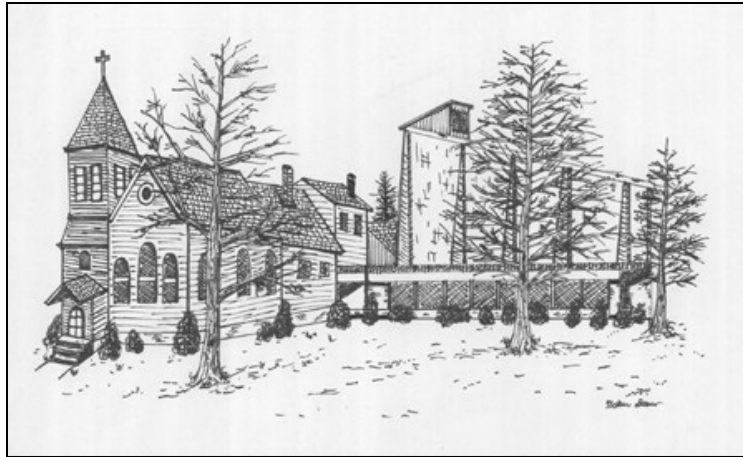


The Lutheran Church of St. Mark



1885 ~ 2010

*One Hundred Twenty - Fifth
Anniversary
May 10, 2010*

† Glastonbury, Connecticut †

The Pastors of the Lutheran Church of St. Mark

Rev. E. Schneider

1882-1884

Rev. Edmund F.A. Hantle

1884-1888

Rev. William Koepchen

May 1889-August 1889

Rev. Henry F. Stein

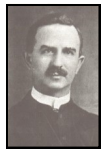
1889-1891

Rev. John F. H. Horst 1891-1894



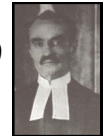
Rev. Fredrich Ottman 1894-1900

Rev. Henry C. Beckman 1900-1914



Rev. William C. Schmidt 1915-1920

Rev. Hugo F. R. Stechholz 1920-1940



Rev. Karl E. Blake 1940-1961

Rev. Joseph E. Hakes 1962-1967



Rev. Thomas J. Windsor 1968-1975

Rev. Elmer F. Dreyer 1975-1982



Rev. John J. Marschhausen 1982-1997

Rev. Rebecca J. Bourret 1997-2001



Rev. Joseph B. Ekeberg 2001 -

The First One Hundred Years

The Lutheran Church of St. Mark had its roots in the German immigration to this area in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Glastonbury industries brought German families to town, beginning with the Korgiebels about 1850.

1880's - The Journey Begins

About 1880 John Kiedaisch, a member of one of these immigrant families and a farmer on Hebron Avenue, advertised in the *Connecticut Staats Zeitung*, a German language newspaper, for a German Protestant preacher to come to Glastonbury. The advertisement was answered in 1882 by Rev. E. Schneider and resulted eventually in the formation of St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Pastor Schneider held German language services for the mission congregation in the Band House. Also known as the Music Hall or "Athenaeum," it was on the grounds of the Williams Brothers Manufacturing Company, makers of silver and cutlery, on Naubuc Avenue. This area was then known as Curtisville. The building, owned by the Glastonbury Band, was torn down in 1939, long after the small band of Lutherans had moved to new quarters.

Following two years of holding services in the rented Band House, the small group met for a brief period in the chapel of the First Church Christ Congregational on Main Street.

In 1884 Pastor Schneider left and his mission work here was undertaken by Rev. Edmund F. Hantle. Pastor Hantle also ministered to the Evangelical Lutheran Church* in Hartford, then connected with the old General Synod, which later became a part of the United Lutheran Church in America, and in a further merger, the Lutheran Church in America.

Pastor Hantle in 1885 became Congregational State Missionary among the German population in Connecticut. At this time the young congregation met at the Addison Chapel by the lower mill in the Addison community in northeastern Glastonbury. On Sunday, May 10, 1885, the little group held a "founding," a Gurendung. Then on Sunday, September 27 there was a "Temporary Organization" at which a short constitution was adopted along with a statement of the confessional basis for Der Evangelical Lutherischen Saint Markus Gemeinde zu Glastonbury. From these events we date the existence of The Lutheran Church of St. Mark as an organized church.

Twenty-two family names were recorded as communicants during the Rev. Hantle's pastorship, including: KIEDAISCH, John and Anna; SCHMIDT, Gottfried and Katherine; LINGNER, George and

Louise; SHROEDER, Carl and Katherine; SCHWARM, Heinrich and Elisabeth; BANDEL, Jacob and Katherine; MILLER, Christian and Katherine; ISLEIB, Andreas and Katharine; ROMMEL, Adam; ZERVER, John and Nina; ZERVER, Jacob and Louise; GEIGER, Barbara; BUCK, Heinrich; WOLLMAN, Carl; ULBERT, Bruno; BEHRENDT, Otto; and ROSER, Herman.

Descendants of some of these were still to be found among the members of The Lutheran Church of St. Mark 100 years later.

On April 18, 1886, 16 young people were confirmed and their names recorded.

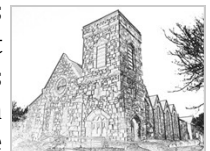
After Rev. Hantel left in October 1888, to accept a call to Waterbury, CT, Farmer Kiedaisch again placed an advertisement in the *Staats Zeitung* for a minister. This advertisement was answered by Rev. William Koepchen, who arrived from New Haven on Wednesday, May 22, 1889. He was met at the Hartford railroad station by Mr. Kiedaisch and "a pair of good horses" and preached to those gathered that same evening. Although Pastor Koepchen served this parish but a short while, it was through him that St. Mark became associated with the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (then the Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and other states). Pastor Koepchen also served parishes in Dodgeville, MA, and Bristol, RI, at the same time he served St. Mark.

On August 25, 1889, Pastor Koepchen ordained a young theological candidate, H.F.A. Stein, who immediately became St. Mark's pastor and served until 1891. He later became a professor at Concordia Collegiate Institute, Bronxville, NY.

The 1890's - New Leadership

In the summer of 1891, John F. H. Horst, 25 years old and a recent graduate of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, was commissioned by the Missouri Synod as Missionary-at-Large for the State of Connecticut. He made his headquarters in South Manchester where a small congregation, Zion, had been founded. From there he also ministered to St. Mark, to a group which had separated from Reformation in Hartford, and to a group in New Hartford. All these were considered to be one parish.

St. Mark had still been meeting in the Addison Chapel. Now, however, services began to alternate between that chapel and St. James Episcopal Church on Main Street. At first St. Mark used St. James' facilities once a month and then more often until a church was built on Grove Street.



*This congregation became a part of Trinity Hartford which later merged with St. Paul's Hartford to become Grace Hartford, when ministers were in short supply during World War II.

After Pastor Horst left in January, 1894, to answer a call in the West, he was replaced by Rev. Fredrich Ottman that same month. Like his predecessor, Pastor Ottman lived in South Manchester. He later moved to Hartford from whence he served his rather widespread parish.

Under Pastor Ottman's leadership, St. Mark was more formally organized as were the German Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession in Hartford and Zion Lutheran in Manchester. Christ Lutheran entered a period of such growth that Pastor Ottman recommended that Hartford and New Hartford become one parish and Glastonbury and Manchester another. This was done by the Mission Board of the Missouri Synod in 1900.

Rev. Ottman continued serving St. Mark and Zion for a short while, preaching on alternate Sundays to his parishioners in Glastonbury, at St. James.

1900 - St. Mark's Constitution is Written

During Pastor Ottman's tenure at St. Mark, a constitution was written by a committee consisting of Conrad Wolfart, Otto Behrendt, Jacob Reichard, Julius Menschke, and the pastor. It was adopted in 1900 and continued in force for 39 years.

The first voters' meeting under this constitution was on July 1, 1900, immediately following ratification. Chosen at this annual election were Jacob Reichard, president; Conrad Wolfart, treasurer; Otto Behrendt, secretary; and Bruno Ulbert, trustee. Other offices called for by the constitution were vice-president, one other trustee, and two deacons. These offices were probably previously filled.

It was the deacons' job to aid the pastor in his duties as needed and to keep order during worship. Trustees were responsible for maintaining church property.

It was also from Pastor Ottman's ministry in Glastonbury that we have the first recorded confirmation class.

In July 1900 Pastor Ottman left to accept a call to New Haven. On July 29 a call was extended to Rev. Henry Beckman of New York City to become pastor to the 44 communicant members of St. Mark at a salary of \$15 per month. He, too, served Zion Manchester. Glastonbury's population then was 800.

Building A Church

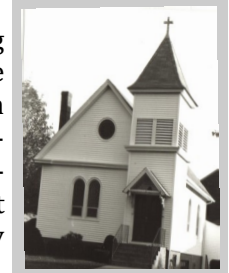
It was during Pastor Beckman's ministry here at St. Mark that a first sanctuary was built. Search for a site began September 9, 1900, with the appointment of Otto Behrendt, August Noch, and Conrad Wolfart as a search committee. Land was purchased on Grove Street where Grove now intersects with New London Turnpike.

One wonders from whence came the money for the purchase, as the first quarterly financial report

of record, which covered July to October of 1900, showed a total income of only \$81.36, with expenditures listed of \$54.00!

