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# ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

# messenger

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"Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15

April 2020

## A note from Pastor Vergin regarding St. Mark's operations during Governor Whitmer's "stay-at-home" order

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The peace of our Lord be with you!

As you've probably heard, in order to slow the spread of COVID-19, the Governor has issued a "stay-at-home" order, effective for at least three weeks. I'm writing to you now to explain how St. Mark's will be moving forward, given this new order. I ask for your patience and grace as we do our best to continue the ministry of the Gospel in these challenging times.

First of all, while we strongly affirm the necessity of corporate worship to the Christian life, we also affirm our Christian duty to obey our earthly leaders, when we can do so without sin, as well as our duty to protect the life of our neighbors. Therefore, the elders and I have decided that for the duration of the Governor's "stay-at-home" order, given how COVID-19 has been spreading in our community, we will not be holding in-person worship services at St. Mark's, but will instead be posting videos of our services online (due to time and personnel constraints, these will probably be limited to our Sunday services, arranged in a shortened form). We hope to begin corporate worship again, as soon as possible, once the order is lifted. You will be able to access these videos, as usual, through our website ([www.stmarkwb.org](http://www.stmarkwb.org)), through our Facebook page (stmarkwb), or on my YouTube page (visit [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and search "Pastor Vergin").

We recognize that this means that we won't be holding in-

person services during Holy Week, including Easter Sunday. This is a sad circumstance, but we must deal with things as the Lord directs them. We pray that He, in His mercy, will soon deliver us from this disease, so that things might return to normal. In the meantime, I will explore different possibilities that might allow us to still observe these holy days in some way.

Second, during the duration of this order, all church meetings and events are cancelled.

Third, during the duration of this order, I will be refraining from non-emergency pastoral visits. I do, however, plan to continue making emergency visits. I will also be keeping in touch with people throughout, to the best of my ability. If you need pastoral care in any form, please call me on my cell (248-742-5906).

Fourth, I plan to keep you updated via email twice a week (probably on Tuesdays and Fridays). These emails will include selected Scriptures, church news & reminders, a list of special prayers, and a list of special needs. Please reach out if you'd like me to include anything on the prayers or the special needs lists (these are intended especially as a service to those who have contracted COVID-19, or have been impacted by it). These emails will keep us connected to God's Word and connected to one another in love throughout this crisis. Please read them promptly and with care!

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## Pastor's Note

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Fifth, Debbie (our Office Manager) will be working from home while the "stay-at-home" order remains in place. Calls to the church office will be forwarded to her, as well as any mail sent to the church.

Sixth, please strongly consider signing up for automatic giving. To sign up, visit our website at [www.stmarkwb.org](http://www.stmarkwb.org) and click on the "GIVING" tab near the top of the Home Page. We intend to continue paying our staff throughout this crisis and we need your financial support to do that. Thank you for your faithful generosity, especially in these uncertain times!

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to ask. We've had to make some tough decisions, and, again, we ask for your patience and your grace in all of it. The Lord will sustain us and will lead us through. He won't leave us. He'll walk by our side through everything. So let's lift up our voices together in prayer to Him, let's love one another, and let's trust in Jesus, who died for our sins and who rose again for our justification. He will restore us at the perfect time.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Vergin

The *Messenger* is the monthly newsletter of:

**St. Mark's Lutheran Church**

*The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod*  
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West Bloomfield, MI 48324  
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**Sunday**

Divine Service with Holy Communion 9:30 a.m.  
Adult Bible Class 10:45 a.m.  
Sunday School (Sept. - May) 10:45 a.m.

**Wednesday** - The Gate worship service 7 p.m. (from the Wednesday after Easter until mid-November)

**One Saturday/month** - Men's Bible Study/Breakfast 9 a.m.

Handicap accessible.

## A note from President Tom LoCascio regarding church building operations

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The peace of our Lord be with you!

