

St. Mark's

EPISCOPAL CHURCH



I will, with God's help.

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!"

- Isaiah 6:8

I will, with God's help.

Christian stewardship is best described as "life after baptism." In baptism, we receive new life, and from that point on, we are called to live our Christian life in faithful response to God's grace and love!

Stewardship also has to do with our *whole* life. It has to do with our time, our talent, our treasure, our relationships, and everything that matters to us and God in this life. Over the next few weeks, you are invited to consider your stewardship of time and talent in the spirit of this year's stewardship theme: *I will, with God's help*. We make certain promises in response to God's grace bestowed upon us in our baptism. We say we will lead a life of service, and with God's help, we will proclaim by word and example the Good News in Christ.

In and through our church, we have plenty of opportunities to serve and advance our mission to know Jesus Christ and make him known. Please take this time to consider your spiritual gifts and your offering of time and talent, and on Sunday, September 11, every one of us will have an opportunity to commit or recommit our time and talent to the mission and ministry of St. Mark's.

With the program (school calendar) year upon us, this is a good time for you to consider your involvement in the parish and make a commitment to how you will take a part in the mission of our church. There are many members, and there is one body. You and I have been baptized into this body, and now we are asked to be the body. Will you live this life after baptism? I will, with God's help!

Faithfully,

Fr. Bert

Acolytes/Chalice Bearer

Adult and children assist in various ways during worship.

Crucifer - the minister who carries the cross at the properly appointed times and assists the celebrant in setting the table at the Eucharist. In our parish, the crucifer also bears the first chalice during the time of communion.

Torchbearer - the minister who lights the candles before the service, carries the torches at the properly appointed times and extinguishes the candles after the service.

Gospel Bearer - the minister who carries the gospel book at the properly appointed times. In our parish, the gospel bearer also bears the second chalice during the time of communion.

Contact: Benno Scheibner (Adults) barbs4@earthlink.net
The Rev. Bert Baetz (Youth) bbaetz@stmarksfortbend.org

Adult Christian Formation

Adult Christian Formation comes in several flavors, and at St. Mark's one of our most enjoyed adult classes involves Bible study. We have developed a simple, four-step method that anyone, regardless of their 'Bible-study-maturity', can embrace and make their own. Come join Adult Christian Formation on Sunday mornings from 10:15am to 11am!!

Contact: Rob Hamon nukee00@gmail.com

Altar Guild

The Altar Guild prepares the church for all worship services cares for our altar, our fine linens, and the flowers in preparation for all services. Individuals work in teams and serve one week per month. Teams meet once a week (during their service week) to set up the altar for the Sunday services.

Contact: Bettye Newberry l.newberry@sbcglobal.net

Children's Chapel

2nd & 4th Sunday of the month 9:00 am (starting September 11)

Jesus reached out to the children and so will we! On the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month we have children's chapel at the 9am service. Children's Chapel is designed for children approximately 4 to 8 years old so those children hear the Scriptures at their level. At the beginning of the service, the children and chapel leaders will process from the parish hall to a designated space where the children will hear a children's sermon, sing songs, say a children's creed, and pray their own prayers of the people. Children's Chapel is held during the first part of the 9am service and the children eventually join the rest of the congregation in the sanctuary (big church) in time for Communion. Jesus says the kingdom of God belongs to the children. So, if you are interested, please join us in this ministry of Christ's kingdom!

Contact: Anne Geraci
Shan Harris

peptobismalpink@gmail.com
shanharris02@yahoo.com

Choir

The St. Mark's Choir is made up of and seeks out different kinds of "critters" from all walks of life: men, women, young, old, singles, and couples. At present there are about 10 choir members. The choir director is Steve Godowns. The Choir provides musical leadership at the 9:00 am and the 11:15am services and prepares special music for the more festive seasons of the Church Year. This special music has included hymns, carols and anthems with brass accompaniment. The St. Mark's Choir offers opportunities for Christian fellowship throughout the year. Choir members take care of each other and seek to help and support each other during times of joy and crisis. If this sounds like the group for you, come join the St. Mark's Choir! Sing high! Sing low! And clap your hands!

Contact: Steve Godowns

sgodowns@comcast.net

Christian Formation Grades 7-12

All youth in grades 7-12 are invited to attend Christian Formation Class in classroom E every Sunday at 10:10. The primary curriculum is *Real and Relevant* which focuses on daily applications of scripture using short movie clips. Lively discussions revolve around these lessons and how the themes presented can provide the youth with some guidelines for their own lives. Themes this fall will include what it means to be a Christian, balancing the here and now with eternity, things God has done for us, The Ten Commandments, betrayal and forgiveness, All Saints' Day, beliefs and convictions and being alone. Chris Abbott teaches the class.