Yet, less than two years later, on April 13, 1902, the cornerstone of that first building was laid. It contained a synodical book, a list of church officers, a list of voting members, and three Lutheran periodicals. Pastor Beckman and Rev. P.O. Duessel were speakers for the occasion.

The new church building was dedicated on July 13 of the same year. Former pastor Fredrich Ottman and Professor H. Stein officiated. Total cost of that first building was \$1,331.46! The largest contribution was \$692.50, given by the Wolfart family.



St. Mark was incorporated September 9, 1902, as "The Evangelical Lutheran Saint Mark's Church, an ecclesiastical corporation organized under and by virtue of the laws of Connecticut."

The next year, 1903, gave us the first recorded marriage of St. Mark. It was the nuptials of Carl and Olga Dickau, nee Russland, on July 5. According to the 75th Anniversary history, however, Mrs. Martha Molzhan Ulbert* was the first bride (1903) married in the Grove Street Church.

The first baptism and funeral of record at St. Mark were also after Pastor Beckman's arrival. Edward Julius Frederick was baptized October 14, 1900. Frieda Hennig, a victim of drowning, was buried on October 16, 1900.

Women's Group Forms

On February 15, 1903, twenty-two women formed a *Frauenverein* (women's group). Officers were: president, Mrs. Katherine Wolfart; secretary, Wilemina Beckman; and treasurer, Mrs. Anna Kiedaisch, succeeded by Martha Ulbert. These officers served for many years. Regular meetings were held on Sunday afternoons in the church following a two o'clock worship service. One of the functions of the group apparently was fundraising. One means was an annual pork and sauerkraut dinner, which the ladies prepared from ingredients donated by local merchants. Tickets were sold for about \$1; income was donated to the congregation for various purposes. For example, in 1906-07, \$100 was given toward debt retirement and in 1908, a chandelier was purchased for the sanctuary. Another project of the *Frauenverein* was to keep the church cleaned. Until 1947, one member each month took this responsibility.

On November 1, 1906, a choir was organized. At about the same time, the Wolfarts donated an organ. One of Glastonbury's undertakers, John Hamil, became the first organist. In spite of the fact that he

*She was 82 in November, 1960, and had been confirmed by Pastor Horst.

played with but one finger, he was paid a dollar per week and kept his position for many years. Later organists, in order of service, were Helena Behrendt, Martha Hoff, Dorothy E. Kamm, Marion Erden, Kendall Hayward, Sandra Windsor, Gretchen Hill, Bryan Leone, Eugenia Hamisevich, Anna Rayburn, Donna Murphy, and Linda (Conway) Hilliard. The organist has usually also been the choir director.

1910 - Youth Group Organized

On November 13, 1910, a Young People's Society (later known as the Walther League) was formed with twenty-two members. A popular social activity was a sleigh ride to a neighboring Lutheran church where the Walther League of the host church would provide refreshments and entertainment. The entertainment was usually a songfest or a play, most often a comedy. The group was also involved in fund-raising. In 1917, for example, they donated a clock and an altar Bible to St. Mark.

It is unclear when a Sunday School was first organized. The 1905 annual report mentions that 33 children were enrolled in Sunday School. The 1909 report mentions a Sunday School income of \$22.63. Further, the records report that new Sunday School quarters were dedicated August 4, 1912. The first classes were held there, in the church basement, on November 25, 1912, with sixteen children present. Apparently each class grouped itself around a table for lessons, all in one large room. Sunday School income was directed by a superintendent appointed for an indefinite term by the pastor. One of the early teachers was Helen Behrendt, who taught for over 40 years.

On June 14, 1906, a "one day" school began with six children. They studied Bible, geography, the Catechism, and German each Thursday morning from 9 a.m. until noon. On April 15, 1911, a regular Saturday class was organized. Henry Grupe of Rockville taught German to 30 children. The children needed to know the language as Sunday School classes, worship services, and confirmation classes were conducted in German. All church records were also kept in German.

St. Mark held its first annual Missionfest on September 1, 1905, with Pastor Kavasch as guest speaker. A mission fest consisted of a worship service with a special speaker, and often special music, and was usually held in the afternoon, followed by a dinner prepared by the Frauenverein. Sometimes an additional service was held after dinner. Neighboring churches were invited to attend and an offering was taken for the benefit of missions of the church. Two hundred dollars was collected for this purpose at the first mission fest. These were held regularly at St. Mark for many years. The last one mentioned in church records was held in November 1953. For

many, these were important social events. Attendance was frequently so great that many people had to stand throughout the services.

Up to this time, St. Mark had been an independent Lutheran Church. On September 15, 1906, St. Mark was admitted into membership in the Eastern (later Atlantic) District of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other states. This association was maintained until 1977.

Initially, communion was celebrated four times each year. By 1908 this had been increased to six times annually. To commune, one had to have previously registered by filling out a card and having confessed one's sins in a private meeting with the pastor on the preceding Thursday, Friday, or Saturday. Communion was served, using a common cup, first to men and then to women. Children were not allowed to approach the altar rail.

One member, Anna Klinger, announced at a Frauenverein meeting that she planned to go forward for communion right behind her husband at the next communion service. She did, though she did not make her husband aware of this decision beforehand -- and Pastor Beckman did serve her. At the next communion service, three more women went forward with their husbands to commune. Thus, the practice of communing men and women separately was ended at St. Mark.

Another practice in these early years was for only church Board members to greet visitors at services. Mrs. Klinger thought this a silly policy and began personally welcoming visitors to St. Mark.

In the early years, confirmation was usually held on Palm Sunday. Candidates were given an oral examination on *Luther's Small Catechism* by the pastor before the assembled congregation. Questions could also be asked of candidates by those assembled. Confirmands were usually about 14 years old, as they are today. However, the oldest person confirmed at St. Mark was Ella Hausmann, confirmed in 1935, at age 73. Pastor Beckman regularly visited members of his confirmation classes, one each week, staying for supper with the family.

The first annual church picnic at St. Mark was on July 3, 1909, at the Wolfart's home. Picnics are still held, sometimes after worship in the courtyard behind the sanctuary on a Sunday in June. Many picnics have been held at JB Williams Park, often on Rally Day in September.

In November 1914 Pastor Beckman accepted a call to a church in Secaucus, New Jersey. In January 1915 Rev. W.C. Schmidt was called to the pastorate of St. Mark, preaching his first sermon on January 17. Pastor Schmidt also served Zion Manchester, as had previous pastors.

Membership had grown to 205. Pastor Schmidt suggested that the congregation "purchase building lots in a more suitable locality for the erection of a new church." He preferred a location on Main Street, but land there was considered quite expensive. Therefore, nothing was done about expansion during his stay at St. Mark.

Pastor Schmidt accepted a call to a church in Jamaica, Long Island, NY, on September 15, 1920. He stayed at St. Mark until a new pastor could be called, finally resigning October 31, to be succeeded by Rev. Hugo F. R. Stechholz of Patterson, NJ. He was installed as St. Mark's pastor on December 5, 1920, with Rev. A.C. Steiger officiating, assisted by Rev. P.W. VonSchenk. Pastor Stechholz, too, served Zion Manchester, habitually walking back and forth from St. Mark to Zion along Keeney Street. A physical fitness enthusiast, he also was known to walk into Hartford to visit members in the hospital there or to dash out the back of the church to do sitting-up exercises while the congregation labored through very long Bach hymns.

On June 28, 1925, St. Mark celebrated its 25th anniversary based on the July 1, 1900, date the constitution was ratified. Former Pastors Beckman and Schmidt were featured speakers. Rev. Beckman preached a sermon in German and Rev. Schmidt, one in English.

1920's - New Church Built on Griswold Street

A new, larger house of worship for St. Mark was erected in 1925. On October 8 a 60' X 200' lot on Griswold Street was purchased for \$41,250 from Josephine A. Griswold. At about the same time, the church building on Grove Street was sold to a Ukrainian Orthodox congregation for \$4,200. This building still stands and is used by the same congregation today.

Emil Klinger dug the foundation for the new building with a team of horses and a hand scoop shovel. Building plans were drawn by Mr. Klinger and Pastor Stechholz. The church was built by Carl Dean and Howard Fladd.

On November 8, 1925, the cornerstone, containing a communion cup, was laid. Rev. G.A. Derwig preached at the ceremony. On May 16, 1926, the new church was dedicated. Three services were held. The morning service was conducted in German with Professor Stein, a former pastor, preaching. Special music was provided by Martha Hoff playing organ, and Elsa Behrendt playing a violin solo. The afternoon English service had the Rev. G. A. Derwig, preaching and special music provided by Henry A. Hausmann on cornet, Fred W. Hausmann on drum, and Raymond H. Hausmann on violin. The third service, that evening, was also an English-language ser-

vice. Rev. John Kavasch, Christ Hartford, preached and the Christ Church choir sang under the direction of Christian Recknagel.

The completed church cost \$12,700 furnished. A bell for the steeple was donated by Williams Brothers, silverware manufacturers in Glastonbury. In 1930 a pipe organ was given by Immanuel Lutheran Church, Bristol. It was overhauled at a cost of \$485.44 and used until 1971, when it was sold for \$50.



1930's - English Language Usage Grows

A look at congregational life in the 1920's and 1930's is possible by examining Pastor Stechholz's Announcement Books, kept in German for German language services and in English for English-language services. These were kept so that announcements could be made to the congregation of upcoming events or special concerns for the pastor. Sunday bulletins, as used today, were not a practice until Pastor Blake came.

