

THE LION'S TALE

ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
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MAY 2019



Episcopal City Mission
ST. MARK'S SPONSORS

YOUTH BIRTHDAY PARTY
FRIDAY, MAY 3rd

VOLUNTEERS ARE INVITED

Depart from St. MARK'S at 6:30pm SHARP

We CAR POOL to the City Youth Detention Center
3847 Enright Avenue, St. Louis MO 63108

The Youth Play Bingo Games & Win
Candy Bars. We serve Pizza & Ted
Drewes Frozen Custard and Sing
Happy Birthday!

If you can't volunteer consider a DONATION
Packs of Candy Bars, Gift Items for 3 Gift Bags,
Sports T Shirts or Sponsor a PIZZA at \$7.00 each

We Usually Order 8 Pizzas
Questions ??? contact Rev. Jerre Birdsong
314/962-6639
or Email jebirdsong@att.net



The Day of Pentecost
June 9, 2019

We will celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church.
 Remember to wear something red as a sign that we are all touched by the flames of the Spirit.

Trinity Sunday
June 16, 2019

On this day we particularly celebrate our Christian understanding of God as Trinity.



Bishop's Visit

The Rt. Rev. George Wayne Smith will make his last regular visitation to St. Mark's on Sunday, June 16th at the ten o'clock service. Bishop Smith will celebrate and preach.

Refreshments will be served after the service. If you have any questions about the Bishop's visit please contact Mark+ at mark@saintmarks-stl.org

From Darkness Into Life

Reflection offered for the Great Vigil of Easter, April 20, 2019

“At early dawn, the women came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared.” (*Luke 24:1*)

At early dawn, in the dark. At early dawn—in that liminal time between mid-night black and morning blue, when deep gray shrouds everything and all appears as amorphous bits and blobs.

At early dawn, when the world has yet to awaken. Women, feeling their way along, not trusting their early-dawn eyes, their steps careful to protect the spices and oils and cloth they carry. At early dawn, in the dark.

They come upon the tomb they seek and see in the grayness that enshrouds them that the stone that had sealed the rough-hewn cave, the place where his body, tortured and mutilated, had found a place to rest, the stone about which they wondered as they walked: would they be strong enough to move, the stone which had sealed the tomb in cold, still, darkness, the stone has been rolled away. By whom? For what purpose?

The women stop and gaze for some moments at the gaping hole of darkness, darker than the gray of early dawn, and they slowly move towards the yawning darkness, and enter the cool and silent darkness, and as their eyes adjust from the grey of early dawn, they see that in the darkness there is nothing there. No body. No anything. But darkness.

Suddenly: the apparition! The blinding brightness. The duet of voices. And the question that will define the rest of these women’s lives and indeed the very life of all creation: “Why do you look for the living among the dead?”

Barbara Brown Taylor reminds us that “new life starts in the dark. Whether it’s a seed in the ground, a baby in the womb, or Jesus in the tomb, it starts in the dark.”

And then, new life bursts forth into the light of the world as it claims and defines the light. New life. Transformed life. Eternal life.

Jake Owensby tells us that the “very essence of eternal life is love. [Love] that reflects the very heart of the God who imparts it...Love [that] has died to judging others for being different and embraces each person and every creature as the beloved child of God...Love [that] has died to seeking its own status and guards the dignity of every human being...Love [that] has died to comfort and personal privilege and pursues justice for the forgotten and the persecuted, the despised and the oppressed.”

Love that is eternal life. Resurrection life.

The women at the tomb and we tonight are asked: “Why do you look for the living among the dead?” He is risen. He is risen.

And so, too, we, and all creation. Risen into resurrection life. Of course, now the challenging part becomes: Just how will we live it?



Mark +

FROM YOUR DEACON

What a glorious dinner we had in our Parish Hall on April 26 prepared by local Syrian refugees! When we actually meet the women and children who have been through so much horror and are now starting new lives, we are reminded that this crisis is not just an issue we periodically see in the news. These are real flesh-and-blood fellow humans whose lives were devastated. Be sure to see the pictures from the evening in this *Lion's Tale*.

The United Nations has deemed the current refugee situation as the largest humanitarian crisis since World War II. In Syria alone, 6.3 million people have fled the violence in their country to resettle globally. People do not become refugees by choice. Refugees are children, women, and men forced to flee their homes on account of persecution, war, and violence. When refugees cannot return home nor integrate into the first country that provides them safety, they may be eligible for resettlement to a third country. Less than 1/2 of 1% of the world's refugees will ever be resettled.

