fun to have on our team. The best part of their help is that they too enjoyed the experience and plan to return each month! We thank Jonathan, Tina, Eric, and Beau as well as their guidance staff, Daysia, Ashley, and Shawanda.”

About *AccessCNY*

AccessCNY offers person-centered services that empower individuals of all ages and abilities to reach their full potential as part of our shared community. The goal is to help each participant reach their own unique level of independence – participants and/or their families have developmental disabilities or mental health diagnoses. *AccessCNY* offers more than 30 unique programs from housing to community support, to education and advocacy work.





From Our Youth Group: Can/Bottles Update

Everyone is familiar with the saying, “A penny saved is a penny earned.” In this case, “A nickel saved is a nickel earned.”

After a few years and four pages of can and bottle returns, the redemption center prompted us to cash in on our returns. The result was a check for more than \$900 for the Youth Group! That’s a lot of cans and bottles.

Many thanks to those who donated to the can and bottle drive. Your generosity benefits the Youth Group. Hopefully, they’ll be able to enjoy some activities in the future.

Please continue to bring in your cans and bottles to place in the collection bins. *Your donations are truly appreciated.*

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

God Bless,
St. Mark Youth Group

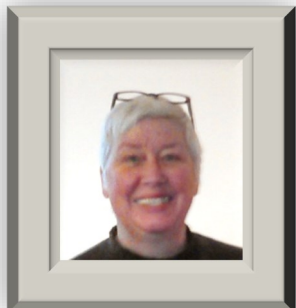
My Journey

By Kevin Ward

For the past couple of years, I have been on a spiritual and personal journey. As many of you know, I came out as transgender this summer. I asked God to help me in this transition and I believe that God has helped me on this journey. I wanted to share it with you, my church family. I am in the process of legally changing my name to Kevin. I would appreciate it if you would call me Kevin. My pronouns are he, him.

Thanks for your love and support. God Bless!

Update to St. Mark's Artist on Display, Nancy Morrison



As published in the Fall newsletter, St. Mark the Evangelist's own Nancy Morrison had her artwork on display at the Marcellus Free Library for the entire month of September. Everyone who entered the library was greeted by her incredible and vibrant artwork which is hung near the receptionist desk.

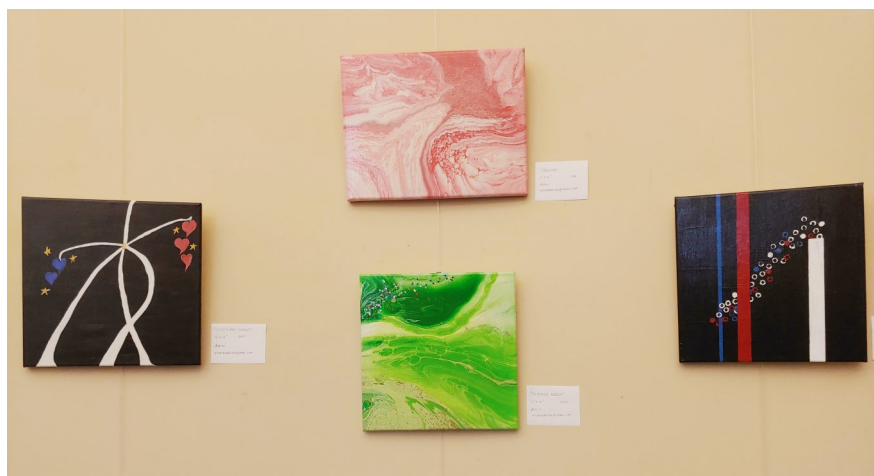
Recently, Nancy received word from the library director that her exhibit was the most successful they have had there in years!

Nancy said she sold 6 of her 22 displayed paintings and she is looking forward to having another exhibit in the future.

Congratulations, Nancy, and we look forward to what you will do next!

Nancy's style of painting

Nancy calls her style of painting 'abstract expressionism' or possibly, 'whatever-comes-to-mind expressionism.' It is primarily fluid art pouring, but sometimes she also uses brushes, spatulas or other things to draw or make embellishes (sharpies, the ends of toilet paper tubes, combs, stencils, sponges, etc.).



A heartfelt “Thank You”

I want to extend the biggest and most grateful THANK YOU to all of you at St. Mark for your love and support when my stepdaughter, Callie, was involved in a horrible car crash in North Carolina in late October. We honestly did not know if she was going to make it and if she did, we didn't know if she would be able to keep her leg, which had been nearly completely severed off. It was a very dark and scary time and COVID didn't make the situation any better, that's for sure. Jerry, her dad, was not even allowed to see and visit with her once while we were down there. Fortunately for us, she had her sister, Nicole, a very special young lady, there to keep an eye on things, provide updates to us and get the doctors to Facetime with us when they gave the updates on surgery, etc. That way we could hear it ourselves and ask them any questions we had.



I thought you would like to see who your prayers and support were for. From left is Kaylia, Jerry (Callie's dad, my husband), Chantelle and Callie. Callie and her daughters visited us in May just months before the accident.