These books show an active women's group and young people's society, as well as a New England Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Men's Club, each holding regular meetings.

Devotional pamphlets, tracts, and religious newspapers, sometimes available in both English and German, seem to have been important to congregational life. They were distributed after services or were received by individual subscription. In the latter case, subscribers were urged by the pastor to share them with others. A regular monthly newspaper subscribed to by many was the *Atlantic Bulletin*, which was informative about mission work of the Missouri Synod's Atlantic District. Another popular periodical was the *Lutheran Witness*.

On February 19, 1933, the women's group celebrated its 30th anniversary. Later that year, on April 19, 1933, Palm Sunday, a reunion service was held for all who had been confirmed at St. Mark. Of 199 total membership, 81 were present. (From these numbers we realize that we are missing the names of some 30 St. Mark Confirmands). From the first class in 1886, one for which we no longer have any record, two were present: Wilhelm Hausmann and Anna Kiedaisch (Mrs. Paul Kasche). Two years later on September 29, 1935, St. Mark observed its 50th anniversary, using the 1885 date of the "founding."

On May 17, 1936, the tenth anniversary of dedication of the new church was observed with a German service at 11 a.m., at which Pastor Stechholz preached, and an English service at 3:30 p.m. at which Rev. John Mohrmann preached. The Ladies Aid Society served both a dinner and a supper. Later that

same year, there was a terrible flood which affected a number of the members of St. Mark. These flood victims were offered assistance by sister Lutheran congregations in New London, CT, and Westerly, RI.

Also during 1936, envelopes for monthly offerings and envelopes for quarterly mission offerings were distributed to all member families. A curious entry in Pastor Stechholz's Announcement Book for January 8, 1936, was "*Dues are payable to the financial secretary.*" Beginning in 1939, the system of weekly envelopes, in practice today, was instituted.

Other than offerings, a source of income for the church during these Depression years was bonds. These were loans at the rate of interest agreeable to the lending member and the congregation as borrower. But money was usually needed to pay other loans due or to meet urgent, necessary expenses.

Missions supported by St. Mark during this era were the Lutheran Hospital in Brooklyn, the Orphan Home of West Roxbury, MA, the Detroit Deaf Mute Institute, the Lutheran Hour, and construction of a chapel at Concordia College in Bronxville, NY.

Controversy had begun over the almost exclusive use of the German language at St. Mark, as it had in other Missouri Synod churches. In 1903 English services had been attempted "but soon came to an end on account of too little interest." Times had changed and the ladies led when in 1920 the name of the Frauenverein was changed to the Ladies Aid Society and English became its official language. Martha Hoff became the first secretary of a women's group at St. Mark to keep records in English.

But the change to English was slow and gradual. On May 19, 1938, the congregation voted to have a seminary student preach in English every second Sunday of the month. This began June 12, when an English service at St. Mark was led by Walter Litke. Pastor Stechholz, too, sometimes preached in English but preferred German. On July 3, 1938, voters authorized rewriting the church constitution in English. This constitution was ratified in 1939 and St. Mark was, for the first time, a completely separate parish from Zion Manchester. Communicant membership was about 112.

On October 10, 1940, Pastor Stechholz, in ill health, resigned as pastor of St. Mark to devote himself to Zion Manchester and a new responsibility, Redeemer Lutheran in Lebanon, CT. His last sermon at St. Mark was preached on December 8, 1940. He died two years later.

1940's - The First Full-time Pastor is Called and a Parsonage Built

Rev. Karl E. Blake of Holyoke, MA, was installed as pastor of St. Mark by Rev. George Meyer on December 15, 1940. Pastor Blake was St. Mark's first

full-time pastor. All previous pastors had also served other congregations as well as St. Mark.

Under Pastor Blake the change to the English language was completed. All services were in English except for one held once each month for the benefit of elderly members more comfortable with the German language. Within a few years, these, too, were discontinued. For the first time all church records were kept in English.

As the church did not own a parsonage, Pastor Blake at first lived in a room on Maple Street in East Hartford and took meals in the homes of parishioners. His monthly salary was a grand \$25!

In 1943 the congregation purchased a 75' x 300' lot on Griswold Street from Bryon Griswold for \$750. August Kuehn of West Hartford contracted to build a parsonage on this lot. This house at 57 Griswold Street was sold in 1962 after the present parsonage adjacent to the church was purchased.

When Pastor Stechholz served St. Mark he had preferred candlelight. Consequently, electric lights were not installed until after his resignation when a contribution from a Mrs. Black of Naubuc Avenue provided the means.

At a voter's meeting January 29, 1947, Maurice Lowe, president of the congregation, spoke about the need for a modern heating system and indoor toilets. It was decided to raise the necessary funds by producing a minstrel show, as it had been done successfully in 1941. On April 22 and 23, 1947, a second minstrel show with Mr. Lowe as director was held at Naubuc School for sell-out crowds. Ever with an eye to increasing profits, Pastor Blake went through the audience selling refreshments. Toward this end, also, Richard Hollister prepared a program containing paid advertising. Proceeds from these endeavors were more than enough to pay for the work which was done that fall.

As in the early days, the electorate was still severely limited. At a typical voters' meeting in 1946, for instance, matters were decided by eight male voters.

These meetings were normally held in January, April, July and October. Additional meetings were called when necessary. At the regular meetings candidates for the Board of Deacons were nominated and elected, salaries were set, purchases were approved, delegates to conventions were elected, and committees were appointed.

The January voters' meeting gradually grew to be the largest of the year. It was held at church on a Sunday afternoon, preceded by a dinner prepared by the ladies. Although they still had no vote, women did attend. At a typical meeting on January 17, 1954, of 35 communicant members present, only 12 were voting members.

In 1940, the Ladies Aid Society had joined the Women's Missionary League, the auxiliary of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and had changed its name to the Priscilla Guild. Throughout the 1940's they were active with annual banquets, Monte Carlo Whist nights, Christmas Parties, and sewing and knitting clothing and blankets as well as staging clothing drives for Lutheran World Relief. In 1947 contributions were dropped into a "little house" at the rear of the church, apparently in support of a family in Germany whom the Walther League had "adopted."

The Walther League, for the youth of St. Mark, continued to thrive throughout the forties and fifties. They participated in a bowling league after which the group would return to church for refreshments plus ping pong, bridge, or piano playing and singing. They also played in a softball league organized in 1947. In addition they sang in the Choral Union, a choir composed of youth from Lutheran churches in the Hartford area. Rehearsals were regularly scheduled followed by performances in churches throughout central Connecticut. Walther League also had Halloween parties and an annual Memorial Day picnic. Funds were raised by having car washes, and by selling Christmas cards.

Evidently St. Mark continued to have financial crises from time to time, all through the forties and fifties, as evidenced by many references to loans from members. These were sometimes secured by bonds, and at least once, by a mortgage on the parsonage.

1950's - Focus on Community and Children

On January 20, 1952, a chapter of the Lutheran Laymen's League was formed at St. Mark. The purposes of the LLL were evangelism and fellowship. They fulfilled these by helping sponsor *The Lutheran Hour* on radio, providing funds for seminary students through the Valparaiso University Scholarship Foundation, and sponsoring (sometimes in cooperation with neighboring chapters) retreats, dinners, a bowling league, picnics and seminars. An example of the latter is "Race Relations and the Church" held February 22, 1957, in Bristol.

During his pastorate here, Rev. Blake was deeply involved in civic activities such as Lion's Club, Boy Scouts, and Little League baseball. As a consequence of these contacts, St. Mark's Sunday School enrollment swelled with an influx of children of non-member families.

As at the Grove Street church, Sunday School met in the basement, which was not divided into separate classrooms. Then, as now, Sunday School began its year with a September Rally Day when children were promoted to the next class and families and friends were invited to attend. During the 1950's classes began each Sunday at 9 a.m. and lasted for an hour. Memory work was stressed, and included

Luther's Small Catechism as well as Bible verses. The superintendent, still appointed by the pastor for an indefinite and usually long term, was charged with the responsibility of ordering materials, keeping attendance records, managing funds, and organizing each year's program. Today the Sunday School superintendent has much the same duties.

A Cradle Roll was established December 23, 1949, when voters approved renovation of a small room in the church basement for that purpose; infants were tended by volunteers while their parents attended worship services, as is done today in what we now term the "nursery."

An outgrowth of the Cradle Roll organization was establishment of a lending library for church members. It began on October 7, 1951, under the leadership of Mrs. Wilbur Trombley. Initially, four books were available: *Evolution, The Story of Luther, Jehovah's Witnesses*, and *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories*. Books could be borrowed for two weeks at a time.

On March 24, 1950, a committee consisting of chairman Maurice Lowe, Wilbur Trombley, William Brusick, and Pastor Blake, was appointed to revise the church constitution. A conservative one not significantly different from the 1939 constitution, which in turn was much like the 1900 one, was ratified at a voters' meeting on April 21, 1952. It would not be until 1968 that this document would be completely modernized, expanding the electorate to include women. And not until 1980 did women attain equality with men under the church constitution.

On September 23, 1951, voters gave permission for Hockanum Methodist Church of East Hartford to use the facilities at St. Mark for services while their new sanctuary was under construction. In appreciation they donated a set of two brass offering plates to St. Mark on Easter Sunday, April 13, 1952. These are occasionally used to supplement St. Mark's set of four silver offering plates when a large crowd is expected.

