



# The Evangelist

St. Mark's Episcopal Church

A Quarterly Parish Magazine + December 2021

# The Evangelist

**St. Mark's Episcopal Church**  
258 West Franklin Blvd.  
Gastonia, NC 28052  
704.864.4531

Website: [www.stmarksgastonia.org](http://www.stmarksgastonia.org)  
Contact Us: [office@stmarksgastonia.org](mailto:office@stmarksgastonia.org)

The Rev. Shawn L. Griffith  
Rector  
[slg@stmarksgastonia.org](mailto:slg@stmarksgastonia.org)

The Rev. John C. Simpson  
Associate Rector  
[jcs@stmarksgastonia.org](mailto:jcs@stmarksgastonia.org)

The Venerable Brenda M. Gilbert  
Archdeacon of the Diocese of WNC  
[bmg@stmarksgastonia.org](mailto:bmg@stmarksgastonia.org)

Mrs. Polly G. Redd  
Director of Formation & Communication  
[pgr@stmarksgastonia.org](mailto:pgr@stmarksgastonia.org)

Ms. Dionne Browning  
Business Administrator  
[office@stmarksgastonia.org](mailto:office@stmarksgastonia.org)

David H. Wilcox  
Organist and Choir Director  
[dhw@stmarksgastonia.org](mailto:dhw@stmarksgastonia.org)

Kris Kiser  
Sexton  
[gastonjanitorial@bellsouth.net](mailto:gastonjanitorial@bellsouth.net)

A parish church in the Diocese of  
Western North Carolina  
The Rt. Rev. José McLoughlin, Bishop  
[www.diocesewnc.org](http://www.diocesewnc.org)

[Send any Subscriptions/Change of Address](#)  
Polly Redd: [pgr@stmarksgastonia.org](mailto:pgr@stmarksgastonia.org)

[Submissions](#)  
All submissions and ideas are welcome and considered  
for publication. Email submission ideas to  
Polly Redd: [pgr@stmarksgastonia.org](mailto:pgr@stmarksgastonia.org)

**Offering Envelopes**  
Please indicate if you would like to have offering envelopes.  
 Yes, I would like envelopes.  
 I plan to Prepay my pledge.

**My plan is to give:**  
 Weekly;  Every two weeks  
 Monthly;  Twice a month  
 Yearly;  
 Quarterly;  
 As can.



## Stewardship

is the careful and responsible  
management of something  
entrusted to one's care.

Our theme this fall is Stewardship—using our time, talent, and treasure for God's kingdom.

The Cover Photo is the brass collection plates we use. The large one is given in memory of George Russell Tennent and the two smaller ones are in memory of Bruce Dickerson Tankard and Adele O'Brien Tankard.

The picture above is information taken from a typical pledge card used to ask parishioners to commit to giving to the work of the church.



## St. Mark's Episcopal Church

Called to be Christ Centered  
Touching Lives + Transforming Hearts + Teaching God's Word

St. Mark's is a traditional parish in liturgy and architecture, but a progressive parish in organization and community involvement. Each month dozens of our members work tirelessly and creatively with others in our community to combat hunger, homelessness, racism, and other significant issues. By the power and grace of God, we are seeing the Kingdom of God unfold in our community.

We are excited about what the Holy Spirit is doing in our parish and in our community and we would love to share that excitement with you.

We invite you to come visit. Peace be with you!



**Follow St. Mark's  
Episcopal Church  
Gastonia NC on Facebook**

**[https://www.facebook.com/  
StMarksEpiscopalChurchGastonia/](https://www.facebook.com/StMarksEpiscopalChurchGastonia/)**

table of  
**contents**

December 2021 Issue # 6



**One of the wooden collection plates we have been using during COVID and that are used during the season of Lent.**

**feature stories**

- 4 How Love is Growing Here:  
Hope Vibes  
Archdeacon Brenda Gilbert
- 6 Being a Healthy  
Congregation  
The Rev. Shawn Griffith
- 8 Stewardship Campaign
- 9 Annual Meeting Reminder  
CAM Reminder  
Caring Cupboard List
- 10 St. Mark's Altar Guild  
Ed Hoerning, Historian
- 11 A Reflection on a Year at  
St. Mark's  
David Wilcox
- 12 Understanding The Words  
The Rev. John Simpson
- 13 Eagle Scouts

**departments & more**

- 13 Giving On-Line with Realm
- 14 Parish Transitions  
Live Stream Information
- 15 Calendar (as we know it)

## How Love Is Growing Here Archdeacon Brenda Gilbert

*“We’re not here to solve the world’s problems but, we are here to give hope daily. That’s what we are all about”. Adrienne Threatt*

None of us could have imagined when we started our soup and sandwich ministry several months ago, that we would meet so many people from all walks of life, living out their baptismal covenant by serving the homeless population in our city. And yet, that is exactly what has happened.

