



The Lion's Tale

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2022



art ⁱⁿ **the Park**
St. Louis Hills

THANK YOU to everyone who made our presence at Art in the Park a huge success! A truly wonderful day!



It's Coming...November 20



Consecration Sunday Ingathering

Our Consecration Sunday Ingathering will be on November 20th during the ten o'clock service with a celebration lunch immediately following in the parish hall. Watch the Markings and the US Mail for more information and how to RSVP for the luncheon.



ECM Birthday Party Re-Cap

On Friday October 6th Saint Marks and the Christian Church of India coordinated a Virtual Pizza Birthday party for 46 Youth and 10 Staff at the Saint Louis City Youth Detention Center. We give Thanks for the 14 assorted Pizzas delivered to the Youth Center including beverages and 50 custard cups donated by Ted Drewes. Thanks to the Christian Church of India for arranging candy and Birthday Gift Bags. Special Thanks for their coordination assistance: Deacon Jerre, Chuck Doyle, Pastor Clive

At this time ECM Birthday Parties are conducted virtual as requested by ECM and the City of Saint Louis. Youth do have access in person to the ECM Chaplains on a weekly basis. The NEXT ECM Birthday Party will take place in MAY of 2023. Date TBD.

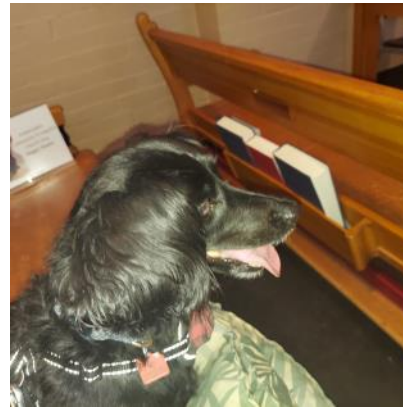


We ask your Prayers for Youth in Detention. Ask how you may help with Candy and Gift Bag Donations.—Submitted by Chuck Doyle, on behalf of Saint Marks Outreach

Blessing of the Animals



Ed Rich and Benji at the Blessing of the Animals. "He's good for another year"



Jasper just can't wait

St. Mark's Website

Have you had a chance to see our updated website? If not, check it out now! www.saintmarks-stl.org
It has been especially designed to be easier to read on your phone or mobile device.





Heaven & Hell

A while ago I was asked if Episcopalians believe in Heaven. Donning my Anglican-via-media hat, I responded that different folks hold different beliefs about “heaven.” I also added that as no one has ever come back to tell us definitively, then we can carry on with what believe, *and* (notice the “both/and”

here) we can look to our Catechism in the Book of Common Prayer for its guidance.

On page 862 of the BCP we find: *Q. What do we mean by heaven and hell? A. By heaven we mean eternal life in our enjoyment of God; by hell we mean eternal death in our rejection of God.*

Good Anglican that I am, I am able to say that I find much merit in the response about heaven. But about hell? Well, not so much. Knowing God’s boundless love in my own life as well as the lives of others, I find it hard to wrap my head (let alone my heart) around “eternal death” from God.

After this conversation, I came across an interview with Karen Armstrong in the New York Times Book Review [<https://nyti.ms/3erWD4R>]. Karen Armstrong is a former Roman Catholic nun who has written extensively on comparative religion. Perhaps her most famous book is *A History of God* (1993), followed by *The Battle for God* (2000). I was blessed to be with her for a two-day seminar in seminary several years ago.

In the interview, Armstrong talks about her life-long engagement with religion:

My understanding of religion was transformed nearly 30 years ago by the great Muslim scholar and mystic Ibn al-Arabi (1165-1240). Sadly, he is little known in the West. A truly religious person... equally at home in a synagogue, temple, church or mosque, since no faith has the monopoly of truth:

“Do not praise your own faith so exclusively that you disbelieve all the rest. If you do this, you will fail to recognize the real truth of the matter. God, the omnipresent and omnipotent, cannot be confined to any one creed, for he says, ‘Wheresoever ye turn, there is the face of Allah.’ (Quran 2:115). Everybody praises what he believes; his god is his own creature and in praising it he praises himself. Consequently, he blames the beliefs of others, which he would not do if he were just, but his dislike is based on ignorance.”