On April 19, 1953, voters approved the formation of a Vacation Bible School at St. Mark. The VBS met during two weeks in June, Monday through Friday mornings. It apparently flourished, as there was a weekly attendance of 410 children by 1955. Offerings by the children were donated to a mission of the church such as Pastor Muller's Orphan Home in Bristol.

In 1953 St. Mark had a weekday morning kindergarten school for children ages three to five. The children were not all members of St. Mark.

In May 1953 Priscilla Guild celebrated its 50th Anniversary as a women's auxiliary of St. Mark.

By the fifties a steadily growing congregation was once again straining existing facilities. On April 16, 1959, an Expansion and Building Committee was formed consisting of Pastor Blake, Donald Laitiner,

Henry Kamm, and Henry Schroeder. They were charged with researching property to purchase for expansion. Moving the church to an entirely different location, to the corner of Prospect and Griswold Streets, or to a lot on Hubbard Street, was discussed. Instead, on June 26, 1960, St. Mark purchased an adjacent lot on Griswold Street from Walter and Marian Schmidt for \$2500. That November 11, a lot adjacent to the first was purchased for \$32,000 from Carl and Caroline Zirchenbach at 87 Griswold Street; it held a two-story brick dwelling. Financing was by a mortgage loan from Glastonbury Bank and Trust with Edward Dickau, Sr., Henry Kamm, George F. Fyler, Jr., and Kendall P. Hayward as guarantors. This was repaid January 13, 1967. Additional financing was by a second mortgage held by the Zirchenbachs, which was repaid March 14, 1962, four years before it was due.

1960's - Women's Rights

In the meantime, St. Mark had celebrated its 75th Anniversary with a series of three special services on May 8, 15, and 22, 1960. Pastor Blake preached at the first two and Rev. Louis Meyer, Executive Secretary of Stewardship and Evangelism for the Atlantic District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, preached at the third service. A commemorative booklet was printed by an Anniversary Committee: Donald Bidwell, Chairman; George Fyler, Sr.; Helen Behrendt; Bertha Becher; George Fyler, Jr.; Milan Macko, and Pastor Blake. At the time St. Mark had 170 communicant members with 130 children and 15 teachers on the Sunday School roll.

In 1960 the congregation pledged \$3 per member for the ensuing five years in support of the Lutheran Chapel of the University of Connecticut in Storrs.

In August 1961 the name of St. Mark was legally changed to St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church of Glastonbury, Connecticut.

At a voters' meeting April 28, 1961, Herbert Aas brought up the question of "women's rights under the church constitution." A committee of three men and three women was appointed to address the concerns, although Pastor Blake opposed the idea. The committee members were Lynn Irvine, Richard Hollister, Edward Schoenrock, Bertha Drause, Ruth Steiner, and Barbara Aas. Progress was slow, and as has been previously noted, women were not allowed to vote until 1968.

St. Mark now owned two houses, the parsonage and the brick house on the newly acquired Zirchenbach property. The congregation chose to keep the house at 87 Griswold Street as a parsonage and to sell the parsonage in use by Pastor Blake and his family. Dissatisfied with this arrangement, Pastor

Blake in the summer of 1961 accepted a call to Redeemer Lutheran Church in Lebanon, CT. His resignation from the pastorate of St. Mark was accepted by the congregation on August 17, 1961, the motion having been made and seconded by women! His final sermon was preached on September 10, though he continued to fulfill other pastoral duties until the end of the month.

During the ensuing pastoral vacancy, duties at St. Mark were performed by Rev. Martin Duchow, assisted by several other area Lutheran pastors.

A Children's Choir was formed at St. Mark during this interim period. Organizers and directors were Kendall P. Hayward and Anne Komm. Sixteen children were members. Their first performance was at the Christmas Eve service in 1961.

St. Mark voters agreed unanimously on November 15, 1961, to extend a call to Rev. Joseph Hakes of Zion, Hopkins, MN, to become its pastor at an annual salary of \$5,000. Pastor Hakes accepted and was installed on January 28, 1962, by Rev. Karl Graesser, President of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Atlantic District.

Renovation work on the new parsonage was completed in time for Pastor Hakes' arrival in Glastonbury with his family. The old parsonage was sold for \$20,000 on February 13, 1962.

Pastor Hakes dropped the requirement to attend registering before partaking of Communion and instituted an Easter Eve worship service in addition to those traditionally held on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Ascension and Thanksgiving. At this same time old hymnals no longer used were given to Pastor Heinz's mission in Coventry.

Under Pastor Hakes' leadership, St. Mark continued to grow and prosper. In 1962 \$3,400 out of a \$20,000 budget was sent to the Church-at-Large and other missions. By 1967 there were 270 baptized members with a communicant membership of 133, and voting membership of 20. Sunday School attendance averaged 98.

On February 28, 1967, Rev. Hakes died suddenly. The congregation quickly responded with aid and comfort for his widow and four children. On March 5 it was voted to "pay Mrs. Hakes the equivalent of the late pastor's salary as a gift as long as she remains in the parsonage." Mrs. Hakes and the children relocated to Buffalo, New York, that summer.

For the eighteen months St. Mark remained without a pastor, Fred Kamm and Gene Hall, as presidents of the congregation, assumed the reins of leadership. Rev. William Ruppard, Chaplain of the Connecticut Veterans Hospital in Rocky Hill; Rev. Walter

Abel; and Pastor Bruce Rudolph from Trinity Rockville fulfilled pastoral duties here.

After several calls to the pastorate of St. Mark were declined by others, Rev. Thomas J. Windsor accepted. Rev. Windsor, a recent seminary graduate, had served on an interim basis parishes in Vestal, NY; Anchorage, AK; and Forest Park, IL. His ordination on June 9 in Buffalo, NY, was attended by St. Mark President Gene Hall and his wife Pat. He was installed as pastor of St. Mark on June 30, 1968, by Rev. Wilhelm H. Wilkins. Pastor Windsor was newly wed. He and Sandra (Zipperian) had been married April 6.

Pastor Windsor's first undertaking here was to rewrite the church constitution with the aid of commentary from the Church Board. The modernized constitution was ratified in the fall of 1968. That August, the name of the congregation was officially changed to The Lutheran Church of St. Mark at Glas-tonbury, Connecticut, Inc.

Women could finally vote at St. Mark! They were not, however, allowed to serve on councils or as deacons. The new constitution divided church administration into five councils, each headed by a deacon. Councils were Fellowship, Financial, Education, Evangelism and Worship. The office of president was retained. Deacons were elected for staggered two-year terms at annual June elections.

Pastor Windsor also added Folk Masses with guitar accompaniment to the worship schedule. An Epiphany Service was also added. There was increased emphasis on lay involvement in worship leadership. During Advent 1970, lay assistants began serving communion. In 1964, when Rev. Hakes was pastor, laymen had begun to read the Scripture Lessons at services. At first these lay participants were only chosen from among the five deacons. Communion was served every Sunday.

The Sunday School began using a new curriculum, *Mission Life Series*. It was a multi-media approach to Bible study, social concerns and Christian ethics.

Bible Study was organized for women each Tuesday morning and all adults each Friday evening. The groups met in various members' homes.

Other initiatives during the Windsor years were a tape cassette ministry to shut-ins and a telephone ministry called Dial-a-Devotion. In September 1968, Altar Guild was reorganized with Arlene Lowe as chairman. *The Messenger* (the name being a result of a congregational contest), a monthly newsletter still in existence, began with Sharon Hess and Doris Andreoli as editors. Its first issue was January 1969.

Pastor Windsor's first Confirmation class in 1969 gave the Eternal Light, which hangs in the present church, as their gift to the church.

In January 1969, Priscilla Guild donated \$20 to modernize the library. Members of the church donated books so that by April, seventy-two volumes had been received. Merlin and Bertha Christianson, with others' help, built book shelves and catalogued books and audiovisual materials for Sunday School. The librarians were Bertha Christianson and Sharon Hess. In the ensuing years, the Book Nook grew to contain over 650 volumes. Mrs. Christianson continued her involvement until her resignation as librarian in September 1981. At that time, Louise Sansing took over these responsibilities.

Kendall Hayward, who served as organist and choir director from 1947-1969, resigned, and became the organist at Redeemer in Lebanon, CT. From 1967 to 1969, Mr. Hayward was assisted by Fred Webster as choir director.

Sandra Windsor, pastor's wife, assumed the position of organist and choir director. The choir was then composed of about a dozen selected members who performed elaborate chorales. These were sometimes accompanied by brasses and tympani. A folk choir of young people was also organized.

The first son of this congregation to enter the full-time ministry was ordained at St. Mark, August 12, 1972. He was George Francis Fyler, III, confirmed at St. Mark, June 9, 1957. He is a graduate of Concordia Seminary and is married to the former Louise Hakes.

On September 3, 1970, the Priscilla Guild, which had resigned from the Women's Missionary League, reorganized as Women of St. Mark. Nine women were elected to a steering committee to "develop various areas of Christian services." They were: Gloria Kukla, Doris Andreoli, Kathy Poselenszny, Sharon Hess, Ruth Pickhardt, Edith Bostelman, Carol Schwab, Nancy Bauer, and Marge Anderson.

