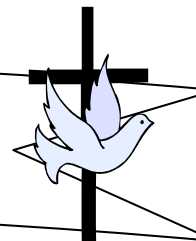


The St. Mark Messenger



Rev. Paul Scheunemann,
Vacancy Pastor

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“For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.... My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, so that your faith might not rest on men’s wisdom, but on God’s power.” 1 Corinthians 2:2,4

Dear friends in Christ at St. Mark Lutheran, Belgium, these words from the Apostle Paul to the believers at Corinth sum up my thoughts as my time as your vacancy pastor comes to a close. When our journey together began three years ago, we did not know how long it would last or where God would lead us. However, we knew God in His wisdom and mercy had a plan for us. Throughout the vacancy God was faithful to us, extending His grace and forgiveness to us as we gathered around His Holy Word and His Blessed Supper. I pray that during my time with you, I kept the focus on our Savior Jesus Christ, who was crucified and has risen and conquered Satan, sin, and death for us.

During our time together, I was blessed to see a congregation, the Body of Christ at St. Mark, who love their Lord Jesus and who seek to put their love into action. Following the guidance of your Head Jesus Christ, your elders and various committees functioned well with little supervision from me. From the beginning, I have felt your love, support, and encouragement for our work together in Christ’s name. In the last three years we have seen God add to His congregation through baptisms and adult confirmations. We have also said our earthly farewell to several members, including charter members of St. Mark, who by God’s grace have received the crown of eternal life and now rest from their labors. And an unplanned blessing from the vacancy, the loan for the narthex addition to the church is close to being paid off through your faithful contributions.

In His wisdom and timing, God has answered your prayers for a new Pastor. He is sending Pastor Lewis Polzin as your shepherd to bring God’s gifts to you and lead you on your journey of faith. As with any new pastor, there will be some changes in things. And with the partnership with St. John Lutheran Church, Fredonia, some details and procedures will need to be ironed out. The last three years, I have been blessed to serve as your pastor and to experience your love for Christ. I thank God for our time together and our friendship in Jesus. Please extend to Pastor Polzin and his family the same love and acceptance you offered to Cindy and me. And in all things keep the focus on Jesus Christ, crucified and risen for us.

Your Brother in Christ,
Pastor Paul