

St. Mark Lutheran Church Butte, Montana



130th Anniversary
1888 – 2018
September 23, 2018



Chancel -- St Mark Lutheran Church decorated for Easter Sunday. Date unknown, but probably prior to 1934. Note communionware, altar cloths, old green carpet, high pulpit, side kneelers, and no communion rail.

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Chancel -- St. Mark Lutheran Church February 7, 1988 decorated for the History Day Centennial Celebration. Note Communion rail in front of altar. The altar cloths dates from approximately 1948. Pulpit has been lowered and the lectern donated in 1934 is present.

A note from the Pastor—2018

We see the blessings that Our Holy Lord has bestowed upon us by grace through faith in Christ wrought by the Holy Spirit. Every activity expresses gifts brought into existence by the creative power of our God the Father. In His spiritual gifts, we rejoice at every past, present, and future baptism. We rejoice at every past, present, and future confirmation. We rejoice at every past, present, and future wedding. We rejoice at every past, present, and future funeral. We rejoice during every Sunday Divine Service as we receive His gifts through the Word and Sacraments, we claim the joy of being part of God's own family, faithfully cared and guided through Jesus Christ our Savior. We rejoice in total thanksgiving to the Triune God that His works of creation, redemption, and sanctification have not been wasted.

God has been Faithful in calling many individuals to the Butte area and then gathering them into a church family. It is primarily in the worship life, but also through the other activities of a Christian Congregation that the Lord of the Church enables its members to work and function for the common good by witnessing, serving, and loving one another.

We rejoice in our loving and faithful God for the many good things that have happened at St. Mark during the last 130 years and look to Him to guide us in the future. Truly, we have reason not only to rejoice for our past, but to rejoice continually for renewed dedication and commitment to an even greater ministry to one another and to people everywhere.

Rejoice in the Lord, Always!

Reverend James Mavis

A note from the Pastor—1988

The pictures and information in this 100th Anniversary history booklet indicate that God has been at work in a very faithful way among the members of St. Mark Lutheran Church. In a very real sense, we are all the work of God, a demonstration of His Faithfulness throughout all the ages.

Every activity that this booklet expresses was brought into existence by the creative power of our God. Moreover, the spiritual life we all need and enjoy is the single most wonderful demonstration of the gifts God so faithfully has bestowed upon each one of us. Now through the Word and Sacraments, we claim the joy of being part of God's own family, faithfully cared and guided through Jesus Christ our Savior. We give sincere thanks to our Triune God that His works of creation, redemption, and sanctification have not been wasted.

God has been Faithful in leading many individuals to the Butte area and then gathering them into a church family. It is primarily in the worship life, but also through the other activities of a Christian Congregation that the Lord of the Church enables its members to work and function for the common good by witnessing, serving, and loving one another.

We thank our loving and Faithful God for the many good things that have happened here at St. Mark in our 100 years of history and look to Him to guide us in the future also. Truly, we have reason not only for thankfulness, but also for renewed dedication and commitment to an even greater ministry to one another and to people everywhere.

Yours in Christian Love,

Reverend Kenneth Reed

Confessional Standard

St. Mark Lutheran Church is a member of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod and as such has constitutionally adopted the following confessional standard. All activities of and decisions by the congregation relative to doctrine, conscience, and Christian life are made in accordance with this confessional standard.

St. Mark Lutheran Church accepts and acknowledges all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church contained in the Book of Concord of 1580 as a true and sound exhibition of Christian Doctrine taken from, and in full agreement with, the Holy Scriptures; and in this congregation no doctrine shall be taught or tolerated which is at variance with these Symbols of the Evangelical Lutheran Church:

1. the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostolic, the Nicene, and the Athanasian);
2. the Smalcald Articles;
3. the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and its Apology;
4. Luther's Large Catechism;
5. Luther's Small Catechism; and
6. the Formula of Concord.

The 130th Anniversary Theme—2018

"Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!" *Philippians 4: v4*

With Apostle Paul's words in mind, we rejoice in all that our Lord has done for us in His death and resurrection—because our sins have been fully atoned and eternal life is ours. We rejoice looking back to see His mighty Hand guiding the people of St. Mark, Butte, and we rejoice in the future because Heaven is our Everlasting Home. Rejoice! Again, we say Rejoice!

The Centennial Theme—1988

"The steadfast love of God never ceases,
his mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning;
Great is Thy faithfulness." *Lamentations 3: vs 22-23*

The Faithfulness of God—as expressed in Lamentations Chapter 3 verses 22 and 23 was selected by St. Mark Congregation as the theme for its Centennial year. God has indeed been Faithful to His people throughout the world including the members of St. Mark Lutheran Church and this Faithfulness is partly expressed in allowing St. Mark Lutheran Church to attain its 100th year of existence. We at St. Mark are thankful to God for His guidance and eagerly anticipate His Faithfulness to us in the future. As a part of the celebration of our Centennial year, we are attempting to record our history as a congregation in Butte, Montana, so that others may see what is so evident to us—God's Faithfulness. We sincerely hope that the reader will gain some insight into the life of this congregation and will be able to see the Faithfulness of God in the activities of the Congregation. We also understand that our history is behind us. It serves to guide and help us, but we know that our "future history" is what is really important and we look forward with excitement and anticipation to the future of St. Mark Lutheran Church and to being with our Father in heaven with all the previous members of St. Mark who have gone before us.

The History of St. Mark Lutheran Church

The next few pages will outline the history of St. Mark Lutheran Church in Butte, Montana. Many church histories often list Pastors and their activities and inadvertently overlook the congregation as the central entity. We have attempted to discuss the history of the congregation as a central theme, but have found that you cannot separate the congregation's history from the succession of pastors that God chose as its leaders. Therefore, much of our history is organized around the coming and going of St. Mark's pastors. We wish to emphasize, however, that the importance of St. Mark congregation is more than the listing of a few individuals who God chose to be its spiritual leaders, but is contained in the activities, hopes, failures, and successes through which God has reached thousands of souls in the last 130 years.

The first 49 years:1885–1934

The earliest records of St. Mark Lutheran Church begin in 1885 when the Rev. Fred Pfautenhauer (later to become the president of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod) was sent from the Dakota and Minnesota District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod to make a survey of the scattered Lutherans in southwest Montana. On a trip through Butte, Reverend Pfautenhauer conducted Lutheran services in Caplice Hall at Park and Montana Streets. Butte was a small mining camp with a highly transient population and a difficult field in which to work.

