

ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH & SCHOOL

STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2022



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You Will Be My Witnesses

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A message from the rector

Dear Friends:

In his final words to the disciples before ascending into heaven, Jesus tells them, “You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth. (Acts 1:8).”

As disciples of Christ today, we take seriously this mandate from Jesus “to be my witnesses.” Our job is to witness to the love we know in Jesus through words and acts, both individually and collectively. Witnesses tell others of what they know to be true and they act in accordance with that truth.

This theme will guide our vibrant community of faith into the next five years of our life together. For more than a year, parishioners have participated in listening sessions and completed surveys while vestry has studied responses while praying and working toward the creation of this strategic plan. We reaffirmed our mission and congregational values while creatively and faithfully mapping out a way for us to witness to the love Jesus came to share with all the world.

As St. Mark’s lives out its mission, the leadership will continually refer to the strategic plan. *You Will Be My Witnesses* ensures that we are working together toward a common goal. It also helps us to stretch our imaginations while respecting our limitations. St. Mark’s cannot be all things for all people but we can be a powerful witness to the Gospel in Palm Beach Gardens, Palm Beach County and to the ends of the earth.

I hope you will take a few minutes to review *You Will Be My Witnesses* and your place in helping St. Mark’s shine as a beacon of faith, hope and light.

See you Sunday!

A handwritten signature consisting of the letters "Jim" followed by a small plus sign (+).

Mission Statement

The purpose of St Mark's is to glorify God, nurture and serve the community, and share in the life of the risen Christ.

Congregational Core Values

- *Proclaim our belief in God, the Father almighty. Jesus Christ, the Son of God. And in God, the Holy Spirit.*
- *Continue in the apostle's teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers.*
- *Persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever we fall into sin, we will repent and return to the Lord.*
- *Proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ, seeking and serving Christ in all persons, loving our neighbors as ourselves.*
- *Strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.*

Goal 1: Be a Leader

Strategies

- Encourage entrepreneurial spirit.
- Demonstrate our commitment to growing our community partnerships.
- Listen to the community and respond to its needs.
- Be a community of faith that others can trust and count on.
- Communicate effectively.

Initiatives

- Initiative 1: Investigate the need for an Episcopal retirement community in northern Palm Beach County.
- Initiative 2: Do what we say we are going to do!
- Initiative 3: Develop a partnership of ministry and worship with New Bethel Missionary Baptist Church in West Palm Beach and/or with other congregations in differing areas of northern Palm Beach County.
- Initiative 4: Require volunteer succession plans.
- Initiative 5: Evaluate appropriate staffing for growth, communication and ministry leadership initiatives.
- Initiative 6: Fund appropriate staffing for growth, communication and ministry initiatives.
- Initiative 7: Complete the rehab of transitional house in West Palm Beach.
- Initiative 8: Support Hearts of Palm through funding, volunteers, ideas and staff.
- Initiative 9: Be open to new ministry ideas.
- Initiative 10: Develop and train new leaders for ministries and committees.
- Initiative 11: Identify parishioners who volunteer in other ministries that are outside the scope of St. Mark's and pray for them.
- Initiative 12: Continue to develop social media communications.
- Initiative 13: Take a pilgrimage to Coventry Cathedral through Cross of Nails.
- Initiative 14: Initiate partnerships with existing non-profits in Palm Beach County that complement ministries at St. Mark's.
- Initiative 15: Offer more services for seniors, including luncheons, studies, resources on aging, estate planning and health care.
- Initiative 16: Create, develop and implement "Arts at St. Mark's" that promotes Coleman Hall and strengthens relationships with St. Mark's School.
- Initiative 17: Build program that promotes the agenda for being a Cross of Nails community.
- Initiative 18: Strengthen ties with the local police and fire department.
- Initiative 19: Create events that position St. Mark's as a leader around national and world issues: interfaith challenges, climate change, educational advancements, aging, values, theological distinctions within the Christian faith, racial healing, etc.
- Initiative 20: Convene groups to identify community needs and determine how St. Mark's is involved.
- Initiative 21: Maximize building usage that complements our ministry goals.
- Initiative 22: Continue to build a culture of safety for anyone who comes onto the campus through regular reviews, integration with school, safe-church child care, and safety measures through increased security.
- Initiative 23: Lead the conversation around racial healing and commit to learning more and talking more about current challenges facing Western cultures.
- Initiative 24: Ensure that technology facilitates better communication.
- Initiative 25: Continue to partner with St. George's Church and Community Center in mission, outreach, worship and fellowship.

