



# The Messenger

## November 2020

### St. Mark's Lutheran Church

A member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

*"A scribe then approached and said, 'Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.' And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.'"* (Matthew 8:19-20 NRSV)

This week two different things brought this scripture verse to mind. The first was a story that came across my news feed about a bronze sculpture of Jesus shrouded in a blanket and lying on a park bench.

The sculpture of "Homeless Jesus," created by Canadian sculptor Timothy Schmalz, depicts a man wrapped in a blanket with only his bare feet exposed. There is a hole in each foot, leaving the viewer with the impression that it is Jesus under the blanket.



*"Homeless Jesus" by Timothy Schmalz*

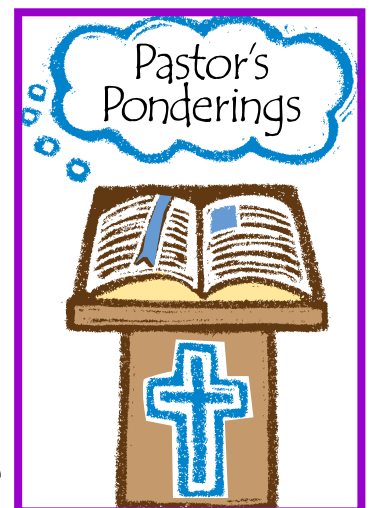
When the traveling sculpture was placed outside St. Barnabas Episcopal Church in Bay Village, Ohio recently, it only took 20 minutes for someone to call the police department's non-emergency line to report the homeless person. The police arrived to discover the "Homeless Jesus" sculpture on display. The parish priest said the point of the statue is to get people's attention and show that when someone in need is being served, so is Christ.

We don't know if the person who made the call, called out of concern for the homeless person or for another reason, however, we do know that the traveling sculpture of "Homeless Jesus" has evoked strong emotional responses from many people. According to National Public Radio, when the sculpture was on display in Davidson, North Carolina, some residents felt the statue demeaned the neighborhood or was insulting.

Schmalz, the sculpture's creator, said the statue is meant to reflect the values of Christ and show that Jesus is aligned with "the least in our society...If Jesus came down today, he would be hanging out with the homeless people, with the marginalized." Schmalz said, "It's a benefit to homeless people and the marginalized themselves to understand that they have self-worth and that they are very close to God."

The second event that brought the verse from Matthew's Gospel to mind, was a call I received from Bill Devine of Habitat for Humanity of the Fox Cities. Bill said he was calling St. Mark's Church to thank us for our financial support this past year. Bill said that their goal for 2020 was to build 17 homes. Due to the coronavirus out-break they didn't quite make their goal this year, but still, they will finish 15 homes this year. Thanks be to God!

Habitat for Humanity, and their mission to provide sustainable housing, is just one of the many ways that your generous gifts continue to make a difference in our community and around the world.



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2020 has been a difficult year, not only for each of us, but around the world. And as much as all of us have been inconvenienced, and perhaps, both emotionally and financially burdened by the virus and world events, 2020 has been understandably worse for the homeless and impoverished individuals in our society.

This year, our Thanksgiving celebrations will likely be curtailed from years past, and still, we know that God is faithful, and we have so much to be thankful for.

This year, at the top of my list of thanksgivings, I am thankful for all of you, for your kindnesses and your generous spirit, that continues to uplift this community of faith and keeps us on the right pathway as we look forward to a new year and the promise that it holds.

Have a blessed Thanksgiving everyone, and remember the poor.

Pastor Bob



## MOSES MESSAGE

### *A Sunday School Update*

Hi Everyone!! I hope you enjoyed your bag with your lesson, Ten Commandment book, the goodies to make and enjoy, and your little Halloween bag of goodies. I enjoy putting these together to give to you and so I hope you enjoy them. We are trying to keep you in touch with Sunday

School through this trying time. Thanks to Leland Tharp for the picture of the Tower of Babel. It was really neat how he made it out of paper bags. With November coming soon, we start to think about Thanksgiving and what we should and are thankful for. It would be nice if you could think of **something you're thankful for and share with me and I will put it in the December Messenger.** So email me at [thoehne@new.rr.com](mailto:thoehne@new.rr.com) so I can get it in the December messenger. I will be delivering a goodie bag or your basket to you sometime in November. You should enjoy it as there will be some fun things to do and eat, of course. So everyone stay safe and healthy through this pandemic. God Bless everyone.

P.S. We miss not seeing your smiling faces.

#### BIRTHDAYS

Sophia Kersten 11/16          Dylan Steeber 11/22

Happy Birthday to you!!!