Do not praise your own faith so exclusively that you disbelieve all the rest.

I suppose it was the conversation about heaven, but when I read this quote from al-Arabi I immediately thought of the time-worn joke about a new soul being shown around heaven by St. Peter. They are standing in front of a huge wall and the new soul asks, “What’s that wall all about?” And St. Peter responds, “Shh... that’s the Roman Catholics—they think they’re the only ones here.”

Of course, you can slot in any other faith or denomination that holds any belief in heaven. I first heard it from a Roman Catholic friend of my father’s way back when I was in grade school. Looking back, I suppose the adult laughter I heard was meant to be ironic. As clichéd and hackneyed and time-worn as it is, sadly I think that joke (and others like it) speak to a deeper challenge in our human nature: the need to separate, to create “the other,” to build up oneself by knocking others down.

While this tendency is something that we, as followers of Jesus on the Way of Love, are called to resist as we endeavor to be Christ’s hands and heart and voice in the world, striving for active peace, I find it especially glaring during these days in the run-up to the mid-term elections.

The “othering” that takes place, the vitriol and negativity that has become part and parcel of our political and social discourse, leads me to wonder, quoting Dorothy Parker: “What fresh hell is this?” And maybe that’s the answer to the question about hell in the Book of Common Prayer.

Of course, we don’t need to participate in the bitterness and scorn we find across most media. We do have the power to turn it off (or not turn it on in the first place). As followers of Christ, we also have the power of prayer: to pray for those at the margins, to pray for the opening of hearts among those who oppress and denigrate, to pray that God’s limitless love would be embraced by all.

Pray. And then vote.

Mark+

St. Mark's Events

All Saints Sunday

All Saint's Sunday is on November 6th this year. We will once again gather in the All Saint's Memorial Garden that day and remember those who have passed. The bagpiper, Laurie Hartung, will return and lead the processional into church. Please submit the names of those you wish to be remembered during the service to the Parish Office by Wednesday November 2nd. parishoffice@saintmarks-stl.org / 314-832-3588.

Kairos Sunday Returns

Kairos Sunday provides the opportunity for folks of *all ages to come together to learn something new, to learn from one another, and to have fun. Everyone meets in the church at 9:30 am* for a half-hour of formation around topics such as: "What's going on at the altar?", "Why do we sing the psalms?", "What does 'Being Christian' have to do with recycling?", and more. Immediately following this half-hour, we gather for worship at 10:00 am—with worshippers of all ages taking on various roles in our liturgy. [Kairos: Greek: the suitable time, the right moment, God's appointed time] **Due to the Consecration Sunday Ingathering on November 20th, there will be no Kairos Sunday that Sunday. The next Kairos Sunday will be on December 18th.**

Thanksgiving Morning Prayer Service

A Service of Morning prayer will be offered on Thanksgiving Morning, November 24th at 9:00 am. Preheat that oven and begin your Thanksgiving with prayer and praise!



Christmas Party

St. Mark's festive Christmas Party will be held on Sunday, December 18th, beginning at 5:00pm. Carols, a buffet dinner, and load of good cheer will be on hand as we wait for a "special guest" to complete the festivities. \$15 Adults, \$8 Children over 5 years, \$50 family max. Once again, we'll be asking folks to help with the dessert table. Please see the signup sheets in the parish hall to RSVP and to bring a dessert. You may also call/email to: 314-832-3588 / parishoffice@saintmarks-stl.org

Slow down. Quiet. It's Advent.
TWENTY-EIGHT DAYS TO SEEK NEW LIFE WITHIN AND AROUND YOU



Advent at St. Mark's

The Season of Advent begins on Sunday, November 27th. Join us as we light the first Advent Candle in our Advent Wreath as we pray in anticipation of the coming of Emmanuel, God-with-Us. Advent supplies will be available as of November 20th on the credenza in the back of the church.

Please watch the weekly Marking's for our Christmas Schedule.



From your Deacon...

