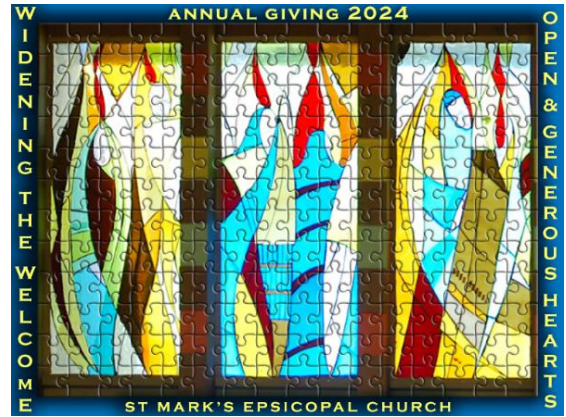


October 6, 2023

Dear Members and Friends of St. Mark's:

This past year at St. Mark's we have experienced wonderful growth but important challenges as we work to **Widen the Welcome** of our community. There have been many blessed events this past year. One of the most notable was during "Holy Week" liturgies when we had an especially dramatic telling of the Passion, a poignant and powerful Easter Vigil with several baptisms (including one by full immersion) and a lively and festive dance and meal to celebrate. Our connective "Summer of Conversation" deepened our community sharing experience, strengthening a loving network of relationships. We continue to grow our out-reach through our involvement with Church Unbound: the ministry of sharing food and worship with our unhoused neighbors. Our major outreach ministry, St. Mark's Montessori School, continues to thrive under our new Director Caitlin McGuire. Looking toward a vital future, we have engaged Paul Barribeau of Growth Design Group, a skilled architect, to guide us as we take steps toward renewing our home of worship with an eye toward our Episcopal tradition, beauty, accessibility, and flexibility to support the ongoing vitality of St. Mark's. We want to **Widen the Welcome** of our community to all those the Spirit sends our way for years to come.



As we do every year in the fall, we want to invite you into a time of reflection about how you will support the continuing life and ministry of St. Mark's. This fall we have been offering a series of Vital Conversations around "Caring for Our Gifts." It is intended to widen our understanding of stewardship: The Gift of a Faith Community, The Gift of Time, The Gift of Relationships, and The Gift of the Body, as well as the Gift of Budgets and Giving.

For the coming month, we ask that you consider **The Gift of Giving**, specifically giving to St. Mark's in support of the life and ministry of this faith community. But we also want you to think about how God is shaping you into a person with an open and generous heart. As people of faith, we are asked to give in response to God's generosity in our lives.

Giving back a portion of the many blessings we have received from God is an act of worship and faithfulness. We give because we have received so much from God. We give to support the work of God in this particular place and among this particular people. Together our gifts support our life of worship, prayer, learning, service, and fun as we continue **Making Something Beautiful for God in our Neighborhood.**

Sunday, October 29th we will host St. Mark's Annual **Celebration Sunday: A Pledge and Pancake Extravaganza!** On Celebration Sunday, we invite all members and friends of St. Mark's to join the whole community in making a financial commitment to the work of God in and through St. Mark's. As we do every year in the fall, we invite you into a time of discernment about how you will help to support the life and ministry of St. Mark's.

In God's Generous Love,



Lucy Sinkular
Senior Warden



The Rev. Christopher McLaren
Rector