With God's Blessings,

Gwen Hoehne, Superintendent

We are  
Thankful for  
YOU!



# Mission of the Month Spotlight

Mark "Missions" on your giving envelope and mail them to St. Mark's at 140 S. Green Bay Road to donate to St. Mark's Food Pantry



St. Mark's Food Pantry is doing very well. When the Safer at Home policy went into effect, we shut down for one week and came up with a new plan. Now no one comes into the church, but we have a team of about four. One person takes their order and two of us stay in the back room to fill the order and a fourth person delivers it to their car. It seems to be working out quite well.

We have been getting meat and other supplies from Feeding America, but a lot of our supplies come from YOU. We are very appreciative of all the cash donations and so many other donations of food and paper products. We couldn't stay open without your help. We help anyone no matter where you live or what church you belong to. Our only requirement is that you need food. We are making a difference in our community. We certainly appreciate your help. — Karen Jordan, Food Pantry Volunteer



Henley Patricia Biese was born Friday, October 2. Proud parents are Erin and Ryan Biese and big brother is Mason Biese. Grandma Jan Bagley is so happy with this little girl joining the family.

## **Important Dates Coming Up at St. Mark's**

- November 1 — All Saints' Sunday
- November 8 — Stewardship Sunday
- November 25 — Thanksgiving Worship
- November 29 — Advent Begins

Visit the East-Central Wisconsin Synod's Website at: <https://ecsw.org/> and Facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/East-Central-Synod-of-Wisconsin-ELCA-139767989400097/](https://www.facebook.com/East-Central-Synod-of-Wisconsin-ELCA-139767989400097/)







St. Mark's is an active supporter of the **Fox Valley Community Table (FVCT)**. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, FVCT will not be having their annual sit down Christmas Dinner, which they have served 300+.

INSTEAD: They will be handing out gift bags to the guests & calling the giving event "*The 12 Days of Christmas*".

St. Mark's is collecting bag items or cash donations for the purchase of items. If you are interested in serving our neighbors, please bring any of the below items to the Nov. 8th parking lot worship. If, due to bad weather, we do not have the parking lot worship or you will not be attending, please drop off your donations at the church now through **November 13th**—call ahead.

**DONATION ITEMS:** Soap, hand sanitizer, sanitizing wipes, toothpaste, disinfectant spray, facemasks, lip balm, shampoo, razors, shaving cream, and canned fruit, vegetables and soup.

GROW IN FAITH, TO LOVE & SERVE



Thanks to our faithful helpers, St. Mark's Food Pantry is doing well. During September, we were able to help 127 people with food. We've been getting between 11 and 16 families picking up groceries weekly. Mostly it's regular patrons who come once or twice a month, but we have been getting new people stopping by. We are happy to help. Feeding America has been having trucks stop at Calder Stadium regularly, and hopefully that helps those who need it.

We are always in need of soaps, juice and spam and tuna. We appreciate all the help given to us. THANKS! - Karen Jordan, Food Pantry Volunteer



## Facebook Video Services



- [www.facebook.com/stmarksneenah](http://www.facebook.com/stmarksneenah)
  - Every Sunday at 10:00 A.M.
  - Every Tuesday/Thursday 10:00 A.M. Devotional
- **DVD's are available** if you do not have Internet in your home. Please call the church office at 920-725-2828 to request copies.



**Giving through the GivePlus Mobile app is an easy and convenient way to donate to St. Mark's. It only takes a moment to set up an account:**

1. Download the free GivePlus app from the App Store or Google Play.
2. Find our church by ZIP code {54956} or by searching "St. Mark's".
3. Donate!

***Thank you for your generosity!***

**St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Neenah**

### **ST. MARK'S GIVING OPTIONS:**

1. Mail in your giving envelopes to St. Mark's: 140 S. Green Bay Rd Neenah, WI 54956
2. Electronic Simply Giving/Vanco forms on our website or in church office. Call the office at 920-725-2828 to have this form mailed to you if you prefer not to leave your house.
3. Download the free GivePlus App from the App Store or Google Play. Find our church by zip code (54956) or by searching "St. Mark's."

*God bless you and thank you for your faithful and generous support during these unprecedented times.*



## ST. MARK'S CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

September 12, 2020



Meeting was called to order at 6:30 P. M. by President Laurie Olson.

Roll Call:

Members Present: Sharyn Gawlick, Bruce Grundman, Mary Jane Hartley, Judy Hellman Donna Joachim, Pennie Linna, Laurie Olson, Nancy Rose, Phyllis Ziemke and Pastor Bob.