I would like to introduce you all to Emmanuel and Adrienne Threatt, a young couple living in Charlotte who saw that there were a number of tent camps around their city and began to ask themselves how does someone living here do something as basic as wash their clothes or get a shower?

They set out to get to know the people in the camps and discovered that often many of those who are unfortunately living on the streets have jobs they go to every day. In fact, several of them have multiple jobs, but with affordable housing almost nonexistent and the cost of basic goods rising, it is difficult to get ahead. They found the people were not lazy, they didn’t want to be in this position,



and they wanted to do things to better themselves.

The idea of the Hope Tank actually came to Emmanuel in a dream. He said, “I had a dream about this vehicle with laundry and showers in it. It would be able to go any-



where that our homeless neighbors would live”. Sharing his dream with his wife, Adrienne agreed and wanted to be involved in the vehicle’s design. “My original desire for the exterior of the Hope Tank was for it to be a living and moving artistic

mural for the city so that it not only encouraged the people that we were serving but, even as it is driving down the street, the average person that does have a home would still be encouraged and inspired to live out their purpose and not be limited by what they don’t have. As for the interior, she said “we wanted to create not just a sterile environment for cleaning, but we wanted to create an experience that was kind of like a moment of being at home”. And that is exactly what they have done.

The Hope Tank is fitted with two restrooms complete with sinks, toilets and showers. There’s also a laundry unit in the back. When I had the chance to go inside the truck, I was immediately struck by how beautifully decorated it is. It looks like someone’s home, warm and inviting. Emmanuel and



Adrienne are used to hearing people voice their surprise when they get a glimpse inside. They often get the comment that the bathrooms are better than people have in their own homes and I agree!

Emmanuel said it was designed for just that reason. They wanted to offer something that wasn't "just leftovers, it isn't something just put together, but very intentional, very well thought out to let our homeless neighbors know that they are valued and are worth every bit of this. Their moment of solitude in the shower can be that space. Even if it's just 15 minutes for them to kind of regain that sense of worth, that sense of dignity". Adrienne describes it by saying, "the Hope Tank experience is simply the opportunity for individuals



Tasha and Michelle with a client

**The Hope Youth Network Staff: Michelle, Jock (in back) Gia, Tasha, Tylieka, Pastor Caroline from Trinity Methodist Church, and Tony.**



to take a shower and get clean clothes in a space that is designed for hope. It is designed for encouragement"

Together with their volunteers who clean the restrooms in between each use and help with laundry, they provide every individual the gift of deep conversation and prayer in order to show them that they are valued. No one is rushed off, everyone is engaged in conversation or given the gift of silence while they enjoy a meal and even a haircut by Emmanuel. They simply meet each person as they are.

When asked about their dreams and goals for their organization, Hope Vibes, the couple said they would love to see the Hope Tank multiplied in three to five years. "Right now there is one. We would like to see three or four Hope Tanks throughout the city and then we can be on track to duplicating it in other cities," Emmanuel said.

St. Mark's is honored to be the permanent location site in Gastonia for the Hope Tank. The Theatts and their crew will be with us the third Thursday of every month from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. Together we hope to shed light on our neighbors without doors and invite others to join us.

If you would like more information about The Hope Vibes Organization, please visit their website - [www.hopevibes.org/hope-tank](http://www.hopevibes.org/hope-tank).

**Hope Vibes  
and their Laundry -  
Shower Truck  
will be in the St. Mark's  
Parking Lot the 3rd  
Thursday of each month.**

## Being A Healthy Congregation

The Rev. Shawn Griffith,  
Rector



Many know that I am taking classes for an advanced degree in ministry. So, far I have taken several preaching courses, studied the first century initiation rites of the church, and discovered the church's dishonorable role in the exploitation of the earth and people of color from the beginning of our nation's history. I am currently taking a course about Leadership in Healthy Congregations, and while the class is comprised of clergy from various denominations, the material addresses the relationship of clergy and lay in building adaptive leadership for the future. The primary resource for the class is Murry Bowen's approach to Family Systems.

