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Who We Are

Founded in 1864, Saint Mark's is a pastoral size, high-energy church, of about 150 families who seek to fulfill the mission of St. Mark's church: Love and Worship God; Love and Serve All People. "Warm and welcoming", "progressive and caring", are just a few examples of who our parishioners say we are. St. Mark's is committed to sharing a love of God, of humanity, and of all creation. We seek to be welcoming and inclusive to all. Our red doors invite all who will come.

ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH LAGRANGE, GEORGIA PARISH PROFILE



Who We Are



The St. Mark's facility is readily recognized in LaGrange by its limestone Celtic cross in front of the church building. The side facing the street bears Christian symbols, while the side facing the church presents secular symbols reminding all who leave the building that the Church's teachings are relevant to the world.

The Nave seats 140 people and features stained glass windows that depict scenes from the life of Jesus. A rose window over the front door and an ornamental window behind the altar provide additional beauty as one enters and exits the Nave.





The church structure encloses St. Elizabeth's Memorial Garden, an unroofed, landscaped courtyard housing our columbarium. It proudly bears its name in honor of the former St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church in the African American community that merged with St. Mark's in the 1960's at the height of the Civil Rights Movement.

St. Mark's provides two Sunday services, both of which offer Holy Eucharist. An intimate Celtic service is offered on Wednesdays. Our average Sunday attendance over the last three years (2019-2021) is found in Table 1.

Year	In Person	Online
2019	91	N/A
2020	87	N/A
2021	54	31



Table 1. Average in-person and online attendance for three years



St. Mark's is blessed with a vibrant music ministry. Members overwhelmingly agree that the music is outstanding in both quality and style (CAT, 7/2022).

An active lay group supports our worship before, during, and after the service through the Altar Guild, the lay ministers and lectors, and our acolytes and tellers.

Christian formation opportunities are in place for both adults and youth. These opportunities are offered on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. A weekly Bible study provides parishioners the opportunity to explore the Bible together.

St. Mark's fiscal health is sound. The gross income of the church for the last three years (2019-2021) was \$538,156, \$538,062, and \$637,168 respectively.



Financial History and Projections

	2019	2020	2021	2022 Budget
General Operating Revenues	536,157	538,286	628,308	456,970

Expenses as % of General Operating Revenues

Total Staff Expenses	39.04%	37.10%	32.42%	38.85%
Property Expense	37.43%	35.40%	41.32%	21.15%
Outside Disbursements	12.47%	12.41%	16.82%	17.20%
Office Expense	2.67%	2.02%	2.89%	4.99%
Congregational Life	3.53%	3.00%	4.81%	5.07%
Surplus (Deficit)	4.85%	10.08%	1.73%	12.73%





COVID-19

COVID-19 impacted St. Mark's in a number of ways. We held church via technology—Zoom, Facebook, and YouTube. This technology also allowed our weekly Bible study classes to continue during the pandemic. Wednesday evening services were held outdoors. When we resumed Sunday morning in-person services, we sat in alternate pews and wore masks. Eventually the choir, composed of vaccinated singers, began to sing again. We continue to use the technology initiated during the pandemic for those who are still uncomfortable with attending in-person services, as well as for other activities. A Grief and Loss discussion group has evolved after the pandemic to provide additional pastoral care.

Prior to the pandemic, St. Mark's offered a preschool program and kindergarten program for children ages 2 to 5 years. This renowned program was established in 1960 to meet a community need, as there were no public kindergartens at that time. Given safety issues from Covid, as well as the availability of public and private programs in the community, the vestry reluctantly decided to close the kindergarten in 2020.





