

MARK TIMES

News & Notes for April 19, 2026

THE WEEK AHEAD

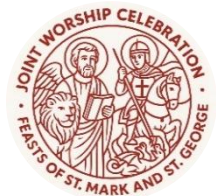
Monday, April 20:	2:30PM	Fiber Arts at Westfield Manor
Thursday, April 23:	4:15PM	Chancel choir rehearsal
	6:00PM	Bell choir rehearsal
	6:00PM	Yoga – Parish Hall

Today's Adult Forum: *The Suppression of Mary Magdalene in the Gospel of John*

Did ancient scribes *intentionally* erase evidence of Mary Magdalene's true influence in the life and story of Jesus as told in the Gospel of John? It could be a conspiracy straight out of *The DaVinci Code*, and using information from a lecture he heard at the 2024 Bible and Archaeology Fest, Pastor Brian brings the evidence for you to consider in the conclusion of this 2-part series this morning!

Joint Service April 26 at 10AM

You won't want to miss our annual joint service to celebrate the feast days of St. Mark (4/25) and St. George (4/23) **NEXT Sunday, April 26 at 10:00AM**. St. George's hosts the service, and Pastor Brian will preach. A **luncheon** for everyone with a free will offering follows the service!



♪ Music Notes ♪

There will be an opening for **one new bell player** in the fall. If you can read music even a little and would like to play bells, see director Carol Kugler.

It would also be wonderful to have new singers join the Chancel Choir. No requirements other than being able to carry a tune and a love for singing!

On another note, many thanks and much appreciation to all members of both choirs for sharing their time and talent all season long. Kudos!

St. Mark Logo Wear – New Items Available!

Now available at <https://www.richsstitchesemb.com/store.php> through May 3. Order sheets are also in the Parish Hall for those who prefer not to order online. Prices on the order sheets include taxes, payment is due when the order is placed. Payment may be given to Sherri Foppe or Ann Martens. Sherri Foppe will pick up completed orders and bring them to church through May 10.

Several styles and colors available:

Crew Neck Sweatshirt with embroidered logo on the shoulder S-XL \$25 2XL-3XL \$28

Hoodie with embroidered logo on the shoulder S-XL \$37 2XL-3XL \$40

Polo Shirt with embroidered logo on the shoulder. \$23 S-XL 2XL-3XL \$26

Short Sleeved T-shirt with images on front and back S-XL \$20 2XL-3XL \$23

Short Sleeved T-shirt with *front image only* S-XL \$18 2XL-3XL \$21

Long Sleeved T-shirt with images on front and back S-XL \$23 2XL-3XL \$26

Long Sleeved T-shirt with *front image only* S-XL \$20 2XL-3XL \$23

St. Mark Offerings for 4/12: General Fund: **\$3,304**; Coffee Fund: \$47

A Word to Easter from Bishop Busboom

“So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added” (Acts 2:41).

“The church is emerging as a community wherein lives are connecting with and being transformed by a boundless God who was incarnate in Jesus and in the witness of those who welcomed the Spirit.” When I first read these words from United Methodist Pastor Timothy Hare, I was struck by what an appropriate description Hare gives of our 21st-century Christian church — a church that is “emerging,” a church that is “connecting with and being transformed,” a church rooted in “a boundless God who was incarnate in Jesus and in the witness of those who welcomed the Spirit.” Sound familiar?



And yet, even more striking to me is that with these words Pastor Hare is not seeking to describe the church of today. Instead, Pastor Hare writes these words as a description of the church that came into being on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2, just fifty days after Jesus’ rising from the grave on Easter Sunday. Remarkable, isn’t it? Two thousand years later and the Christian church is still exactly what the Spirit at Pentecost created us to be — a church that is emerging!

Surely the Christian community that was emerging just weeks after Jesus’ death and resurrection must have felt like their existence was fragile and precarious. After all, Jesus, the one who had been the center of their community, was no longer physically with them the way he once had been. Their numbers were small. They had very few resources, having left everything to follow Jesus. They were living under the control of the oppressive Roman empire. How long would it be before their small community disappeared altogether? Surely, their days were numbered.

But then ... something happens! God intervenes! Having received the promised Holy Spirit, Peter begins to preach the good news of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. Moved by the Spirit, the crowd asks, “What should we do?” to which Peter responds, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:37-38). And that day three thousand persons were baptized and added to the community! What happens that day in the early church is not the result of Peter or of the crowd or of those who were baptized. What happens is solely the work of the Holy Spirit through the proclamation of the gospel!

Yes, we are an Easter church! However, we are also a Pentecost church! The Spirit is just as active and alive in the church today as it was on that first Pentecost. As I travel around our synod week after week, I see it. I see new Christians being baptized, both infants and adults. I see communities of disciples feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger, clothing families in need. I see relationships being formed and leaders being called into ministry. And I hear stories — stories of lives being transformed, stories of students on our college campuses being welcomed into church for the very first time, stories of churches building tee ball fields on their church lawns and installing basketball hoops in their parking lots, stories of disciples publicly living out their faith in increasingly bold and courageous ways.

As we continue to bask in the joy of Easter, what might the Spirit be bringing to new life in the midst of our seemingly fragile, precarious, struggling communities of disciples? What transformation might the Spirit be working in peoples’ lives as the gospel is preached and the sacraments are shared? By the power of the Spirit, how is the church of today “emerging as a community wherein lives are connecting with and being transformed by a boundless God who was incarnate in Jesus and in the witness of those who welcomed the Spirit?

I am convinced more than ever that the Christian church is not dying. The church is emerging, just as it always has and just as it always will, by the power of the Spirit!

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Bishop Greg