Family Systems began as a psychological study of how a family interacts and from that interaction, how the individuals behave. This approach to family dynamics has been used for over seventy years. I was first introduced to this method back in the early 80s during my studying for a Master of Arts in Counseling and Guidance. 4 of the 8 practices that originated in Bowen's theory are the use of triangles, projection, cut-off, and differentiation of self. The others include the nuclear family's emotional system, multigenerational transmission process, sibling position, and emotional process in society.

Why am I writing about Family Systems Theory in a church magazine? Edwin Friedman, an ordained rabbi and practicing family therapist, brought the idea of Family Systems into the religious institution and found that the concepts of family dynamics directly correspond to the interaction of church members.

Earlier this year I asked the vestry and staff to read a book entitled "*Canoeing the Mountain; Christian*

*Leadership in uncharted Territory.*" Todd Bolsinger, the author, talks about the need for churches to adapt or die as we travel off the map of the past into an unknown future. An important quote in the chapter on leadership is "Leadership therefore is about the transformation of a congregation so that they, *collectively*, can fulfill the mission they, *corporately*, have been given." Several resources now say that moving forward the church needs adaptive leaders, but what does that look like?

The Bowen Family System Theory is not another program that we are going to try this year in place of the program we tried last year. We are simply going deeper. Our journey started several years ago with placing mission and ministry at the center of our parish life. "St. Mark's is called to be Christ centered, touching lives, transforming hearts, and teaching God's word." Using the material from the book, *Canoeing the Mountains*, we are seeing opportunities in the face of our current health-related difficulties. Bowen Family Systems Theory is one way of working together in love.

I strongly believe that St. Mark's is a healthy and vibrant congregation. You have heard me speak many times of how the people of St. Mark's are working together to continue the ministry of Christ in this community. But we can do more. Please understand this is not a statement of criticism, but a confession of the reality that exists; and we must acknowledge and address



this reality if we are going to move forward into the future as the Body of Christ. Even healthy congregations can become stronger through reflection and communication.

While I am learning about St. Mark's, I am also learning about myself. As I examine my time serving the people of this parish, I believe that in some areas we have grown together with great success and in other areas my decisions intended to reinforce the vision and goals of our parish should have been approached by a different path. I am committed to seeking God's purpose for this parish and equipping the membership, as best I can, to continue the work of Christ until the day of his return. I am passionate that the work we are called to do is important for the salvation of the world and that we have very little time to accomplish that work. And if you know me, then you know that my commitment and passion have nothing to do with personal gain. I now understand that when we have lost focus in our community life, all of us were inwardly focused on operating from a position of feelings. At the time I took things personally and my guess is that I am not alone. In our church we say we are a family, and in a family, there are disagreement and frustrations, but there is also reconciliation and genuine love for one and other. So, what do we do?

The central concept of the Bowen Family System is differentiation of self. Differentiation of self means to "Be yourself, be an individual. Don't be so glommed into the group. Be the best you can be! It encourages a part of us that is uniquely human. One might call it the emotionally mature part of a person. It takes part in relationships, but not by the giving up or taking on of self. In relationships, this part of self, communicates and defines self to others, cooperates or not, all directed by its principles. It pushes us to be, in Bowen theory terms, a more differentiated self."

(Quote from *The Eight Concepts of Bowen Theory* (p. 26). Leading Systems Press. Kindle Edition)

The challenge here is to become more emotionally mature, to let go of our emotions and to make decisions and take actions based on who we are, what we believe, and our values and principles. This process begins by openly sharing our feelings, without judgement and without blame. Then, we rationally work together towards solutions that bring about wholeness and healing.

You can not change  
the wind but you can  
adjust your sails

*"there is no change until  
there is transformation"*

Can we, as the Body of Christ, consider the best course of action in given any situation for the mission, ministry, and members of God's church without being driven by our feelings?