In accordance with the Governor's Executive Order 2020-21 ("Stay-at-Home" Order), and in order to help keep the COVID-19 virus from spreading exponentially, we are asking ALL members of St. Mark's to refrain from entering the church building until further notice. The only exception to this rule will be the three members of our church deemed essential workers--Pastor Vergin, Kari Kosmalski (Treasurer) and Debbie LoCascio (Office Manager & Financial Secretary)--so that they can conduct the minimum basic operations of our church, and even they will only be in the building for very short periods of time.

Thank you for your cooperation, stay safe and God's blessings to all of you.

Yours in Christ,

Tom LoCascio, President  
St. Mark's Lutheran Church, West Bloomfield

*Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.*

*Joshua 1:9*



## April Birthdays

- 5 Tom Gonzalez
- 6 Barbara Jewell
- 9 Alexa Ingram
- 11 Haley Benson, Isaiah Vergin
- 15 Chris Gerard
- 18 Melanie Schwiesow
- 25 Sophia Hurley
- 27 Steven Allen

## SPECIAL DECADES



### April's special decade birthday wishes

We wish the Lord's richest blessings upon Tom Gonzalez and Alexa Ingram as they'll both celebrate special "decade" birthday's this month! Tom's birthday is April 5, and Alexa's is April 9.

As always, we can't say which special decade birthdays they'll be celebrating, but we pray that our Lord will bless them with continued faith, peace and happiness throughout this upcoming year.



## April Anniversaries

- |                             |      |
|-----------------------------|------|
| 9 Darryl & Jean Swainson    | 37th |
| 20 Frank & Nancy Salo       | 63rd |
| 21 John & Debbie Sidelinker | 41st |

## Special Fund Donations

We thank those listed below who made special donations in February:

**Lutheran Hour Ministries:** Scott Miller  
**Pastor's Discretionary Fund:** David Hagen



## Please remember these folks in your prayers

Those shown below have lost loved ones this past month. Please keep them and their families in your prayers.

† The Mielke family as Cindy Parks' aunt, Barb Mielke, fell asleep in the Lord on 3/14.

## Summarized Council Meeting Minutes March 17, 2020

Meeting opened at 7:30 p.m. with prayer and devotion by Pastor Vergin

### Pastor's Report per Pastor

- During pandemic, Pastor will be: caring for sick members, ensuring continuity of Word & Sacrament ministry at St. Mark's, keeping people connected to the Word, serving our wider community
- Pastor & Elders to work together to determine best practices for upcoming services considering the pandemic/government orders
- Neighborhood Prayer Walk cancelled
- Easter music rehearsals cancelled
- Men's Bible Study April 4 cancelled
- Pastor was nominated to serve as the MI District LWML Pastoral Counselor

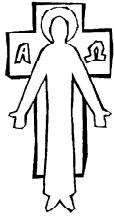
### Gospel Outreach per Pastor & Sharon Williams

- Pastor completed teaching the second *Every One His Witness* Workshop. He'll put together small groups now to meet for continued *Growing as His Witness* studies after Easter
- Pastor and John Reardon met in February and the board will be discussing some of the items they talked over
- We'll be expanding our number of board members soon
- Using our greeters to ID visitors, maybe hand out material telling them about our beliefs, our church and our activities
- We are eliminating the Welcome Basket program because it's expensive and time consuming. Although it seems to have been unfruitful, we don't know. Those baskets had God's Word in them and His Word does not come back empty.
- Sharon ordered tracts to refill the tract tree in the Lobby and has been trying to keep it full

(See *Council Minutes*, Page 4)

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# St. Mark's Lutheran Church



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***Address Service Requested***

## Council Minutes

(Continued from Page 3)

**LWML** per Gail Hardy - not sure if they'll be assembling Easter baskets for St. Paul, Pontiac this year due to the coronavirus

**Properties** per John Sidelinker

- New flag & parts have been installed
- Tree limbs/debris will be chipped in spring
- Side yard next to Tutor Time will be regraded and seeded in spring by contractor that did work on their school yard
- Installed new coat closet light and some new sanctuary LED bulbs
- Defibrillator training - on hold for now due to coronavirus