Refugees come to the United States bringing tremendous talents and gifts, as well as resilience, determination, and hope. These gifts and skills build stronger communities through sharing vibrant cultures, increasing diversity, and strengthening local economies. Refugees are part of a larger immigrant population that is almost twice as likely to start a business as US-born persons. Though this statistic is a little dated, it is significant that from 2005-2014, refugees resettled to the US contributed \$63 billion more in federal taxes than they received in federal assistance. And as the city of St. Louis can attest, communities that welcome refugees often experience revitalization and renewal. Despite this, the current administration has suspended the refugee resettlement program and reduced the total number of refugees who will be allowed into the country by more than half. This is a drastic departure from the US's historic role as a leader in the humanitarian work of refugee resettlement.

I hope that our Welcome Neighbor dinner was just the beginning of our involvement with immigrants at St. Mark's. Join me in praying and pondering how we proceed from here. This prayer may help:

God our Creator: We ask for your loving presence and for your peace to be with refugees in our local communities and around the world. Be with all who are in fear. Be with those whose lives and livelihoods are under threat. Be with us as we strive to enact your will in our welcome and support of refugees. Be with those in positions of leadership, that their decisions may bend toward peace and not division, and that they might realize the power they hold to do justice. Give us all strength and courage. Equip and empower us to be witnesses to your love – as advocates and as servants, as ministers of welcome and bearers of hope, especially for those seeking refuge. In your Holy name we pray. Amen.

In Christ,
Deacon Jerre

On another matter, after four years as the faith-based partner of Kennard Elementary, we have determined that this ministry has run its course at St. Mark's. I have informed the principal that we will no longer be partnering with them after the end of this school year. I acknowledged to her that we recognize what an asset this school is to our community, and I wished them continued success as they fulfill their mission to the children of the area into the future. — Jerre

EASTER SUNDAY - photos by Celeste Kocot





Welcome Neighbor St. Louis Syrian Dinner

More than 80 folks from St. Mark's, Gethsemane ELCA and Hope UCC gathered on April 26th as we co-hosted a Welcome Neighbor STL dinner where we enjoyed delicious food cooked by Syrian immigrants, heard their stories, and a lovely lullaby sung by some of their young children. More on Welcome Neighbor STL at: <https://welcomeneighborstl.com/supper-clubs/>



Our Chefs

Maysaa
(left)

and Fayza
(right).

Photos by
Ed Rich,
Kris Smith &
Mark Kozielec

Going for the Shawarma (chicken wrapped in pita bread).



Guess how many Yalanji (stuffed grape leaves) Deacon Jerre can eat.





Fayza (left) and Maysaa sharing their stories about leaving their homes in Syria, their journeys to America and eventually settling in St. Louis. Maysaa (right) mentioned that there are areas of St. Louis that remind her of her home in Damascus.



Once you had enough to eat there was time to shop! Hand-crafted soaps were on hand, as were scented candles and jewelry made by Ghaidaa.



The younger children who came closed the evening with a lovely Syrian lullaby.



Kris Smith (left) and Greg Diekemper listen as Fayza and Maysaa share their stories.



Blessing of Our Community Garden

On Sunday, April 28th, we gathered at the end of the ten o'clock service to bless the Garden of Eatin' (where half of the beds are tended by folks from the surrounding community). We sang a hymn, the youth gathered helped to bless the water, and each bed was blessed to the glory of God's Creation.

*God bless this garden through which Your glory shines
May we see in its beauty the wonder of Your love.*





Community Garden Cleanup

Approximately half of our gardeners were able to come to help spruce up the grounds around the Garden of Eatin' following the blessing that took place on Sunday, April 28th.

Pictured (l-r) Gary Karpinski, Steve Burns, Kittie Golomski, Celeste Kocot, Gloria Harrelson, Ed Rich and Charlie. Not in photo: Chad White



BISHOP SEARCH NEWS

As of May 1, the publication of our Diocesan Profile and application for the next Bishop of Missouri from the Search /Nomination Committee is now online at

diocesemo.org/bishopsearch

1st Thursdays @ River's Edge Social
May 2nd @ Noon



Everyone Welcome!
Fellowship, Food & Fun
6997 Chippewa Street
Questions: Deacon Jerre
jebirdsong@att.net

IF YOU WOULD like to receive the weekly "MARKINGS" by email, send your email address to the church office. And don't forget you can follow on Facebook or visit our webpage at www.saintmarks-stl.org

SCHNUCKS E SCRIP CARDS are available in the parish hall. Registration can be done online. When you shop at Schnucks a percentage of the amount that you spend is donated to St. Mark's. Thank you St. Markans for using your cards.