The first project of the Women of St. Mark was a Christmas social, December 3, 1970, at which baked goods and handicrafts were auctioned. The proceeds were given to clothe a child at the Lutheran School for the Deaf in West Hartford and toward the Lutheran Church of the Deaf Summer Camp Program.

A Fisherman program, of lay outreach to the unchurched, began in January 1969. Organized by Dave Anderson and Rev. Paul Kaiser, it consisted of 24 members who visited newcomers and invited them to church. By March, 13 new families totaling 45 people had joined St. Mark as a result of this outreach! By 1971 average church attendance had grown to 170 worshippers per service, necessitating two services each Sunday. Membership grew to 500 with 120 enrolled in Sunday School.

1970's - A New Sanctuary

Facilities had been outgrown. Classroom space had to be rented at Naubuc School across the

street from the church to accommodate the overflow from Sunday School and adult Bible classes. A building committee, organized in 1968, was working toward solving the problem. Members were Ernest Gagno, Edward Komm, Raymond Poselenzny, William Raabe, James Schraffenberger, Eugene Hall, and Edward Ingbretsen. A building program was launched on October 5, 1969, at a congregational dinner at Naubuc School. Edmund Van Dyke Cox was selected as architect. His proposed design for educational, administrative, and worship facilities was shown to the congregation on June 9, 1970, and approved on June 15. A fund drive began July 12. A more detailed design was approved October 5 and construction bids were sought. On March 21, 1971, completed plans were approved by the congregation. On June 27 ground was broken for the construction of a contemporary styled sanctuary adjacent to the 1925 building. On August 29, financing was approved and St. Mark received a construction loan of \$195,400. A.J. Pepin and Son was the contractor chosen. On October 24, members approved designs for church furnishings, organ, and stained glass windows. Costs for furnishing were \$23,000.



The nine stained glass windows were designed for St. Mark by Willet Studios of Philadelphia and were called Revelation Windows. Made of faceted glass, they are spaced randomly in the north wall and diffuse the morning light through a variety of rich colors. The clerestory windows high above the altar channel strong sunlight against the west wall through clear glass. The net effect is a sense of the presence of God among His people. The "revelations" symbolized in the windows are:

- *God's majesty revealed in the heavens*
- *God's role as creator of the earth and all its beauty*
- *God's awesomeness to man as are moon and stars awesome to His people*
- *God revealed as lawgiver for His people*
- *God's glory revealed in the incarnation of His Son, Jesus Christ in the representation of Virgin, Child and Epiphany Star*
- *God's revelation of His salvation plan in the crucifixion of His Son*
- *God revealed in the intimate love of the family circle*
- *The crowning glory of God's revelation to His people...the resurrection of the Christ*

On December 26, 1971, the old church was deconsecrated and worship was moved to Naubuc School cafeteria. The new church building was actually an addition to the northeast corner of the old building, leaving that structure intact. The old build-

ing was converted for use as a parish hall and Sunday School facility.

On April 9, 1972, the new building was dedicated. Participating in the leadership of the 10:30 a.m. service were Rev. Victor Albers, Rev. Elmer Dreyer, and Pastor Windsor. Special music was provided by Mrs. Windsor at the organ and Edwin DeGroat playing trumpet. A 3:30 p.m. service was led by Rev. Robert Riedel, former Pastor Karl Blake and Pastor Windsor. A choir from the Cheshire Lutheran Church provided special music under the direction of Rev. Louis G. Neuchterlein.



By 1975 St. Mark had a membership of 311 communing members and 481 baptized members. Worship attendance averaged 200. Sunday School had 128 students. The church's annual budget was over \$30,000.

On May 18, 1975, Pastor Windsor informed the congregation that he had accepted a call to Redeemer Lutheran Church in San Diego, CA. Pastor and Mrs. Windsor were honored with a farewell dinner at Glastonbury Hills Country Club on June 11.

Rev. Elmer Dreyer, from Christ Lutheran Hartford, served as interim pastor and on the Call Committee after Pastor Windsor's departure. On September 28, 1975, he was extended a call to the pastorate of St. Mark and was installed as such November 23 by Rev. Wilhelm Wilkens.

Gretchen Hill was selected to fill Sandra Windsor's position as organist and choir director in September 1975. Also in existence then was a folk choir under the direction of Marge Anderson.

Leaving the Missouri Synod

Events were occurring within the Missouri Synod which were ultimately to affect St. Mark. The Synod's leadership had become ultra-conservative with the election of Dr. Jacob Preus as its president. The conservative leadership on January 20, 1974, had suspended Dr. John Tietjen, president of Concordia Seminary, for teaching what they believed to be heresy. Virtually all the seminary students and faculty became the Seminary in Exile (Seminex). In this region, the Atlantic district had been split in 1973 into the New England District, the New Jersey District, and the Atlantic District with the hope that this could diffuse the opposition to the conservative movement. On March 16, 1974, the New England District resolved to support Seminex with a \$200 contribution from each congregation within the district; to ask Synod to reevaluate decisions made at the New Orleans Convention and in St. Louis regarding Concordia Seminary; and to ask that Missouri Synod churches be allowed to extend calls to graduates and

vicars of Seminex. Days later, on March 23, 1974, the Missouri Synod Commission on Constitutional matters ruled Seminex graduates were not eligible for calls to Missouri Synod churches, and those churches who did extend such calls would forfeit Synod membership. On March 28, a special congregational meeting of St. Mark was called to discuss the situation and on April 17, Pastor Windsor sent a pastoral letter to the membership addressing the issues. In September, after Pastor Windsor had left Glastonbury, St. Mark held two meetings to inform members of the issues. Pastor Charles Kuhl of Zion Manchester presented Synod's point of view. Pastor Dan Fuhler presented the opposing view. St. Mark donated \$200 to Seminex in 1974.

In spite of efforts of a group calling themselves Evangelical Lutherans in Mission, who coordinated financial support for Seminex and reconciliation efforts, division grew within the church-at-large. Pastor Dreyer announced to Council on July 21, 1976, that he would be withdrawing from the ministerial roll of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. This forced St. Mark to take action, as a Synod church could not be ministered by a non-Synod pastor. St. Mark resigned from the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, effective June 15, 1977, ending an association begun informally in 1889 and officially in 1906. The resignation was the result of votes taken at two separate meetings, May 11 and May 22, 1977. The congregation, on May 11, elected not to become a part of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, the church formed by many former Missouri-Synod churches and clergy, but rather to remain an independent congregation. Pastor Dreyer joined AELC in 1977.

This independent status was temporary for St. Mark. On April 26, 1978, an affiliation committee comprising Liz Tarasewich, Don Orend, Fred Webster, Ardra and Richard Kretzmer, John Gearhart, Kathy Poselenzny and Paul Taff was appointed by the Board of Deacons to consider whether or not to rejoin the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod or to join one of the other Lutheran organizations. At a congregational meeting on January 29, 1979, the committee's report was received and voters, by a two-thirds majority, chose affiliation with the AELC. On February 25, a second vote confirmed the first. In a special service September 23, 1979, AELC Auxiliary Bishop Cyril Wismar presented to St. Mark its charter of membership in the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches.

Though St. Mark had been experiencing pain and turmoil through these years, Christian ministry had continued. The church sponsored, through Lutheran Immigration and Relief Services, a refugee

family, Ying and Yer Lee Moua and daughter Yami, who arrived in February 1977, and were settled into an apartment in Hartford. This project was funded by a combination of donations and the proceeds from the Holiday Fair. Independent today, the family moved down south.

The 1980's

The question of equality for women in the life of St. Mark was finally settled during Pastor Dreyer's ministry here. In May 1976 the Board of Deacons voted that girls as well as boys could serve as acolytes. On January 8, 1978, concerned that no women were on the Board of Deacons, Bob Mikkleson addressed the congregation on the need for constitutional amendment. Ron Strine, Robert Schmidt, and John Davis were named as a Constitutional Revision Committee. On March 16, 1980, St. Mark ratified a new constitution calling for "full suffrage for women," allowing them, for the first time, to hold church office. Other changes included "increased participation (of the congregation) in decision-making, efficiency of operation of congregational life, and clarity of language." To the Board of Deacons as set up by the Windsor constitution were added: Trustee Deacon, two Deacons-at-large, a vice president, a secretary and a treasurer.

At the first election of officers under this new constitution April 27, 1980, Gloria Connery and Lois Ott were selected as the first women ever to serve on St. Mark's Board of Deacons.

In 1980 Project Inside-Out, chaired by Roy Tapio and Alan Dresser, was begun to address the need for renovation of the old church building. By October 12 nearly \$20,000 had been pledged by members, and Robert Turner contracted to install vinyl siding, new gutters and new storm windows on the old building. The new building was painted as well. Work was completed in January 1981 and a special Thanksgiving Eucharist was held February 1, with Rev. Rudolph P.F. Ressimyer, Bishop of the East Coast Synod of AELC and former president of the Atlantic District of the LCMS, as guest preacher. A reception followed in the parish hall.

The Fisherman program, which had lapsed, was revitalized in October 1981 under the leadership of Evangelism Deacon Gloria Connery.

Another program instituted at the same time by Evangelism was the Shepherd program. Attendance was taken at worship and those missing for a while were contacted by a "shepherd." It was an effort of a caring congregation to reach out to its own who may have illness in the family or for other reasons may need pastoral care or just friendly contact with their church.