During the first half of November, we have two “civic” events coming up – our mid-term elections on November 8 and Veterans’ Day which we celebrate on November 11. But when it comes down to it, I cannot separate my “civic” self from myself as a follower of Jesus. The Interfaith Partnership of Greater St. Louis gets this connection when it states: “We revere democracy because it is through democracy that we show that every voice and every person matters.

Democracy embodies our commitment to peace, giving us structures to resolve social conflict without violence. Democracy is the way we engage in dialogue with each other, resolving differences peaceably. And democracy shows our concern for the community, ensuring that the few cannot rule over the many. Democracy is of moral and religious importance.”

Our US framework for democracy as amended with equal protections of minorities allows us as a society to pursue the kingdom of God here and now. That is something to keep in mind as we go to the polls. And for the preservation of our democracy for the last 240+ years, we owe a debt of gratitude to our veterans, the women and men who have given their time and labors – and in too many cases their lives – under arduous conditions.

In order to honor and thank all our veterans, I am officiating a service at Emmanuel in Webster Groves at 11:00 AM on Friday, November 11. I invite the congregation of St. Mark’s to attend, along with any others you would like to bring. The service will be a short time for us to come together as a community and lift up our prayers and thanksgivings for those who have served us.

In Christ,
Deacon Jerre

Musical Notes from Barbara

The month of December brings us a wealth of beautiful music for both the Advent and Christmas seasons. One of the best-loved Advent hymns is “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,” which we will sing on the fourth Sunday of Advent, and which will also be the basis of some of our Advent choral and organ music. This hymn had its origins in the medieval “O Antiphons,” a series of seven antiphons intended to be sung at vespers services during the week before Christmas. Each antiphon begins with “O” (hence the name “O Antiphons”) followed by a title of Christ taken from the Hebrew Scriptures (“Wisdom, Key of David, Branch of Jesse,” etc.) and concludes with a request for Christ to come (“Come and teach us the way of Wisdom,” etc.) The Latin words were translated into English in the 19th century and later paired with a 15th-century French melody to create the hymn we know today.



I’d like to invite anyone who enjoys singing but isn’t able to sing with the choir on a regular basis to join us for the Christmas season. We rehearse on Thursday evenings from 7:30-9:00 p.m. and will sing for the 10:30 p.m. service on Christmas Eve. If you’d like to sing with us, please be in touch with me (braedeke@aol.com). We would be delighted to have you join us!

Barbara Raedeke

Diocesan News & Events

Diocesan Convention



The 183rd Convention of The Episcopal Diocese of Missouri takes place November 18 & 19, 2022. Episcopalians from throughout the diocese will gather at the DoubleTree Hotel in Chesterfield for the annual diocesan convention. It's the first in-person convention since 2019 and we are excited to celebrate our life together as a community of faith! St. Mark's will be sending 6 members of our church both lay and clergy to take part in this yearly event.



Responding to the St. Louis School Shooting

The Diocese mourns the loss of life and injuries from the shooting at Central Visual and Performing Arts High School on Monday, Oct. 24. Bishop Deon Johnson asks for your prayers and a commitment to help stop this epidemic of gun violence in our communities.

[Read the Bishop's letter.](#)

[Watch the recording of a prayer service](#) led by the Bishop. The service was held Tuesday evening at St. John's Episcopal Church in Tower Grove, just blocks from the school. (The service begins at approximately 15 minutes into the livestream feed.)



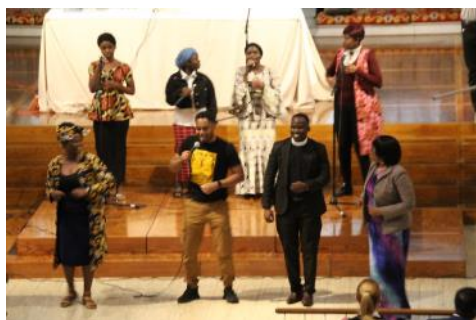
BE Campaign Join the Movement!

BE just; BE kind; BE humble. Help us make our communities and our world a little more like the Kingdom of God.

