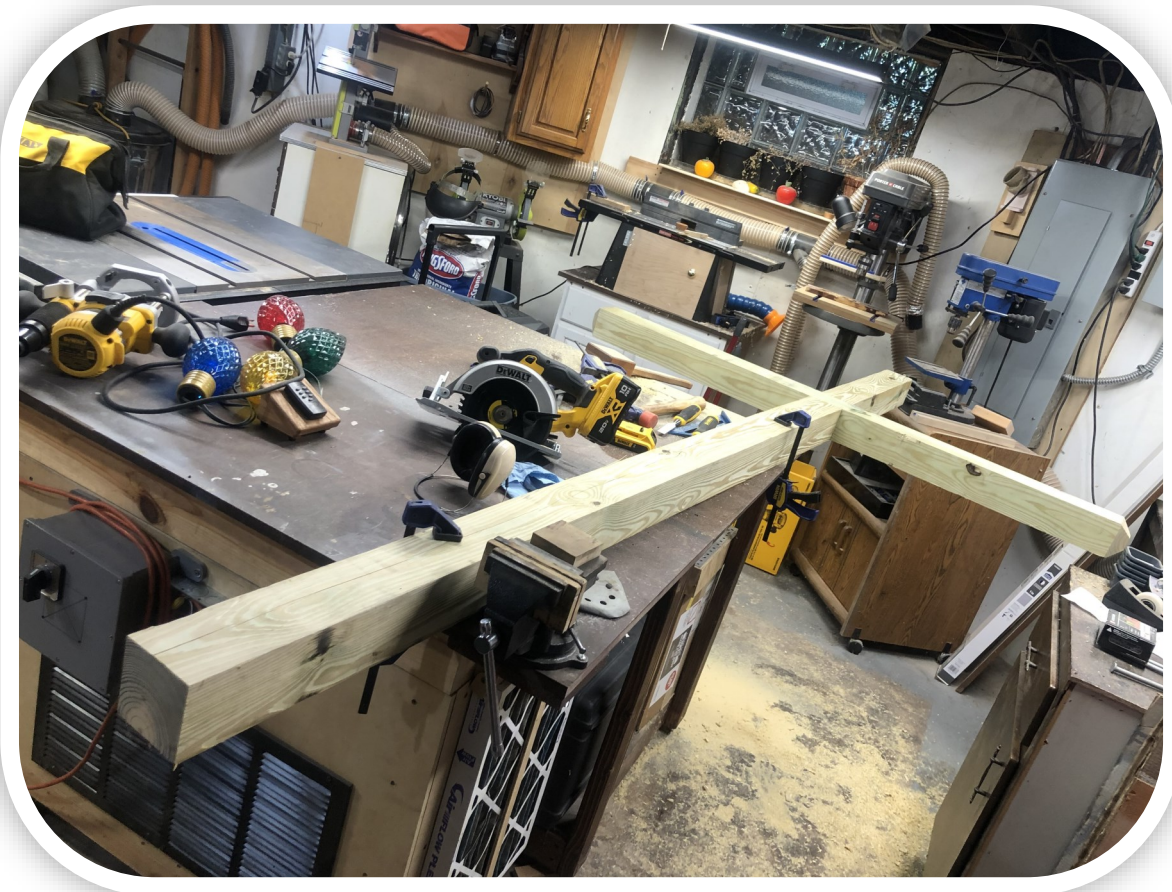




THE WAY

The Newsletter of
St. Mark the Evangelist
Episcopal Church
1612 W. Genesee St.
Syracuse, NY 13204
315-488-8511
www.stmarkssyracuse.com

November 2023



St. Mark's has a new hand-crafted cross to replace the old one that has become pretty worn over time. *For more information about this beautiful new addition, please turn to page 6.*

A Word ...

I recently heard someone describe the months of October and November as the weekend months of the year. And that made me laugh a little because it has the ring of truth to it. If the whole year is compared to a single week, November is definitely like Sunday, unfolding slowly as Fall transitions to Winter, and Thanksgiving is definitely like an old-school Sunday dinner. December, on the other hand, definitely feels like a Monday, full of lots of things to do and catch up on. And just as I don't want to think about Monday on the weekend, I really resent retailer's insistence on pushing Christmas on me before its even Halloween.



But in the life of the church, this is a really fruitful season. November begins with a three day cycle of feasts, All Hallows Eve, All Saints Day, and All Souls Day. In the medieval church these days were known as Allhallowtide and was a time to remember those who had died, including martyrs, saints, and all faithful departed Christians.

