



*The Mission of St. Mark's  
Episcopal Church  
Love and Worship God.  
Love and Serve  
All People.*

ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# The Roaring Lion

## † From Your Rector †

At our most recent meeting on June 29th, the vestry of St. Mark's made the unanimous decision **not** to consider regathering for in-person worship until after our stained glass is re-installed in the church AND the 14 day rolling average of local COVID-19 cases trends downward for 14 consecutive days.

You'll remember that the stained glass is due to begin returning in mid-late August, with another month of work onsite. So, for practical purposes, that means that we would re-gather onsite no earlier than late September/early October. And then we would only consider re-gathering if the COVID numbers in our area are moving in the right direction.

I am grateful for the work of the smaller re-gathering committee and the entire vestry. None of these decisions are easy. Every church has its own specific context. In our case, we have the glass coming back and we have the COVID numbers in Troup County. Given current case loads (especially in our area), it doesn't seem wise to return in July or early August. And given the stained glass, there is no reason to attempt a return a month or so from now.

In addition we must prepare for the reality of what it will be like when we do return. Under the bishop's current guidelines we would be limited to no more than 30 people (possibly fewer), there can be no singing (congregational, choir, or soloists), and every person present must wear a mask. These are obvious and wise precautions. The fact that EVERY person includes the officiant/clergy person means that the experience for those watching at home would be less than ideal with the difficulty of understanding the liturgy/sermon through a mask and a camera!

All of these factors were discussed in the committee and among the vestry: the present reality of the virus in our area, the logistics and timing of the

stained glass, and the experience of what it will be like when we do return. Though the vestry's decision was unanimous, it was not easy. No one takes lightly the responsibility of care that a vestry has to provide for the worship of God in our church. Fortunately, we are able to offer our worship as the church, just not in our building, together.

Those are the practical realities of the next few months. We can certainly be grateful for a bit of predictability in the midst of what has been a supremely unpredictable time. I am certainly grateful for ANY predictability right now!

### **But there's also the grief.**

There are good reasons for the decisions that the vestry made. They were well reasoned, well thought out, well discussed, and well taken. *But there's still the grief.*

We are ALL sad about not being able to gather. Even when we re-gather in some way, we will all be sad because of the limitations and restrictions on the ways that we will gather. I can't fix your grief (or mine), no matter how much I wish I could. I can only walk alongside you in that grief. I can only remind you that we all are still very much together in this, no matter how separate we feel. Call on a friend and talk about your sadness; share your sadness with each other. Call on me. Shared burdens are lighter burdens.

It is impossible to predict the future. And that unpredictability is among the most difficult things for me. We DO know that life continues, in all its joy and sorrow. There will be wonderful events that we cannot share as we might wish. There will also be deaths that we will not be able to honor as we might wish. The good and the bad of life will continue. I promise you that we will find ways to mark

those events, and I beg your help and prayers along the way in partnering with me to find creative ways to do so, even given our present circumstances.

For now, this is a season of creativity. We will learn things to help us along the way. Some of those things we will put down when the season of COVID is at an end. Some of those things will stay with us as new ways of life in the future that we cannot yet see. One clear example is the fact that we are soliciting bids for a system to enable us to live-stream the service when we do return to some kind of in-person worship. That is an investment in our current circumstances, but also an investment in whatever future awaits us.

Life continues, in all its joy and all its sorrow. What are you learning about yourself in this time? We have lost *so much*. I would invite you to pay attention to what you are missing most? And what are not missing much at all? Perhaps we can let go some of the things that we do not miss much, and come together again with a renewed sense of what matters most, what we have missed *most*.

Look for some kind of survey to come your way in the next month or so. In this new (and creative) time, it's important to me and to your vestry that we learn how best to spend the energy and resources of the church. What is working right now? What opportunities are you accessing, and what new things can we offer to fill important gaps?

I remain grateful for the opportunity to serve as your priest. I remain grateful to the God who brings us to each new day, together.

Allen

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# Stained Glass Update

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We received word from our artisans that our stained glass restoration is 75% complete. This represents the studio work. After that, there is about a month of work to re-install the windows onsite. How ever you look at it, this is good news!

Depending on their ability to schedule, on-site work could commence as early as mid-August. Given all these time frames, it is possible that our stained glass could be fully re-installed by late September/early October. This

would be a full four months ahead of schedule! Visit [www.stmarkslg.org/glass](http://www.stmarkslg.org/glass) to see more pictures of the progress and to see an outline of the process.

**SOME FILES HAVE BEEN DELETED FOR PRIVACY REASONS.**

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## Don't Have Internet at Your House— Want to stay Connected to Your Church?

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In this time it can be especially challenging to stay connected to your church if you don't have the internet. Weekly emails and online worship services work well to keep us connected, but simply aren't an option if you don't have internet service.

Your church wants to stay connected, even if you don't have internet! Let us know if you would like to receive things like:

- Printed sermons
- mailings of special news

- a DVD of the worship service other?

Call the church office at 706-884-8911 to let Debra know if you would like to be contacted about staying in touch "offline."