Contact: Chris Abbott christinedabbott@gmail.com

Church Historians

St. Mark's has an extremely rich and wonderful history, bringing people to Christ for sixty years. Over these years, scores of people and events have shaped what our church is today, creating a story of the life of St. Mark's since its beginning. The ministry team of Church Historians is a ministry created to review the historical materials and collections of the church to determine how to best update, preserve, and interpret these materials. Responsibilities of the Church Historians include the following:

- 1) Thanks to church members in the past, St. Mark's has photographs, newspaper clippings, and documents that make St. Mark's history come alive. The Church Historians will decide how to best organize and preserve this historical material and then implement ways to share this history with current parish members.
- 2) The Church Historians will establish archives to house up-to-date materials that they feel should be kept for future congregations. They will document events and collect materials to add to the historical record of St. Mark's.
- 3) The Church Historians will support the annual celebration of our heritage on St. Mark's Feast Day and on other significant anniversaries.

Why does church history matter? Learning about our history helps us learn about ourselves. St. Mark's present-day location, its architecture, its worship style, its organization, its ministries and countless other aspects of our

church life are rooted in the history of our parish. Seeing how God has been at work in the past helps us see how God is at work in the present. Understanding where we have been helps us set goals about where we need to go in the future and inspires us to action. History is ministry!

Contact: Barbara Scheibner barbs4@earthlink.net

Daughters of the King (DOK)

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, our vision as Daughters of the King is to know Jesus Christ, to make Him known to others, and to become reflections of God's love throughout the world. The Order of the Daughters of the King is a spiritual sisterhood of women dedicated to a life of Prayer, Service and Evangelism. We have made a commitment to Jesus as our Savior, and we follow Him as Lord of our lives. We are an Order for women who are communicants of the Episcopal Church. An Order is a community under a religious rule; especially one requiring members to take solemn vows. We don't just enroll as members and attend meetings; we take life-long vows to follow the Rule of Prayer and Rule of Service. The Daughters of the King at St. Mark's is a group of wonderful women who are devoted to God and God's call on their lives. We have grown greatly over the last three years. Being a member of the Order of the Daughters of the King Mary of Bethany Chapter (St. Mark's chapter) is a great way to grow spiritually through community.

Contact: Alysoun Marks alysounmarks@gmail.com

Disaster Task Force

As Texans, we are very aware of hurricane season . In our homes, we plan and prepare for the season, and we pray that we will never need to use our family's plan. As a church, we need to plan and prepare, not only for hurricanes but for other disasters that we don't like to think about such as floods, tornadoes, fires, chemical explosions and terrorism.

Preplanning is the key to being ready for any disaster. When a church knows in advance how they will protect church property and care for their people in the event of a disaster, they are better prepared to minister to

their community. The local church is a major thread in the overall fabric of a community's disaster defenses. An organized disaster response is an effective ministry through which we become instruments of God's healing and hope.

St. Mark's Disaster Task Force has developed our disaster plan addressing how the church will do the following when a disaster is imminent or has occurred: minister to the needs of its members; ensure the availability and usefulness of the church property; maintain the delivery of existing ministries, and provide outreach to the public.

We now need a team to implement this plan. Please contact Rob Hamon or Alysoun Marks for more information about being on the team or if you are ready to jump in and lend a hand.

Contact: Alysoun Marks alysounmarks@gmail.com
Rob Hamon nukee00@gmail.com

Episcopal Church Women (ECW)

The Episcopal Church Women (ECW) provides the leadership role in preparing for parish meals and special events like the Ornament Exchange and this year's Women's Retreat.

Contact: Jennifer Kirkland jenclark83@yahoo.com

Episcopal Youth Community

St. Mark's has an active and growing youth group (7th - 12th grade). We meet on scheduled Sunday afternoons for fellowship and a time to challenge and encourage each other with topical discussions concerning our faith. We have goals and our purpose statement is - "St. Mark's EYC Ministry exists to **REACH** the youth in our community/our friends, and **CONNECT** with other Christians, to help **PRAY/GROW** in our faith, and to challenge ourselves to grow and to **DISCOVER** our Ministry and **HONOR** God with our life."

We enjoy fellowship, spiritual growth, and serving God by serving our neighbors through certain outreach projects. Come join us! We always can use Prayer Buddies, Chaperones, friends who love food, or anybody who

would just like to “hangout” and talk. If you want to help or check us out, please contact us!