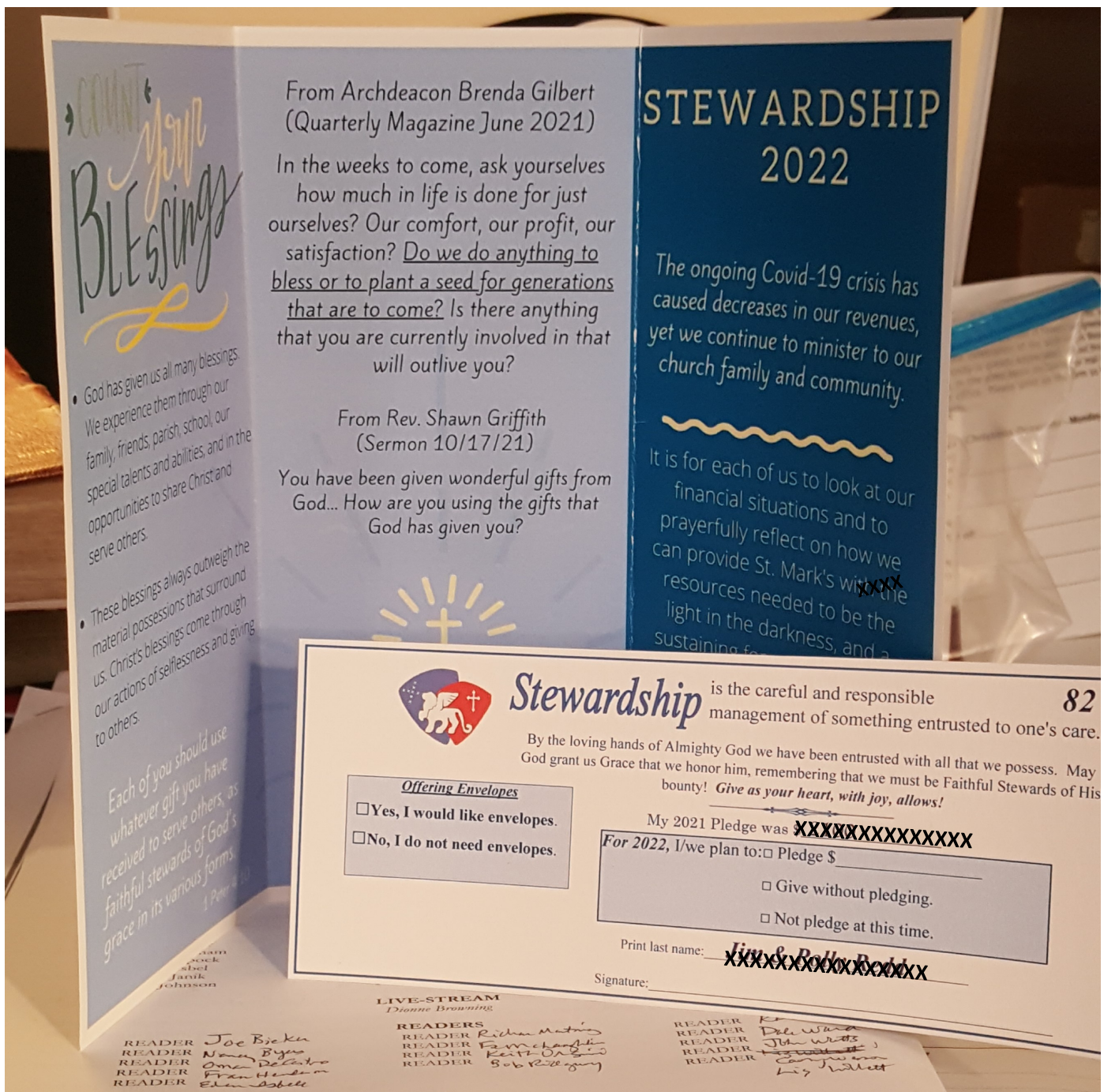
This challenge of setting aside emotions will be difficult for me because I am passionate about the Gospel. I need to learn when to be emotional about our work together and when to be unemotional as I reflect on and communicate our mission as the spiritual leader of this community. As Paul writes in Ephesians, "*We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.*" Ephesians 4:14-16

This challenge is not just for me. I have invited the vestry to explore this journey of adaptive leadership with me. I believe that together we can model healthy relationships that work towards a common goal. Over time, my hope is that St. Mark's will become more whole and more vibrant, as we set aside our personal emotions and think about the best way of being church together.

There is a quote in one of my books that says something like, "there is no change until there is transformation." The church throughout the world is facing a time to either adapt or die. St. Mark's has already begun a transformation into being the church of the future. St. Mark's is doing great things for the Kingdom of God and for God's people. Together, we could do greater things than these with God's help.

# Stewardship

It is that time of year when for most churches the Annual Stewardship Campaign is underway to get the pledges of Time, Talent, and Treasure from the membership for the coming year. The lessons for most of late September through early November seem to be about money and Jesus talking about giving to the Kingdom. We have all experienced it, and possible even made visits to members or filled out our own pledge cards year after year. Time, Talent, and Treasure are important ways that we all can support our parish. Be on the lookout for your Stewardship brochure and pledge card in the mail and prayerfully consider how you can support the work of St. Mark's in the coming year. Please try to return your form to the church office by December 15 so that a budget for 2022 can be created. Kelly Tiblier chairs our Stewardship Campaign for 2022,





