



What's Happening at St. Mark's Announcements - September 20, 2026

From Parish Leadership & Staff

1. New Building Security System

[9/13]

To look after St. Mark's and help ensure our church provides a safe, friendly environment for all users, we are installing a new building security system. Over the coming weeks, you may see camera mounts and other equipment in public areas and around the outside of the building. The cameras will become active and be officially incorporated into the system soon.

The new system will also include updated door locks, enabling staff to unlock and monitor the building remotely when the site is unoccupied. When we switch to the new system, we will change the card readers and keypad locks, and staff and other people who access the building will need to replace their fobs for convenient entry. These improvements are part of our ongoing effort to care for our historic church and are meant to help us continue providing a safe, open, and welcoming environment for worship, ministry, and community events.

We will continue to keep you informed as the installation progresses. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to get in touch with Michele [michele\[at\]stmarks.net](mailto:michele[at]stmarks.net)

Worship

2. 9 AM Service Acolytes Meeting - New Time 11 am

[9/13*]

ALL 9 am (only) acolytes will meet on **Sunday, Sept 20 at 11 am (updated time)**. Room will be announced and the meeting will last only about 20 minutes.. New Schedule to be announced. Contact: Doris Burton [dmburton21\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:dmburton21[at]gmail.com)

Children, Youth and Family Ministry

Learn more about all our different programs at <https://bit.ly/CYFMHandbook>

3. First Day of Sunday School

[9/6]

Our regular Sunday Schools starts today, **Sunday, Sept 20th!** It will go from **10 to 10:50AM** every Sunday, except holidays. Because our Sunday School is growing, your child might not have the teachers or be in the room that you would expect. Please talk to your children in advance if this will feel like a big adjustment for them. Also, in order to greet kids as they enter their classrooms each Sunday, we will not be letting kids in before 10AM.

Catechesis I (PreK3 & PreK4), Location: Undercroft, Room 4
Teachers: Rachel Blessing, Jeremy Sierra, Grace Aspinall

Catechesis II (Kindergarten & 1st Grade), Location: Undercroft, Adams Room

Teachers: Danielle Collins, Kelly Dickinson, Terri Poxon-Pearson

Catechesis III (2nd & 3rd Grade), Location: Undercroft, Room 1

Teachers: Travis Beaty, Jim Brooks, Malissa Zimmerman

Catechesis IV (4th & 5th Grade), Location: Upstairs, Dance Studio

Teachers: Karen Woodall, Katherine Rogers, Jorja Siemons

Middle School (Grades 6–8), Location: Undercroft, Lions' Den

Teachers: Mary Miller Flowers, Jeb Ory

High School (Grades 9–12), Location: Undercroft, Dozier Library

Teachers: Ben Flowers, Britt Pereira

4. Note about entering Sunday School classrooms

[9/13]

One important way our teachers foster a sense of belonging in Sunday School is through the role of Doorkeeper, where one of the two co-teachers greets children individually by name so they feel seen, and then guides them across the threshold and directly to Circle Time. This intentional practice is difficult when children arrive early. Thus, we ask that throughout the coming year, all children stay upstairs until the end of worship. Though sometimes the service runs long and Michele dismisses kids early, **in general the end of worship coincides with the 10:00 AM start of Sunday School** so we will use the end of worship as our sign to go downstairs. We share this norm in advance because we know it is a change for some families. Please contact Lisa at [YouthDirector\[at\]stmarks.net](mailto:YouthDirector[at]stmarks.net) with any questions.

5. Youth Group Retreat in WV

[9/6]

The Youth Group will go on a retreat to Berkeley Springs, WV from **Sat, Sept 26 to Sun, Sept 27**. They will stay at a lodge with a hot tub and go white water rafting on Sunday. The youth confirmation class will meet at 3PM when they get back. Please RSVP at <https://bit.ly/youthinWV>. Email our new youth groups leaders, Jeb and Jilian, if you have any questions or would like to chaperone: [jebory\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:jebory[at]gmail.com) and [jmcg1213\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:jmcg1213[at]gmail.com).