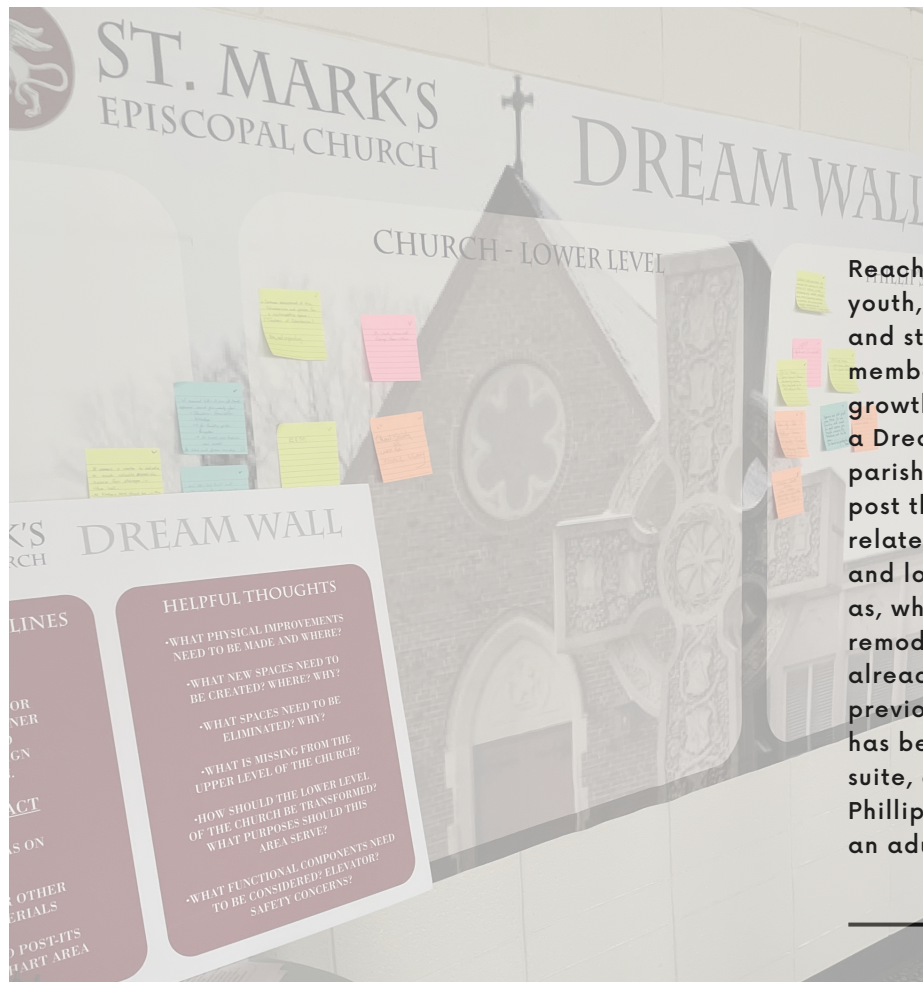
Where We're Going

Equipping members of St. Mark's for ministry with an emphasis on outreach continues to be our focus now and for the future. The outreach ministries that serve our community are numerous and allow our members a variety of ways to participate.



<p>Meals on Wheels prepares and delivers nearly 100 hot lunches weekly to the homebound in the LaGrange community.</p>	<p>Interfaith Food Closet under the direction of LaGrange Personal Aid provides food and staples for those in need. Members volunteer during a designated month.</p>	<p>Community Play Space consisting of several playgrounds is offered behind the church, next to the city's greenway and The Thread walking trail.</p>
<p>Phillips House Ministry assists Troup County residents in need of emergency help in such areas as rent or mortgage assistance, prescriptions, and utility payments.</p>	<p>LaGrange Council of Church Women's Clothing Center offers clothing to referred individuals. St. Mark's staffs the center one month a year.</p>	<p>The Green Team encourages environmental sustainability efforts within the church.</p>
<p>Blessing Bags provide the homeless and those in need with basic necessities purchased and packed by St. Mark's members.</p>		<p>Our church serves as the host site for the Choral Society of West Georgia and is the home of the LaGrange Sierra Club.</p>

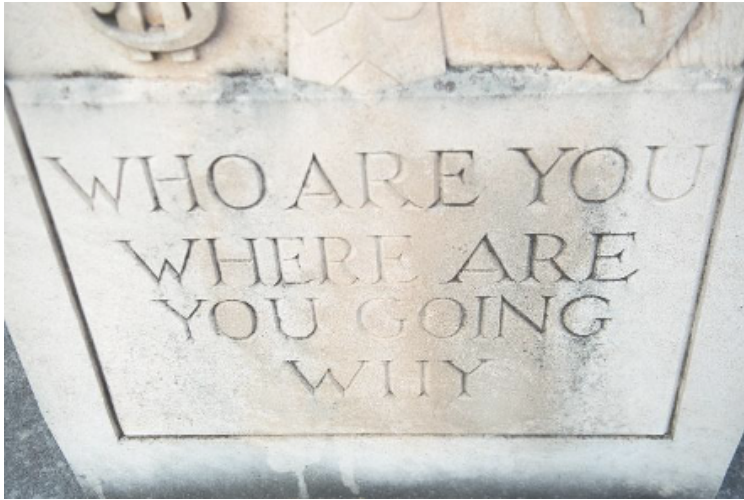
Where We're Going



Reaching new people, families and youth, and providing more meaningful and structural opportunities for members are top priorities for the growth of our church. With the help of a Dream Wall created by the vestry, parishioners have an opportunity to post their creative thoughts and ideas related to the utilization of the upper and lower levels of the church, as well as, what step we will take next. A remodel of the church kitchen is already in the works and space previously used by the kindergarten has been transformed into a choir suite, a vesting room, space for the Phillips House ministry, our youth and an adult interest classroom.



