



D E C E M B E R 2 0 1 9

The Call



May the words of our mouths and the mediations of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight oh Lord our strength and our redeemer.

Going to God with the Shepherds

*If you want to go to God, go without
Your certainties. Take your graces. Leave
your certainties behind. If you go looking
for a Triangle inside a Trefoil inside
A Conundrum, you'll miss the greatest sight
of all, the Holy Trinity playing
children's games on the lawns of heaven. If
you only look for the Virgin of the Window,
you'll walk right past Our Lady, laughing and telling
stories with a group of friends.*

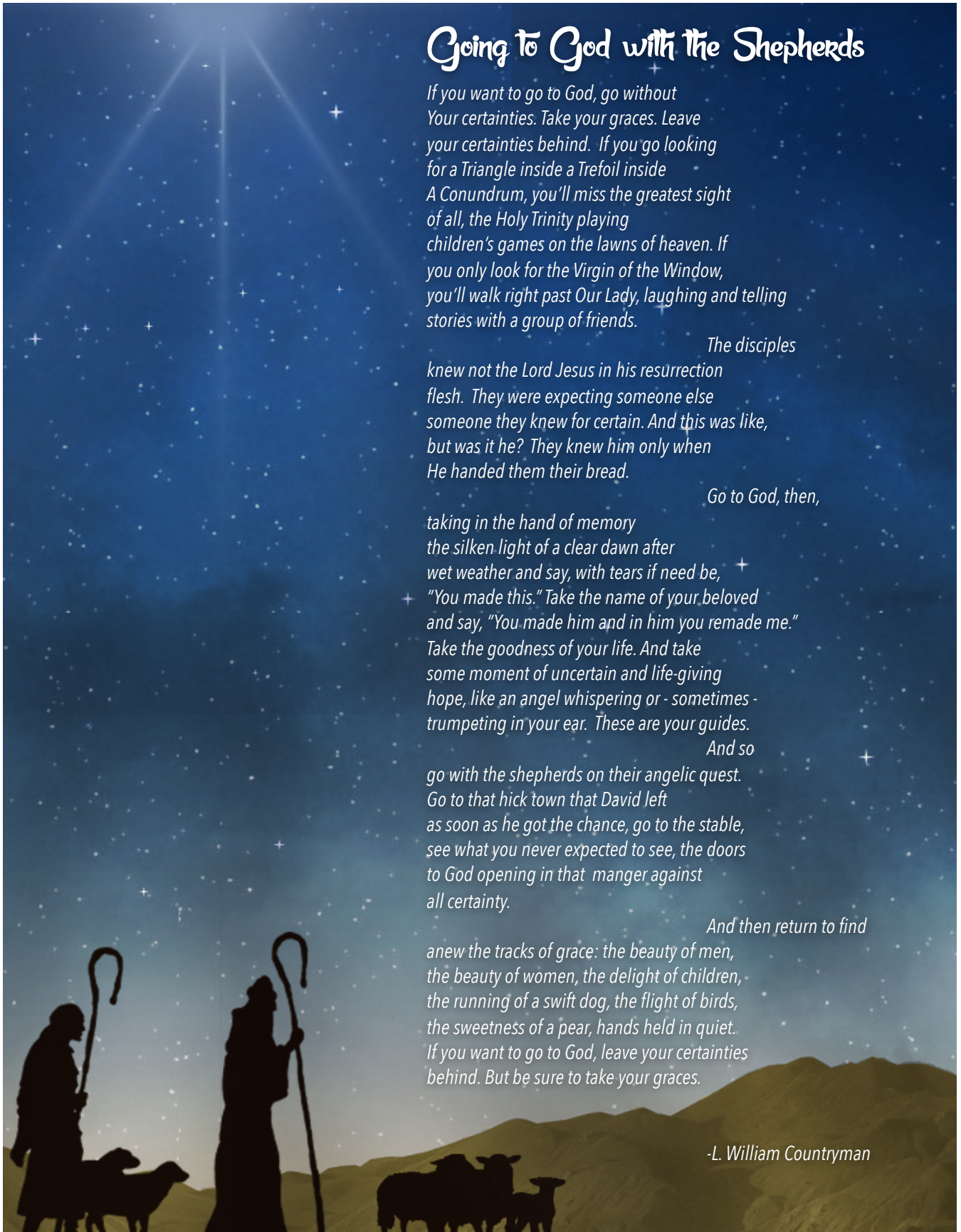
*The disciples
knew not the Lord Jesus in his resurrection
flesh. They were expecting someone else
someone they knew for certain. And this was like,
but was it he? They knew him only when
He handed them their bread.*