In 1886 the German Evangelical Lutheran Church of Butte, Montana, was organized and Reverend John Meyer of Helena served the young congregation. Weekly services in German were conducted in a schoolhouse on Broadway Street. It seemed that there were people in Butte willing to serve their Lord. The fledgling congregation received Mission Board support from Synod and District.

In 1888 the Butte Lutheran community required a full time pastor. Reverend Adolph Bartling was called from Addison, Illinois, to be the "Deutsche Evangelical St. Markus Kirche's" (German Evangelical St. Mark Church's) first resident pastor and was installed on September 23, 1888. In 1889 St. Mark used the Plymouth Congregational Church on West Granite Street for worship services at 3:00 p.m. with Sunday school at 1:30 p.m. During Pastor Bartling's tenure, land was purchased

at 67 West Silver Street and a small chapel was constructed for \$1,500. Pastor Bartling did not limit himself to serving St. Mark, but participated in the cornerstone service at First Lutheran Church in Helena in 1889 and served there as a vacancy pastor 1893. Ill health required Pastor Bartling to leave St. Mark and in September 1893 he accepted a call to Austin, Illinois. When Pastor Bartling left, St. Mark was a congregation of about 75 souls and a small Sunday school. The formal history of St. Mark as a congregation dates from the installation of Reverend Bartling as its first resident pastor.

The congregation then called Reverend Martin D. Hudtloff of LuVerne, Minnesota. At the time Pastor Hudtloff arrived in September 1893, St. Mark was receiving \$25 to \$30 each month from the Synod's Mission Board. Under Pastor Hudtloff's spiritual leadership, the congregation grew, prospered, and was incorporated under the laws of the State of Montana on November 14, 1895. Active Ladies Aid and Youth Clubs were two of numerous organizations within the congregation. In 1897, the congregation purchased a lot at 69 West Silver Street, adjacent to the original chapel, and built a parsonage. In 1903 the original chapel and parsonage were sold, because congregational growth required construction of a larger church. After the chapel was sold, the congregation worshiped for five years in the Finlanders Hall at 318 North Wyoming Street. German services were held each Sunday at 11:00 and 8:00 p.m. English services were held every fourth Sunday. Sunday school was held each Sunday at 9:45 a.m.

In 1901 St. Mark purchased lots at the corner of Silver and Montana Streets anticipating the time when it could construct a new church. Financial records, minutes of the voter's assembly, and old photographs indicate that homes or other buildings existed on the building site and had to be moved prior to construction. On August 26, 1906 plans by architect M. D. Kern were accepted and on October 31, 1906 the first dirt was excavated for the foundation. The bilingual (German and English) cornerstone was laid on June 16, 1907. Gifts from businesses in Butte, loans from individuals, donations from members, and sales sponsored by the congregation were all used to raise the approximate \$16,000 cost of construction. The congregation first worshiped in the lecture hall (basement) on March 1, 1908 with two special services. The morning service was led by Reverend. G. Mertz of Missoula and the evening service by Pastor Hudtloff. Construction of the chancel continued and the building was joyously dedicated on November 15, 1908. Reverend

Martin Mertz of Helena preached the dedication sermon. Five years after the dedicating the new building, the congregation celebrated its 25th anniversary in September of 1913.



M.D. Kern & Co. 1908 drawing of the proposed St. Mark Lutheran Church, Butte, Montana.

Spoken German was discouraged nationwide during World War I. Most Districts of Synod, including the Dakota and Minnesota District to which St. Mark belonged, also discouraged the use of the German language in services during World War I. St. Mark wished to continue using German and appealed to the synod for transfer to the English District where German Language services were allowed. The original petition was not granted, but later church records show that St. Mark transferred back to the Montana District from the English District, so at some point permission to join the English District must have been granted.

Unfortunately, ground subsidence, most likely related to mining a few blocks to the east of the church building, resulted in severe foundation damage. In 1925 the congregation restored the church building to its

original condition of safety and alignment. Between \$6,000 and \$7,000 were spent to repair the foundation and redecorate the interior in gray. During the three months of repairs, the congregation worshiped at the Swedish Lutheran Church at 300 South Montana.

On December 2, 1929 Pastor Hudtloff's wife Julia was called home to her Lord. Julia Hudtloff had been an untiring worker for the Lord, assisting her husband by playing the organ at services, taking an active interest in all affairs of the congregation, and teaching Sunday school. Pastor Hudtloff outlived his wife by five years, but died suddenly on May 20, 1934, after a period of failing health. Funeral services for Pastor Hudtloff were attended by eight Lutheran pastors from southwestern Montana. Pastor Hudtloff was buried in Mt. Moriah Cemetery next to Julia.



Lutheran pastors attending Reverend Martin Hudtloff's funeral in 1934. From left to right: Reverend Misch (Bozeman), Reverend Janssen (Hamilton), Reverend Mertz (Missoula-retired), Reverend Jordan (KalisPELL), Reverend Vomhof (Laurel), Reverend Ziegler (Helena) and Reverend Bundschuh (Pablo). The men are standing where St. Mark built its meeting room and handicapped access addition in 2003.

The next 26 years: 1934–1960

Reverend H. W. Moehring of Montevideo, Minnesota, accepted St. Mark's call to be its spiritual leader in November 1935. At the time he was installed, there were 250 communicant members. Between 1935 and 1941, communion was offered only about twice a year: at Christmas and Easter attracting as many as 350 people to these services; many more than on regular Sundays. Pastor Moehring encouraged the congregation to offer communion more often in hopes of boosting normal attendance. During this time, the congregation translated its constitution from German to English; belonged to the English District; built a new parsonage adjacent to the church; held annual mission festival services; and celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Women were active in the business of the church, participated in congregational meetings, and planned the decoration of the new parsonage. Groups such as Ladies Aid, Walther League, a Men's Club and Sunday school were active.

The Sunday school received little financial support from the congregation; only the loose offering from the Christmas Eve service. In July 1940 the Sunday school purchased a bus with their funds to transport children to church, but by December 1940 discontinued the service as too expensive. Between 1935 and 1941, St. Mark established a budget so that members could better track congregational expenses. Every congregational organization (Ladies Aid, Youth Club, etc.) was financially responsible to the congregational budget and had a set portion to raise and contribute. In February of 1941 Pastor Moehring left the pastorate vacant. Reverend Emil Ziegler of First Lutheran in Helena traveled to Butte by train to serve the vacancy.

The fourth pastor at St. Mark was Rev. Donald Boernke who accepted a call in July of 1941. Pastor Boernke was a fiery hard working man—very strong in evangelism; he himself made 1,704 calls in one year. Pastor Boernke stressed the importance of regular church and communion attendance; it was common practice for members to commune only once or twice a year. Evening Bible classes were held twice a month and a special class was held to train individuals to become more effective Sunday school teachers. The mission efforts of Pastor Boernke and St. Mark were recognized in 1946 in a letter from the English District Mission Board commending its good work.