CAMP PHOENIX

July 28-August 3

Camp Phoenix is filling up - don't get left out this year! A ministry of the Diocese of Missouri, the accredited summer camp is held at the DuBois Center in DuBois, IL for ages 8 - 15. Camp Phoenix is an overnight camp for seven days and six nights of fun and adventure! Campers have opportunities to swim, ride horses, hike, canoe, and participate in crafts, archery, campfires and all-camp games. Any camper, regardless of their religious background, is welcome to attend. An open house at the camp will be scheduled soon for those who are interested. To register and find more information go to www.camp-phoenix.org.



Spring Park Clean-Up

Saturday, May 4th, 2019

8:30 a.m. at Tamm Ave and Nottingham Ave
Friends of Francis Park and the St. Louis Hills Neighborhood Association invite you to join your neighbors for Francis Park Spring Clean-Up and Planting Day. Bring your own garden tools or we will provide. No experience necessary! Questions email president@stlhills.com or Call: Nancy – **314-616-6468**

WHAT'S COMING UP?

TUESDAYS 9:30 a.m. in Parish Hall - Al anon Group

WEDNESDAYS 8:00 p.m. in Parish Hall - AA Group

THURSDAY MAY 10 5:30 p.m. Al Anon Meeting in Parish Hall

TUESDAY, MAY 14 - 7:00 p.m. Vestry Meeting

FIRST QUARTER CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS were mailed May 1st. If you have any questions please contact the recording treasurer Kathy Tracy.

DOORWAYS NEWS



We are planning bingo games with the residents of Cooper House at Doorways in June. We are looking for those interested in participating and for donations of bingo prizes. The favorite prizes are bags of snacks, puzzle books such as crosswords or word finds and toiletry items. All are found at Dollar Tree. A box for donations will be in the parish hall. The best days and times for the residents are Mondays through Thursdays at 6:00- 8:00pm or 1:00-3:00pm. If you are interested in joining us, please notify Jerre or Marti, and then we will decide on a date and time. If anyone would like to send baked goods that day, that would be great. Thank you

Current Volunteer Opportunities

DOORWAYS is always seeking volunteers to better assist our clients and staff. We currently have opportunities in the following areas:

Game Night volunteers

Cooper House resident companions

Spring cleaning volunteers

Gardening/Landscaping volunteers

Crafting volunteers

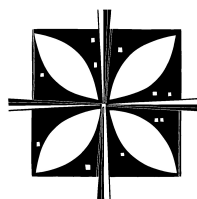
Annual Dinner volunteers

Bakers (provide special treats to residents)

Activity Assistants (go on activities with residents)

Administrative volunteer (make phone calls, assist with mailings, etc.)

If interested in volunteering, please contact Patrick Young at pyoung@doorwayshousing.org.



SPRING CLEANING? Donate your books to our book cart in the parish hall. Books of all types and for all ages are needed, except encyclopedias, school textbooks, and

outdated computer guides. **BOOK SELECTION CHANGES WEEKLY**—a bargain at only \$.50 each. Stock up now for all your summer reading.

Dining Out For Life

May 2, 2019

Raise your fork on Thursday, May 2, 2019 and take part in the 26th annual Dining Out For Life©! In 2018, the St.

Louis community raised over \$150,000 to help Saint Louis Effort for AIDS provide education on the prevention of HIV/AIDS and comprehensive support services for those affected by the disease. Grab your family and friends and make plans to **dine out** for breakfast, lunch, dinner, coffee, cocktails and more at any of the participating Dining Out For Life© restaurants. *Margaret Hvatum will be hosting Dining Out For Life at Hammerstone's Bistro (9th & Russell) Thursday night 5-9. Other restaurants donating a minimum of 25% of their proceeds can be found*

at: <https://www.diningoutforlife.com/city/stl/>



VESTRY MEETING on Tuesday, May 14th at 7:00 p.m. in the Proehl Conference Room.



COFFEE HOUR HOSTING

Please see the sign-up sheet in the Parish Hall to host Coffee Hour which follows the 10:00 service. What's involved?

Brewing a few pots of coffee, providing a small nibble or two, welcoming folks for a bit of fellowship, and placing used dishes in the sink (No need to wash: our cleaning folks do it). If you haven't hosted yet, why not give it a go.

For the St. Mark's Calendar, please visit our website www.saintmarks-stl.org and click on the calendar tab.