

St. Mark's Lutheran Church, ELCA

Reaching Out with the Unconditional Love of God!

Worship Sundays at 9:30 am

605 Spruce St, Madison, WI 53715

July, 2019



Where Have You Seen God Lately?

Pastor Lisa Nelson

Jesus said, "I will ask the Father, and he will give you an Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you." (John 14:16-17) Later, Pontius Pilate asked Jesus, "What is truth?" Now, there's a question for today.

Sometimes, it seems that we are living in completely different worlds based on what media source we listen to. For example, some people are deeply afraid of the immigrants who are crossing our borders, while others are welcoming them with open arms. This seems like polar opposites. So, what is truth in this situation?

According to Eric Law in his book, *Holy Currencies*, "We live in a world conditioned by the paradigm of either-or thinking – something is either true or false." But that is too simplistic, and it is an adversarial approach to truth.

For instance, either Black Lives Matter, or you Back the Badge. Does it really have to be one or the other? Why do we have to choose sides? If we admit that one group has been placed at risk, does that really diminish the risk the other group experiences?

I don't think so. The point is that those whose lives are at risk do mat-



Pastor Lisa Nelson

ter. All Lives Matter does not acknowledge that some people are more at risk than others and that we need to do something about that.

According to Eric Law, "the spirit of truth calls us to attempt to understand the multiple points of views." And "this truth-discerning process is always complex and messy." Sounds like life—whether we like it or not.

Eric says, "As a Christian, I struggle with Jesus' call to love my enemy – a radical demand of the spirit of truth. I don't know the truth unless I am willing to see the conflict from my enemy's viewpoint."

Jesus calls us not only to get along but to work together for the sake of the world. Let's pray for the courage to view conflicts and cultural differences from someone else's perspective. I know we want to be part of the mission of God, so let's practice seeing Christ in the other, as well as in ourselves.

Peace, Pastor Lisa
pastorlisa@stmarksmadison.org



Welcome Rev. Walter Baires!

Assistant to the Bishop, South-Central Synod of WI



On July 7, we welcome our new synodical Director for Evangelical Mission/DEM, Rev. Walter Baires. He will worship with us at 9:30 am. Following worship and fellowship, Rev. Baires will lead a forum for us to learn about our own culture, so we can welcome other cultures to St. Mark's.

The forum will run from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm and will include lunch (no charge).

Please join Pastor Lisa Nelson, President Lisa Manion and others for this great opportunity to meet with DEM Rev. Baires, and gain some new perspectives of how we can interact with our community.

Border Crisis: Another Way to Help

The Humanitarian Respite Center desperately needs:

- men's pants, size 28-32 short
- women's bras
- new underwear for men, women and children
- men's belts-small
- tennis shoes with laces for men, women and children

Send donations to
The Humanitarian Respite Center
111 S. 15th St.
McAllen, TX 78501

What Matters . . .

Stay connected to events and stories of faith in action in our synod! Email Synod Communicator & Event Manager, Deacon Vicki Hanrahan at vickih@scsw-elca.org to be added to "What Matters." Thank you for your partnership!

What is a Director of Evangelical Mission?

(Excerpt from ELCA.org)

In order to coordinate the partnership between the ELCA's churchwide ministries and the 65 synods of this church, directors for evangelical mission serve in positions shared by both of these expressions of this church. They are fully churchwide staff who are fully embraced by synods.

Directors for evangelical mission convene leadership tables in their synods, which oversee four main areas:

- mission development or "new starts"
- congregational renewal or "redevelopment"
- Mission Support and stewardship
- missional vision and planning for the synod

DEM's are a key resource for congregations and leaders seeking tools and counsel for starting a new ministry or revitalizing existing ministries, as well as how to identify, develop and equip leaders for mission and ministry.

South Madison Unite



This organization is a coalition of South Madison residents and their allies who seek to ensure equitable, convenient, and uninterrupted access to a full-service supermarket on South Park Street.

To receive updates and news regarding this issue:

- join South Madison Unite at <https://www.southmadisonunite.org/join-us.html>
- "Like" us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/southmadisonunite/>

St Mark's History Addition to the May Article

The brief history of St Mark's that was printed in our May newsletter should have included Pastor Jerry Anderson who served from 1981 to 1995.

Connecting With Our Neighbors



Hanging Out at the Fire Pit



**Upcoming
Fire Pit Nights!**
Join us Tuesdays,
July 30
August 13 & 27
6:00 to 8:00 pm.
Meet the neighbors.
Enjoy some snacks!



*Did Someone Mention
Snacks?*

St. Mark's Park and Playground is serving our neighborhood families and providing a great spot for us to hangout and greet the people passing by. Thanks to Mark Weerda and Lisa Manion, we now have a new, portable "Fire Pit" that serves as the centerpiece for our Fire Pit Nights. This is really fun and has been a great way to connect with neighbors who are out and about. Everyone says hello. Some folks stop to chat. Kids come and play on the playground equipment. And we pet a lot of dogs! More of these opportunities are scheduled. Join Us!



*St. Mark's Park & Playground
with a New Swing Set and a New
Welcome Sign!*

Faithful Innovation

What is Faithful Innovation?

St. Mark's is a participant in Faithful Innovation

This is a process, not a program, in which a group of congregations form an intentional “leaning community.” Participating congregations will be discerning their unique answer to this question: “*As we listen to God, one another, and our neighbors, what future do we imagine God is bringing forth in our midst?*” The answer needs to come from Christ and our willingness to ask hard questions and listen for answers, as well as our ability to take risks, secure in our standing in Christ.