Members Excused: Eric Blank and Jeff Tharp.

Members Unexcused: None

Guests: None

In keeping with the COVID-19 social distancing guidelines, Sharyn Gawlick, Bruce Grundman, Mary Jane Hartley, Judy Hellman, Donna Joachim, Pennie Linna, Laurie Olson, Nancy Rose, Phyllis Ziemke and **Pastor Bob met in person at St. Mark's wearing our face masks and sitting 6 feet apart.**

Devotions: **Judy Hellman led us in devotions with a reading "Thoughts from Solitude" by Thomas Merten.**

Sharyn Gawlick volunteered for devotions next month.

The September Calendar was not passed around for any changes/additions due to the building being closed.

Approval of Minutes for the August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020 meeting. MSC by Judy Hellman/Phyllis Ziemke.

Thank You Cards - A Special Thank You card was sent to Laurie Wilkinson for all the time she puts into getting our Sunday Church Service set up and on line.

Financial Report:

1. Current Budget balance is \$51,308.54
2. Building Improvement is \$3,131.72
3. **August's giving was \$13,272.91** - Spending was \$11,011.76.
4. Giving needs to be around \$3,500.00 to \$4,000.00 per Sunday to meet spending.

MSC by Nancy Rose/Judy Hellman.

### **Pastor's Report**

1. I have made one home communion visit, using the individual sealed communion sets and meeting outside. All hospital visits still continue to be suspended due to the COVID-19.
2. **I continued to post Tuesday and Thursday morning devotions on St. Mark's Facebook page.**
3. I participated in several Zoom Meetings with the Synod Office and pastoral colleagues regarding best practices during the coronavirus.

OUR CHURCH'S  
**FINANCIAL HEALTH**

**For the month of  
SEPTEMBER 2020**

**Given: \$15,726.39**  
**Spent: \$19,466.31**



4. **Together with St. Mark's Stewardship and Finance Committee, I attended two zoom meetings on "Beginning a culture of Generosity."**
5. I presided at a Labor Day memorial worship service for Clark Anderson.
6. I met with the family of Marguerite Brechlin in preparation for the up-coming memorial service for Jim Brechlin.
7. I met with Chris Rose and Chelsea Mueller in preparation for their wedding.
8. **I continue to record, along other members of St. Mark's Church, the Sunday worship service, which is then posted to our Facebook page and linked to our website.**
9. **Along with Laurie Olson, I met the Youth and Family Ministers from St. Paul's and Our Savior Churches in Neenah, and Pastor Jon Gallatin of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, to discuss youth education opportunities.**
10. **I presided at St. Mark's third parking lot worship with communion**
11. **I met with our musicians to record music for St. Mark's online worship service.**
12. **I met with St. Mark's Committees as needed.**
13. I have been making preparation for the 2020-2021 confirmation year which will begin with on-line classes on Wed. Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup>.
14. I presided at the wedding of Chris Rose and Chelsea Mueller.
15. I met with Tom Goodsett, from TFG Audio Visual Solutions as he installed audio recording equipment in Our Sacristy.
16. **Along with others from St. Mark's Church I participated in a Webinar Zoom meeting presented by MFSA and UMKR, entitled, "It is Antisemitic to criticize the state of Israel. I also shared some pictures from my 2012 trip to Israel and Palestine's and my thoughts on the conflict.**
17. **I participated in a zoom meeting with the Pastor's of the Appleton Conference**
18. **With other members from St. Mark's I helped with the mulching project at Wilderness Park in Neenah for God's Work, Our Hands.**



Doris & Victor Gilbert  
Pat Wenzel  
Judy Koerner  
Tara Dieck

MSC Phyllis Ziemke/Mary Jane Hartley.

Committee Reports:

Christian Education: No Meeting.

Connection: No Meeting.

Endowment: No Meeting.

Finance/Stewardship:

1. Mary Jane reviewed the current giving for August, which was \$13,272.91 and expenditures were \$11,011.76. Our spending was under our giving by \$2,261.15
2. Mary Jane Hartley and Jenny Blank continue to work on the finance computer program and glitches.

3. **Stewardship is participating in a program called “Beginning a Culture of Generosity”**. The committee members will be attending 6 sessions to be able to explore how to support our Congregation. The sessions are virtual, and the resources are available online. The program will assist committee members in approaching our traditional tasks of sending out pledge cards and how we inform the congregation of our current financial situation. We reviewed the timeline for our tasks for the program.
4. The Finance and Stewardship Committee has found ourselves in a different situation this year in that from your generosity we have been able to meet our expenditures without going into a deficit, and in **response to that, we have been able to utilize the gifts given to St. Mark’s to be generous to our community.**

Memorial: No Meeting.