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## *Phillips House Ministries— June Report*

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Five senior citizens were helped this month because of the gifts given with love from the congregations of Advent Lutheran and St. Mark's Episcopal. These donations allowed us to continue using the protocols of LPA to assist those in need in our community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

\$200 checks were sent to five City of LaGrange accounts for seniors from the age of 65 to 86. Three hardships arose from loss of wages. One gentleman had been diagnosed with a severe illness last year and has been on sick pay, but the bills are adding up. A lady had extra expenses after suffering a stroke and having to learn to walk again. One senior lost income from tenants suddenly moving out. Another had depended on her daughter for help but her daughter's work hours were cut due to the COVID-19 virus.

An 86 year old woman was afraid to leave her house because of the virus. After her refrigerator broke and she had eaten all the other food, she realized she had to do something. LPA was able to get her a refrigerator and food and through the PH, pay on her utility bill.

The members of the Phillips House Ministry give thanks to God and you for your continuing support.

Deposited in June	Income
Advent Lutheran	\$300.00
St. Mark's reg giving	416.67
St. Mark's Alms	415.00
Total	\$1,131.67



## Popcorn Theology~~

Popcorn Theology will not meet until further notice. We hope to resume movie nights SOON!



## Reading Group~~ *Midnight at the Blackbird Café*

The Reading Group will meet on Monday, July 20, at 6:00 p.m. to discuss *Midnight at the Blackbird Café* by Heather Webber. We will once again meet via Zoom. Be watching the e-Lion for the Meeting ID and password.

Here is a description of the book. “Nestled in the mountain shadows of Alabama lies the little town of Wicklow. It is here that Anna Kate has returned to bury her

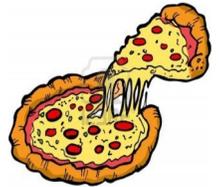
beloved Granny Zee, the owner of the Blackbird Café.

It was supposed to be a quick trip to close the café and settle her grandmother’s estate, but despite her best intentions to avoid forming ties or even getting to know her father’s side of the family, Anna Kate finds herself inexplicably drawn to the quirky Southern town her mother ran away from so many years ago, and the mysterious blackbird pie

everybody can’t stop talking about.

As the truth about her past slowly becomes clear, Anna Kate will need to decide if this lone blackbird will finally be able to take her broken wings and fly.”

All are welcome to join the discussion!



## Do you need a little help?

Our periods of isolation continue and shift based on government orders and our own vulnerability. As we move deeper into this time, do you need more

help than you thought you would? That’s ok! There are members of St. Mark’s prepared to go get groceries or make pharmacy runs for you. Reach out through the parish

administrator and we can help coordinate the help you might need!

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**St. Mark's Episcopal Church**

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 706-884-8911  
 706-884-8801 (FAX)

www.stmarkslg.org or info@stmarkslg.org  
 Kindergarten Office—706 884-1568  
 Phillips House Ministries—706 882-2210  
 Bishop: The Rt. Rev. Robert C. Wright  
 Assistant Bishop: The Rt. Rev. Don Wimberley  
 Rector: The Rev. R. Allen Pruitt  
 Organist/Choirmaster: Paul Culp  
 Organist Emeritus: Glenda Bryant  
 Parish Administrator: Debra Edwards  
 Kindergarten Director: Kim Davison

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***Love and Worship God.  
 Love and Serve All People.***

***Vestry Officers 2020***

Sr. Warden: Todd Stephens 706-882-3163  
 Jr. Warden: Mitch Cummings 850-933-2111  
 Treasurer: Janet Morgan 706 882-0687  
 Clerk of the Vestry: Judy Price

Pete Chambers, 2022 706-961-5220  
 Susan Marshall, 2022 706-402-1911  
 Lucretia Silcox, 2022 239-850-5000  
 James Baker, 2021 706-884-3059  
 Dornan Gresley, 2021 706-302-2099  
 Kriss Lindner, 2021 706-845-0981  
 Melinda Pomeroy-Black, 2020 706-594-0809  
 Cathy Hunt, 2020 706-882-5645  
 Todd Stephens, 2020 706-882-3163

**Finance Corner**

	Last Month	Yr. to Date
Revenues	41,296.51	236,462.71
Expenses	50,856.49	191,296.37
Operating Results	-9,559.98	45,166.34
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Utility Costs Last Month	\$2,029.00	

Sunday Attendance  
**June, 2020**

May 31	<b>119</b>
June 7	<b>75</b>
June 14	<b>71</b>
June 21	<b>90</b>
June 28	<b>92</b>

***Poetry & Pinot***

Poetry and Pinot will meet  
 on Tuesday, July 14 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom.  
 Everyone is welcome!

**Monday Discussion Group**

The Monday group will not meet again  
 until the current restrictions on meeting in church  
 space are lifted.



***Parish Prayer***

God of all, gracious and loving:  
 we thank you for the diversity of  
 your creation; give us wisdom and  
 strength to know your voice in the  
 midst of the noise all around, so  
 that we might see and serve you in  
 one another and in our common  
 life. AMEN

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