Begun then, too, was Neighborhood Watch, in which names and addresses of new members of the

community are procured and a post card sent inviting them to visit St. Mark.

In the mid-sixties, the Walther League had ceased operation, and in spite of several attempts to get one started, St. Mark was without a youth organization. On November 16, 1980, the Lutheran Youth Fellowship for 7th, 8th, and 9th graders was formally organized with Gloria Connery as advisor. A senior division was added the following summer. Activities included: picnics, skating, skiing, parties, retreats, trips to fairs and amusement parks, participation in the Lutheran Youth Congress, mowing the church lawn, raking leaves each fall and participation in the Holiday Fair of St. Mark. Fundraising projects included car washes, candy sales, bake sales, rock-athons and paper collection drives. By 1985 this group was going strong with 11 young people in the junior division and 26 in the older group.

Gretchen Hill's last service as organist/choir director at St. Mark was on Thanksgiving Day, 1981. Nancy Laubsher became interim choir director with Al Eker as interim organist until the following summer when Bryan A. Leone assumed the position of Director of Music.

During 1981, the Education Council, headed by Charles Sansing, studied "Confirmation and First Communion," a joint publication of the LCA, ALC, and LCMS. It recommended separating confirmation from entry to the Lord's Table. It was the decision of the congregation, however, to retain the present practice of admitting only confirmed members to Communion. It is the practice of members to bring their young children to the altar for a blessing during communion. Some unconfirmed young people who transfer to St. Mark from Lutheran congregations where they were communicants do commune here.

In 1981, a Committee to Consider Congregational Concerns, headed by Don Orend, was formed to review Pastor Dreyer's leadership. As a result of expressions of concern voiced in a questionnaire submitted to members by this committee, Auxiliary Bishop Wismar met with the congregation on September 9. An outgrowth of this meeting was the formation of the Pastor-Parish Committee charged with acting to facilitate resolution of problems before they grew. Members were Bob Hylander, Phyllis Oglesby, and Ron Strine.

On December 30, 1981, Pastor Dreyer submitted his resignation, preaching his last sermon at St. Mark on January 31, 1982. During this trying time, St. Mark suffered a great loss of membership. In early 1982, attendance at Sunday services had dropped to about 80, but rose again to slightly more than 100 by May.

The call process, which involved a self-study, began when Auxiliary Bishop Wismar met with the

congregation on February 7. The process involved interviewing a number of candidates and then submitting their names to the congregation for selection of whom to call as its pastor.

On June 13 names and histories of candidates for call were presented to the congregation. On June 20 members voted to call Rev. John J. Marschhausen of Our Savior Lutheran, Mineola, NY, to the pastorate of The Lutheran Church of St. Mark at a salary of \$16,500 annually.

The parsonage was quickly refurbished and Pastor Marschhausen, wife Dorothy, and children Laura and John, arrived in Glastonbury in August 1982. He was officially installed as pastor here at a 4:30 p.m. special service on September 12, 1982. Liturgist and preacher at the installation was Rev. Arthur Hawlicheck, retired pastor and member at St. Matthew Lutheran in Avon, CT.

A New Hymnal

St. Mark had dedicated for liturgical use the Lutheran Book of Worship on August 22, 1982, and began using Setting I, the contemporary setting for worship. Its adoption the previous April 25 had followed three years of discussion by the Worship Committee. The LBW had been used as a resource for the choir for several years prior to its adoption at St. Mark. The books had been purchased in June at a cost of \$1,649, slightly less than the amount raised through memorial gifts.

With a new pastor, new liturgy and hymn book, and a new music director, St. Mark still had an old, old problem--periodic financial crises, especially in the aftermath of the loss of membership and the pain of the early eighties. Over the years, as has been mentioned, emergency funds were acquired by loans from members or from the community, through various public fundraising projects. One of the latter was a holiday fair held near the Christmas season. Budgets during this period usually exceeded pledges. For example, the 1982 budget was \$59,577, but the 77 pledges received totaled only about \$46,000. The financial crunch was especially felt over the summer when so many members were away. This usually necessitated a special collection to pay bills. For instance, to cover the crisis of the summer of 1983, St. Mark had "Adopt - A - Bill," where members were asked to pledge to pay one of the congregation's many outstanding bills.

An emphasis during Pastor Marschhausen's ministry was a renewed commitment to the missions of the church outside the walls of St. Mark. In November 1982 St. Mark joined with all the other Lutheran Synods in the U.S. in an appeal for funds to alleviate world hunger. Small banks shaped like loaves of bread, "Love Loaves," were distributed to members to be filled and returned as an offering at Thanksgiving.

The \$238.84 collected was sent to Lutheran World Relief for famine relief.

For the first time in a number of years, the 1983 budget included \$1,000 as a line item for Serving Others. In November 1984 the Church Council passed a resolution to increase the amount for Serving Others in each budget by 1%, until reaching 10% of the total budget -- a tithe. In addition, monies offered in Lenten Self-Denial folders and Advent Dime folders are designated for the missions of the church - at - large.

In 1982 the Sunday School began providing a Thanksgiving meal for a needy East Hartford family. Each class was responsible for providing a portion of the meal with their donations. They had for many years, with the help of the Women of St. Mark, donated \$100 to the Cromwell Home for children around Christmas; and for many years collected Campbell's soup labels to procure equipment for the Lutheran School for the Deaf in Detroit, MI.

New in 1984 was the Seasonal Sharing Project coordinated by Debbie and Courtney Morrow. Food, Christmas gifts, and money were donated by members of St. Mark so that four families enjoyed a happier Christmas than would have been the case.

Although St. Mark had not in the recent past budgeted funds for benevolent purposes, members were mindful of this responsibility. For example, in 1981, ten percent of Inside - Out funds received through community fundraising efforts was given to ABC (A Better Chance) House of Glastonbury, and to NET, a ministry of St. James Episcopal Church, which provided emergency housing for troubled young people. Women of St. Mark for many years supported Lutheran World Relief. They made quilts, sweaters (most of them knitted by Lillian Kamm), and layettes for LWR. The women also sponsored an annual carol sing for shut-ins and residents of Salmon Brook.

Ecumenism has long been practiced at St. Mark. Lutheran Youth Fellowship belonged to Youth of Glastonbury Churches, organized in 1984. LYF participated in YGC New Games Tournament and held a bake sale in support of the Glastonbury Children's fund.

On March 4, 1983, Women of St. Mark hosted a World Day of Prayer service of Church Women United. In other years St. Mark's women have participated by taking part in the program and with their attendance and offerings. St. Mark was represented on the Founding Board of the Glastonbury Conference of Churches. On Thanksgiving Eve 1984, St. Mark hosted the community Thanksgiving Service.

Glastonbury Episcopalians and Lutherans shared an evening discussing the Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue at a dessert-coffee on the anniversary of Martin Luther's birthday, November 10, 1983. It was

hosted by St. Mark for St. James and St. Luke. The discussion was led by Auxiliary Bishop Wismar of the AELC and the Right Rev. Bradford Hastings, Bishop Suffragan of the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut. The Eucharist was celebrated as a conclusion to the evening.

An outgrowth of the discussion of the Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogue was that the people of St. Mark were invited to attend the 6:45 a.m. Eucharist at St. James each Wednesday during Lent in 1984 and 1985, and to share a light breakfast served by the ladies of St. James afterward. Pastor Marschhausen was a participant in the leadership of the services.

The Women of St. Mark hosted a pan-Lutheran gathering October 11, 1983. It was a dessert-coffee fellowship and a celebration of the Eucharist. Women attended from St. Paul in Wethersfield, Zion in Portland, Faith in East Hartford, Concordia and Immanuel in Manchester, Trinity in Vernon, and Bethlehem in East Hampton.

Pastor Marschhausen served on the AELC New England Board of Directors and on the East Coast Synod Council.

Another contact with other Lutherans was through Aid Association for Lutherans. A branch of AAL was formed at St. Mark in 1984. Members also came from Zion, Concordia and Immanuel in Manchester, as well as Prince of Peace, Coventry. Dave Rau was the AAL representative.

Christian Education at St. Mark then included a weekday Bible study begun in 1983, a 7th and 8th grade confirmation class, a Sunday Bible class for teens, the adult class already mentioned, a Word and Witness study group began in 1983, and, of course, the Sunday School. Sunday School students were expected to memorize Bible verses, names of the books of the Bible, Ten Commandments, The Lord's Prayer, Apostles' Creed, and Luther's explanations of the latter three. The number of students enrolled was 59.

St. Mark's Music Director Bryan Leone announced April 4, 1984, that he would be leaving in June to enter Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. In his brief term as music director, he had helped the congregation learn Setting I and Setting II of the LBW. He also led worshippers in learning to chant the Psalms.

St. Mark's first daughter to enter the ministry, Gloria Connery, began her studies at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in June 1984.

Doris Andreoli acted as interim organist until Eugenia Hamisevich was hired as organist and choir director in 1984. Ms. Hamisevich holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Julliard, with a major in organ. (What a far cry from that first organist who played with one finger!) In addition to the parish

choir, St. Mark again had a youth choir. It began rehearsals September 9, 1984, following worship.

Though St. Mark had a pictorial directory of its membership in the 1970's, it was out of date. In September 1984, pictures were taken and St. Mark had a Centennial Pictorial Directory. The effort was spearheaded by Phyllis Webster.