6. Youth Confirmation Class after WV trip

[9/20]

The Youth Confirmation Class will meet for 90 minutes after the youth come back from their WV trip, likely around **3PM on Sunday, Sept 27**. We will be in the Elders room (left in the undercroft) for movement, fun, snacks and conversations about moving into adulthood. Contact [Annie.Rorem\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:Annie.Rorem[at]gmail.com) with questions.

7. PreK3 & 4 Catechesis I Meetup

[9/6]

Catechesis I parents and kids and siblings are invited to build friendships and get to know their Catechesis I teachers at Garfield Park playground on **Sunday, Sept 27th at 11:30ish**.

(Maybe after Grate Patrol?) We will provide pizza and drinks. RSVP at <https://bit.ly/4xBrJKT> so we can be sure to have enough goodies! Contact [YouthDirector\[at\]StMarks.net](mailto:YouthDirector[at]StMarks.net) for more information.

8. Kindergarten & 1st Grade Catechesis II Meetup

[9/20]

Catechesis II parents and kids and siblings are invited to build friendships and get to know their Catechesis II teachers at Garfield Park playground on **Sunday, October 4th at 11:30ish**. Basically, if your child is not in choir, then you should head over after Sunday School. If your child is in choir, then you should head over after that. We will provide pizza and drinks. RSVP at <https://bit.ly/4xpZX3b> so we can be sure to have enough goodies! For more information, contact [YouthDirector\[at\]StMarks.net](mailto:YouthDirector[at]StMarks.net).

9. Neurodiversity Working Group Meeting

[9/20]

The Children, Youth and Families Ministry (CYFM) Neurodiversity Working Group (NWG) has launched a support group for parents of young people who are neurodiverse or have special needs (no formal diagnosis necessary). Julie Murphy, a 40-year St. Mark's member and certified parent coach, is convening the monthly meeting. Our next meeting is **Sunday, October 18 at 11 am in the library** (across from the nursery). We hope that this will be a non-judgmental space where parents can share experiences and find support and strength. For questions or to receive this month's calendar invitation, email Julie at [juliaabbottmurphy\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:juliaabbottmurphy[at]gmail.com).

10. Please Sign Up for a Slot to Support CYFM!

[9/13]

With over 100 children and youth registered for Sunday School (as well as eight Confirmation students, 10 HS Pilgrims, etc.), we need many adults to make our programs run smoothly. We keep track of all the volunteers and open slots on different tabs of the spreadsheet at the QR code on the right. You can sign up there directly. Here are some ways to help:



Tab 1 - Children's Chapel Co-Leader: From 9-9:20 each Sunday, we need two people to lead Children's Chapel in Baxter Hall.

Tab 2 - Next Gen Reflection Co-Leader: From 9-9:20 each Sunday, we need two people to facilitate the hands-on Next Gen Reflection space in the undercroft.

Tab 3 - Worship Bag Organizer: We need someone to take 5 minutes before the 9am service to restock the worship bags that are in the nave.

Tab 4 - Unmet Volunteer Needs: Various opportunities arise throughout the year with different levels of responsibility. Some roles can be done from home; some are quite short term.

We do not ask that you know how to take on any of these roles already. We will reach out with instructions when the time gets closer and pair you with someone to orient you. As we start a

new school year, please consider how you will give your time to our collective ministry to children, youth and their families.

Music and the Arts

11. St Mark's Fabric Arts Show

[9/13*]

Have a look at the great photos of St Marks doing social justice and making a real difference in our city! Then, after viewing the Art Walk, go home and decide how you are going to participate in the October Fabric Arts Show. Knitting, crocheting, counted cross stitch, embroidery quilting, or pasting fabric on cardboard to make a "painting". It's all welcome here. Please send me photos of your crafts (even if they aren't finished) **by the 27th of September**. Questions? Contact Elin Whitney-Smith [elin\[at\]WatercolorDC.com](mailto:elin[at]WatercolorDC.com)

12. Get Involved in the Music Program!

[9/6]

Do you know a child who may be interested in singing with the Treble Singers (ages 4-7) or Youth Choir (8 and up)? Email [judith\[at\]stmarks.net](mailto:judith[at]stmarks.net). Adults of all voice parts on welcome to join the Chancel Choir (rehearses Thursdays 7:30-9:30 pm). [jeff\[at\]stmarks.net](mailto:jeff[at]stmarks.net). The Handbell Choir rehearses two Tuesdays per month from 6:00-7:15 pm. [kep5\[at\]cornell.edu](mailto:kep5[at]cornell.edu).