## Remember CAM this Winter



### SHOPPING LIST for CAM

**Dry Cereal**  
**Grits / Oatmeal**  
**Pancake Mix / Syrup**  
**Soup / Crackers**  
**Canned Beans (Kidney, Navy, etc.)**  
**Canned Vegetables (no green beans)**  
**Canned Fruit**  
**Canned Meat**  
**Macaroni & Cheese**  
**Spaghetti Sauce & Pasta**  
**Rice / Mashed Potatoes**  
**Peanut Butter / Jelly**  
**Powdered Milk**  
**Personal Care Items**



### **Annual Meeting Reminder**

As we move toward 2022, you are reminded that St. Mark's gathers for their Annual Meeting in mid-January. This year due to the calendar and the Rector's schedule, **the Annual Meeting of St. Mark's will be January 23.** There will be a joint service at 9:30 followed by the meeting in the Parish Hall. At that time there will be reports on the many ministries happening here at the church and on our financial status. There will also be an election for the 4 members of the class of 2024 and 1 replacement member for the class of 2023. Nominees are now being solicited in the parish for a true slate of candidates. Speak to the Rector or the Senior Warden if interested.

To vote in the election you must be at least 16 and a communicant member of the parish of St. Mark's by either baptism, confirmation, or transfer of your letter to our records. If you are in any doubt about your eligibility, please contact the office in January.

### Caring Cupboard Needs

Our Caring Cupboard continues to be used on a regular basis and often people stop by during the week to say they have seen what is happening and to contribute towards it. We even have one of our users who regularly puts a few coins through our red door mail slot to encourage us and to help. Blessings truly abound.



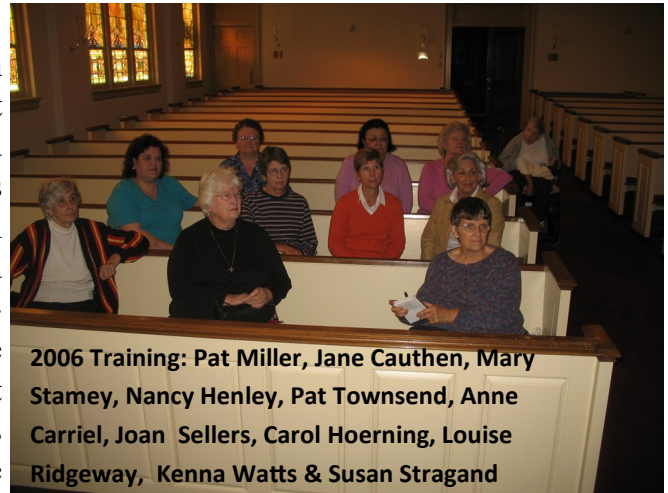
- Protein Sources
    - Mac & Cheese cups
    - Beef Stew
    - Ramen Noodles
    - Vienna sausages
    - Beanie Weenies
    - Peanut Butter cups
    - Tuna or Chicken packets
  - Fruit and Pudding Cups
  - Small cookie or cracker packages
  - Lance Crackers
  - Small bags of chips
  - Oatmeal and Grits packages
  - Granola or other snack bars
  - Individual cereal boxes
  - Water bottles or Gator Aid
  - Feminine hygiene products that we re-bag
  - Travel soaps, shampoos, etc (as you travel)
  - Utensil packets you get in take-out food
- Plus blankets, hats, gloves, scarves for the cold weather. Just bring to the parish hall. Thank you for your continued support.

## THE ALTAR GUILD AT ST. MARK'S

Edited from an article written by Edward F. Hoerning, Church Historian

An Altar Guild is a vital part of a parish church. The men and women who are part of an Altar Guild are responsible for preparing the altar for each and every service including weddings, funerals, baptisms, children's services, and all the weekly and Sunday services. In many churches the Altar Guild also does the flower arrangements for the altar each week, from their own gardens or from purchased flowers, and all the other special decorations that are used throughout the church year.

The Altar Guild of St. Mark's has been part of the parish from its beginnings on Long Avenue. Since moving to our present location, the men and women of the Altar Guild have served under several rectors and associates. Each clergy person has different requirements for their Altar Guilds. For example, in the early 1980's the Rev. Wilson Sneed had the altar moved away from the back wall of the church and out into the chancel where the priest could stand behind the altar and face the congregation. That was a huge change and it has been that way ever since. About the same time the Baptismal Font was relocated from the front door area to its location between the choir pews in the chancel. Several years later a box for the reserved sacrament was put up over the credence table with a light that shows when consecrated bread or wine are in it.