The end of November also brings us the end of the church year as we prepare for the beginning of Advent. As I have mentioned before, the church year is divided between a time to re-experience our ancient ancestors' encounter with Christ, from a season of anticipating his arrival (Advent) through his whole life, death, resurrection and Ascension, all the way to the gift of the Spirit at Pentecost. The other half of the year, in our Sunday readings, we are called to examine our own lives and to ask ourselves "what does the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus mean for me?"

In November, our Sunday Scriptures invite us to explore the trajectory and endpoint of our own faith journey and what the promise of Christ's return means to us and how it impacts our lives. So enjoy this "weekend" part of the year, and I hope the blessings of God may be with you throughout these years.

Peace,
Jon

Advent and Christmas

Advent again begins on December 1st this year. This year, we will be providing materials from "The Way of Love: Practices for a Jesus-Centered Life" which offer daily reflections and opportunities to try different faith practices that can strengthen your faith and deepen your relationship to God.

As happens occasionally, this year the fourth Sunday of Advent is December 24th, Christmas Eve. We will have our regular Sunday morning worship as well as our Christmas Eve Services.



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST MARK...

Parish Discernment 2023

On October 28, the vestry met for a retreat day. The day started with a Bible study on Acts 11:19-30 which is a passage that tells about the beginnings of the Christian community in Antioch which was the place where the mission to the Gentiles began. From this passage, we looked at what the purpose of a church community is and how we might know whether it is a spiritually healthy place or not. From there, we began a discussion on how we can be a community that is not only spiritually healthy, but also sustainable. We reviewed all the materials and conversations from the parish meetings and looked again at all of our options. In the afternoon we were joined by the Rev Canon Tom Ferguson from the bishop's staff who answered questions and shared about the experiences of other parishes who have been on similar journeys.

We feel at this time, that we can cut sufficiently cut back on our expenses and still meet the priorities identified in the parish meetings, which were:

- ◆ Maintaining a sense of community
- ◆ Our outreach ministries are an essential part of our parish identity
- ◆ We believe that the church is the people and not the building
- ◆ Participating in Eucharist is important in our lives of faith

This will necessitate a renegotiation with St Luke's on how we share in the costs of both Fr Jon and Deb, our Admin, but we are confident that can be resolved. Moving forward, we will also be in conversation with St Luke's on how we can more firmly establish our partnership and find other ways of sharing in ministry and expenses to the benefit of both.

Sacred Ground

Our Sacred Ground program had our last meeting on Tuesday October 24th. For over more than a year, we have met, talked and learned from one another and from the program materials. We encountered stories we never heard before, wrestled with questions about our own identities and the stories we were taught as children, and became aware of deeper currents in our community that we may have never noticed before.

Sacred Ground is a film- and readings-based dialogue series on race, grounded in faith. Small groups are invited to walk through chapters of America's history of race and racism, while weaving in threads of family story, economic class, and political and regional identity.

Sacred Ground is part of Becoming Beloved Community, The Episcopal Church's long-term commitment to racial healing, reconciliation, and justice in our personal lives, our ministries, and our society. Participants are invited to peel away the layers that have contributed to the challenges and divides of the present day – all while grounded in our call to faith, hope and love.

Fr Jon would like to invite everyone to participate and so is considering hosting another session in the coming year. If you are interested, please let him know.



Episcopal Roots

Lifetime Episcopalian and St. Mark parishioner, Joan Green, recently acquired this picture of her father, William Myers, in front of St. Mark's Church circa 1907-1909. He was between 10-12 years old at the time and was an acolyte. Joan notes that six generations of her family have received sacraments in St. Mark's Church. (William is also Leslie Hunt's grandfather.)

Have Fun Christmas shopping at

St. Mark's Clothes Closet!

**Saturday, DEC. 9
9:30am — 12pm**



★
JOY
NOEL
ANGEL
JESUS
PEACE HOPE
WISEMEN
CHRISTMAS
BELIEVE FAITH
PRINCE OF PEACE
THANK YOU

**Browse through
Men's, Women's and Children's Clothing, Shoes, etc...
ALL FOR ONLY A 25-CENT DONATION PER ITEM!**

FREE!

 **Bread**

 **Bric-brac table**

 **Coats, hats,
scarves, mittens &
boots!**



At the Green Café!

Thanksgiving help for Porter: Thanks to your generosity, St. Mark's raised \$1,030 for gift cards for Porter families along with Wegman's kicking in \$100. Cards in the amount of \$750 were purchased and the balance will be used toward Christmas gift cards for Porter. Your gift was very much appreciated by the Social Workers and staff as well as the families in need who benefited from your kind benevolence. Here is a letter St. Mark's received outlining some of the ways the gift cards made a difference in our neighboring families lives.