Partnership: No Meeting.

Property:

1. Run wires for video and virtual services when wire arrives.
2. Wash the east side of the church.
3. Roof the garage in September.
4. Grass mowing going well, Thanks to Donnie.
5. Discussed ordering sanitizer for the church – Pathicide. Bruce will talk to Laurie. Joe and Sandy will go to Sun Chemical. This comes as a concentrate.
6. Actuator valve has been replaced.
7. Candle Base for Baptism Candles needed. Bruce will talk to Mike.
8. Clean up around garage to be done.
9. Need to flip the church sign.

Social Ministry: No Meeting.

Worship and Music:

1. The sermon message for Sept. 6<sup>th</sup> will be given by Bishop Gerald Mansholt. The readers and assistant minister parts will be done by our congregation members.
2. Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, **we will have another parking lot service with communion. This is also “God’s Work, Our Hands” Sunday. Ideas for congregational activities were also discussed. Some of these are mulching in one of the local parks, food drive, hygiene kits, painting rocks and yard signs.**
3. Pastor Bob and Laurie Olson reported information on the updating of the sound system. The updates will enable the worship service to be projected into the Fellowship Hall when we can have indoor worship again and also will include improvements to our recording system.

Youth: No Meeting

Committee Reports: MSC by Judy Hellman/Pennie Linna.

Unfinished Business:

1. Council Retreat is on hold till the Fall.
2. The Basket Raffle is rescheduled for November.





New Business:

1. Laurie Olson presented the In-Person Task Force report on the proposed Funeral Guidelines and the Outside Group Use Guidelines. *(This report was included in last month's Messenger)*

Sharyn Gawlick moved to accept this and have it in place for when we reopen the church.

Council next went over the Proposed Outside Group use Guidelines. MSC by Phyllis Ziemke/ Judy Hellman to accept these guidelines in place for when we reopened the church to outside groups.

2. In light of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the following decisions have been put in place for the paid staff **and St. Mark's church. This will be revisited monthly or sooner if needed.**

- \* Judy, Delores and LuAnn our Organists will continue to be paid thru the end of October  
MSC by Phyllis Ziemke/Bruce Grundman {Judy Hellman Abstaining.}
- \* Rich, our janitor will remain at the 10 hours per week. He will continue to coordinate with Pastor as to what days and hours this will be. MSC by Phyllis Ziemke/Bruce Grundman.
- \* **All outside groups that meet at St. Mark's remain cancelled till further notice.** {Will re-examine this when we move into Phase 2 of re-opening Guidelines.}
- \* Regular Church services for St. Marks is available on Facebook Live.
- \* Church office at the present will remain open in the morning.
- \* Food Pantry program to continue, following safety guidelines.

All of the above decisions will continue to be monitored on a regular basis as we continue to work our way thru this health crisis facing our country.

3. Tom Goodsett from TFG Audio Visual Solutions has been working on getting his part of the sound system in place and ready to go.

4. Update on "God's Work, Our Hands" that took place following our Parking Lot Service on September 13.

- \* Canned Food Drive during the Parking Lot Service.
- \* Lay mulching at a Wilderness Park in Neenah.
- \* Put hygiene kits together.
- \* Painting Rocks
- \* Yard Signs
- \* Had several face masks donated.
- \* **Sunday School young people sent out over 80 cards to St. Mark's shut ins/elderly.**

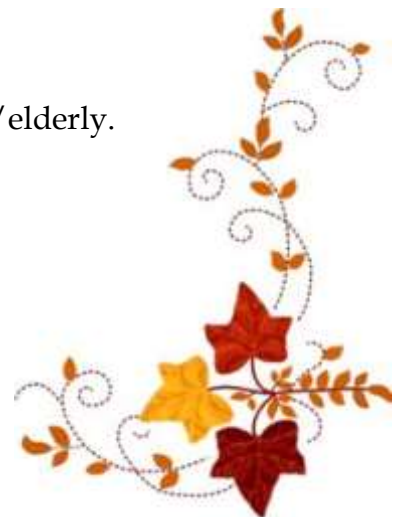
5. Community Table served 65 bagged lunches on Tuesday.

MSC by Phyllis Ziemke/Nancy Rose to adjourn at 7:46 P.M

**We closed with the Lord's Prayer.**

Next meeting is October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 6:30 P.M.