2006 Training: Pat Miller, Jane Cauthen, Mary Stamey, Nancy Henley, Pat Townsend, Anne Carriel, Joan Sellers, Carol Hoerning, Louise Ridgeway, Kenna Watts & Susan Stragand

Many of the items used by the Altar Guild have been donated over the years. A large paten was given to commemorate Ed and Carol Hoerning's 70th birthdays and the Throwers gave a new processional cross in memory of their daughter Mary Marsh. Many of the colored hangings have also been given in memory or thanksgiving. The blue hangings now used during Advent were given by Ruth FitzSimmons. Before that St. Mark's used purple in Advent. One of the recent changes was the change from solid wax to liquid wax on the altar candles. They are hard to fill but do make the light of the candles clearer, easier to light, and more distinct.

The linens used on the altar are treated with great reverence. The "Fair Linen" is the fine linen cloth that covers the altar table for Eucharist. On top of the Fair Linen is a large square "Corporal" with a simple cross in the center where the paten and chalice sit. Purificators are the clothes used to wipe the chalice and paten as part of the service and to clean up. They are softer linen and have a cross embroidered in the center. One duty of Altar Guild is to gently wash, remove wine and lipstick stains, and iron the linens. The colored Veil and Burse cover the stacked vessels and match the Frontal and Pulpit hangings with the color of the season.



Pat Townsend and Carol Hoerning in the Sacristy where Altar Guild works.

Several women have been the head of the St. Mark's Altar Guild including Dolly Humbert, Libba Jacobs, Marge Hyde, and Gladys Ulrich. Carol Hoerning, who began her altar guild duties as a 14 year old in Cossackie, New York, where her father took her to the church each Saturday and she worked alone to serve the priest, joined the St. Mark's Altar Guild in 1980 and became the leader in 1999. She served until she could no longer remember and she died in 2020.

The 1990 annual report listed 32 members of the Altar Guild. 31 years later only 3 of those listed still remain. The current roster of Altar Guild members lists 15 people including at least 2 men. On behalf of the Altar Guild anyone interested in joining them is invited to support this vital part of the life of St. Mark's.



## A Reflection on a Year at St. Mark's

### David Wilcox

### Organist & Choirmaster

The First Sunday of Advent marks for me one year of ministry at St. Mark. It is a great pleasure serving together with you and our exceptional staff. Despite the limitations Covid-19 have placed on us, meaningful, life-changing ministry has taken place. St. Mark demonstrates active ministry within, and especially outside the walls of the church building.

Many of you may know I was in full-time ministry for 44 years until “retiring” the end of 2020. The first 8 years were at large churches of 5000 members or more. The majority of my ministry has encompassed church planting (9 years) where music ministry was non-existent and I was hired to start the program and build the church. There were several positions where I was hired to revitalize their music ministries. (27 years). My marching orders have been to raise the bar and the same is true here at St. Mark's.

My objective in ministry is to lead and equip God's people, the Church, in fulfilling their responsibilities to regularly worship God and make Him known according to the measure of grace and spiritual gifts they have been given. Let me be very clear that any success in ministry is not about me or anyone in particular. The objective is rooted in the Apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians 4:11-13

*So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, **to equip his people** for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*

Too many of my colleagues (church musicians) think they are only responsible for music performance. And a lot of them are inflexible stick in the muds with a silo mentality!

Alec Wyton, an English-born organist, composer and teacher who brought contemporary influence to



American church music over many decades, two of them as organist and choirmaster at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine in Manhattan, was also the coordinator of the commission that produced The Hymnal 1982. Wyton's formula for a music minister is a three-tier function of Pastor, Teacher and Performer.

I want to partner in ministry rather than be a stranger (in my silo) who comes to deliver musical services. Church musicians should play a significant role in creating a spiritual community within the parish.

Choir provides an opportunity to build community, trust, spiritual support, insight and understanding of texts which will then provide spiritual food. The choir's primary task is leading worship. It is imperative they have a clear understanding of and embrace the text. My responsibility as a teacher is to offer a deeper understanding of and attachment to the music they perform. Additionally, my goal is to improve their performing skills and increase their confidence and sense of fulfillment in singing.

My performance standards are grounded in Psalm 33: 3 - *Sing to him a new song; **play skillfully**, and shout for joy.* The church often settles for mediocrity. In my book that is inexcusable. I want us to offer our very best to a most excellent God. That requires study, preparation, and in my opinion, is only effective when my roles as Pastor/Teacher take precedence.