SYRACUSE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Jaime Alicea, Superintendent of Schools

Porter Elementary School

Lisa Quinones-Sherman, Principal

November 21, 2023

Dear St. Mark's Parishioners,

On behalf of the 25 grateful families that benefited from your collective generosity in providing much-needed gift cards, I'd like to extend a heartfelt "thank you" to everyone at St. Mark's Church who donated to our Porter families when food insecurity is a very real issue at our school and the community at large.

Often, we may donate at our local congregations and wonder exactly who may have benefitted from our generosity. While still protecting the privacy of our students and their families, I can provide scenarios that paint an accurate picture of both the needs of our families and the possibilities that were created because you gave some of your hard-earned money to help simply out of kindness. Because of your efforts:

- ♥ Grandparents on a fixed income were able to buy a turkey to feed their growing grandchildren who were currently residing with them after an eviction.
- ♥ Parents who lost their jobs unexpectedly were able to afford the fixings for their Thanksgiving meal and will celebrate with their young children.
- ♥ A single parent of three young children used her gift card to stock up on healthy snacks and lunch fixings to offset the meal expenses incurred over the school break.
- ♥ A family of eight were able to offset unplanned food expenses after their refrigerator malfunctioned and many of their perishables spoiled.

These are just a few of the families that were helped by your generosity, and many were genuinely moved that people they did not know would want to help them when the chips were down, and finances were tight. Our families that benefitted were a diverse group in every way...some were native Syracusans, some grew up near the large peanut plantations in Georgia, others hailed from Somalia, Burma, and the tropical coastal areas of Kenya. Other families had fled war-torn areas of Afghanistan or the Congo. What they all shared was gratitude that there are good people in the world, literally right next store to Porter Elementary, that cared enough to help make their children's lives a little bit brighter.

We at Porter wish all of you a safe, healthy, happy Thanksgiving Day.

In warm regards,
Your friends at Porter Elementary

NEW CROSS FOR ST. MARK'S

Last spring at a Vestry meeting, it was noted that our current cross is showing its age. Warden Jim Miller immediately volunteered up his son, Jeff, to build a new one for St. Mark's. "Jeff is a ceramic engineer in Pittsburgh working for Vesuvius, a molten metal flow engineering company," Jim said. "He also has become a competent wood worker and has a woodworking shop in his basement. I sent him measurements and he brought me this cross for Thanksgiving." Jim said it came unassembled so he will be looking for some volunteers to help erect some time before Lent.

Thank you, Jeff! Beautiful job!



Made with Love ... and lots of yarn!

In November, 32 pairs of warm and colorful mittens were delivered to Porter Elementary School for any student in need. Parishioner Nancy Tucker has made it her mission each year to work as she has the time year round to knit these beautiful items for the children just in time for the winter chill.



november

Happy Birthday

- 1 Dave Cook
- 3 Shirley Keech
- 6 Ernestine Long

If you would like to be added to the birthday and or anniversary listing, please contact Deb in the office.

From the Treasurer...

Budget Report for January 1 thru September 30 2023

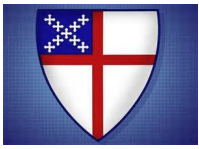
	Budget for Year	Actual	Difference
Income	\$115,450.00	\$93,864.80	-21,585.20
Expenses	\$178,316.89	\$112,639.00	-\$65,677.89
Deficit	-\$62,866.89	-\$18,774.20	\$44,092.69
Pledges	\$53,000.00	\$35,359.00	-\$17,641.00
Clothes Closet/FP			
Balance of Account	\$ 3,124.84		

Submitted by: Pat Dunn



Animal Blessings given in October





St Mark the Evangelist Episcopal Church

1612 W. Genesee Street Syracuse, NY 13204

TO:

Sundays
11 am—Holy Eucharist
In-person and by Livestream

All are Welcome!

Office Hours
Tuesday & Friday:
8 am to 2 pm
Thursday:
12:30-3pm

**Christmas at
St Luke's &
St Mark the Evangelist**



**JOIN US TO CELEBRATE
THE BIRTH OF HOPE IN
STORY, SONG, AND PRAYER**

December 17th following the Service - Greening of the Church
At both parishes

December 17th at Noon – St Mark's Christmas Party
In the St Mark's Parish Hall

December 24th at 4:00pm - Early Christmas Eve
At St Mark's
Family-Friendly service with favorite Christmas hymns –
reception to follow

December 24th at 7:00pm - Christmas Eve
At St Luke's
Festal Eucharist with hymns – champagne & chocolate
reception to follow

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.