Pastor Boernke faced a difficult problem during his ministry. He strictly followed the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod's position prohibiting membership in fraternal organizations. Some St. Mark members who did belong to lodges and other fraternal organizations were told that unless they gave up their outside memberships, they could not partake of the Lord's Supper. The members were encouraged to worship even though they were prohibited from communion. Several members left the congregation during this period of conflict.

During World War II, St. Mark collected clothing for the destitute in Europe and Asia. When peace was declared, St. Mark held a service of thanksgiving and collected a peace thanks offering as their portion of a Synod-wide thanks offering.

Because the walls were moving away from the floors and doors and windows were being forced out of shape, it was again necessary to reinforce the church building in 1945. A loan from Church Extension through the English District and funds from the Anaconda Company covered \$12,000 of repairs that included redecorating the building inside and out.

On September 5, 1945 the congregation's name was changed to St. Mark Lutheran Church.

In May of 1949, Pastor Boernke accepted a call to the Florida-Georgia District to do mission work in Tallahassee, Florida. Reverend O. Misch of Bozeman served the vacancy until the congregation called a new pastor. Also in May of 1949 the congregation transferred from the English District to the Montana District after accepting personal loans from members to pay the \$4,000 owed to the English District.

In September of 1949 Reverend Arnold Gierke of Hardin, Montana, accepted St. Mark's call to come to Butte. At this time the congregation numbered 278 souls. A choir, a new organ, and new organ chimes helped beautify services after Pastor Gierke arrived. Easter was particularly colorful with a cross decorated with real Easter lilies that became an Easter tradition. During Pastor Gierke's time at St. Mark, parts of Sunday services were broadcast on the radio as a mission outreach. Confirmation classes were large with 24 students in 1956 and 24 students in 1958. A change was made in St. Mark's practice of kneeling during the confession of sins, because some elderly members found kneeling difficult. Members could stand or sit during the confession as they desired.

Pastor Gierke also concentrated on evangelism with the outreach for souls always present. During his time, the congregation conducted evangelism programs and members went out two by two for the purpose of winning souls for Christ. The callers were trained and sent into the field with a Bible and a set of questions and answers on Christian truths and doctrines. The Sunday school grew quickly as did the congregation. By the end of 1958, there were more than 500 members and Sunday school enrollment was between 150 and 200. The congregation began to look for a place to build or start a second church as well as more space at its current location. In 1956 the congregation purchased land with funds loaned from the Montana District and bequests from deceased members and planned to use it to build a daughter church. In 1957 the congregation decided to add office space and create Sunday school classrooms in the basement. However, in October of 1958, before the addition was constructed, Pastor Gierke accepted a call to Belvidere, Illinois.

The vacancy created when Pastor Gierke left was the longest in St. Mark's history. Reverend Ronald Zagel of Anaconda served as interim pastor for St. Mark for almost two years. The congregation was not idle during the long vacancy and the planned program for St. Mark and for God's kingdom was carried out. Services were 9:00 a.m. on Sundays, welcoming committees of six greeted people in church, Holy Communion registrations were taken by elders, and a Reformation Day service was conducted by the youth group. Christmas Eve services (with a children's program) were held without Pastor Zagel. Work continued in evangelism with an every member visitation program.

St. Mark continued with its planned renovation that included rebuilding the garage, construction of office space above the garage, construction of new restroom facilities behind the garage, and basement classrooms. Estimated costs were \$35,000 and the congregation obtained a loan from a private lending company for \$25,000. In May of 1960 St. Mark hired Tayler-McDowell Construction Company to complete the renovation and construction. On August 21, 1960 the remodeled basement and new addition were dedicated to the glory of God with a joyous special service. District President Frieburger and Pastor Bauman of Helena were the preachers.

The congregation paid off the loans on the land purchased in 1956 for the site of a daughter church. However, the right of way for Interstate 15/90 crossed the land and the congregation later sold it for \$7,425.

The lengthy Gierke vacancy was difficult for St. Mark. With the help of the Circuit Counselor, Pastor Wagner of Bozeman, the Voters studied First Timothy pertaining to the call of Pastors. According to the Voters Assembly minutes, "We studied the whole book." A list of qualifications was also drawn up. Because many congregational families had split religious beliefs, the pastor needed to have strong personal counseling skills. Because mining caused a continual population turnover, the pastor needed to keep in close contact with new converts, new members entering the city, and with people leaving the city. The congregation desired a spiritual leader who was "strong in mission work", "strong in youth work", and most importantly "strict in following the Biblical and Lutheran doctrine of the Missouri Synod." After 14 calls, Reverend John Senter of Fort Benton, Montana, came to St. Mark.

The next 26 years 1960 – 1986

In November 1960, St. Mark celebrated with a special service of thanksgiving when Reverend John Senter was installed. Three years later the congregation celebrated its 75th anniversary on September 22, 1963 and gave that day's offerings to missions. Even though economic times were difficult during Pastor Senter's pastorate, the congregation planned for the future by again buying land for a daughter church. Pastor Senter also served the Whitehall congregation at this time and considered Butte-Whitehall to be one of his dual parishes.

The congregation was active in missions, evangelism, and youth. Training in mission work was held each month and calls on members and prospects made one evening each month. Coffee hours were times to inform members of world-wide mission activity. The third Sunday of each month focused on reaching St. Mark's mission goal and the mission budget was always met, even if it meant borrowing money.

Pastor Senter made special effort in evangelism training and often said, "Education starts in the cradle and continues on to the grave." The Sunday school staff met weekly, a preschool was held, and children participated in "Saturday school" religious classes. The members also had opportunity to train for: Bible study; visiting members of the congregation; visiting the unchurched; and in building family life based upon a rich understanding of God's purpose for the family as described in the scriptures.

The youth group was very active. Pastor Senter was chairman of the District youth committee beginning in 1957 and served until he left

St. Mark in 1967. During this period, the youth assisted with building a church at Seeley Lake, Montana; helped renovate a room for a chapel at the Warm Springs State Hospital; helped canvass for mission prospects; collected soap for Lutheran World Relief; and collected clothing for the Rocky Boys Indian Reservation.

Some of Pastor Senter's time in Butte was difficult economically because of long strikes against the Anaconda Company. Often, offerings did not cover the costs for a church secretary and sometimes Pastor Senter's salary was late. The church addition built during the Zagel vacancy placed a financial strain on the congregation and at one point Pastor Senter approached District about the possibility of a subsidy. The congregation, however, said no, "St. Mark will not be on subsidy." and through the Faithfulness of God the bills were paid.