Goal 2: Deepen Faith

Strategies

- Increase opportunities for fellowship.
- Encourage personal responsibility for faith development.
- Optimize the worship experience for a broad range of seekers.
- Foster a safe environment for supportive personal relationships.

Initiatives

- Initiative 1: Offer additional adult formation opportunities at St. Mark's.
- Initiative 2: Offer additional adult formation opportunities on-line for personal study at home.
- Initiative 3: Increase fellowship opportunities.
- Initiative 4: Evaluate appropriate staffing for formation initiatives.
- Initiative 5: Fund appropriate staffing for formation initiatives.
- Initiative 6: Implement *Renewal Works* offered by Forward Movement.
- Initiative 7: Encourage personal responsibility for faith development.
- Initiative 8: Build a stronger, more comprehensive music ministry.
- Initiative 9: Form a children's choir.
- Initiative 10: Research, evaluate and possibly implement alternative weekend worship services.
- Initiative 11: Encourage scriptural learning in relation to mission and service efforts.
- Initiative 12: Support youth group leaders and fund youth-group activities and events.
- Initiative 13: Explore opportunities for worship with other churches and denominations.
- Initiative 14: Build on St. Mark's Cares ministry.
- Initiative 15: Increase participation in Breaking-Bread ministry.
- Initiative 16: Increase opportunities for children's talents and gifts to be used in church, school and personal lives.
- Initiative 17: Continually evaluate existing programs for relevance, effectiveness and growth opportunities.
- Initiative 18: Invite outside guests and preachers who promote the spiritual life.
- Initiative 19: Provide a forum for parishioners to share how their Christian values, moral and ethics shape their professional lives.
- Initiative 20: Continue to invite school families into the life of the parish through church ministries, worship services and events.
- Initiative 21: Explore ways to integrate multi-generations.
- Initiative 22: Explore a regular Sunday Forum or Bible study.
- Initiative 23: Encourage growth and excellence in all existing and future programs.
- Initiative 24: Continue St. Mark's involvement in the Mama Ada Foundation and further mission work in Haiti, Costa Rica, Kenya and elsewhere God calls.
- Initiative 25: Find ways to include youth in worship leadership roles in addition to maintaining existing acolyte ministry.
- Initiative 26: Provide resources for families while addressing all ages.
- Initiative 27: Support labyrinth ministry and other prayer ministries through the Peace Chapel at St. Mark's.
- Initiative 28: Recommit to Daughters of the King and encourage their leadership in deepening the prayer life of the parishioners.

Goal 3: Thrive

Strategies

- Encourage a comprehensive approach to planned giving.
- Engage parishioners in the practice of stewardship.
- Instill in all members the desire to take responsibility and ownership for the accomplishments of our shared visions.
- Embrace change.

Initiatives

- Initiative 1: Communicate ways to participate in planned giving.
- Initiative 2: Develop an APP for giving to St. Mark's and for general communications.
- Initiative 3: Hire a manager for retail operations at St. Mark's (Lion's Den, Thrift Shop, On-Line Store).
- Initiative 4: Challenge the congregation to achieve 75 percent pledge participation.
- Initiative 5: Lower debt left from We Will! Build in Faith campaign.
- Initiative 6: Support Cornerstone Scholars at St. Mark's School.
- Initiative 7: Fully fund implementation of initiatives by acquiring appropriate staffing and financing of that staff as recommended by existing staff of church and school.
- Initiative 8: Promote and encourage "green" sustainability projects such as technology and sound ecological and environmental policies.
- Initiative 9: Provide support to staff for continuing education and development that is necessary to fulfill initiatives, including spiritual retreats, opportunities for growth & renewal and professional development.
- Initiative 10: Partner with local colleges and universities to develop IT projects.
- Initiative 11: Encourage participation in church and school activities by all adults.
- Initiative 12: Build relationships with vendors and sponsors that align with St. Mark's missions and ministry and support our life together.
- Initiative 13: Build endowment.
- Initiative 14: Host a family movie night.
- Initiative 15: Integrate school and church strategic plans.
- Initiative 16: Develop technology that makes giving to St. Mark's easier.
- Initiative 17: Increase profits from Lion's Den and Thrift Shop.
- Initiative 18: Integrate new members into life of parish.