

**St Mark's is a small, family style church in downtown Starke; the majority of parishioners have worshipped here for more than 20 years. We are a welcoming and friendly congregation, with no 'reserved' pews; in fact, we're more likely to greet a newcomer and ask them to come sit with our family!**

The roots of our congregation date back to 1863, and the present building was originally built in 1880 in the town of Fairbanks. When that church disbanded the building sat empty until purchased by the Starke congregation – disassembled and numbered board by board, shipped by rail to Starke – and reassembled! The cornerstone states “St Marks 1900” and it was completed and consecrated in 1902. Stained glass windows were added in the 30' & 40's, and many of the appointments date back to the early 1900's.

A parish house was built in 1942, and opened as a Church Service Center for the soldiers at nearby Camp Blanding as a joint operation with the Presbyterians, providing a 'home away from home' throughout the war.

More recent additions include classrooms, conference space and an office. Between the conference room and the Parish Hall, various groups such as AA, our Men's club, the ECW and others make use of the space regularly.

## Contact Us

Clay Oneal, Sr Warden (352)222-2074 [onealcc@live.com](mailto:onealcc@live.com)

212 N Church St, Starke, FL 32091

Phone: (904)964-6126

Email: [StMarks03@outlook.com](mailto:StMarks03@outlook.com)

Web-site: [StMarksStarke.org](http://StMarksStarke.org)



# Parish Profile

## February 2021



**ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
**Starke, Florida**

# Table of Contents

Overview of our church.....	<b>1</b>
History of Diocese of Florida and St. Mark's.....	<b>2</b>
Parish Survey findings .....	<b>3</b>
COVID changes in our parish .....	<b>4</b>
Our NEEDS and PLANS .....	<b>5</b>

# Our Needs:

## Search for PT Rector:



With a balanced 2021 budget, including \$40k for a PT (20 hrs/wk) rector, we seek a vibrant preacher who will be seen in the city. We have contracted to have the historic church cleaned and repainted this year (expected completion before Easter) to welcome our new priest!

## We plan to improve our Virtual Presence:



A revised web-site and improved audio and video for our live broadcasts are planned; we strive to attract and retain more regular viewers of our services, and open the doors to a larger part of the community when it is safe to do so, Virtual Church is a reality...

## Lessons learned:



COVID forced a new reality to expectations; we have been blessed to still have the resources needed to pay our bills and keep a balanced budget. We found new viewers beyond our walls, and intend to improve! Listening to members is crucial, and we know the majority seek spiritual enrichment.

## COVID affected changes:

Our services were previously attended by **35-45 members** each Sunday morning, and a few gathered for Bible Studies on Wednesdays. We had a **full meal** prepared by the MarksMen (Men's Club) following worship on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month, and lighter refreshments were offered by the ECW, DOK and others on the remaining Sundays. **Fellowship was important to us**, and we had a monthly Marksmen breakfast with small repairs performed around the grounds (even repainting the parish hall); a monthly Family Grill'nChill where folks brought their own meat for the grill with a provided potato and salad, then enjoyed a dinner together! We completed an ALPHA course with about 20 people early in the year...

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*March 2020 brought many things to an immediate halt!*

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March 22nd, we had **no service** as we faced a 'shut-down', and learned about coronavirus precautions; we complied with CDC and Diocesan directives, explored options, and held an outdoor 'parking-lot' service on Palm Sunday. After encouraging everyone to watch the live broadcast from the Cathedral for Easter week, we cleaned and sanitized, removed books from pews, and promoted our Live broadcasts of Sunday worship on FaceBook.

### **We learned a few things...**

With only 5 or 6 present in church to perform and video the services, we had another 30 or so watching us live, and as many as 300 views within a day! We were reaching folks that could previously only attend every 6-8 weeks, but now could worship with us every week!