**Youth & Family** per Mandy Vergin

- Community Easter Egg Hunt, Easter morning Egg Hunt both cancelled

*(continued next column)*

- Continuing to research ideas for family-friendly worship services
- Sunday School closet has been totally cleaned out & reorganized

### General Business

- Easter Breakfast cancelled
- Debbie LoCascio trained Debbie Sidelinker on H.R. job
- Compared 4 bids Debbie L. got for engineering work on the 3 lots along Bywater Ave. Council voted to go with Green Tech bid. Council voted to go forward with the lot splits now, but hold off on selling the lots until we see how the virus might affect the housing/property market
- FYI, Mi. Church Extension Fund is making a Line of Credit available to congregations at super low interest rates

Next Council meeting: April 21, 7:30 p.m.

Adjourned at 8:38 p.m. Closed with the Lord's Prayer

# Thoughts and Prayers

## MORE URGENT PRAYER'S:

**Clarence Arnold**—needs prayers for health & memory issues.  
**Butch Fitzgerald**—needs prayers for health issues.  
**Joan Freeman**—needs prayers for health and family issues.  
**John Freeman**—needs prayers for health issues.  
**Barbara Jewell**—will be undergoing back surgery on 4/23.  
**Mac McConnell**—needs extra prayers.  
**Marcy McConnell**—fell and broke some bones.  
**Rod Oehring**—needs prayers for health issues.  
**Kay Reynolds**—needs prayers for health issues.  
**Frank Salo**—needs extra prayers.  
**Marilyn Turner**—needs extra prayers.  
**Dorothy Vermeersch**—is recovering from surgery.  
**Lynne Welty**—is having health issues.  
**Sharon Williams**—is battling cancer again.  
Joan Freeman's brother, **Ernie Sampson**—is having multiple health problems.  
Barbara Jewell's niece's friend, **John**—his health is poor.  
Barbara Jewell's friend, **Patricia**—hit by a car; needs prayers.  
Debbie LoCascio's father, **Bob Tippett**—has memory issues.  
Mary Ann Lockwood's friend, **Sharon Richards**—is battling cancer.  
The Lockwood children's (Anna, Christian, Michael) grandfather, **Milton Javery**—is battling cancer.  
Angela Peters' father-in-law, **Karl Peters**—has health issues.  
Cindy Park's mom, **Rose Mielke**—is having health issues.  
Jason Peters' sister, **Joslyn Peters**—needs extra prayers.  
Carolynn Taylor's grandson's wife, **Stephanie Payton**—is battling breast cancer.  
Mike & Kyle Tolman's grandpa, **Dave Scroggie**—Alzheimer's is worsening; has Stage 3 kidney disease.  
Evy Vergin's teacher's cousin, **Nick**—was injured at work.  
Mandy Vergin's father, **Bruce Ketcher**—has health issues.  
Rob Wheeler's dad, **Rick Wheeler**—is recovering from a brain bleed.  
Lori Whitehead's friend, **Vickie Tucker**—is battling cancer.  
Lori Whitehead's great niece, **Morgan Duggin**—needs extra prayers.  
Sharon Williams' friend, **Carol York**—is very ill; praying that she'll come to faith in Christ.  
Sharon Williams' granddaughter, **Erika Williams**—needs extra prayers for guidance.  
Sharon Williams' great-grandson, **Emmitt Reynolds**—diagnosed with Autism.  
Joanne Wisti's friend, **Paul Kascha**—is battling cancer.