Contact: Suzanne Mottin Suzanne_B_Mottin@oxy.com
Bonnie Knecht mrsblekat@gmail.com

Godly Play for Children

St. Mark’s goal is to provide a wonderful area for our church and school children to have a “hands on” experience as they enjoy sacred stories of our Christian faith through the art of story-telling and visual engagement. Our children are invited into these sacred stories through the effective Godly Play resources and materials. Jerome Berryman the creator of Godly Play states, “Godly Play teaches children the art of using Christian language - parable, sacred story, silence and liturgical action - helping them become more fully aware of the mystery of God’s presence in their lives. Ages 2+, always looking for volunteers to help with this growing ministry, if interested, please contact either Suzanne Mottin or the Rev. Bert Baetz.

Contact: The Rev. Bert Baetz bbaetz@stmarksfortbend.org

Hospitality

We are returning to the team concept for our hosting ministry. We hope to have 4 teams. Each team will have 2 members and should only have to serve once a month. The teams are responsible for putting out church purchased items such as cookies, cheese and crackers, frozen grapes, and other finger foods. You will also make sure the coffee pots are full after each service. The time commitment is very small, as it is only between services. As you feel led, please sign up to be a team member.

Contact: Melissa Hamon mhamon@stmarksfortbend.org

KIDS HOPE USA

Kids Hope pairs church members with at-risk kids in supportive, mentoring relationships that help a child feel loved and valued. We spend one hour per week at Cora Thomas Elementary School. We read, talk, play games and sometimes help with math. Each mentoring relationship is

wrapped in prayer by a prayer partner. We occasionally will need the help of a substitute mentor when the regular mentor may be unavailable. Please consider one of these wonderful ways to reach out and help a child who needs us! You'll be so glad you did.

Contact: Lisa Arnold lisaarnold4u@yahoo.com

Kids' Kingdom

All children in grades 1-6 are encouraged to attend Kids' Kingdom classes in classroom G in the education building at 10:10. This fall the Kids' Kingdom group will be studying the Old Testament stories of Joseph and Joshua. The Joseph unit will include such activities as creating hieroglyphic scrolls, tie-dye pillowcases, a timeline, playing Jeopardy, cooking "dirt pudding", and presenting a Readers' Theater titled, "Joseph's Cool Coat." In the Joshua unit the activities will include a map of the Israel during Joshua's time, a shoebox diorama, and a drama titled, "The Walls of Jericho". All of those fun activities are designed to reinforce the lesson and message presented in the Bible story with applications for the students in their daily lives. Kids' Kingdom follows a rotation model with Christine Ronning, Sara Hawkes, Sarah Baetz, Carolyn Duff, Amy Wacker and Dorothy Valencia all serving as teachers and Chris Abbott organizing the lessons and overseeing the class.

Contact: Chris Abbott christinedabbott@gmail.com

Lay Readers

The oral tradition of reading Scriptures aloud has been part of the church's worship since the church was born. The story has been told from one generation to the next, and we carry on with this tradition at St. Mark's while the lay readers read the lessons, Psalms, and prayers of the people during our worship.

Contact: The Rev. Bert Baetz bbaetz@stmarksfortbend.org

The Men of St. Mark's

The Men of St. Mark's is a group dedicated to building stronger relationships: between men and God, between men and St. Mark's, between men and their families and between men and their friends.

The group meets twice a month (on the 2nd and 4th Mondays) at 7 PM in the Parish Hall. The meetings include socializing, kolaches, a short inspirational video and discussion, chocolate chip cookies, planning for future events and prayer.

Throughout the year there are other special activities where we get to know each other better, while serving God, St. Mark's and each other. Events have included planting sod, cooking for the craft fair, serving soup and salad to the congregation during Lent, and helping men in need.

But it is not all work. When we are not busy serving God, we watch Texans games together, play golf and gather together for eating manly food, shooting, juggling, bird watching, stargazing, playing hillbilly golf and breaking bones in our feet. Join us!

Contact: Benno Scheibner barbs4@earthlink.net or any other man.

Mission Trip

Please consider joining us on the parish mission trip in the summer of 2017! We will be headed back to the Port Aransas/Corpus Christi community to once again work with Mission 911, a ministry to the homeless in Corpus Christi. We will be staying at the Mustang Island Conference Center (a beach retreat center in the Diocese of West Texas). The trip is for rising 7th graders through adults, and it promises to be another transformational experience ... for it is in giving that we receive! The mission trip will be June 11-15, 2017.

