

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Reaching Out With the Unconditional Love of God

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www.stmarksmadison.org

February 2018 NEWSLETTER

The Meaning of Lent

I like the idea of Lent - forty days to consider our relationship with God and how we want to grow this relationship. There are years I have given something up for Lent and years I have added a spiritual practice for Lent. Usually I get more out of adding a spiritual practice to the relationship I already have with God. In the past few years we have tried different worship experiences here at St. Mark's to accommodate our smaller than average congregation. I am very grateful this year to be encouraged to have evening services for both Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. As I have imagined how we will worship I have felt God's energy encouraging us to set aside these special times to be in communion with God. Already, as a community, we are *adding* to our spiritual practices for Lent.

The purpose of walking through Lent together is that we become more finely attuned to our longing for God and seek God with all our hearts.
Ruth Haley Barton

As you are aware, Ash Wednesday is also Valentine's Day. While this may mean a later than usual Valentine's Day dinner (the Ash Wednesday service is from 6:30 to 7:00) the two celebrations blend well. For me, Valentine's Day is a day to offer those we love a tasty chocolate treat and tell them how much we love them. It is a good winter respite. Ash Wednesday is a day to love God with our whole hearts, setting aside special time to get to know God better and acknowledging that we are not God. It is good spiritual practice to acknowledge this season of the church year.

Blessings,

Pastor Lori



Pastor Lori Powell

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St. Mark's Food Ministry



Food Pantry: We have volunteers who have been working in the food pantry for ten years or more. We are very grateful for their dedication but a few of them are beginning to travel more. It would be great to have rotating teams of volunteers so that if two of them are on vacation we still have enough volunteers to serve our guests. If you know of good places to advertise for volunteers, let Lori know. We have an invitation ready to go.

Friday Meal: It is a blessing and a relief to have the waterproofing done in the Fellowship Hall. This means we have the wheelchair ramp back in business. We are experimenting with Table Tents to welcome guests and recommend civil discourse.

Financial Giving

January Giving Summary

	Actual Giving	Budgeted Monthly
Members	\$2725.00	\$2200.00
Friends	\$ 172.00	\$ 350.00
Rent Rec'd 7th Day	\$ 860.00	\$ 860.00
Rent Rec'd Foods Mins	\$ 737.50	\$ 737.50
Funeral Rental	\$ 325.00	\$.00
Kitchen Rental	\$ 225.00	
Am Fam Refund	\$ 563.00	

**Thank you to members and friends who support
the ministry of St. Mark's.**

February Birthdays



February 24th - Ron Peterson



Ash Wednesday Service, February 14th 6:30 to 7:00

It is good to celebrate BOTH Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday. Love will overflow for the people in your love with whom you celebrate Valentine's Day and for God as you make time to be in worship. In our Ash Wednesday service we will explore three different ways to be prayerful and "resource" our Lenten journey. There will be no offering or communion but we will share the imposition of Ashes. If you need a ride because it is dark at 6:30, call the church office! We would be happy to give you a lift. :)

Team Meeting Review

Teams met for their Quarterly and Pre-Annual Meeting on January 21st. We celebrated the completion of the wheelchair ramp and the agreement to have an evening Ash Wednesday and Good Friday service.

In preparation for the Annual meeting we need updated rental policies, changes and edits to our Welcoming Statement, and approve the 2018 Budget.

Annual Meeting and Potluck - February 18th



Following worship on Sunday, February 18th is our Annual Meeting. Please bring a dish to pass either a lunch item or a brunch item. Each Worship Team should have one person prepared to share an Annual Report. We will be voting on becoming a Reconciling in Christ congregation. We will approve new rental policies. We will vote on who will represent us at Synod Assembly. We will review the bids received on a new floor for the Fellowship Hall and determine when would be the most appropriate time for this project. It is potentially a \$25,000 project and may be a ways out. Our tile and our sealant have tested positive for asbestos - but to quote a scientist friend of mine, "the floor will never burst in flames!"



Thank you to Chris Anderson who created the new red signs on our sign post outside. (And Jim O'Connor who helped put them up!)



South-Central Synod of Wisconsin
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Around the Synod

SAVE THE DATE! Synod Assembly 2018 – Saturday, May 5 & Sunday, May 6 – Kalahari, Wisconsin Dells - SAVE THE DATE! Prepare to elect your voting members at your annual meetings. Annual assemblies are life-giving and life-changing for congregational members! Council presidents should be thinking about lay leaders in your congregations who would be energized by lively engagement with other leaders in our Church and inviting them to attend as a voting member or visitor!