## ONGOING PRAYERS:

Cathy Fitzgerald's niece, Kim Trombley—recovering from a very serious car accident  
Cathy Fitzgerald's sister, Charlotte—recovering from a stroke  
John & Joan Freeman's daughter, Joy Rester—is recovering from surgery  
Friend of St. Mark's, Thisvi Steiger—is having medical problems  
Barbara Jewell's friend's daughter, Rebecca Chipps—is finished with radiation and is improving.  
Barbara Jewell's neighbor's grandson—confined to home  
Barbara Jewell's neighbor, Ed Perez—having knee problems  
Barbara Jewell's friend, Pam Perez—is having medical issues  
Barbara Jewell's neighborhood friend, Joanne English—has throat cancer; might need neck surgery  
Julie Kosmalski—her cancer is in remission  
Debbie LoCascio's friend's neighbor, Marilyn—health is failing; praying she'll come to faith in Jesus before it's too late.  
Debbie LoCascio's sister-in-law, Leselie Tippett—is recovering from surgery  
Tom LoCascio's cousin, Angelo Barduca—is receiving therapy  
Mary Ann Lockwood's cousin's kids—Abigail and Amelia List—are ill  
Cindy Parks' friends, Sheila, Mary, and Linda—all are battling breast cancer  
Cindy Parks' sister, Jeane Schaefer—is recovering from back surgery  
Cindy Park's brother, Jerry Mielke—is having medical problems  
The Salo's daughter-in-law, Joni—is recovering from a stroke; receiving therapy  
Marlene Steck—needs extra prayers  
Mike & Kyle Tolman's grandma, Margaret Scroggie—needs extra prayers  
Dorothy Vermeersch's cousin, Gloria Maire—has several medical issues  
Larry Whitehead's daughter, Tracy Whitehead—prayers for wisdom and guidance  
Lori Whitehead's sister, Linda Head—has medical issues  
Sharon Williams' friend, Tina Fonville—is on oxygen  
Sharon Williams' daughter-in-law's nephew's fiancé, Rachel—cancer is in remission  
Sharon Williams' daughter-in-law, Pam Williams—has health issues  
Matt Zavada (whose father, Ray, works at the LCMS Michigan District)—praying for healing for a wound on his foot.

(continued next column)

Sunday Divine Service: 9:30 a.m.  
Sunday Adult Bible Class: 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School (Sept. - May): 10:45 a.m.

Men's Bible Study/Breakfast: First Saturday/month at 9 a.m.

Wednesday Worship: "The Gate" 7 p.m. (the Wed. after Easter through mid-Nov.)

# April 2020

## St. Mark's Lutheran Church

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For live, up-to-date versions of ANY St. Mark's calendar, visit our website at:  
[www.stmarkwb.org](http://www.stmarkwb.org).

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
			<b>No church services or events per the Governor's Executive Order</b>			
<b>5 Palm/Passion Sunday</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9 Maundy Thursday</b>	<b>10 Good Friday</b>	<b>11</b>
			<b>No church services or events per Governor's Executive Order</b>			
<b>12 Resurrection of Our Lord</b>  <b>No church services/events</b>	<b>13</b>  Pastor's Day Off	<b>14</b>  Pastor out of office in p.m.	<b>15</b>  4pm Confirmation Cls. A	<b>16</b>  10am Quilting Bee	<b>17</b>  <b>DEADLINE TO SUBMIT NEWSLETTER ARTICLES</b>  4pm Confirmation Class B	<b>18</b>
<b>19 2nd Sunday of Easter</b>  Elder on Duty: Jim O'Brien 9:30am Divine Service 10:45am Adult Bible Class 10:45am Sunday School	<b>20</b>  Pastor's Day Off	<b>21</b>  Pastor out of office in p.m.  7:30pm - Council Mtg.	<b>22</b>  4pm Confirmation Cls. A	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>  <b>DISTRIBUTE NEWSLTR.</b>  4pm Confirmation Class B	<b>25</b>
<b>26 3rd Sun. of Easter</b>  Elder on Duty: Tom LoCascio 9:30am Divine Service 10:45am Adult Bible Class 10:45am Sunday School	<b>27</b>  Pastor's Day Off	<b>28</b>  Pastor out of office in p.m.	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>		

<b>ALTAR GUILD:</b> Leslie Oehring
<b>COUNTERS:</b> Jennie & Karen Kaufman

ACOLYTES:	GREETERS:	USHERS:	VIDEO TECHS:
5 None	5 None	5 None	5 None
12 None	12 None	12 None	12 None
19 Sophie Hurley	19 None	19 John R./John S.	19 Debbie Sidelinker
26 Jay Anderson	26 None	26 John R./John S.	26 Lynn Thomas