The Lutheran Church of St. Mark in its first 100 years came from being a German-speaking congregation in a rural, agricultural society, whose members were almost totally of Lutheran background, to being an English-speaking congregation in suburbia with many members from various Christian traditions. Communion, once served only four times a year, was now celebrated every Sunday and at other special services. Female members, once allowed only an auxiliary role in the life of their church, now had full and equal rights and responsibilities and played a role in all facets of church life. Administration of church affairs went from nine (the pastor, four corporate officers, two trustees, and two deacons) in 1900 to fourteen (the pastor, five corporate officers, six committee chairmen, and two members-at-large) in 1985. Communicant membership over the past 100 years had grown from fewer than 30, to 353 by 1985.



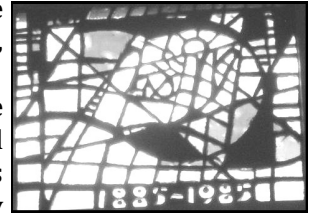
Church 125th Year Historical Update

Late 1980's

The Congregation's 100th Anniversary celebration was held during May of 1985. Bishop Rudolph P. F. Ressemeyer of the East Coast Synod, The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches led the May 5 Centennial Service. The special guest was Harold Wimmer, Bishop of the New England Synod, The Lutheran Church in America. A Centennial Banquet was held at the Manchester Country Club, with guest speaker Bishop Walter Martin, retired Auxiliary Bishop of the East Coast Synod, for the Metropolitan New York Region, ELCA. The total expenses for the Centennial Celebration were \$29,952, which included the cost of gifts in celebration of the event. Two specially designed stained glass windows by Willett Studios in Philadelphia were installed in the south wall of the sanctuary. The smaller window on the left contains symbols of the sacraments of Communion and Baptism.

Communion is symbolized by stalks of wheat and a cup of wine. Baptism is shown by water along the bottom, toward which the Holy Spirit, the white area, descends.

The window on the right symbolizes "The Word becoming flesh." The Word is the open book. The Holy Child is held in God's hand.



The Congregation, in October 1986, voted to separate preparation for Holy Communion from instruction for Confirmation so that young people who are deemed ready would be able to receive Communion without having been confirmed.

Facility and Land Issues

One major change was made to the church facility in 1985: the parking lot was extended at a cost of \$21,828. In 1989 the parking lot was paved and lighting installed for a total cost of \$18,912.

In late 1984 the Church was approached by two developers expressing an interest in purchasing a portion of the church property to the north. In early 1985 Ron Strine was asked to represent the Church in continuing discussions with John Sakon Development, which was assembling a parcel in excess of ten acres north of the church. After a number of meetings and negotiations, the Congregation agreed on January 24, 1988, to the sale of approximately 1.6 acres at the northern edge of the parking lot for \$85,000. Thus began a 25-year effort to develop the tract of land, which continues today.

A property record search in 1988, in connection with the 1.6 acre sale to Sakon, led to the discovery that through several name change efforts and State filings we mistakenly created two corporations. The Evangelical Lutheran Saint Mark's Church of Glastonbury, Connecticut, was incorporated on September 9, 1902. On August 18, 1961, the name was changed to Saint Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Glastonbury, Connecticut. On January 18, 1980, intending to change the name, a mistake was made and a second incorporation was registered in the name of The Lutheran Church of Saint Mark, Glastonbury, Connecticut. On the advice of counsel, the Council proposed a joint meeting in April 1989 of the two corporations to vote to merge into one and change the name to The Lutheran Church of Saint Mark, Glastonbury, Connecticut. The filing evidencing the change occurred on September 5, 1989.

ELCA

In the mid-1980's, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) was created by the merger of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in America and the American Lutheran Church.

In October 1986 Church Council appointed Audrey Raabe, Eleanor Jacobs, and Beverly Melvin to a committee to review and compare our current constitution with the model proposed by the ELCA.

The ELCA met in Portland, ME, in June 1987 and elected Robert L. Isakson as the first bishop of the New England Synod. A new constitution and by-laws for the Synod were passed, along with a proposed budget of \$1.8 million. Proportional share per baptized member was set at \$12 to \$20.

In January 1988 the congregation became a member of the New England Synod, ELCA. The congregation also became a part of the Greater Hartford Conference of the New England Synod, and Pastor Marschhausen was elected the first Dean of the Greater Hartford Conference. The recommended constitutional changes were formally accepted in July 1989.

Ministry

St. Mark entered 1987 with a “milestone” six-figure budget of \$100,000. As the church continued to grow, new initiatives were begun. St. Mark’s participated in a television ministry program with St. Paul and First Church. The series “Living the Word” ran for thirteen weeks.

At the suggestion of Jan Frick, a tag and bake sale was held in 1988 as a fundraiser to help defray some of the church’s mission obligations. The event raised \$838.

In 1989 Judy Fuller was hired to work 15 hours per week as the Office Secretary.

On June 10, 1987, Bryan Leone became the second member of St. Mark’s to be ordained. On January 7, 1990, Gloria Jean Connery became the third member of our church to be ordained.

The 1990’s - Building for the Future

In 1990 the Church Council appointed an ad hoc “Long-Range Planning Committee.” This committee studied the long-range needs of the congregation and made its recommendations to the Church Council. The highest priorities were (1) to address the space needs of the congregation, especially the educational needs and the desire to serve the neighborhood and community; (2) the replacement of the aging electronic organ in the church; and (3) updating of the parsonage building.

Between 1990 and 1995 the windows of the parsonage were all reglazed and some storm windows were replaced; the upstairs bathroom was renovated; a new furnace was installed; and new flooring was installed in many areas.

The Church Council recommended to the Congregation in 1991 that St. Mark build a new educational wing to address the first priority identified by the Long-Range Planning Committee. After a suc-

cessful initial Gift Campaign and Building Fund Campaign, the congregation proceeded to build the 2,500 square foot educational wing in 1992. The construction financing was secured through Mechanics Savings Bank of Hartford. The long-term financing was secured through Aid Association for Lutherans, Appleton, Wisconsin. The C.F.M. Construction Company of Glastonbury (Charles F. Monseglio, President) was General Contractor and Construction Manager. David Cox of Glastonbury served as architect. The Building Committee for St. Mark was chaired by Gary Steuber. The following served on the Building Committee: Pastor John Marschhausen, Audrey Raabe, Karen Cooke, John Ambrose, Raymond Frick, Donald Orend, and Jennifer Steuber. The ground breaking was held in September 1992. Construction began in November 1992 and was completed in June 1993 at a cost of \$225,000. The building was formally dedicated on September 12, 1993.

At its December 15, 1993, meeting, the Church Council brought the Educational Building Project to a close with the authorization to order the new furniture for the lounge using money raised by the special “furniture project” and funds from the undesignated Memorial Fund.

In 1993 through the efforts of Don Orend, a “meditation garden” was established in a space between the church and the educational building. It is closed on three sides, and with its garden features, provides a quiet, private setting for restful reflection.

Staffing Changes

For the first time in the congregation’s history, St. Mark was assigned a seminary intern to be shared with Faith Lutheran East Hartford. Vicar Hans Haspel-Schoenfeld started on October 1, 1994, and served until June 11, 1995.

In 1992 the congregation celebrated Pastor Marschhausen’s tenth anniversary as pastor of St. Mark. 1995 marked the 25th anniversary of Pastor Marschhausen’s ordination — another cause for celebration. Change was just around the corner, however. In early 1997 Pastor Marschhausen announced that he had received a call to become pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, New Haven, Connecticut, and that he was accepting the call.

After consultation with Bishop Isaksen’s office, and with Pastor Kathleen Reed, assistant to Bishop Isaksen, St. Mark accepted the appointment of Pastor John Stadlander as Vacancy Pastor during the call process. A Pastoral Call Committee was appointed consisting of Dave Taylor (Chair), Helga Dickau, Judy Durham, Lee Hilliard, Charles Sansing, Ron Strine and Ellen Zerillo.

On Sunday, October 19, 1997, the congrega-

tion voted to extend a call to Pastor Rebecca J. Bourret who was serving as interim pastor for Concordia Lutheran Church in Manchester, Connecticut. Pastor Bourret started as the pastor of St. Mark on December 1, 1997, and was installed February 8, 1998.

In September 1994, Eugenia Hamisevich announced her resignation as organist and choir director of St. Mark. She had served since November 1984. Anna Rayburn served as St. Mark's interim organist and choir director until June 1995, when Donna S. Murphy was hired as St. Mark's Minister of Music.

In 1997 Bill Galiette was hired as Church Sexton, and subsequently moved into the church parsonage with his family when it became vacant following Pastor Marcshhausen's leaving.

Ministry of the Church

In 1991 a Missions Committee was added and quickly got to work. During 1992 the congregation became a mission partner with Bethphage Lutheran Mission of Connecticut. On behalf of the New England Synod, Bethphage runs a number of group homes in Connecticut for the developmentally disabled. St. Mark became involved by "adopting" the group home in Portland, CT, as its special mission project.

In the autumn of 1992, with the help of District Representative Del Springer, Aid Association for Lutherans established a fraternal branch of St. Mark together with Faith Lutheran Church, East Hartford. J. William Raggie was the first branch president.

In 1994 a Sunday morning 8:15 a.m. service was added to the weekly worship schedule. Two years later, the supplemental hymnal *With One Voice* was introduced, and a Junior Choir was started by Donna Murphy, Minister of Music.