Now is a great time to join the choir. Rehearsals are Wednesday evenings, 7:00 – 8:15 and Sunday mornings, 9:30 – 10:15 and we are preparing for Advent Lessons and Carols, which will be Sunday, December 12, 5:00 pm in person and live-streamed. Hope to see you there.

Blessings,  
David

# Understanding the Words

## The Rev. John Simpson

### Associate Rector

I get fuzzy reception. Maybe you can relate...

With two kids in elementary school my alarm goes off pretty early each morning. But the sound that drags me out of my slumber, more often than not, is a garbly static, a jarring hiss of FM radio rather than whatever music or talk radio I'd programmed into my clock radio. I've futzed with it, moved it around, pointed it in different directions. I've run the power cable up to the curtains, coiled it, and done all manner of geometry, but each morning I'm reminded how I've failed to quiet the noise overwhelming the signal.



It's frustrating because I know how good it can be. I've laid awake soaking in a good story on the radio for several minutes before even realizing it was my cue to get up (the calm before the storm). Instead of hearing inspiration, or beauty, or thought-provoking sound waves, I wake to confusion, a message lost in transmission, and I'd just like to silence it so I can go on with my day.

Central to our liturgies at St. Mark's, be it Holy Eucharist on Sunday or Morning Prayer on a weekday, is the reading of scripture. It serves as an anchor for both our preaching and our prayer, always seeming to provide a necessary dose of either comfort or agitation (lest the comfort work too well). It pulls us through the liturgical year, through parables, letters, and miracles, to Nativity as well as to Passion. I'm looking forward to the first Sunday of Advent, when the Old Testament reading and Psalm will be reintroduced, after being omitted to shorten the ser-

vice during COVID. Together with the Gospel and the Epistle from the New Testament, we get a healthy sample of the Bible each week, and over the three-year cycle cover most of the major stories.

You can imagine, though, that even with 156 Sundays to work with (52x3), there's a lot we don't cover, a lot we have to skip over. Maybe you've felt it, too. Maybe you've felt that in the couple of paragraphs we read from a certain book of the Bible on Sunday it's difficult to know it's context. Who are these characters? Where are they going? Why all the drama? How could this snippet from an ancient text possibly help me (or my church) produce a faithful response to God's mercies? It can seem more confusing than helpful, a mere fragment of a message.

There was, of course, a simple fix to my radio problem: a proper antenna. With it I can receive the full strength of the signal. The music becomes clear and beautiful, the stories become intelligible and riveting once again. The fix is simple for us, too, if not as easy. The fix is that we can practice what we do on Sunday (read scripture, pray, confess, to name three) throughout our week. Are you feeling a little dazed and confused during the readings? Try



reading ahead the week before. (The readings are from the Revised Common Lectionary in the back of the Book of Common Prayer, or online.) Try reading not just the passage from the chapters around it. Try tackling a whole book (this Advent is heavy on the Gospel of Luke). I think you'll find new life in the readings when you read them in your own time, and read them as they were designed to be read: as a whole book.

**Eagle Scout Projects** Several young men associated with our parish were recently awarded their Eagles from the Boy Scouts of America.

**Anthony Varriale** is a member of BS Troop 11 at First Presbyterian. For his Eagle Project he built wood duck boxes on the River Link Greenway and the River Side Greenway near Goat Island in Belmont. The boxes are on high poles and the wood ducks fly straight into them to be above predators. Anthony build 5 boxes at each location. He also added regular song-bird houses on the back of each box to attract and encourage other birds as well. He was awarded his Eagle Scout at St. Mark's on November 14. Anthony has been awarded every badge that the Boy Scouts give and his sash was covered with them.



**Michael and George Whatley** are also members of BS Troop 11 and recently completed their projects and paperwork for their Eagle Scout Awards. For their projects they built and planted butterfly gardens at the River Waste Water Treatment Facilities. Both boys built raised beds for their gardens. George's garden was in Belmont and included a butterfly watering station. Michael's garden had butterfly houses and was located at the main Gastonia facility. Their Eagles will be awarded at St. Mark's in January when the holidays are over.

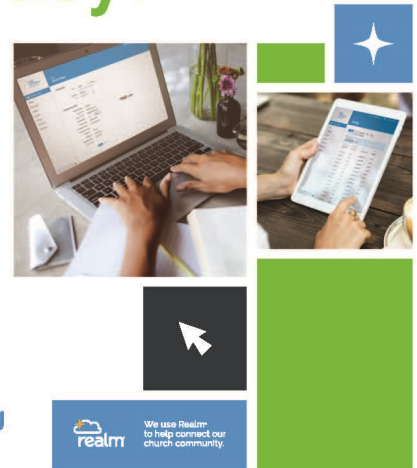
We have also learned that **Jamie Danis**, son of Henry and Jenna Danis who were members here and now live in Greensboro, also earned his Eagle Scout in mid-December.