*Go to God, then,
taking in the hand of memory
the silken light of a clear dawn after
wet weather and say, with tears if need be,
"You made this." Take the name of your beloved
and say, "You made him and in him you remade me."
Take the goodness of your life. And take
some moment of uncertain and life-giving
hope, like an angel whispering or - sometimes -
trumpeting in your ear. These are your guides.*

*And so
go with the shepherds on their angelic quest.
Go to that hick town that David left
as soon as he got the chance, go to the stable,
see what you never expected to see, the doors
to God opening in that manger against
all certainty.*

*And then return to find
anew the tracks of grace: the beauty of men,
the beauty of women, the delight of children,
the running of a swift dog, the flight of birds,
the sweetness of a pear, hands held in quiet.
If you want to go to God, leave your certainties
behind. But be sure to take your graces.*

-L. William Countryman



The Coming of Jesus



First Sunday of Advent	Light the Candle of Hope	12/1	8:30 & 11:00
Second Sunday of Advent	Light the Candle of Peace	12/8	8:30 & 11:00
Third Sunday of Advent	Light the Candle of Joy!	12/15	8:30 & 11:00
Blue Christmas	Prayers for Comfort	12/19	7:00pm
Fourth Sunday in Advent	Light the Candle of Love	12/22	8:30 & 11:00
Christmas Eve	Sunset Eucharist	12/24	4:00pm
Christmas Eve	Silent Night Eucharist	12/24	10:30pm
Christmas Day	The Nativity Eucharist	12/25	9:30am
First Sunday of Christmas	The Word	12/29	8:30 & 11:00
Feast of Epiphany	Welcome the Three Kings Burn the Greens	1/6	7:00pm



Blue Christmas

A service of Remembrance and Hope

For some, this season of commercials and invitations to holiday celebrations with presents, friends, family and abundance does not bring peace or joy. Instead, it serves as a reminder of a loss or an insecurity or anxiety about dreams deferred or defeated. For some, this will be the first Christmas without a parent or spouse. It will be another year without finding someone to love. It will be another year marked by poor health, another year of a lousy job. The year ends and the hope of a better situation diminishes. In

this time, even surrounded by loving community, we can feel lonely and the pressure to smile and feel otherwise is oppressive.

We can help ourselves and others in similar situations by making space to acknowledge our sadness and fears, and to draw solace from knowing we are not alone. For these reasons, St. Mark's offers a service on **Thursday, December 19th at 7:00** where we will share comforting prayers and scripture and quiet music. You may light a candle for your heart's desire. May the tranquility of the church serve as a sanctuary for you and all that you are carrying within your heart. Come be reminded that even though we are hurting, God loves us and carries us gently in His arms.

Give the gift of companionship to a friend or loved one in need. Invite them and come with them to a time of peace and healing. Be that good neighbor in the season of light.