A profound and humble thank you to Fr. Gaetz and Gary and Phyllis, the wardens, for not even hesitating to tell me to go to Callie and to not worry about anything at church. And here we were preparing for All Saints Sunday and going into Advent! Not exactly the best time to not have the church secretary! But they let me help out from North Carolina and Phyllis took the reins on the special bulletin board, printing the bulletins and so much more. It meant the world to me how supportive our leadership was.

And to my church family – I can't thank you all enough for your prayers, support and love. I know God answered you all and Callie not only woke up (hungry!) but survived and they were able to save her leg! There has been a myriad of other issues she has had to deal with like broken and dislocated ribs, blood clots, internal injuries, etc., but she continues to heal so quickly even the doctors couldn't believe it. It is a true miracle of God answering all of the prayers you and we sent up. THANK YOU! One thing I would like to point out that might seem like a small thing, but to me it was huge and really touched my heart and meant so much...almost every time one of you checked in with me, you would ask how is “Callie” doing. Not “how is Jerry's daughter” or “how is your stepdaughter,” but you always asked about her by name. That just showed me that your caring and concern went above and beyond. You all have a very special place in my heart and life, and I am taking this opportunity to let you all know it!

*Love,
Debi Denny*

Milestone birthday, beloved parishioner celebrated



St. Mark Parishioners came together in November to celebrate longtime and faithful parishioner Ernestine Long's 95th birthday. Ernestine lives at Brighton Towers and some of her friends from there attended the service and celebration as well.

Ernestine was presented with a sash and crown, a birthday cake, cards and gifts, which she said blessed her so much.

"Thanks for caring enough to include me in your lives," said Ernestine. "You made my 95th birthday a very special one. I'm thankful, grateful and blessed. Love and hugs to everyone!"



Making an impact



St. Mark recently received a letter and an email thanking us for our support of the Church World Service Blanket program along with a certificate of honor. They wanted us to share this banner with all of you! The letter and honor certificate are posted on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall. According to the Impact Report they also sent for January-June 2021, CWS was able to provide 23,610 blankets; 800 emergency clean-up buckets; 1,380 school kits; and 7,500 hygiene kits. Not bad for 6 months!



Be 'Eveready' to share your light

This hit home for me.

When a flashlight grows dim or quits working, do you just throw it away? Of course not. You change the batteries. 🔦. When a person messes up or finds themselves in a dark place, do you cast them aside? Of course not! You help them change their batteries. Some need AA...attention and affection; some need AAA...attention, affection, and acceptance; some need C....compassion; some need D...direction. And if they still don't seem to shine...simply sit with them quietly and share your light. 💕💕



A Chuckle Courtesy of ‘Kids in Church’ *Collection of Religious and Other Humor from All-Creatures.org*

A Sunday school teacher asked her class, "What was Jesus' mother's name?" One child answered, "Mary."

The teacher then asked, "Who knows what Jesus' father's name was?" A little kid said, "Verge."

Confused, the teacher asked, "Where did you get that?"

The kid said, "Well, you know, they are always talking about Verge n' Mary."

3-year-old Reese:

"Our Father, Who does art in heaven, Harold is His name.
Amen."

A little boy was overheard praying: "Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a real good time like I am."

After the christening of his baby brother in church, Jason sobbed all the way home in the back seat of the car. His father asked him three times what was wrong. Finally, the boy replied, "That preacher said he wanted us brought up in a Christian home, and I wanted to stay with you."

I had been teaching my three-year old daughter, Caitlin, the Lord's Prayer for several evenings at bedtime. She would repeat after me the lines from the prayer. Finally, she decided to go solo. I listened with pride as she carefully enunciated each word, right up to the end of the prayer: "Lead us not into temptation," she prayed, "but deliver us from E-mail."

A Sunday school teacher asked her children as they were on the way to church service, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?" One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."

Six-year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother, Joel, were sitting together in church. Joel giggled, sang, and talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had had enough. "You're not supposed to talk out loud in church." "Why? Who's going to stop me?" Joel asked. Angie pointed to the back of the church and said, "See those two men standing by the door? They're hushers."

A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin 5, and Ryan 3. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. "If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, 'Let my brother have the first pancake, I can wait.'" Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, "Ryan, you be Jesus!"

A father was at the beach with his children when the four-year-old son ran up to him, grabbed his hand, and led him to the shore where a seagull lay dead in the sand. "Daddy, what happened to him?" the son asked. "He died and went to Heaven," the Dad replied. The boy thought a moment and then said, "Did God throw him back down?"

One particular four-year-old prayed, "And forgive us our trash baskets as we forgive those who put trash in our baskets."

A wife invited some people to dinner. At the table, she turned to their six-year-old daughter and said, "Would you like to say the blessing?" "I wouldn't know what to say," the girl replied. "Just say what you hear Mommy say," the wife answered. The daughter bowed her head and said, "Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?"



Submitted by Joan Green



St Mark the Evangelist Episcopal Church

1612 W. Genesee Street Syracuse, NY 13204

TO:



Service Time

Sundays

10 am—Holy Eucharist

In-person and by Livestream

Visit www.stmarkssyracuse.com for
Info regarding virtual service and programs

Office Hours

Tuesday—Friday:

9 am to 1:45 pm



Mission Statement: The Church of St. Mark the Evangelist is a community of faith sharing the love of Jesus Christ with one another and the world.