

President's Report to our St Mark Congregation

December 2017

Below is another report on monthly council and board activities. I hope you find it useful in keeping you an informed member of our church.

Pastors are reporting Advent schedules are officially underway. The busy season of the church scheduling is printed out for us in our bulletin and available on our web pages. Make sure to watch for those worship times as adjustments have been made by our Elders. Campus Ministry reports that Thai night is coming up which is well attended just before finals week. Another note is our International Youth Conference that will be held in Toledo, Ohio this year. Our congregations usually plan a shared bus trip with other area congregations for our youth group to attend. Pastors also continue to discuss the Bible translation target as we are moving forward from the NIV 1984 translation as it is no longer in print. Feel free to discuss with pastors on thoughts in this direction. Pastors also would like to offer our open doors to the congregation and their friends. Feel free to bring a friend to Christmas services!

Elders have made progress on a multi-month study of our pastors' roles and the congregational pastoral needs of our congregation. The study showed that there is necessary pastoral work at St Mark for more than two full time pastors. We currently employ 1.5 pastors. The current needs and size of our congregation are stretching our current pastoral staff. Acting on the results of that study, the Elders will be recommending an addition of a full time pastor to our staff. With God's blessings to our congregation and your thankfulness for them in terms of support, the counsel believes we will have budgetary support for another pastor to further our mission at St Mark. After the council vote of approval on this item, the discussion quickly turned to starting our Vision Committee back into high gear. Opportunities of pastoral coverage for early child care, second/satellite sites, and other items may now be even more possible. This direction will be brought to our voters for approval and further discussion. If voters will support the council motion, we will most likely start the planning process of calling for an additional pastor immediately after approval. Please contact me if you are willing to participate in planning the future vision at St Mark. Help is needed in this area as we move ahead.

The Stewardship Board wishes to pass on this announcement to the congregation regarding the "50 in 50" fund drive: The goals of the offering were to demonstrate our thankfulness and joy for 50 years of God's grace and blessing and also to fund some projects that would have lasting impact on our mission and ministry. The fifty days for gathering the offering ended November 30th. We were blessed with \$30,321 in gifts. A heartfelt thanks to all who contributed! With these gifts we will rebuild the choir loft and, combined with funds already in a Bell Tower fund, finish that project too. Building and Grounds is supervising the work. We should see the choir loft construction beginning shortly - and possibly complete by the time you get this letter! The bell tower is more complex and is requiring some dedicated time by our buildings and grounds team. Status on this project will be updated to our voters at the January 21, 2018 meeting. The council wishes to thank the Stewardship Board and Anniversary Committee for their hard work on the organization of the fund. It was a huge success!

The Board of Education reports that the next school year is beginning to be organized. The voters will be approving an updated tuition (non-member & fellowship families) and book fee schedule. The main item here is the added fees for the online enrollment and registration software (TADS) that is now in use. The Board reports that much automation and streamlining has been gained by the use of the system now in place. It's been a great help to the staff! The Board is also moving through the

continued accreditation process. They are now at a point to where school staff policies need to be updated and put in place. Because the school is part of our church, staffing policies also need to cover our pastoral, secretary, and janitorial staff. The council will be requesting a committee to be put in place to develop a "St Mark Staff" handbook to assist the needs of school accreditation for staff policy. The goal of the committee is to include ALL St Mark staff under these policies.

Building and Grounds are working the LED light conversion process. Bulbs have been received and some organization of work teams is now being planned. The wiring updates and fixture conversion will need to be performed. Please watch the bulletin for announcements as this planning firms. Help will be needed to make the project happen smoothly and quickly. Anyone can help - knowledge of wiring electricity is NOT required as the tasks include moving furniture, clean up, wiring, moving boxes of bulbs, to organizing old bulbs for disposal - to name a few. Anyone can help - please help if you are able! Again, watch the bulletin for upcoming announcements in this area. Also discussed is the bell tower planning status. The team plans to offer status to our voters and answer any questions we may have on the planning process for our bell.

The Technology Board reports that they are working on a plan to document and detail devices on our St Mark network. We may want to consider funding a replacement plan they are working as these devices do not last forever and are now a critical part to the operations at St Mark. As this planning firms, look for updates from the team on this plan.

The Treasurer reviewed current incoming funds for our operation. The council discussed our commitment to our Synod for the CMO fund. This fund directly supports the operations of our Synod. The council discussed in detail our income for operation. Prayerful consideration centered on keeping our tithe commitment to our Synod. Our budget has increased as our membership increased to 800 members. The council decided to increase our commitment to our Synod to maintain that first fruit tithe to our synod as an example to our members in their first fruit offerings to support our mission at St Mark. Again, the voters will have final approval on the recommendation in our January 21, 2018 voters meeting.

On a closing note, the council wishes to thank all the members of St Mark for their involvement and support of our mission. Have a blessed and safe holiday season! As for next year, we will continue to make use of the precious gift of St Mark that God has given us as we move through 2018 and beyond!

I'll include my standard closing statement with you: If you ever need more information on any of the work the boards are performing, let me know. I'll work to find the answer or raise a suggestion for discussion. Contact information for me: Email (fischerfull@gmail.com), Cell (715.497.5264) - feel free to give me a call if you want to discuss anything we're working on, if you have ideas, can help, or just want to chat. Your council values your ideas and support.

In God's service,
Eric Fischer, President

Please note: Upcoming quarterly voter's meeting date: 01/21/2018 @ 06:30PM / <http://www.stmark-wels.org>