Why



St. Mark's mission is twofold: Love and Worship God; Love and Serve All People. We are a vibrant parish with a diverse group of people, thoughts, and ideas, who take seriously the call to be the Body of Christ to one another and to the world around us.

Through worship, fellowship and outreach ministries, we value the importance of celebrating the Episcopal faith and sharing and proclaiming it to all.

Invitation

St. Mark's welcomes applicants who will partner and empower our vital lay ministries. Our desire is for someone authentic, with the ability and interest to help our members discern their gifts and articulate a clear vision for all.

Our history of over twenty-five rectors, with an average stay of six years and the past two serving over eleven years each, demonstrates the stability that our parish offers. We are proud of St. Mark's and are looking forward to sharing it with someone with shared values.

St. Mark's is filled with committed individuals who step up and pitch in to get the job done. Our new Rector will find not just a welcoming church, but a parish full of people who want to treat this ministry as a partnership.





Living in LaGrange

Incorporated in 1828, LaGrange is the county seat of Troup County, Georgia with a population of just over 30,000 citizens. The local economy is diverse and fast growing, supported by automotive and textile industries, institutions of higher education, and healthcare infrastructure.

The LaGrange-Troup County area provides many recreational attractions, including a large visual and performing arts community, West Point Lake, Sweetland Amphitheater, and The Thread—a greenway over 20 miles long.

Troup County houses three higher education institutions, including West Georgia Technical College, Point University, and LaGrange College. West Georgia Technical College offers two-year degrees, and Point University and LaGrange College offer four-year degrees.

Wellstar West Georgia Medical Center, located in LaGrange, is frequently recognized for its commitment to providing world-class healthcare and excellent patient services. LaGrange has two large multi-specialty physician groups, heart and cancer clinics, three nursing home facilities, a hospice, and several urgent care practices.



Atlanta Diocese Information

The Diocese of Atlanta is a diverse and expansive faith community, with 117 communities focused on worshipping a living and loving God and working for a better world in the name of Jesus Christ. More than 50,000 members in 11 convocations spread across 75 ½ counties in north and central Georgia make up the Diocese.

Our Diocesan Purpose Statement, adopted at Annual Council 2015, informs all aspects of our common life: "We challenge ourselves and the world to love like Jesus as we worship joyfully, serve compassionately, and grow spiritually."

We are a Christian community blessed with vibrance, variety, and vitality. Our Diocesan bishop, The Right Rev. Robert C. Wright, was elected in June 2012 and ordained and consecrated on October 13, 2012.

The Offices of the Bishop are at the Cathedral of St. Phillip in Atlanta. The Diocese has more than 200 clergy under Bishop Wright's oversight, plus an abundant supply of lay leaders and ministers.

The Diocese of Atlanta was carved from the Diocese of Georgia in 1907. As part of the Episcopal Church, the Diocese is connected to the worldwide Anglican Communion of 70 million people in 38 provinces. The Diocese is also engaged in a special companion relationship with the Diocese of Cape Coast in West Africa.

The Diocese of Atlanta actively supports the ministry of The Episcopal Church and its presiding bishop, The Most Reverend Michael Curry.

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Follow Bishop Wright: [Facebook](#) / [Instagram](#)



Additional LaGrange/Troup County Information

<https://www.visitlagrange.com/>

<https://www.southernliving.com/travel/lagrange-ga>

<https://www.atlantamagazine.com/travel/lagrange-georgia-five-reasons-you-should-know-about-this-budding-southern-city/>

https://www.thrillist.com/amphhtml/travel/atlanta/things-to-do-lagrange-georgia?fbclid=IwAR0J_9ElkQR5zCNK2NwDqGTMD63MPjY512JR4qYlgRmj-i0ODKupAQSlFos

<https://www.troup.org/>

<http://www.lagrangedevelopment.com/>

<https://www.lagrangechamber.com/>



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