



The Lion's Tale

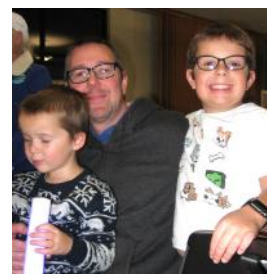
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2025



Happy New Year



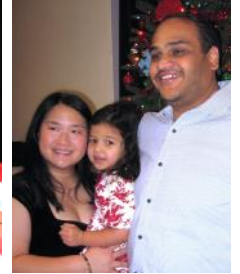
In December, the Godly play class joined many friends, and some of the St. Mark's congregation, on a walk to see the festive light displays on Candy Cane Lane, Angel Avenue, and all along the streets in between.



Godly Play joined the congregation in a spontaneous nativity play during the 5:00 pm Christmas evening service.



Christmas Party 2024



During the Christmas party, the children enjoyed making ornaments, decorating the tree, working on gingerbread houses, and singing Christmas carols. They were happy to welcome two year old Milo to the festivities.

Greetings from our New Rector



Hey there, St. Mark's! I am so looking forward to joining you as your new rector. My first day in the office will be Monday, February 3. I hope as we get settled into a new rhythm of life together you might take some time to stop by, introduce yourself, and plan a time to meet for coffee or a walk together. The best part of being a pastor is working alongside a congregation and getting to know the fabulous people God has called together. I can't wait to start this process with all of you. I firmly believe that the Holy Spirit is working within and among us even before we meet, preparing us to connect with one another and begin this new relationship. Thank you for calling me to taking a chance on a Lutheran and thank you for your hospitality in welcoming us into the parish. Here's to 2025—a year of new relationships, new beginnings, and all that God has in store. Delaney+



Dear Parishioners:

I'm pretty sure you can figure out that this will be the last time I will publish my thoughts or wishes in the *Lion's Tale*. In addition, this will be a relatively short piece, mainly because I have just two words to pass along to you. Those words, of course, are THANK YOU!

Thank you to a parish that prays together and plays together. Sunday worship is always done well, thanks to our wonderful choir, and to the several volunteers who work hard to make sure that everything is ready ahead of time, that lessons are read correctly, that the Chalice is distributed, and that our worship service is streamed online each Sunday. And, of course, thanks to

Deacon Jerre, the Rev. Teresa, and the Rev. Pamela for assisting and even for their willingness to lead the worship when I've been unable to do so. And our socializing, of course, is second to none,

Thank you to our ushers and greeters who welcome visitors cheerily. Leslie and I came to St. Mark's "as civilians" before anyone knew who I was, and of my upcoming interim ministry; and your welcome was wonderful. That doesn't happen everywhere.

I could go on trying to thank everyone who makes St. Mark's the special place that it is, but I'm sure I'd forget too many of you. I should probably just finish up by thanking Melissa, who really runs the place, and who does so much to make the clergy's job easier.

Thank you, thank you, thank you to each and every one of you. I'm sad to have to leave you, but my prayers will continue for St. Mark's and for Delaney as you move into the future together. I'm confident that it will be a blessed future.

THANK YOU! Michael+

Music Notes



When we think of Christmas music our thoughts naturally turn to beloved carols, many of which we've sung in the last several weeks: *O come, all ye faithful*; *Silent night*; *Joy to the world*; *Angels we have heard on high*. As we move into the Epiphany season, I'd like to highlight some of the hymns linked to the Gospel readings (in this year's Lectionary C cycle, mostly from the Gospel according to Luke) which we will hear in the weeks ahead. There are, of course, those hymns associated with Matthew's story of the Wise Men: *We three kings of Orient are*, *As with gladness men of old*, and *What star is this, with beams so bright?* Throughout Epiphany, the scripture readings focus on the ways in which Jesus

manifests himself as the light of the world, and many seasonal hymns touch on the theme of light: *How bright appears the Morning Star*; *Christ, be our Light*; *O Light of Light*, *Love given birth*. One hymn that deftly includes many of the Epiphany Gospel stories is *Songs of thankfulness and praise (Hymn 135)*, which touches on the stories of the Wise Men, Jesus' baptism, the wedding feast at Cana, and the Transfiguration. We often sing this hymn at the beginning and end of Epiphany as a way of framing the season and remembering or anticipating the Gospel stories. I hope we'll all think of those stories as we sing this hymn this year. -Barbara

Godly Play

In November, the children decorated the small, wooden time capsule box that was blessed and taken to the Diocesan Convention. In 15 years, the box will be returned to the church to be opened. They always look forward to hearing the bagpiper who plays before the All Saints service. At the end of the month, they harvested their last crop of the season, sweet potatoes. They thought that one looked exactly like a duck.