Service and Social Justice

Step into SSJ. View our volunteer opportunities page at www.stmarks.net/socialjustice

13. Understanding and Responding to the Crisis in Palestine: The Call to Churches

[9/13]

Members of St. Mark's have three opportunities this month to explore the evolution of the crisis in Palestine and learn how churches can respond. **On the 21st** the final program in Dr. Mark Braverman's free, 4-part webinar series will examine Christian-Jewish relations, the weaponization of anti-Semitism, and the Palestinian call to American Christians. Registrants for any program can obtain recordings of all four. Go to bit.ly/4xxhBTd to register. **At 7 pm on September 29**, he will be speaking at the **Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington** at 4444 Arlington Blvd./Route 50 (\$20 suggested donation). For more information about Braverman and both events, see the flyers on the windowsill in the foyer. If you need a ride on the 29th or are willing to offer one, please contact Peter Hawley at [phawleydc\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:phawleydc[at]gmail.com) no later than September 27.

14. Spend 90 Min to Help Keep Local Synagogue Safe for the High Holy Days?

[9/6]

Synagogues have to be concerned for the safety of their congregants in a way that we, mercifully, have not had to be. Since 2024, parishioners have supported Hill Havurah (212 East Capitol) for the High Holy Days by staffing one-hour outdoor greeter shifts on a few mornings and afternoons. This year, services will take place on **Sep 11 (eve)**, **Sep 12 (morning)**,

Sep 20 (eve), Sep 21 (morning), Sep 25, and Sep 26. They require a short security training: watching a video and reading a couple of documents

If you're interested in helping our Jewish siblings or would like more information, please contact [christoph.berendes\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:christoph.berendes[at]gmail.com)

15. Visit the Green Lions' Table

[9/20]

The Episcopal Diocese of Washington celebrates the Season of Creation in September. In honor of this Season, stop by the Green Lions' table at the parish fair to learn about what the Green Lions have done to make our church, homes, and community more green and sustainable and to see what else we are planning. Plans include a fall trip to Eco-City Farms, an urban farm that uses Certified Naturally Grown farming methods; partnering with the Anacostia Watershed Society for its Earth Day cleanup and other actions; environmental films and lectures; a potential environmentally-focused trip to Honduras (see below) and more. We would love to hear your ideas too. Email Leslie Allen for more info ([lacaphill\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:lacaphill[at]gmail.com)).

Finally, let's care for Creation by recycling correctly! Remember! Blue bins are for recyclables: glass, aluminum, plastic (but not plastic bags), cardboard, clean and mostly clean paper (but not our compostable paper cups). The rest goes in the garbage can!

16. Sustainable Villages Honduras

[9/20]

St. Mark's parishioners have been involved in environmental and sustainability work in villages in Honduras since 1989. Since 2018, that work has been under the auspices of Sustainable Villages Honduras. Stop by the Green Lions table to learn more about the incredible strides these villages have made toward installing toilets, providing clean water, practicing sustainable agriculture, diversifying crops, making lives better in their communities, and making it less likely that people will need to leave their villages to try to come to the United States for work. **St. Mark's is hoping to send a group of about 7 parishioners to these villages in February** (a cooler, dryer time!). Come learn more or reach out to Leslie Allen for more information ([lacaphill\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:lacaphill[at]gmail.com).)