Welcome the Newly Baptized

Cora Jade Stein
(pictured here)

with sister Rowan
and parents
Rick and Bridget





Epiphany



In the West, Christians began celebrating the Epiphany in the 4th century, associating it with the visit of the Magi (the three kings) to Bethlehem. According to the Gospel of Matthew, the three wise men, named Melchior, Caspar and Balthazar, followed the star of Bethlehem across the desert to meet the baby Jesus. There they offered gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Later tradition suggests that the three Kings represented 33 Europe, Arabia and Africa respectively. The gifts they brought symbolized the importance of Jesus' birth, the gold referencing his royal standing; frankincense his divine birth; and myrrh his mortality.

The word 'Epiphany' comes from Greek and means 'manifestation'. It celebrates 'the revelation of God -in his Son- as human -in the person of Jesus Christ'. The Feast of Epiphany observed on January 6th, the day following the 12th and final day of the Christmas season reminds us that Christ came to model right relationship with God, with one another and to redeem what human brokenness lays waste to in this world. The Epiphany event and the weeks following to Ash Wednesday remind us Jesus Christ is a gift for the whole world, all people, through all ages. It is a feast with specifically unifying powers.

We invite you and friends to our 2019 Epiphany Feast, **Monday, January 6th at 7:00**. Like the Kings' visit, the service will be a short time of prayers and reflection. We will bless the **wise men brought from our families' personal nativity sets**. These figures will remain in the church through the season reminding us that at his birth, Christ had a message for the world beyond geography and time.

Following the service, Christmas greens from the church and our homes will blaze and **Three King Cookies** will be enjoyed.

Formation Info.

WHO
AM I?
WHO
ARE
WE?



ADVENT

What does this season in the Church Year represent? What does the word actually mean?

advent [ad-vent] noun

a coming into place, view, or being; arrival:

the advent of the holiday season. (usually initial capital letter) the coming of Christ into the world. (initial capital letter) the period beginning four Sundays before Christmas, observed in commemoration of the coming of Christ into the world.

As we enter into a new church year and the season of Advent we talk and ponder deeply about what it means for Christ to come into the world. We wonder what it was like to wait with anticipation and excitement on the coming Messiah. We contemplate the arrival of the Christ and how his life forever changed how people think of themselves both then and now.

As you know, our youth have been contemplating who they think God is calling them to be personally through many different experiences. As we begin Advent the youth will begin to explore the question of "who are we?" This is the next step in trying to understand who God has created us to be. Who are we as a group, a church, a Christian people. Who are we as Episcopalians, as friends, as the hands and feet of God? Many questions will be asked and more will be meditated on as we look to who the world says this generation is now and who it will become. We will decide what needs to be changed. We will consider what we agree with and what we might want to challenge. Advent for the youth of St. Mark's will be a time of reflecting on who we are called to be? How will you reflect on your calling this Advent season?

THIS YEAR DURING ADVENT THERE WILL MANY ADVENTURES IN ADVENT FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH. AS YOU CALENDARS BEGIN TO FILL UP, WE HOPE YOU WILL FIND TIME AND SPACE TO JOIN US WHEN YOU CAN.

Children & Youth Events During Advent

DEC. 1 - AUTO BELL TICKETS SALE (YOUTH FUNDRAISER)

DEC. 7 - CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY - MOVIE, CRAFT, & SNACKS @ ST. MARK'S

DEC. 14 - YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY PIZZA & ICE SKATING!

DEC. 24 - THE TRADITION OF LIGHTING THE WAY WITH LUMINARIES

DEC. 24 - 4PM - FAMILY CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

10:30PM - SILENT NIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

DEC. 25 - 9:30AM - CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE



D E C E M B E R 2 0 1 9

Thanks to ALL who supported the Escuelita Dinner & Silent Auction in many ways.
We had a record breaking night with attendees and donations.





Trees and Wreaths
will be available for pick
up
on Sunday
December 1st



Dec.
1

Auto Bell Tickets will go on sale Dec. 1st. These make great gifts for young drivers or stocking stuffers. The gift cards are worth \$20 for any service at Auto Bell. All money goes to youth programming & remember its cheaper to buy from us than from Auto Bell!