In December 1967 Pastor Senter accepted a call to Leslie, Missouri. Reverend Martin Bauman of Helena served Butte as interim pastor until December of 1968. During the vacancy, worship services were held at 7:30 P.M. on Sunday evenings and Pastor Bauman usually stayed with a St. Mark member family on Sunday nights. On Mondays, Pastor Bauman would visit shut-ins, the sick, and hold meetings. The congregation, along with synod, considered whether altar fellowship was possible with the American Lutheran Church. St. Mark also considered to selling the parsonage to pay off the church addition debt.

In December of 1968 pastoral candidate George Ploetz from Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield, Illinois, accepted an assigned call to become pastor at St. Mark. During Pastor Ploetz's ministry, many changes occurred. The final payment on the church addition was made in 1970, a new organ was installed and dedicated in 1972, new altar paraments adorned the altar, and Chrismons were made for the Christmas tree. The congregation spent \$7,300 to restore the exterior of the church building and placed protective wire screens over some of the stained glass windows. The congregation amended its constitution in 1971 to allow elders to be elected after only 2 years of service in the Voter's Assembly. Another constitutional change in December of 1972 lowered the voting age to 19 years; a proposal to allow women's suffrage was defeated.

The congregation elected to enter altar and pulpit fellowship with Gold Hill Lutheran Church following the lead of the Missouri Synod which had decided to enter into fellowship with the American Lutheran Church. Pastor Ploetz covered services for Gold Hill during as needed and

Gold Hill returned the service during Pastor Ploetz's vacations. The two congregations also held combined Reformation Day services in 1972. In 1973 the Voters decided to participate in the Lundstrum Crusade which was to be conducted in Butte that year. St. Mark received names of 85 prospective members from the crusade, but records are not clear about how many joined the church. The Voters Assembly consented in 1974 to allow the Butte Ministerial Alliance to hold services for Christian unity at St. Mark if a pastor in altar and pulpit fellowship conducted the services.

In September of 1972 a weekday school, which met once a week between 5:00 and 7:00 P.M, was started for grades 3-8 with weekly attendance of between 35 and 40 students. A light supper was served during the school period.

St. Mark remained interested in forming a second congregation and in 1972 approached the Montana District for assistance to start the mission. However, the District was not ready to open new fields and did not offer support. St. Mark decided to proceed on its own and mission services were conducted at the Atherton Fire hall beginning in September of 1972. By March 1973 it was clear that the mission effort was ineffective, because the only people attending the mission services were St. Mark members. St. Mark discontinued the Atherton Fire hall mission effort in March of 1973. The congregation began using the Kennedy Evangelism Plan in about October 1971 with apparently enthusiastic response.

Pastor Ploetz accepted a call to Idaho Falls, Idaho, in December of 1975 and Reverend Louis Elvers served as interim pastor until March 15, 1976 when Reverend Larry La Dassar of Harlowton, Montana, was installed as pastor at St. Mark.

Pastor La Dassar served St. Mark for almost 10 years. For many reasons this time was difficult for St. Mark. Pastor La Dassar was much more conservative theologically than Pastor Ploetz and theologically based conflicts during the early years of Pastor La Dassar's ministry resulted in some members leaving St. Mark to join other Lutheran churches in Butte. However, theological differences were not the only reasons that St. Mark lost members. In the late 1970's and early 1980's the Anaconda Company began to phase out operations and mining was completely closed down by 1983. Church records indicate that many families left St. Mark for other Lutheran churches as the economic effects of the mine closing spread.

In 1981 the congregation revoked altar and pulpit fellowship with Gold Hill Lutheran Church in accordance with the Missouri Synod's position. In 1984 the congregation contributed more than \$24,000 to Synod's Forward in Remembrance drive; held several special offerings for World Hunger and contributed \$1,000; and decided to participate in the Together in Missions Program (Personalized Mission Support). The Together in Missions offerings went directly to support Reverend Randy Benscoter's mission work in Papua, New Guinea. In the later years of Pastor La Dassar's ministry, efforts were made to start a campus ministry at Montana Tech and the congregation participated in the Synod's Alive in Christ program.

The congregation insulated the church ceiling in 1982 and covered many of the 1960-addition windows in with wood. The church's large stained glass windows were covered with Plexiglas in 1982 to protect them and decrease heat loss. In 1986 the congregation evaluated its site for a daughter church and found that the Butte's need for a second Missouri Synod congregation was low; that neighborhoods had changed, and that the site was not as suitable as it had been. The congregation decided that the investment could be better used by selling the land and placing the proceeds in the Church Extension Fund, where the money could be loaned to help others further the work of the Lord.

Pastor La Dassar's ministry in Butte ended on June 30, 1986 when he accepted a call to Minot, North Dakota. Reverend Steve Carlson of Deer Lodge, Montana, became interim Pastor and served until December 14, 1986 when Reverend Kenneth Reed of Steubenville, Ohio, accepted St. Mark's call.

St. Mark's membership in 1988 was 168 baptized and 124 communicant members. Not as many as at some times in the past, but still demonstrated a viable and active congregation.

The next 32 years 1986–2018

Reverend Kenneth Reed was installed as pastor at St. Mark Lutheran Church on December 14, 1986. Under Pastor Reed's leadership, the congregation celebrated its 100th anniversary, made important changes to its constitution and bylaws, developed a unified budget, purchased a new parsonage, and looked forward to its second hundred years.

Pastor Reed served at a time when the congregation contained active, young, families interested in building a strong church life. There was an adult choir, a group of 15-20 children that grew up together, annual congregational fellowships (Seders—a traditional meal that Pastor used to explain Lent in 1989 and 1994; gatherings to prepare Christmas gifts for the Sheltered Workshop; Halloween parties; spring fellowships such as "The Cruise" in 1996; spaghetti dinners; and Easter Breakfasts hosted by the youth group). Sunday morning and weekday Bible Studies were re-established. The Sunday school was active with all grades between kindergarten and high school. Church attendance was strong and some members who had left the congregation returned.