17. Interfaith Action's Pen Pal Project

[9/13*]

Men and women convicted of a federal crime serve their sentences in a federal prison. They are incarcerated in 122 prisons around the US. As of June 2026, over 300 people have volunteered to be pen pals with a person incarcerated in a federal prison or a Virginia State Prison. Over 150 additional people in prison have requested a pen pal, with new requests every week. We need more pen pals on the outside to meet this need. Both Gretchen Willson and Jan Lipscomb are resources at St. Mark's if you have additional questions. To become a Pen Pal, you must attend

an hour-long Zoom Orientation. Contact us for more info on upcoming orientations
[incarcerationjustice\[at\]stmarks.net](mailto:incarcerationjustice[at]stmarks.net)

18. Nave Art Show: We are St. Mark's Service and Social Justice [9/13]

Our mission is to engage boldly in the struggles of life and care for others with love, justice, and compassion. That mission comes alive in hands-on activities and partnerships, a sampling of which are displayed in the Nave. We invite you to join us in caring for others in need in DC and around the world. <https://www.stmarks.net/service-and-justice/>

Contact: Edna Boone [ednaboone\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:ednaboone[at]gmail.com)

19. Responsive Grant Proposals Due 9/28 [8/30]

SSJ is offering grants of up to \$1500 toward a new project you believe will benefit the larger community outside St. Mark's. All ages are encouraged to apply! **Proposals due by 9/28 with decisions by 10/9.** The recipient must send receipts for expenses incurred on the project to SSJ by mid-December. Judging considerations include: whether the beneficiaries are involved and want the project; whether others from St. Mark's can participate; and is it realistic for implementation? Your proposal for the project should include a description, implementation plan and budget/justification for the amount requested. Send your proposal/questions to Leslie Allen, [lacaphill\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:lacaphill[at]gmail.com).

20. Wear an Orange Shirt on Wednesday, September 30th; Panel Discussion [9/20*]

Orange Shirt Day is a call to increase understanding of the impact of sending Indigenous children to residential boarding schools and the cultural genocide it embodied. Any orange shirt that reminds you of this cause will suffice, but the following suppliers sell branded items and support Indigenous communities: empowernativevoice.com orangeshirtstore.ca
<https://shop.indigenousmarketing.ca/collections/orange-collection> redrebelarmour.ca
<https://inac.ca/collections/orange-shirt-day-collection-national-day-for-truth-and-reconciliation>
(Orders from Canada may involve tariffs and delays.)

The Coalition to Dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery is hosting a panel discussion, including the co-chair of the Episcopal Church's commission on native boarding schools, **September 30 at 7:30pm**. See <https://tinyurl.com/Sep30Remembrance>

Contact Kit Arrington Katherine Arrington [kit\[at\]tulsablue.com](mailto:kit[at]tulsablue.com), Steve Dalzell [dalzellsr\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:dalzellsr[at]gmail.com) or Jan Lipscomb [juanita.lipscomb\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:juanita.lipscomb[at]gmail.com) for more information.

21. Jesus Was a Migrant Film Showing [9/20]

Join us on **Sunday, October 18 here at St. Mark's at 12:30 pm** to view and discuss the film, "Jesus Was a Migrant," a documentary about borders, belief, and



what we owe each other. Lunch will be served. Author and historian, Dr. Jemar Tisby travels to the U.S.-Mexico border to examine the theological crisis at the heart of American Christianity — and what it means when a nation built on faith turns its back on the most vulnerable. This event is sponsored by Capitol Hill United Methodist Church, Christ City Church DC, Church at the Well, St. Mark's Episcopal Church and Washington Community Fellowship. Questions: email Holly at [hkreutts\[at\]hotmail.com](mailto:hkreutts@hotmail.com) or Julie at [juliaabbotmurphy\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:juliaabbotmurphy@gmail.com). Visit <https://tinyurl.com/STMjesusmigrant> to register or use the QR code.

Parish Life & Diocesan Events

22. Honoring Verna Dozier [9/13]

Virginia Theological Seminary will honor Verna Dozier at a **symposium September 24** featuring former Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and other Episcopal leaders discussing her life and ministry. Verna was a nationally recognized Episcopal theologian, author, and teacher, and, from 1955 until her death in 2006, a beloved member of St. Mark's. The symposium begins at 1:00 and will conclude with a Commemorative Eucharist at 5:15. The event is free but you can register here: www.vts.edu/walkercommemoration

23. Seeking a Volunteer to Help Produce the Daily [9/13]

We are looking for a computer-savvy volunteer to help produce "The Daily" which is sent to member subscribers on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday.