From your Deacon...

Happy New Year! Happy Epiphany! How appropriate it is that we celebrate Epiphany – God’s revealing light to all people, in all places, and throughout all time – at this particular moment of this fragile earth’s (our island home’s) revolution around the sun. The day on which we have the least amount of light during the year was about two weeks ago. For these last two weeks, our breadth of light has been increasing – even though we feel like we still have too much darkness.

During the season of Epiphany, we recognize that God revealed Jesus, in the world’s darkness, as the Christ, the light of the world. On Epiphany the magi followed the bright star over Bethlehem and brought the infant Jesus gold for royalty, emphasizing the kingship of Christ; frankincense, a tree gum burned during worship to produce an aromatic smoke, symbolizing prayer; and myrrh, a bitter resin used to anoint bodies before burial, foretelling Jesus’s death.

Advent began in darkness and moved toward the light with the lighting of the Advent candles. With Christmas we proclaim the presence of the light. The season of Epiphany calls us to spread the light. I’d like to share with you the words of New Zealand hymn lyricist Shirley Erena Murray (1931-2020):

*Star Child, earth Child, go-between of God,
love Child, Christ Child, heaven’s lightning rod:
This year, this year let the day arrive
when God’s kingdom comes for everyone, everyone alive.*

*Street child, beat child, no place left to go,
hurt child, used child no one wants to know; (Refrain)
Grown child, old child, memory full of years,
sad child, lost child, story told in tears; (Refrain)
Spared child, spoiled child, having, wanting more,
wise child, faith child knowing joy in store; (Refrain)*

*Hope-for-peace Child, God’s stupendous sign,
down to earth Child, Star of stars that shine;
This year, this year let the day arrive
when God’s kingdom comes for everyone, everyone alive.*

We are called to be this same light in our earthly darkness. And using the metaphor of spirituality author Robert Benson, we are called to punch holes in the dark, as that’s what it takes to let the light of Christ shine through and help bring about God’s kingdom on earth. This Epiphany, how might we together, and individually, punch holes in the darkness?

In Christ,
Deacon Jerre

More Christmas Party 2024



For several weeks, the children, including some adults, worked on creating cards for 100 residents of Casey Paige Home.



St. Mark's Events

Annual Meeting

This year's Annual Meeting will be on January 26th. We welcome all to attend. Those who submit reports for the Annual meeting the cut-off date for submissions is January 20th. I will be sending a reminder email to all of you. Childcare will be available.

2025 ST.MARK'S DIRECTORY

The new directory will be available after the Annual Meeting so all new vestry and delegate information can be included. If you have had any changes to address, telephone or email since January 2024 please provide that information to the Parish Office parishoffice@saintmarks-stl.org or call 314-832-3588.

Please Join us on January 19th, after service has concluded to a small reception in The Rev. Michael Dunnington's honor to thank him for his service to the St. Mark's congregation.

Also, please join us on February 9th after service as we will have a small gathering to welcome our NEW RECTOR, The Rev. Delaney Schlake-Kruse.

Upcoming Events

Wednesdays 7:00pm

Thursdays 7:30pm

Fridays 7:00pm

January 13th

January 19th

January 26th

February 3rd

February 9th

February 17th

AA Meeting in Parish Hall

Choir Practice in Choir Room

SMART Recovery Group in Parish Hall

Vestry Meeting 7p.m.

The Rev. Michael Dunnington's Last Service

Annual Meeting after 10:00 am Service.

The Rev. Delaney Schlake-Kruse first office day

The Rev. Delaney Schlake-Kruse First Service

Vestry Meeting 7p.m.

Here are a few pictures from the Diocesan Convention that was held in November.



The Lion's Tale is published bi-Monthly by St. Mark's Episcopal Church. Melissa Engle-Editor

To submit an article email it to parishoffice@saintmarks-stl.org.
Deadline for article submissions are listed below.

February 26th March/April Lion's Tale

April 23rd May/June Lion's Tale

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www.saintmarks-stl.org