Submitted by Donna Joachim



## BEGINNING A CULTURE OF GENEROSITY



Did you know that the average protestant church member gives away about 2% of their income to the church? Another statistic shows that the median protestant (person in the middle if lined up smallest percentage to largest) only gives 0.62% of their income to the church.

For most people the reason for this has less to do with their wealth or income and more to do with intentionality and regular systematic giving.

Over the course of a year, \$1 per day comes to a gift of \$365, which for about 35-40% of Americans would be significant growth in their giving to the church. The average Starbucks coffee costs \$2.75. This amounts to over \$1,000 if one is purchased every day of the year.

Regular, systematic giving can help all of us become more generous. We get overwhelmed when we think about larger numbers like \$1,000. However, most of us can find \$2.75 per day. As you think and pray about your generosity this year. Consider how systematic giving may help you become more generous.

*When I became a member at St. Mark's, I saw my generosity begin to bloom. When you become part of something and you see what your giving does, it makes you more interested in doing more, giving more of yourself such as committees and actions. It becomes part of your life and your life philosophy of being generous to not only your church, but your community, friends and neighborhood. -Dawn Jones*

# BEGINNING A CULTURE OF GENEROSITY

## PLACE GOD FIRST IN YOUR BUDGETING AND SPENDING

The Ten Commandments stress that God must be first in our lives. And Jesus said, "Seek first God's kingdom and righteousness and all these things shall be yours as well." (*Matthew 6:33*)

Many experience difficulty giving generously despite the desire and pledge to do so, because they attempt to give from what is left over at the end of the week or month rather than from first fruits, from all they have received.

The simple practice of placing God and The Church first in budgeting and spending has helped many to experience joy in their giving. When you do this, you are giving back from all that a good and loving God has provided. And you are practicing stewardship, understanding that you are but a temporary trustee of what God has entrusted to you.

### **Reminder:**

*Statement of Intent* card and *Time & Talent* form will be collected at the **November 8<sup>th</sup>** parking lot worship service, which is Stewardship Sunday. If you are not able to attend the November 8<sup>th</sup> worship service or due to bad weather, we do not have the service, please mail or email your card and form to the church office. Additional copies of the *Statement of Intent* card and *Time & Talent* form are on the St. Mark's website (look under resources).

### **Help Us Reach Our Goal:**

Two of our St. Mark's members have agreed to challenge us with a combined special gift. The challenge is, if we meet the Finance and Stewardship Committee's goal of receiving 50 *Statement of Intent* cards, they will bless us with a \$3,500 gift. If you haven't returned an intent card in past years, here's an opportunity to make an impact, by doing so. We will keep everyone posted on our progress towards our goal.





## Love Your Enemies

During an anti-racism protest in London this past summer, Black participant Patrick Hutchinson saw a white counter-protester fall. Fearing for the injured man's life, Hutchinson hoisted him over his shoulder and carried him through the crowd to seek help. Hutchinson was called a hero but says he just wanted to do the right thing and hoped his action might bring people together.

According to Jesus, the right thing is to "love your enemies [and] do good to those who hate you" (Luke 6:27). It's easy to love and be kind to our friends and people with similar beliefs. But when someone show kindness to a member of an opposing group, we witness more than a hero; we see Jesus' love in action.



## Weather Permitting

**St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Neenah**

Parking Lot Worship Service

**Sunday, December 13 at 9:00 A.M.**



### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

You are asked to stay in your vehicle at all times. (Must be in a vehicle. Setting up of lawn chairs will not be an option.) Pastor and worship assistants will be outside with volume transmitted through your car radio (station number will be posted on a sign when entering the lot & in your bulletin on the morning of the service). Follow directions of the parking lot ushers. A safe distribution of communion and an offertory will be a part of the worship. Check e-mail and Facebook for updates about this service.



# Visit St. Mark's Website

[www.stmarksneenah.org](http://www.stmarksneenah.org)



Do we have your email address?

Please send an e-mail to [office@stmarksneenah.org](mailto:office@stmarksneenah.org) so we can update our church records.



### St. Mark's Office & Leadership Email Addresses

St. Mark's office: [office@stmarksneenah.org](mailto:office@stmarksneenah.org)

Pastor Bob's e-mail is still: [pastorbob@stmarksneenah.org](mailto:pastorbob@stmarksneenah.org)

Mary Jane Hartley's e-mail is now: [treasurer@stmarksneenah.org](mailto:treasurer@stmarksneenah.org)

## St. Mark's Lutheran Church

140 S. Green Bay Road

Neenah, WI 54956