While in the midst of the shut-down, our rector and church leaders committed to sending Daily messages. During my time as a Vestry Member, I volunteered to help in the church office, and was given this gift assignment. It is something I enjoy - gathering artwork and nature photos, matching these to a prayer or inspiring reflection, and creating a listing of the St. Mark's events. The Daily no longer comes out every day, so the time required is about 1 and 1/2 hour, or so, depending on the search process. The work is possible to complete remotely. Let me know if you are interested. Contact: Jan Lipscomb [aa\[at\]stmarks.net](mailto:aa@stmarks.net)

24. Saints & Sinners Dance! Volunteers Needed [9/6]

Help make our Saints and Sinners Dance on **Saturday, October 24, 2026** a great night! We're looking for volunteers to assist with: **Advance Planning:** Coordinate decor, music/AV, or food & drinks. **Day-of Support:** Help with hall setup, table arrangements, or evening activities. Any amount of time helps! To get involved or learn more, email Aaryn at [aarynkopp\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:aarynkopp@gmail.com)

25. Update from Deborah Cunningham [9/20]

I'm thrilled to report that my recent surgery went incredibly smoothly! It's a relief to have that big hurdle behind me. Now, I'm embarking on the next phase of this adventure: physical

therapy. It's going to be a bit of a marathon, but I'm feeling motivated and ready to put in the work to get back to my usual self.

On a more heartfelt note, I've been absolutely touched by the outpouring of love and support from all of you. Seriously, every email, message, and especially the thoughtful gifts have truly brightened my spirits and made this initial recovery period so much easier. Your kindness means the world to me and I can't thank you enough.

I'll be focusing on my recovery over the next little while, but please know I'm really looking forward to reconnecting with everyone and being back in the thick of things as soon as I'm cleared and feeling up to it. Warmly, Deborah [dcwaterlover\[at\]yahoo.com](mailto:dcwaterlover[at]yahoo.com)

26. Supporting Deborah's Recovery [9/20]

St. Mark's beloved Nursery lead, Deborah, is recovering from recent knee surgery. To support her during her recovery, you can contribute in a few easy ways: **Direct Gift Cards:** Send e-gift cards for food or groceries directly to her email at [dcwaterlover\[at\]yahoo.com](mailto:dcwaterlover[at]yahoo.com). **Group Gift Pool:** Venmo any amount to @lc6751, and funds will be pooled into gift cards to send to her. **Get Well Notes:** Send direct email notes or scanned handwritten cards from kids to [dcwaterlover\[at\]yahoo.com](mailto:dcwaterlover[at]yahoo.com). Please keep Deborah in your thoughts as she heals!

27. Newcomer Gatherings [9/16*]

Newcomer gatherings are an opportunity for new and established members to share a meal, meet people whose paths don't often cross, and discuss what makes this community unique. If you are interested in attending one of these events, please sign up here: <https://shorturl.at/dZYKr>. **The next one is October 25th.** Email [terripoxonpearson\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:terripoxonpearson[at]gmail.com) with any questions.

(* next to the date denotes that this announcement has been updated)

Do you have an announcement for St. Mark's?

Submit announcements of 150 words or less to [bulletin\[at\]stmarks.net](mailto:bulletin[at]stmarks.net) by 5 pm Tuesday for inclusion that Friday. They run for three weeks unless we hear from you. Each must include a parishioner's name and email. If using a QR code, also provide the underlying link.

To include your event: email [parishadmin\[at\]stmarks.net](mailto:parishadmin[at]stmarks.net) for the calendar, [website\[at\]stmarks.net](mailto:website[at]stmarks.net) for the website, or complete the form (shorturl.at/vaXg7) by Tuesday night for a spoken announcement.