Session II

At the second session in Milwaukee on May 5, we worked on creating “experiments” meant to help us learn new behaviors to build and improve our relationships with our neighbors. Rather than having a goal, each experiment is designed with a feedback loop that will help us to discern what the next experiment will be. It is an ongoing process. One of our experiments is to create a gathering space in the courtyard and playground area to provide a casual, informal way to engage with our neighbors. You are encouraged to participate!

Dwelling in the Word

As we journey through this process of Faithful Innovation, we are invited to “dwell in the Word.” We are encouraged to read Acts 16:6-15 every day and consider what God might be saying to us, to notice

Asking God Questions

The questions we ask shape how we think about God, our congregation, each other, and our neighborhood. We want to learn to regularly ask “God Questions” of each other along this journey. We will listen for God’s answers, dwell in scripture together, share stories about what God is doing at St. Mark’s, and notice where God might be at work in our lives and in our neighborhood.

Examples of “God Questions”

- What might God be up to?
- What might God be saying to us?
- How do we sense God’s presence in our daily lives (in our workplaces and in our neighborhoods)?
- What does God care about in our local communities?
- How might God be leading our congregation to join in something God is already doing?

Next Team Meeting

Tuesday July 23 at 6:00 pm

Join us for this next meeting! We will be meeting with our team coach for a meal. Speak to Pastor Lisa or President Lisa Manion for details.

new things in the scripture that perhaps we haven’t noticed before. We are encouraged to consider what these things might mean for us as individuals, as the community of St. Mark’s and for our neighborhood.

Acts 16:6-15

They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. When they had come opposite Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them; so, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas. During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, ‘Come over to Macedonia and help us.’ When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, and

from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days. On the sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there. A certain woman named Lydia, a worshipper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, ‘If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home.’ And she prevailed upon us.

St. Mark's Food Ministry

Food Pantry & Friday Meal Volunteers



One of the most unique things about St. Mark's Lutheran Church is our Food Ministry. Our Food Pantry and Friday Meal serve many people in our community. Volunteers are what keep this ministry running!

If you are interested in volunteering for the Food Pantry or the Friday Meal, please speak to Tony Esser or contact the church office.

Our Food Pantry is open on Tuesdays from 10:00 am to noon, and on Thursdays from 5:30 to 7:30 pm.

Volunteers help clients shop, restock shelves and help with cleaning and straightening the pantry. No experience or special skills required to volunteer!

Our Friday Meal volunteers work from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm to help setup the food serving line, serve food and clean up afterward. No cooking skills required! A great opportunity for both individuals and groups! Assemble a group of friends, relatives, co-workers, classmates, etc. and volunteer for a Friday Meal.



Assisting in Worship

We appreciate our worship assistants who greatly enhance our worship. You can participate by reading lessons, serving communion, offering prayers and more. Please speak to Chris Anderson for more information or if you would like to assist.

New Freezer

The freezer in the Food Pantry died recently leaving the Food Pantry staff scrambling to save the contents before they thawed. All frozen food was transferred temporarily to the kitchen freezer without any food loss.

Thanks to several member donations and a significant donation from Lake Edge Lutheran Church, we were able to purchase a new freezer right away, and have it delivered within a few days.



Special thanks to all who donated including Lake Edge Lutheran Church who heard about our need and immediately sent a donation of \$300. We are so fortunate to have partners willing to step up and help!

You Can Help at St. Mark's!

There Are Many Ways You Can Help!

We rely on volunteers for most of our maintenance and lawn care. The sanctuary and hallways need frequent vacuuming and dusting. Restrooms need to be cleaned regularly, and paper products restocked. Stairwells and lower level hallways need to be cleaned and mopped. Please look for ways that you can pitch in to keep our building looking great!

See Something That Needs to Be Done?

If you see something that needs to be repaired, cleaned, replaced, etc., please share your concern with President, Lisa Manion. Have an idea how to take care of the issue? Be sure to let us know how we can help! To leave a message at the church email StMarks@StMarksMadison.org. or call the office at 608-256-8463.

Children's Worship Space

Children learn to worship by participating and being present. We encourage people with children to keep them in worship with them at all times. But, worship can be a little hard to sit through when you're little, so we have created a space for children right in the sanctuary! The space is carpeted and contains a child size table with chairs, crayons, puzzles and easel and other age appropriate toys and activities. There is room to move around and fun things to occupy little hands. Children, you are welcome here!



Above: Keefe watches while Skylia and Rhea rock out to the worship band on a recent Sunday morning.



Left: Rhea works on a sermon illustration while her mom, Alisa, looks on.

Baby Care Kits

It is again time to begin collecting items for Baby Care Kits that will be sent to Lutheran World Relief. Items may be new or very gently used. Items must be in excellent condition with no stains or tears in order to be accepted through customs. (One unacceptable item can jeopardize the entire shipment.) Sizes needed are 6 months to 24 months. Blankets and sweaters may be hand made.

You may begin bringing donations any time. We will assemble Baby Care Kits on Sunday, September 8 following worship. The boxcar loading date is early this year, September 14.

It is Garage Sale season, so watch for very gently used items as you visit sales in your area.

Items Needed:

- 2 lightweight cotton t-shirts (no Onesies®)
- 2 long or short sleeved gowns or sleepers without feet
- 2 receiving blankets, medium weight, cotton or flannel, or crocheted or knitted with lightweight yarn, between 36" and 52" square.
- 4 cloth diapers, flat fold preferred
- 1 jacket, seater or sweatshirt with a hood, or include a baby cap
- 2 pairs of socks
- 1 hand towel, dark color recommended
- 2 or 3 bath-size bars of gentle soap equaling 8 to 9 oz., any brand, in original wrapping; no mini or hotel size bars.
- 2 diaper pins or large safety pins