# Overview of St. Mark's

## Lay Ministries



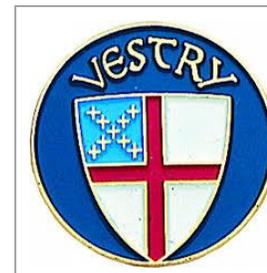
include the Alter Guild, Chapel House dinners, Choir, Cursillo, Communications, DOK, ERD, Food Pantry, God's Kids, Kairos, Men's Club, Noegel Fund, Sunday School, and others.

## Parish Survey



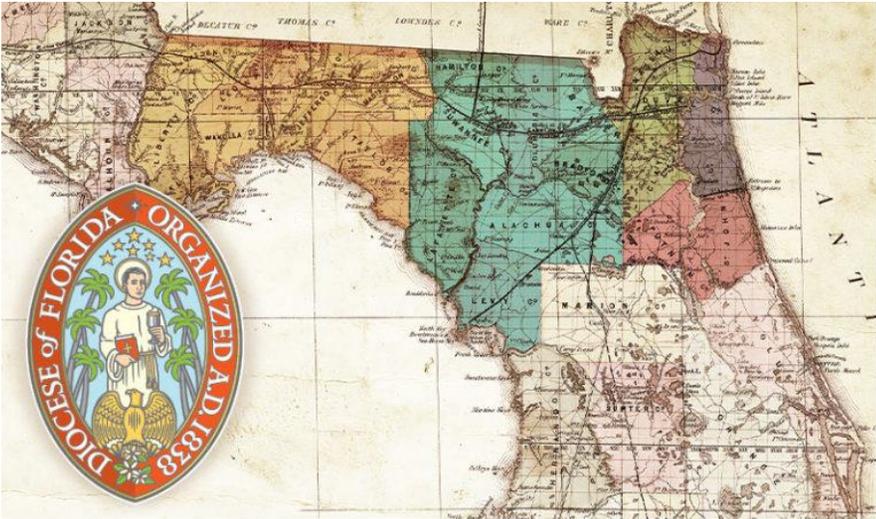
was completed January 2021; results are included in this booklet on page 3.

## Vestry



Clay O'Neal, Senior Warden (2021)  
Joe Lukas, Junior Warden (2023)  
Brenda Farnsworth (2022)  
Jennifer Luke, clerk (2021)  
Bob Tickel (2022)  
Elzie Sanders (2023)  
Kelly O'Neal, Treasurer

# Diocese of Florida



officially formed on January 17, 1838, and was received into union with the General Convention of the Episcopal Church on September 7, 1838 with seven parishes. The Diocese has forged ahead over the past 183 years and remained focused and true to God's call. The call to live and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ in community, Eucharist, and servanthood ministry is never realized without great sacrifice or great thanksgiving for all that has been accomplished.

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*St Mark's was founded in 1863 as a 'preaching station' with services held in private homes. The present building is one of the oldest "Carpenter Gothic" style.*

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Our recent Parish Survey was completed by 13 people, with some interesting perspectives:

Most were over the age of 60 and attended St. Mark's for more than 20 years; most attend weekly and participate in some of our organizations. Most are **not likely** to attend a Tuesday noonday or Wednesday evening service (if offered), but many **desire more Adult Christian Education** (possibly a Deacon-led Bible Study on Sunday mornings). **Most prefer Rite II BCP**, singing hymns and songs, and a **blend** of organ, piano and guitars is acceptable. Most think sermons should speak to scripture, spiritual development, and daily Christian life, but NOT social issues. Sermons should be thought-provoking and relative to daily life, but NOT printed and read. **Fellowship** is also strongly desired, but presently difficult with COVID precautions. Many also think we could do a better job with our web-site, and should increase efforts to include lapsed members.

**Our next Rector should be** a planner and preacher, discussion leader and promoter of adult Christian education – our spiritual leader, **helping parishioners discover their own ministries.** Traits most important are "Shepherd" and "Traditionalist".

## **Our Mission:**

**"to Know Christ, and to Let Christ Be Known!"**