The BE campaign officially launches this week and leads up to the midterm elections. We hope you and your congregations will get involved! We have liturgical resources for you to use, videos for you to share, and will soon have T-shirts you can purchase!

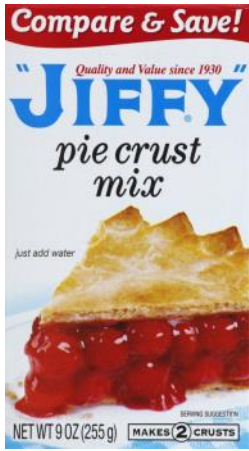
Go to <https://www.diocesemo.org/be-campaign/> for more information.

Launching a New Community of Faith



The Episcopal Diocese of Missouri welcomes **Grace African Christians Connection** as our newest missional community!

This new community is led by the Rev. Mtipe Koggani, a transitional deacon serving at Christ Church Cathedral in St. Louis. Grace African Christians Connection will officially become a mission at our annual convention in November. The group is planning to hold services once a month at the Cathedral.



Thanksgiving Donations for Isaiah 58

Isaiah 58 Ministries provides all the fixings for full Thanksgiving dinners for 300 families. Last year we donated cash to buy turkeys. This year, St. Mark's has signed up to donate 300 boxes of *Jiffy Pie Crust Mix*. Next time you're grocery shopping grab some and bring it to the collection bin in the Parish Hall by Sunday, November 6th. They cost 99 cents at Schnucks (perhaps a bit more elsewhere). Questions? Contact Deacon Jerre at jerre.birdsong@gmail.com or 314-608-3255.

UPDATE: 303 BOXES OF JIFFY PIE CRUSTS HAVE BEEN COLLECTED. WE HAVE EXCEED OUR GOAL OF 300.



DOORWAYS Opens New Campus in St. Louis

After more than 5 years of planning an agency expansion to respond to a growing depth and breadth of need, the dream is a reality! On Wednesday, October 19, at 10 a.m., over 230 guests gathered for the grand opening of the new DOORWAYS Jefferson Avenue Campus. Click here to view the full program.

Visit the [Jefferson Avenue Campus web page](#) for more information—including the full Grand Opening Program with lists of donors, partners, and providers!



RIP Medical Debt Press Conference 11-10-22

The Emery Washington Convocation, of which St. Mark's is a part, raised over 25K to forgive \$2.5+ million in medical debt in the St. Louis region through RIP Medical Debt. Now that the campaign is over, the RIP steering committee is holding a press conference to celebrate this moment of Jubilee.

Everyone is welcome and encouraged to come to the press conference on **November the 10th at 10 AM on the steps of Christ Church Cathedral**. This short event (15 - 20 min) will include testimonies from members of the diocese about the importance of abolishing debt and the high cost of healthcare in our nation.



Junior Warden's Corner

Seeking Volunteers to restore our St. Mark's Red

The railings, bell tower, and trim on the Parish House and Rectory have been repainted. We will need volunteers to help prep and paint some doors and other exterior surfaces. We are flexible on the date and timing of such activities. If you would like to help out, please contact the Jr. Warden, Dennis Belieu, at (314) 443-8372.



Upcoming Events

Wednesdays 7:00pm	AA Meeting
Thursdays 7:30 pm	Choir Practice
November 6th	Daylight Savings Time (Fall Back)
November 6th	All Saint's Day Service
November 15th	Vestry Meeting
November 18th-19th	Diocesan Convention
November 20th	Consecration Sunday Ingathering
November 24th	Thanksgiving Day Morning Prayer
November 27th	Beginning of the Advent Season
December 18th	Kairos Sunday 9:30am
December 18th	Christmas Party 5:00pm
December 20th	Vestry Meeting
December 24th	Christmas Eve Services 5pm and 10:30pm
December 25th	Christmas Day 10:00am
December 30th	Deadline for checks for 2022 Pledges-12pm



Daylight Savings Time

Don't forget to set your clocks back on Sunday, November 6th!



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.

December 21st Deadline for January/February Lion's Tale

February 22nd Deadline for March/April Lion's Tale