In 1988 St. Mark celebrated its 100th anniversary. The year-long event included a service on February 7, 1988 focused on St. Mark's history (Reverend John Senter—St. Mark Pastor from 1960 to 1967 preached); a service on April 17, 1988 focused on our present (Pastor Reed preached); and a service on June 19, 1988 to celebrate the congregation's future (Pastor Reed preached). The celebration year culminated on September 18, 1988 with a morning service at 10:00 a.m. (Pastor Reed preached), an organ concert offered by Dr. Robert Engebrecht at 2:30 p.m., and an Anniversary Vesper Service of Praise at 3:00 p.m. (Reverend Al Pullman, President of the Montana District, preached). In his sermon, Pastor Pullman commented that, "Lamentations 3: 22-23 was the only positive statement in the entire book." Following the September 18 services, St. Mark hosted a Centennial Banquet at a local hotel. Other centennial activities included building improvements such as remodeling the sacristy and repairs in the altar area.

In May 1989 the St. Mark Voter's Assembly asked St. Mark's membership to approve an amended constitution and, if approved, to adopt new bylaws. The most fundamental change followed the lead of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod to allow all communicate members of age to vote. The congregation retained male-only presidents, vice presidents, and elders—as people occupying these positions sometimes may

lead worship services in the absence of the Pastor. Other fundamental changes created a Church Council charged with handling the congregation's business between Voters meetings, and decreased the number of Voter's meetings from 12 to 4 annually. St. Mark ratified its new constitution on September 17, 1989 by a vote of 67 to 4. In 1992 the congregation amended the bylaws to abolish the Church Council and create the Parish Planning Council. The duties of the Parish Planning Council were to review congregational activities, encourage congregational participation by members, and develop programs that would enhance the Kingdom of God. The Planning Council membership came from an extensive set of committees/boards (Fellowship, Education, Finance, etc. as well as the congregation's elected officers). The design attempted to involve as many people as possible and lighten individual workloads.

In November 1993 the Planning Council considered the housing conditions for a Pastor with young children. A primary concern was the number of transients in uptown Butte and the potential for harm to Pastor and his family. Following the Planning Council's lead, the Voter's Assembly created a Parsonage Committee to investigate the purchase/building of another parsonage. In October 1994, based on the findings of the Parsonage Committee, the Voter's decided that the congregation should retain its existing parsonage, but also to build or purchase a new parsonage. On August 27, 1995 the congregation purchased a home at 3029 Irene Street and Pastor Reed's family moved from Montana Street to the new parsonage. Although the old parsonage was then unoccupied, the congregation did not immediately sell or rent it, but entered into lengthy discussions extending into early 1996 about how to handle the property.

In 1992 the congregation discovered that its treasurer was embezzling cash and not depositing offerings. The treasurer resigned and left the congregation. St. Mark did not file charges and the family repaid the funds. The incident changed how the congregation handled offerings so that there was always more than one member counting and preparing deposits. In 1994 the congregation faced up to its cash flow issue and its failure to pay District Missions. Its policy was to forward to District the amounts designated by members on their offering envelopes. The problem was that total offerings each month were rarely enough to cover local expenses as well as Missions. By April 1994, the congregation owed the District more than \$6,000 (the amount received from members, but not remitted). In January 1995 St. Mark adopted a unified budget that included Missions as a monthly expense. The congregation then paid its Mission commitment and other monthly expenses from general offerings

and “Missions” no longer appeared on offering envelopes. The congregation withdrew funds from its Lutheran Church Extension Fund accounts to pay the past due amount to the Montana District.

In 1993-1995 St. Mark seemed to struggle with its congregational focus. Pastor Reed and the officers held a congregational retreat in October 1994 during which members discussed and set goals for evangelism, stewardship, attendance, and participation in congregational activities. On October 25, 1994 St. Mark adopted the goals and a Mission Statement—the Mission Statement was still in use in 2018.

“We at St. Mark Lutheran Church witnesses to God’s love in Jesus Christ, joyfully serve our church family, and world preaching and teaching God’s word for earthly for earthly life and eternal salvation.”

During Holy Week 1996, Reverend Kenneth Reed abruptly resigned as Pastor of St. Mark Lutheran Church as well as from the roster of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. The congregation was hurt, in turmoil, and struggled to deal with its loss. Without a pastor, the congregation used prepared worship materials to conduct Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services. President Wollenberg and the Montana District stepped up to help St. Mark through the crisis. President Wollenberg promised that a pastor from somewhere would be in Butte on Easter Sunday. That service began when Vicar Douglas Thompson, of Billings, Montana—dressed in a traditional black robe and white surplice—entered the chancel and invited people to worship. God showed St. Mark that, with His help, it could go on.

During the next few months, the congregation cared for Pastor Reed’s wife and children by allowing them to live in the Irene Street parsonage. The congregation paid a \$1,000/month stipend to the Reed family (not the former pastor) for four months. Members conducted food drives for the family. A few months after the resignation, the Reed family left Butte.

The congregation also cared for its former pastor. It paid his salary until May 15, 1986 (one month from date of informal resignation) and allowed him to stay in the Montana Street parsonage until he arranged other accommodations. Ken Reed stayed in Butte until 2001 and remained a member until he left.

In April 1996, St. Mark called Reverend Herbert Schiefelbein as interim pastor. Pastor Schiefelbein had recently retired from Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Seeley Lake, Montana, and came out of retirement

to help. Pastor Schiefelbein was in Butte (and Whitehall) from Thursday through Monday each week to lead worship, attend meetings, and hold confirmation classes. The congregation initially housed the Schiefelbeins in the Montana Street parsonage. After the Reed family moved, the Schiefelbeins moved to the Irene Street parsonage. The congregation's decision in 1995 to hold on to the Montana Street parsonage, rather than rent or sell it, shows how God works in and through his people. St. Mark had no idea that it would need two parsonages, but it did. The congregation rented the parsonage to members in need, and eventually sold it to a young member family for the cost of moving it to a new location.

In July 1996 St. Mark received an official letter of resignation from Kenneth Reed and began the process to call permanent pastor. Zion Lutheran, Whitehall, Montana, asked St. Mark to become a dual parish. St. Mark declined Whitehall's offer, but agreed that when a permanent pastor came to Butte, St. Mark would provide Zion with Word and Sacrament services. St. Mark's Pastor would lead Sunday services and spend one day each week in Whitehall to teach confirmation and attend meetings. The contract covered Whitehall's basic needs. In exchange, payments from Zion would support a part time secretary for both congregations. The secretary would take on record keeping, correspondence, and bulletin preparation allowing the pastor more time for members.

In September 1996, St. Mark sent a call to Reverend Christopher Wareham who was serving at St. Paul Lutheran Church Spearfish, South Dakota. In November and December 1996, Pastor Schiefelbein could no longer serve St. Mark regularly. Pastors from Helena, Bozeman, Boulder, and Three Forks conducted Sunday services; the elders handled midweek Advent services. St. Mark conducted Sunday school at 4:00 p.m. and worship at 5:00 p.m.