ANGEL TREE

The Angel Tree is up &
in Founders Hall from
December 1st through December 31st



Pick an Angel from the Tree
and provide the \$ amount listed.
or donate whatever amount you feel compelled to give.

Take an envelope and indicate the amount of your donation. Place your donation in the wooden church at the base of the tree.

Enrich a child's summer by making a donation for our Campership Fund.
Last year several Ranson Scholars were able to attend YMCA Day Camp for an incredible summer experience that they would not have had were it not for the generous people at St. Mark's.
If you remember the excitement of going to camp or if your child has had such an experience, please consider making this happen for a child who has never experienced this feeling.

***Checks can be made to St. Mark's (note campership in the memo line)**

All funds appreciated. To fund a full week of camp is
\$170



Birthdays

Linda Amidei - 12/5
 Peter Macon - 12/5
 Cora Stein – 12/5
 Ruth Blackwelder - 12/6
 Jackson Rhinehardt - 12/6
 Natalie Engel -12/7
 Jackie McWhorter - 12/9
 Pryor Rhinehardt - 12/9
 Debbie Leisey – 12/10
 Matt Addington - 12/12
 Nancy Harding - 12/13
 Robert Gambill - 12/14
 Patrick Wiley – 12/14
 Audrey Boyle - 12/15
 Bridget Vanevenhoven – 12/16
 Nancy Whitehead - 12/18
 Elizer Griffiths - 12/23
 Nancy Tatom – 12/23
 Lesli Kathman - 12/24
 Homer Sanford – 12/24
 Jan Sanford - 12/24
 Andrew James - 12/26
 Trulyn Rhinehardt - 12/26
 John Southwell – 12/27
 Sandi Sumas - 12/28
 Eric Brown - 12/29
 Vivian Mach – 12/30

Anniversaries

David & Laura Fahey - 12/17
 TJ & Johanna Tatlow – 12/29

Prayers for continued healing:

Willard & Barb Osburn
 Saunders & Billy Black Martha Ann Springer
 Bob Egan Phyllis Barnwell
 Mike Wilson Marlene Bandis
 Elena Michel and her family
 Richard & Mary Beth Masline
 Bob Chandler

New Members:

**Ebenezer Griffiths & Tenneh Roberts
 with children,
 Momo Fully, Elizer Griffiths,
 Benezer Griffiths**

Joanne Whelan

Panera Bread Pick-Up

**Alan & Lesli Kathman -12/6
 Jeff & Janine Marek – 12/13
 Don & Debbie Siegel – 12/20
 Scott Hundertmark – 12/27**



"Thirstday", Thursday

(A testosterone friendly answer to WINE.)

**Will break for the month of December
We will resume our gathering in January.**

Happy Holidays Everyone

See you on Thursday January 9th



WINE

Women in Need of Entertainment

December 16th @ 6:30pm
at the home of

Tracy Tinsley
11737 Trails End Lane
Huntersville NC

Please bring a wrapped ornament for our ornament exchange. If you have never participated in this it is a ton of fun.

If you have been on the fence about attending WINE the December WINE is definitely worth the trip.

ALSO

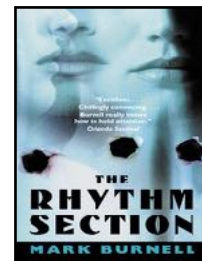
Bring a a bottle of WINE or a dish to share.
If you don't have time for either, just bring yourself.

Please contact Allison Rhinehardt allibrett@gmail.com or
Dawn Middleton dawnmittleton@bellsouth.net
with any questions

St. Mark's Muses Book Club

We will meet on
Thursday December 19th
at 10am at St. Mark's

We will read.
Rythm Section
by: Mark Burnell



If you would like a copy of the book or need additional information please contact

Genny Hinkle at gnvvhinkle@yahoo.com

or

call 704 595 7957



Come to the
Annual Meeting 12/8 at
9:30

Meet the Vestry Candidates,
Enjoy Brunch, Discussion & Fellowship

On the following pages you will meet 6 vestry candidates for the 2020-2022 term.