Contact: Melissa Hamon mhamon@stmarksfortbend.org
The Rev. Bert Baetz bbaetz@stmarksfortbend.org

Prime Timers

St. Mark's Prime Timers is a new ministry created to meet the unique interests and needs of those 55+. Joyful Christian fellowship will be a primary

focus with such happenings as dining at local restaurants (lunch or dinner) and organized outings to local places and events. Since this ministry will be new starting in 2017, the members involved can define group experiences most meaningful to them! Tours of historical or religious places? Sporting events? Cultural events? Fresh and diverse experiences can be planned.

Another focus of Prime Timers is personal growth through learning on topics truly relevant to the 55+ life stages. Topics on real life issues might include fostering healthy intergenerational relationships, managing the change from employment to retirement, using twenty-first century technologies, or living as empty-nesters. A caregiver support group and a grief support group could be started.

We all have talents, experience and wisdom in different areas that can be shared to bless others. Building strong relationships with each other will be part of Prime Timers as we offer spiritual and social connectedness to each other during medical treatment or illness or provide empathetic caring during a family challenge.

A person does not need to be a member of our parish to join this ministry. Prime Timers will be a new way to share St. Mark's mission with others as we invite others 55+ to join in fellowship and continued learning.

If you would like to be part of this ministry in 2017, express your interest now and experience God in new and meaningful ways!

Contact: Barbara Scheibner barbs4@earthlink.net

Sewing Guild

The Sewing Guild of St. Mark's (known affectionately as the "Sewing Sistahs") is a friendly group of ladies who get together twice a month -- usually on a Wednesday --and socialize, sew, and have a pot luck. All of our sewing projects are specifically chosen for one purpose--to further the love of Christ. We're growing!

In 2016 we have made baby and toddler quilts for Texas Children's Hospital. We also sewed tote purses from recycled blue jeans and filled each tote with small bottles of shampoo and other toiletries. In addition, we made colorful pillowcases; both projects were dedicated to the Ft. Bend Women's

Shelter. We are currently preparing Nativity "kits" for families of St. Mark's to complete during Advent. Our last project for 2016 is to make scarf/hoodies supporting Lord of the Streets, an outreach of the Diocese of Texas.

If you want to participate but can't because of work or family obligations, we will accommodate you by fixing up a "homework kit" with fabric and pattern. I want to encourage you to sign up, pick up your pincushion and scissors and come have a happy, sewing experience!

Contact: Jeannie Reaves reaves4jeanne@yahoo.com

Social Outreach Ministry

St. Mark's has a Social Outreach Ministry that plans and spearheads a number of outreach projects each year. We believe that reaching out to our community and the world creates a better place to live for those less fortunate, while enhancing our experience of God. Jesus Christ teaches that through opportunities to give, we grow and benefit greatly as we serve others.

This ministry is looking for caring souls who want to make a tangible difference in the lives of others. Each team member needs to be motivated by compassion and inspired to plan and implement an outreach project that will better our community, our country, or our world. We heartily welcome new members and new ideas on how to best help those in need.

Contact: Arlene Rivenes arlenerv@comcast.net

Spiritual Direction

Within each of us dwells the desire to find meaning beyond the moment; to discover our true selves; to grow closer to God. Spiritual Direction encourages one to explore a closer relationship with God. As you reflect deeply on the experiences of your life you begin to recognize God's presence and grace in new ways. Spiritual Direction is "holy listening" with the Holy Spirit as the true "director". The privilege and responsibility of the spiritual director is to journey with you as you deepen your relationship with God. The journey takes place in the context of confidential one-

on-one sessions. For more information or to set up a meeting please contact Susan Pinter, Spiritual Director, Graduate of “Formation in Direction” of the Diocese of Texas.

Contact: Susan Pinter spinter@stmarksfortbend.org

St. Mark’s Episcopal School

St. Mark’s Episcopal School opened its doors August 25, 2014 with 13 students. Three of the four classrooms opened, each with a certified teacher and a trained classroom assistant. Currently, 32 students are enrolled. Within a nurturing Christian community, St. Mark’s Episcopal School builds in each child the foundation for good character and a lifelong love of learning.

The mission of St. Mark’s Episcopal School is to encourage spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development in young children through an enriched curriculum, rooted in the Christian faith.

St. Mark’s Episcopal School philosophy is to foster an early childhood education which honors the unique value and beauty of all children as creations of a loving, empowering God. Based on nurturing Christian values which mirror our Episcopal identity, St. Mark’s Episcopal School integrates spiritual formation, joyful discovery, and playful creativity into our daily curriculum, enabling children to reach their full potential.

In addition to weekly Chapel, every Wednesday at 9:10am, Godly Play is taught weekly in each classroom. Godly Play teaches children the art of using Christian language – parable, sacred story, silence and liturgical actions – helping them become more fully aware of the mystery of God’s presence in their lives.