St Mark's members took a collective breath and looked to the future. A bulletin announcement from December 29, 1996 summarized the mood:

"Most of the traditional activities (confirmation, pot luck dinners, advent worship, and others) of our congregation have continued, thanks to your hard work. However, there has been a void that will shortly be filled by the arrival of a new spiritual leader. We must remember that our work for the Lord does not end with his arrival. Rather, the team is again complete and together we must work to accomplish the tasks God will place before us in the coming years."

St. Mark's membership in September 1996 was 204 baptized and 147 communicant members.

Reverend Christopher Wareham was installed as St. Mark's twelfth pastor on January 5, 1997. He came to a congregation slowly healing from the loss of its previous pastor. The first few years of his ministry focused on that healing. Ken Reed did not leave Butte, Montana, until 2001 and Pastor (and the St. Mark Elders) spent much time visiting/ counseling the former pastor. Part of St. Mark's healing included visits by Pastor Wareham to every member of the congregation who was willing to meet with him. The every member visits took about two years to complete.

When Pastor Wareham arrived, the congregation inaugurated changes planned during the Reed vacancy. Even though St. Mark/Zion was not officially a dual parish, and Pastor Wareham was not called to Zion, he provided Sunday services in Whitehall. He also traveled there once a week to teach confirmation, visit members, and attend meetings. In January 1997, St. Mark hired a part time secretary to cover administrative needs for both congregations. St. Mark's more-formal relationship with Zion apparently confirmed what Pastor Senter thought in the 1960s, because he often said that he considered Butte/Whitehall one of his dual parishes.

St. Mark also changed the services it used each Sunday by including Divine Service—settings one and three from the Lutheran Service Book; Matins from Lutheran Worship, and a pre-printed “contemporary” service. In August 1997 the congregation started offering common and individual cup communion twice monthly. The congregation enjoyed annual Mission Festivals, often with guest speakers. Pastor Wareham included one contemporary hymn each week—something not in the hymnal. The adult choir, re-started during Pastor Reed's ministry, continued throughout Pastor Wareham's tenure.

Between 1996 and about 2007, the congregation included more than a dozen active families with about 25 children who attended elementary, middle, and high school together. In many of these years St. Mark sent 15-20 campers to the District youth camps at Red Lodge, Montana, and 5-10 youth to the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod's National Youth Gathering. The senior and junior youth groups met often. The youth played floor hockey in the basement (only a few broken windows); held annual lockins (the basement was full of sleeping bags and tents); and

hosted the annual Easter Breakfast. The camps and National Gatherings were costly and the youth raised funds through bake sales, garage sales, and annual Holiday bazaars. By about 2007, the youngest of these children had graduated high school leaving Butte for jobs, college, and the military. In most cases they left Butte. Because there were few young adults and children; the youth groups dissolved and Sunday school shrank to a few students. Vacation Bible school continued each summer attracting 8-15 children.

In 2008 St. Mark became concerned by its shrinking youth groups and Sunday school. The elders and Pastor, after consulting with the Circuit Counselor, decided to meet with every member of the congregation. The meetings started in June 2008, lasted through September 2009, and produced many comments and suggestions about St. Mark's health. Some suggestions were implemented, but nothing seemed to change the youth group/Sunday School problem. The pastor and elders studied books on church growth and learned that even though visitation of members was at one time the 'silver bullet' of ministry, those days seemed past. What people wanted were relevant programs for their families and children.

On April 22, 2012 the congregation met after church for lunch and discussion of a Church Growth Program. The pastor and elders received many suggestions that helped create a plan. On September 16, 2012 St. Mark adopted a Church Growth Program that emphasized growth in personal and group prayer; enrichment of each member's spiritual life; insured that St. Mark had a clear presence in the community; improved internal communication; explained our worship services; and created numerous small group Bible studies to learn more about God's word and offer venues for members to socialize. The Church Growth Program implemented a number of changes and new activities, but the congregation has never evaluated its effectiveness.

In 2013-2014 the number of young children attending church increased and St. Mark started a "Kids Church". During the worship service, unconfirmed children could go to the basement for a lesson and activities.

Annual congregational fellowships started during Pastor Reed's and extended into Pastor Wareham's ministry. The fellowships included: the Spring Time Fun Time Café; a 1950s Springtime event; the St. Mark Cruise; spaghetti dinners; the Backwards Dinner; a Bunco Party; an Eat What you Get Dinner; and a Burger Bash. The youth groups were

integral to these fellowships providing everything from food preparation to entertainment.

In 2003, Dr. Robert Engebrecht—one of St. Mark's organists—announced that the 2003 organ concert (his 25th annual) would be his last. In addition, the small Sunday school made it difficult to consistently organize full-scale Christmas programs. In 2006 St. Mark decided to combine a limited Sunday school program, performances by the St. Mark choir, instrumental music, a short organ recital, and a sing along to create the St. Mark Christmas Festival. In 2007, the Festival became less a concert and more a night of responsive readings and music that told the Christmas story. Sunday school members and youth were active in the Festival up through 2012 with pageants held most years. When there were too few children for a pageant, Sunday school students led the responsive readings. Each Festival ended with a fellowship in the basement. Doc Engebrecht participated in the Festivals until 2015. In 2017 Sunday school students again helped lead the readings.

Pastor Wareham inherited a long-ongoing discussion by St Mark regarding whether to stay in uptown Butte that had begun when the congregation was discussing where best to house its Pastor and his family. The congregation first determined that the Montana Street church had long-term viability with proper maintenance and updating. Then it decided on where best to be in Butte, Montana. The conversation was long and difficult, at times seemingly to lead in many directions. However, at a special voters meeting on September 7, 2003, St. Mark decided to remain in uptown Butte and add a meeting room, new restrooms, handicapped entries, and an elevator to the church building. When built—the addition was elevator ready, but a funding shortfall prevented installation of the elevator. The congregation dedicated the addition to the glory of God on July 11, 2004 and a potluck dinner followed. Former vacancy Pastor Reverend Herbert Schiefelbein was the guest speaker.

In May 2009 St. Mark voters directed the Planning Council to re-explore installing an elevator. At a special Voter's meeting on April 17, 2011 the congregation decided to install a full-sized elevator in the 2004 addition. St. Mark used savings, the building fund, and a fund drive lasting through December 2011 to pay for the construction. The congregation received some Urban Renewal Authority funds from Butte, Silver Bow, because installation of the elevator helped keep an uptown Butte historic building viable. The elevator was dedicated on September 9, 2012.