The candidates for Vestry were asked to submit a bio & respond to the following:

In my tenure on the St. Mark's Vestry, I think the Holy Spirit is leading me to engage this issue or ministry for the health of the body.

VESTRY CANDIDATES IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER

Candice Sullivan



Growing up in the Midwest, our family activities centered around our church. I went to nursing school and joined the military believing I could be part of something much larger than myself. I met my husband, Milton, while we were serving in Vietnam. As a military family, we had the opportunity to worship in many other countries and found our Episcopal family wherever we were stationed. We have two children, Kathleen and Joseph, and spent most of our time in Northern Virginia where I had a long career as a nurse and completed my PhD in Nursing Education.

I joined St Marks in 2015 when my husband and I retired to North Carolina. Reverend Sarah inspired me to work with children at Ranson IB Middle School. I've always believed that children are our future where we should be putting our time and energy. I love being part of the outreach ministry, serve on the Finance Committee,

and believe the Holy Spirit is leading me to engage in this ministry for the ongoing wellbeing of St Marks. I believe the best decisions are made through consensus building and that listening is the greatest skill you can develop. I see the opportunity to serve as a member of the Vestry as a call to use my talents toward meaningful work through Christ.

Rick Stein



My name is Rick Stein and I have been attending St. Marks for 6 years now. My wife, Bridget, and I will be teaching the older kids in Sunday School later this year and we couldn't be more excited about it. This is definitely out of my realm of comfort as my childhood was not strongly embedded with faith. Each year as my time with St. Marks grows, so does my faith and sense of community and I couldn't be more thankful for finding this church and the people that make it great. It has been everything we were looking for that we left behind in Michigan and even though it took us a few years to find it, we know that this is our home. When asked if I would be interested in applying for the vestry, I was caught off guard and had not realized to the extent how much I really cared about this community and what it means to me. When I had agreed to teach Sunday School I had been contemplating how else I could be involved in the church to be more apart of the community because I had missed out on so much in the past years due to my career. Then I was given this opportunity and I believe this was my calling of giving back to this community that has given so much to my family and me

Mandy Self-Sparrow



I have been attending St. Mark's Episcopal Church since 1997. I have a wonderful husband, a 14 year old daughter, a 13 year old step-daughter and three rescue dogs! I work at Huntersville Oaks Rehab Center as an Occupational Therapy Assistant. I love helping others and seeing the best in people. During my time at St. Mark's, I have been active in many different groups most recently the Barn Swallows. I look forward to serving the church!

In my tenure on the St. Mark's Vestry I hope the Holy Spirit will lead me to engage with a marginalized community to show grace, understanding and hope. I hope to learn from this community, and not only make myself more aware, but share with my church family. Together, we can become a stronger and more accepting community.



Michael Havens

I grew up in New Jersey and studied at Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, from which I received a BE in Computer Engineering in 2005. I moved to Charlotte soon after for work, which is when I met my wife, Elizabeth. I was raised Catholic, and she was raised Southern Baptist. So, when we were looking for a church we could attend together, we found ourselves drawn to the Episcopal Church. We learned that there are so many couples like us that they've coined the term "Captists" for the phenomenon. We've been married since 2011.

A change of work brought us back North for a few years, but we've been back in the Charlotte area for almost four years now, and we've been attending St. Mark's almost as long. Rev. Sarah's sermons and the friendliness of the congregation made our decision to join an easy one.

While in college, I ran the Catholic Campus Ministry organization on campus, and I am passionate about ministry and mentoring, especially with young adults and young professionals. I feel the Holy Spirit is calling me to help find creative ways to further engage young families and other individuals of this sometimes hard-to-reach age group with regards to membership as well as fellowship. I am also interested in the new "Flyin' Lion" ministry and am excited to help in any other ways the Spirit directs me.