In 1996 the Church Council spent considerable time on how to improve its greater community outreach. It was decided to conduct an Easter Egg Hunt at the church the day before Easter. Plans were also made to revive a Vacation Bible School. St. Mark held its first "Action Auction" and Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. Name tags for members were introduced to help members and visitors alike to identify people.

At the June 1999 New England Synod Assembly, a resolution was passed to endorse "Called to Common Mission" which would allow full communion with the Episcopal Church. The proposal was to come before the ELCA Church-wide Assembly in August.

Meeting New Challenges

A quote from Council President Fritz Kuenzler in his 1996 President's Report sums up conditions at St. Mark in 1996: "As you are aware, your Council continues to struggle with the many demands

placed upon our budget and the tenuous financial condition that we find ourselves."

In 1996 the Council developed a new vision statement: "In relationship with Jesus Christ, through the Word that gathers and nourishes us, we receive the truth that brings meaning and fulfillment to all aspects of our lives."

The Church Council appointed a committee of Jennifer Steuber, Chuck Ott, Marilyn Felmer and Ginny McIntosh to develop a Church Survey to solicit ideas and concerns from the congregation. The results of the survey centered on more leadership, youth programs, mission outreach, personal spiritual life, and improved Council communications.

St. Mark went on-line in 1996 with the e-mail address of "therev@imagine.com."

In May 1996 it was confirmed that the mission resources entrusted to the New England Synod were badly mismanaged, resulting in a financial loss in excess of \$740,000. The Church Council voted in July 1995 to suspend benevolence payments to the Synod and to hold such funds in escrow until such time as an independent audit was conducted and corrective actions taken.

The 1996 Pastor's Annual Report to the Congregation included the following statistics:

<i>Membership on 12/31/96—</i>	429
<i>Average Weekly Attendance —</i>	135
<i>Avg. Weekly Sunday School Attendance —</i>	38

The exterior and interior of the church were painted in the fall of 1998 at a cost of under \$12,000. The fiscal year 1998 ended with a \$3,764 surplus.

In 1999 the mortgage was refinanced changing the rate from a variable 7.625% to a fixed 6.75% thereby reducing the monthly payments by \$140.

A Pipe Organ for St. Mark

An organ committee, chaired by Fred "Jake" Jacobs, was formed in 1998. The church had been blessed with a donation of an Austin pipe organ from the Wamester family. Professional opinions were sought concerning whether to expand the organ now or in the future. A number of other organs became available, including the instrument at Christ Lutheran Church in Hartford, which disbanded in 1999, and all were investigated to determine the best fit.

2000's -

The Quest for a Pipe Organ is Realized

The Austin pipe organ was determined to not be quite the right size for our sanctuary, and in 2002 it was sold. The following year, the congregation agreed to purchase and refurbish a Wick's organ for a projected cost of \$60,000. Odell Organs of East Hampton, Connecticut, repaired, cleaned, revoiced, and installed the instrument, after Ronald



Kraatz and the Property committee readied the sanctuary, creating space for the pipes and blowers.

Organ fundraising was led by Bill Wamester, and the completed project was celebrated with the organ dedication on November 21, 2004.

Worship and Outreach

In 2000 a new practice of “continuous communion” was introduced. This change meant that communicants no longer needed to wait to be invited to the table by an usher.

The church constitution was modified in 2002, granting the right to vote to all confirmed members, not only to those 18 years of age; reducing the number of congregational meetings from four to two a year, held in January and April; and renaming the Evangelism Committee the Outreach Committee. One new method of outreach for potential members was the creation of the St. Mark website www.stmarkglastonbury.org. This debuted in 2003 after months of work by Jonathan Chiu and Jake Jacobs.

In 2003 St. Mark converted to the “full text” bulletin, intended to make it easier for visitors to follow the worship service.

St. Mark joined MACC (Manchester Area Conference of Churches) in March 2004, and Eleanor Tunney was appointed the first St. Mark representative to the organization.

In 2005 St. Mark again hosted the World Day of Prayer for the churches in the Glastonbury area, continuing a tradition of Ecumenism.

A full set of new *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* hymnals was ordered in 2009, thanks to the generosity of congregation members.

A committee was formed in September 2009 to plan events to celebrate the church’s 125th Anniversary. A commemorative Christmas ornament was designed and sold to raise funds. The ornament featured the church’s altar and cross on a matte finish glass ball, and sold for \$10. The Committee planning the event included Dave Obedzinski, Audrey Raabe, Rose Marie Strine, Ron Strine, Linda Obedzinski, Pamela Koshmerl, and Deborah Gresens. A celebratory brunch at the Hilton Garden Inn followed a special church service in May 2010. Plans also included a musicale celebration.

Staffing Changes

The year 2000 brought much change. After Donna Murphy resigned as Director of Music, Linda Conway joined us in that role.

That same year, Pastor Bourret accepted a call to become a staff member of the New England Synod of the ELCA and resigned as pastor of St. Mark.

On May 20, 2001, the congregation extended a call to Rev. Joseph B. Ekeberg, who was pastor of Peace Lutheran Church in Tolland. The formal Ser-

vice of Installation was held September 30, 2001.

Mary Ann Purtill, Office Manager, who had replaced Judy Fuller, left in December 2005. Linda Rousseau served in that role in 2006 and early 2007. During Linda’s tenure, she painted and donated a series of murals that are displayed under the cross in the sanctuary during the different church seasons throughout the year. Pamela Koshmerl became Office Manager in November 2007.

In 2007 Pastor Ekeberg requested and received approval for a sabbatical leave for a period of three months over the summer. He completed an historical/church study on the ministry of his great-grandfather Gustaf Albert (G.A.) Brandelle, who was the pastor of several churches for over 30 years and was at one time President of the Augustana Lutheran Synod. The history was published in the November 2009 edition of *The Augustana Heritage* newsletter.

New Lending Library

During 2008/09 our church had been working with St. Paul’s and Our Savior’s Lutheran Churches to learn more about charitable giving, how to educate our members about this subject and how planned gifts like bequests in wills, annuities or trusts can give us all an opportunity to make an extraordinary gift that will strengthen our congregations and further our missions. This two-year charitable giving education program had been funded in part with a generous grant from Thrivent Financial. One of the projects the three churches agreed upon was to establish a lending library at each church. A bookcase has been placed in each church and contains books, DVD’s, brochures and other information on a number of topics.



Focus on Youth

The idea of increasing Youth Ministry had been discussed for several years, and in August 2002 the pastors from St. Mark, Our Savior in Newington, and St. Paul in Wethersfield talked to Gary Anderson about a shared ministry among the three churches. The Council unanimously endorsed the ministry for a two-year period. The new Youth Minister was installed at St. Mark on October 20, 2002. The increase in staffing expense led the annual budget to exceed \$200,000 in 2003.

Gary continued as youth director for several years, successfully growing the program and increasing youth participation in church activities. He resigned in 2006 and was replaced by Rev. Douglas Ryniewicz, then returned in 2007 to mid-2009.

Facility Upgrades

“The Campaign for Our Future Needs” was introduced in 2001. This was designed to raise funds and resources over a period of six years that would be needed to improve and add to the church facility

and programs as well as an endowment fund for future needs.

The new sign identifying St. Mark and fronting on Griswold Street was installed in 2002. Several years later, after the installation of the new pipe organ, the carpeting throughout the sanctuary was replaced.

In 2007 work began to renovate the church basement to remedy significant water damage, at an estimated cost of \$21,500. And in 2008, the exterior of the building was repainted, at a cost of \$20,000.

By 2009, the focus was on going “green” — making our facility and our practices more environmentally friendly. One major change was distributing the monthly newsletter, *The Messenger*, electronically rather than via postal mail, in order to reduce operating costs.

Renewing our Fellowship with St. James

It's always nice to return a favor -- even if it takes a while. For a time during the early years of St. Mark, before we had our own church building, worship services were held at St. James Church. In 2007-08, the members of St. James held worship services at St. Mark while their sanctuary was undergoing a major renovation. It was a pleasure to have the two congregations deepen their historic bond.

Much has changed, and much has remained the same: The Lutheran Church of St. Mark is still a part of the body of Christ in Glastonbury, Connecticut.

St. Mark has many traditions and practices, some of long duration, some of recent vintage. They add richness and variety to the tapestry of congregational life here: Poinsettias and three trees in the sanctuary at Christmas, lilies at Easter, special services on Christmas Eve and during Holy Week, Fellowship Hour, Altar Guild, Sunday School Christmas Pageant, and receptions after church for each confirmation class...

May God bless and prosper the Lutheran Church of St. Mark as its members continue to weave the tapestry of a congregational life of worship and service.



As part of the 125th Anniversary Celebration, the Luther Window, above, has been moved from its location in the Narthex of the old church to the Narthex of the present sanctuary, and placed in a protective lighted “window box” for all to enjoy.



The information contained herein was gathered and compiled by Ron Strine, with the assistance of the previously published first 100-year history, compiled and written by Beverly Melvin, and many members and friends of St. Mark throughout the years.

This publication was edited by Linda Obedzinski, Orinda Taylor and Rose Marie Strine.

Final publication compiled and produced by Pamela Koshmerl at The Lutheran Church of St. Mark on April 30, 2010, at Glastonbury, Connecticut .