In 2003, St. Mark decided to add handicapped access and a meeting room to the church at 223 South Montana. (D. Ottolino photograph)

Other major building maintenance projects included: November 1999—repaired wooden front doors and removed unused brick chimneys; December 2007—refinished the chancel floor; September 2008—replaced the Montana Street doors with steel doors and frame; November 2008—reroofed main building, removed brick pinnacles around north tower, and added plywood diaphragm for earthquake safety; January and February 2009—repaired interior plaster and painted the church’s interior; September 2009—repainted all white work on exterior and replaced stained glass protective covers; May 2010—re-carpeted the chancel area; September 2013—bought new chairs and tables for the upstairs meeting room; February 2014—replaced the cross arm on south tower damaged by wind and painted the cross; and May 2014—replaced chairs in the fellowship hall.

In September 2013 Pastor Wareham announced that he and Carolyn had purchased a house in Butte, Montana, and that he would retire from St. Mark in June 2014. St. Mark’s parsonage was again vacant. The congregation decided to hold the property until a new pastor came. If that pastor wished to own his own home, the congregation would then consider its options.

St. Mark called Reverend Alfred Ebel as vacancy pastor and he traveled to Butte weekly from his home in Red Lodge, Montana, to cover services at Whitehall and Butte. During the vacancy, St. Mark Butte and Zion Whitehall formally became a dual parish and jointly called a new pastor. St. Mark/Zion's first call was returned. St. Mark/Zion then called Reverend James Mavis of Tucson, Arizona who accepted the call.

Reverend James Mavis was installed at St. Mark/Zion on January 25, 2015. There were 131 communicant and 164 baptized members.

Pastor Mavis stepped comfortably into St. Mark's congregational life fitting in where Pastor Wareham left off. Pastor Mavis' strengths are preaching and presentation of the Gospel, interactions with children and youth (particularly with Montana Tech Students), and personal interaction with members. Pastor Mavis has made some changes in Sunday worship such as inclusion of new congregational responses in Sunday prayers.

In 2017, St. Mark restarted a small Sunday school about 8 students. There are almost always some small children in church and Pastor offers a children's lesson each Sunday. The children (and the congregation) get a lot out of the lessons. It is wonderful to hear how the children have come from not answering any question during the lesson; to always saying, "Jesus" in answer to any question; to actually answering the question. Pastor Mavis has made a strong effort to connect with Lutheran students at Montana Tech. Bible Studies (with pizza—he knows how to get to them) attract 6-10 students each week. One outcome is that several Montana Tech students are in church many Sundays.

In 2018 St. Mark's relationship with Zion Lutheran in Whitehall is well formalized by the dual parish agreement. However, St. Mark's on/off history with Redeemer Lutheran Church, dating back at least as far as Pastor Reed's ministry continues. Shortly after he came to Butte, Redeemer asked Pastor Mavis to cover services there twice a month until they could resolve whether they would disband or continue. Requests to continue the service became a routine matter before St. Mark's voters until August 2018 when the Montana District called a pastoral candidate to Anaconda. The new pastor will develop the Missouri Synod's presence in that community.

Major building maintenance since Pastor Mavis arrived includes: May 2015—resealed and repointed the brick exterior; May 2015—repaired

south steeple roof to keep water from entering the building; May 2016—converted the chancel lighting to LED lights; May 2016 renovated the kitchen serving area; and August 2017—repainted water damaged area in the southeast corner of the chancel.

St. Mark's membership in September 2018 was 182 baptized and 146 communicant members. The almost identical communicant membership in 2018 to that in 1986 shows that, although adults came and left, more children left than joined. About 25 children from the Reed and Wareham ministries grew up and mostly left Butte, Montana. In the first three years of Pastor Mavis' tenure, the number of children at St. Mark has slowly increased as a few families with children have joined/returned. Children's lessons each Sunday, Kid's Church during the sermon, Vacation Bible School, and a restart of Sunday school have helped.

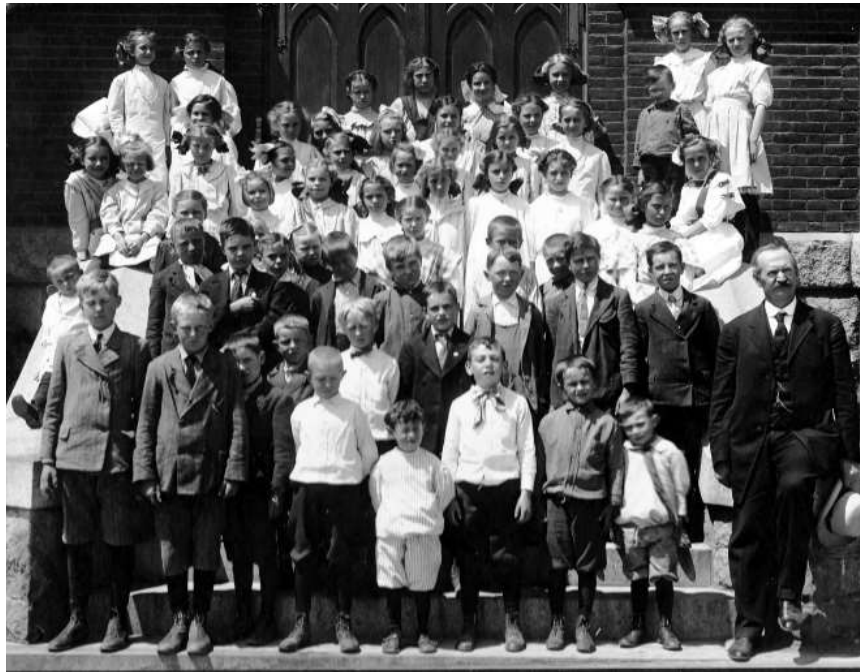
Conclusion

The history at St. Mark shows our reason for being a congregation. The September 1986, edition of the St. Mark Messenger states, "The most important function of our church is to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ: that God, in his great love for us, sent his only son, to live and to die, that we might through faith in him, receive eternal life."

It is clear that St. Mark Congregation has proclaimed the good news in the past and, God willing, will continue to proclaim the good news into the future. More than 2,100 baptisms; almost 1,500 confirmations; more than 1,300 weddings; and almost 1,500 funerals performed by St. Mark congregation between the years 1885 and 2018 testify to St. Mark's activity in Butte, Montana.

We are joined together to give to God honor, glory, praise, and adoration. We are gathered together to support one another in times of sorrow and to celebrate with each other in times of joy. We are a family of God, assembled to share with each other the full knowledge we have gained as children of God and to learn even more of the God whose entire activity on earth is for our benefit. We are banded together to tell even more people of the Way of salvation and to pray for those people who have not as yet understood all that God has in store for them.