Scott Hundertmark

I have been a member at St. Mark's about 8 years and I attend the 8:30 service. Growing up I was an acolyte at the Episcopal Church I went too. At St Marks I am on the Parish Life committee as well as an usher. I have gone on all 3 of the Costa Rica mission trips the church has been involved with as well as the Farm Workers mission trips. I have also accompanied the youth on a mission trip to Asheville. From everything I have been involved with over the years with the church, I believe I could bring some fresh ideas that would continue to have our church grow and stay strong.

I would want to serve on the vestry to help continue the great things the church already does. It would also give me the chance to understand how the church works.

Alan Kathman



Our family joined St. Mark's in 2001, seeking a church community where our whole family could grow. We usually attend the 8:30 Service; left side, near the front. Our children were raised in this faith community and, as they enter adulthood, I see how blessed we have been here. In our sons' everyday actions, I see reflections of many sermons, Sunday school lessons and deep youth discussion. In these moments I am immensely grateful.

Shortly after joining in 2001, the following passage from Eucharistic Prayer C got rather stuck in my head:

Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this Table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only, and not for renewal. Let the grace of this Holy Communion make us one body, one spirit in Christ, that we may worthily serve the world in his name.

Up to that point in my life, Church had always meant sanctuary and rest. To think of Church as a well-spring of strength and renewal for greater service was a new perspective for me. In that spirit, I have approached different roles and tasks over the intervening years and would now like to serve on Saint Mark's Vestry.

I feel the Holy Spirit is leading me to work on our relationship with the community around us. We have made great strides through our work with Ranson Middle School and La Escuelita San Marcos, as well as Loaves and Fishes, Tutoring, Scouting, AA and NA. Now, we are about to break ground on a new parish building which will enable deeper ties with these organizations and will create avenues for different service in our community as well. Some aspects of servicing the loan rely on our ability to put the new building to use for meetings and receptions. As our identity in the Long Creek/Huntersville area becomes associated with both our community service and gracious facilities, we will be able to pay off the loan promptly and keep our minds on God's plans for us. It will take thought and work to realize the full vision that the Legacy committee has laid out with the new facilities. It is a vision I feel called to make a reality.

2019 Stewardship Update

	2019 Budget	October YTD Actual
Current Pledged Income	\$343,410	\$261,528
All other anticipated income		
Non-Pledge Offerings	\$20,000	\$21,094
Other Income (use of space by outside groups)	\$17,000	\$ 11,235
Sales Tax Refunds	\$ 5,000	\$ 4,145
Daisy Shipp McCoy Foundation Trust Income	<u>\$33,360</u>	<u>\$28,280</u>
Total Budgeted Operating Income	\$418,770	\$350,719
2018 Budgeted Expenses Approved by Vestry		
Staff	\$264,950	\$219,901
Diocesan Support	\$40,512	\$ 33,760
Campus Maintenance & Utilities	\$55,447	\$ 36,551
Office Administration & Other	\$27,450	\$ 23,206
Youth & Christian Formation	\$12,190	\$ 6,225
Outreach & Escuelita Support	\$14,400	\$ 11,103
Parish Life, Pastoral Care, Stewardship & Parish Retreat	\$ 7,100	\$ 3,123
Worship & Music	\$ 2,765	\$ 1,925
%4 pledges unfulfilled based on historical average	<u>\$13,736</u>	
Total 2018 Budgeted Expenses	\$438,550	\$335,795
Current Excess/ Deficit of receipts over disbursements	\$19,780	\$14,924

***Year to Date Pledge Fulfillment 83%**

2020 Pledge update 82 families for a total of \$309,860.00

D E C E M B E R 2 0 1 9



St. Mark's Episcopal Church
8600 Mt. Holly Huntersville Rd.
Huntersville, NC 28078
www.stmarksnc.com