St. Mark’s Episcopal School is a Texas State Licensed facility. We are currently working to become accredited with the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools (SAES).

We have a strong, hardworking staff, and as our school grows so does the need volunteers in the office and in the classrooms. Our enrollment is steadily increasing, the possibility of adding another certified teacher and a teaching assistant is on the horizon.

Our motto this year is *Together We Make Our School a Success.*



We need your help! Our school would appreciate and encourage anyone who could give of their time and talents.

Below are a few suggested opportunities to help. Of course, we welcome volunteers at any time! Just let us know how you want to help:

Come to the school as a guest reader.

Come to the school and share your career with the students.

Volunteer in the school office one or two days a week.

Volunteer on Wednesdays in the After School Care Program from 2:30 -4:00 during our staff meetings.

Work with community leaders for marketing opportunities and community outreach.

Come to the school and lead a Fun and Fitness Program.

Organize our growing library for the students and staff.

Possible teacher and teaching assistant positions available for the 2016 -17 school year.

Help with service projects and special programs

Come to the school and lead the Godly Play sessions once a week on Wednesdays for our older students.

Volunteer as a substitute teacher and/or teaching assistant.

Substitute teachers and teaching assistants are always needed.

St. Mark's will host six weeks of Summer Discovery Camps beginning in June with an extended day program available. Volunteers are needed for both morning camp sessions and afternoon enrichment programs.

St. Mark's Episcopal School is a ministry that mirrors our Episcopal identity as it provides an exemplary early childhood education program. Come and join us in providing a strong educational program based on Christian

values. Volunteers are always welcome and encouraged.

EXEMPLARY STANDARDS FOR EXEMPLARY RESULTS

Contacts:

HEAD OF SCHOOL: Dr. Suzanne Welch school@stmarksforbend.org

OFFICE MANAGER: Jerri Carington schooloffice@stmarksfortbend.org

St. Mark's University

The goal of St. Mark's University is to engage the community in learning about a variety of subjects from a Christian perspective. We will offer many learning opportunities such as: financial planning, parenting classes, strengthening marriage workshops, fitness instruction, language courses, understanding mental health, life skills, etc., using trained lay persons or outside resources.

Since this is a new ministry, we are looking for suggestions of topics of interest, and also for people who are interested in leading a class. If you have suggestions, would like more information, or are interested in leading a class, we would love to hear from you!

Contact: Alysoun Marks alysounmarks@gmail.com

Ushers and Greeters

How would you like to be a part of a ministry that welcomes people into our Sunday worship? We are looking for ushers and greeters for our 9:00 and 11:15 services. For our 9:00 service we have 2 greeters and 2 ushers and at the 11:15 we have 2 ushers. Ushers and greeters share hospitality to visitors and parishioners every Sunday morning. Responsibilities include greeting all who enter the church, distributing service bulletins and collecting the offering. In addition, ushers assist those with special needs, help ensure that seating is available for all in attendance, and check that the church has a clean appearance after the service. If you are interested in being a part of this very important ministry.

Contact: Melissa Hamon mhamon@stmarksfortbend.org

Vacation Bible School

Please join the Vacation Bible School team! Bible lessons, snacks, crafts, and games based on daily themes.

This ministry needs many volunteers to be successful. Please join in to help us create an inviting time for the children of our community and their parents. VBS will be held in 2017 June 27th-29th

Contact: Melissa Hamon

mhamon@stmarksfortbend.org

The Reverend Bert Baetz
Rector

Dr. Suzanne Welch
Head of School

Kimberly Hart
Executive Administrative Assistant

Melissa Hamon
Director of Parish Life

Sandra Barkerding
Financial Secretary

Dr. Charles Yates
Treasurer

Dr. Steve Godowns
Organist

Susan Pinter
Spiritual Direction

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St. Mark's Core Values

Gracious. In our relationship with Christ, God welcomes us home, and we, in turn, offer gracious hospitality to all those whom God leads to our church.

Rooted. Our worship and liturgy are rooted in the rich tradition of the Episcopal Church, drawing on the wellspring of customs from the ancient church through those of today.

Authentic. We are an authentic people, true to our Christian identity, and genuinely thankful for the gift of our gathering and for the sacred space of our church.

Christ-centered. We are the church, the Body of Christ, and we therefore have Jesus Christ at the center of our life; for in the risen Christ we live and move and have our being.

Empowered. Jesus commissions us to go to all nations with his good news, and we, the people of St. Mark's, are empowered by the Holy Spirit to proclaim by word and example the Gospel in Fort Bend County and beyond.