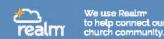
**Our  
On-line  
Giving  
Program**

## Giving made easy!

- Give online
- Quick one time gifts
- Recurring gifts
- 24/7/365
- Manage your giving
- Pledges
- View giving history
- Print giving statements



Sign up or sign in at [onrealm.org](https://onrealm.org)



Text **givestmarks** to **73256** to give using your mobile device. The **Funds** line is a drop-down menu showing multiple funds available to contribute to online, including; Budget, Flowers, Rector's and Deacon's Discretionary, Outreach, and more.

This number will never send unsolicited texts to you. To cancel further messages, text STOP. If you need assistance with text giving, text HELP. Standard text message and data rates may apply.

or

Go to <https://onrealm.org/stmarksgastonia/give/now> to go directly to St. Mark's giving page on Realm.

## Parish Transitions

### Transferred In:

**Peter John Jennings**, from St. Anne's Roman Catholic, Rock Hill, SC, 8/30/21

### Births:

**Grant Maxon Getty**, son of Taylor and Paige Getty, grandson of Joe and Beverly Bieker, born 8/13/21

**John "Jack" Childs Simpson, V**, son of John and Barbara Simpson, born 9/11/21

### Awards - Eagle Scouts:

**Anthony Varriale**, 11/14, son of Vince and Rachel Varriale and a member of Troop 11, his project was wood duck boxes in Belmont

**Michael and George Whatley**, sons of Michael and Suzanne Whatley, finished 11/10 and to be awarded in January, their projects were butterfly gardens in Belmont and Gastonia

**Jamie Danis**, son of Henry &

Jenna & former member, awarded his Eagle Scout in Greensboro in December

### Birthdays of Note:

**Margaret Owen**, Happy 100th January 23, 1921

**Mildred Manning**, Happy 100th November 14, 1921

### Deaths:

**Jerry Kiser**, father of Kris Kiser, Gastonia, 8/4/21

**William Roberts**, parishioner, Gastonia, 8/16/21

**Vera Reno**, Liz Willett's step-mother, Miami, 8/27/21

**Brandon Burns**, Rosanne's nephew, 9/14 in Majorca

**John William Moore, Sr.**, parishioner, Lynne's husband and Kristin Major's father; David John, Zach, & Austin's grandfather, Gastonia, 9/22

**Joe Saunders**, former parishioner, 11/18, auto accident in Gastonia

**Mildred Manning**, parishioner, 12/4, Covenant Village after a great 100th birthday celebration

---

### Live Streaming Continues



If you do not feel you can be with us in person yet, please continue to watch our 8:00 and 10:30 Services online via either Live Streaming on the web page or on Facebook. The 9:30 Family Service is taped on Saturdays and available on Sunday mornings in both places. Communion kits are available.

# Calendar 2021-22

**As we regather in our space, we are also hoping to catch up on activities which were halted for the past 2 years of the pandemic. We are looking toward a true celebration with food and lots of fellowship to reunite us when we are back together, whenever that happens.**

**Until that time we continue with the work to be done in and around our city and to worship virtually and physically as we are able. with Live Stream, Facebook, and other gatherings as allowed.**

## **December**

- 5 - Advent II
- 11 - Hosts for Daughters of the King Diocesan Assembly hosts, virtual
- 12 - Advent III  
Youth Caroling  
Advent Lessons and Carols, Reception
- 15 Office closing early for Staff Christmas
- 16 - Hope Vibes here
- 18 - Logan Loveless Ordination in Asheville
- 19 - Advent IV  
Vestry  
Greening the Church after services  
Blue Christmas Service
- 24 - Christmas Eve 5 pm Family Service  
11 pm Festival Eucharist w/ Special Music
- 25 - Christmas Day; HE 11 am
- 26 - Christmas I, 8 and 10:30 am

## **January**

- 2 - Christmas II, 8 and 10:30 am
- 9 - Epiphany Pageant & Baptism at 10:30 am
- 23 - Annual Meeting, 9:30 Joint Service



St. Mark's Episcopal Church  
258 Franklin Blvd  
Gastonia, NC 28053  
704.864.4531



---

# St. Mark's Episcopal Church

is called to be Christ centered

**Touching Lives, Transforming Hearts, Teaching God's Word**

*I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as  
I have loved you.      John 13:34*