To God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit we give thanks, praise, and glory for the 130 years of Faithfulness shown to St. Mark Lutheran Church and we "Rejoice in the Lord" that God will continue to bless the members of St. Mark.



German school students at St. Mark in about 1920. Reverend Martin Hudtloff is at the far right.



St. Mark Lutheran Church basement fellowship hall. Date is unknown. Note wood stove and paper decorations. The view is from the east end of the basement area.

St. Mark Pastors

Photographs



Martin Hudtloff



H.W. Moehring



Donald Boernke



Arnold Gierke



John Senter



George Ploetz



Larry La Dassor



Kenneth Reed



Christopher Wareham



James Mavis:

Biographical sketches

Thirteen men have been chosen by God to be spiritual leaders at St. Mark. Each has served different terms, served across generations, and offered varied talents and capabilities. However, all have had the spiritual interest of the congregation and its membership first in their hearts and minds. We include short biographies of St. Mark's called pastors and its two long-term vacancy pastors. Each man was truly a part of St. Mark and represents God's Faithfulness. Pastors Zigel and Bauman are included, because they served 2-year and 1-year vacancies. There were other vacancy pastors and their names are included as appropriate in the church history.

Reverend Adolph Bartling: September 23, 1888— September, 1893

Pastor Bartling holds the distinction of being the first resident pastor of the Deutsche Evangelical St. Markus Kirche. He arrived in Butte from Addison, Illinois, and was installed at the young congregation. During his pastorate, the first German Lutheran Chapel in Butte was constructed at 67 West Silver Street. In addition to serving Butte, Pastor Bartling served Anaconda, Glen, Dillon, Sheridan, Silver Bow, and Virginia City. In 1893 Pastor Bartling assisted Helena in laying the cornerstone for their new church and later served them as a vacancy pastor. Pastor Bartling served St. Mark for five years before accepting a call to Austin, Illinois.

Reverend Martin Hudtloff: September, 1893—May 20, 1934

Pastor Martin Hudtloff, the son of a pastor, was born November 10, 1863 at Wausau, Wisconsin, the oldest of 14 children. At the age of 14 he studied at Concordia College of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and later entered Concordia College at Fort Wayne, Indiana. Pastor Hudtloff graduated from Concordia, Fort Wayne in 1888, the year that St. Mark installed its first pastor, and took his theological training in St. Louis, Missouri. Pastor Hudtloff's first call was to Steen, Minnesota, where he served two years helping organize several missions. On September 21, 1893 he was called to Butte from LuVerne, Minnesota, and served St. Mark until his death 41 years later. In addition to serving St. Mark, Pastor Hudtloff served First Lutheran in Helena as a vacancy pastor after the death of Reverend Martin Mertz in 1912. In 1892 Pastor Hudtloff

married Julia Detloff of Burnett, Wisconsin, who came with him to Butte in 1893. Julia Hudtloff died in 1929 preceding her husband's death by 5 years.

Reverend H. W. Moehring: November, 1934—
February, 1941

The third pastor of St. Mark, Reverend W. Moehring, was installed in November of 1934. Pastor and his wife Margery were active in helping and advising the youth clubs. Pastor Moehring also advocated frequent and regular communion; at least six times per year to avoid the rush of having all members of the congregation communing on Good Friday. During his service to St. Mark, Pastor Moehring served as a vacancy pastor to the Deerlodge and Anaconda parishes. Pastor Moehring attended the English District Meeting in 1936 in River Forest, Illinois, travelling by train because he had received a free pass. Pastor Moehring left the pastorate vacant in 1941.

Reverend Donald Boernke: July 13, 1941—May 22, 1949

Pastor Donald Boernke from Hamilton, Montana, was installed in Butte in 1941. Pastor Boernke was an energetic evangelistic pastor who worked very hard to win souls for Christ. Volunteers for different tasks within the congregation were obtained by his direct manner. When he asked you to teach Sunday school, pastor did not say "Would you please consider teaching Sunday school...." but, "When you start teaching Sunday school you will" Pastor Boernke expected you to serve when asked. While living in Butte, Pastor and his wife Carol became parents of Judy and Richard. In 1949 Pastor Boernke accepted a call to the Florida-Georgia District to conduct mission work in Tallahassee, Florida.

Reverend Arnold Gierke: September 18, 1949—
October 19, 1958

Pastor Arnold Gierke, son of Reverend Albert F. and Rosa Gierke, was born August 30, 1913 at Niagara, North Dakota. Pastor Gierke graduated from Concordia Academy and Concordia College of St. Paul, Minnesota in 1934. Upon his graduation and completion of a vicarage in Hannover, North Dakota, he was called to the Montana District to begin work in the Hardin-St. Xavier area—a new mission field. During Pastor

Gierke's ministry at St. Mark, he was a member of the Montana District Board of Directors, Secretary of the Department of Parish Education, Director of the Christian Youth Emergency Action in 1951, a member of the Lutheran Education Association, and editor of the Parish Education bi-monthly District Bulletin. Pastor and his wife Lillian were blessed with five children: Charles, Judith, Eugene, Karen, and Timothy (who was born in Butte). All three of Pastor Gierke's sons became Missouri Synod pastors. Pastor Gierke's daughter Karen married a Missouri Synod pastor.

Reverend Ronald Zagel: October 19, 1958—
November 6, 1960 (vacancy)

Pastor Zagel was the son of Reverend Martin Zagel and Elenore Zagel of Eden, Idaho, and was born on December 14, 1926. He attended school in Twin Falls Idaho. He attended Concordia College of Portland, Oregon and Concordia College of Oakland, California. After college he served a tour of duty in the Navy. After his discharge from the Navy, Pastor Zagel entered Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. He served the Lewistown, Montana area on summer assignment in 1950 and stayed on there to serve as a vicar in 1951. After graduation from the seminary in 1954, he received a call to Redeemer Lutheran Church in Anaconda, Montana, where he served until November 1961. Pastor Zagel married Ruth Freiburger in 1954 and they were blessed with four sons. During his dedicated service to St. Mark, Pastor Zagel's son, Mark, died at the age of 4 1/2 years and the congregation sorrowed. Pastor Zagel had to resign his last position in the Northwest District as institutional chaplain in the city of Portland, Oregon in 1985 due to illness and died on January 19, 1987. His funeral service was held at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Anaconda, Montana.

Reverend John Senter: November 6, 1960—
December 1967

Pastor Senter graduated from the Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1956. After graduation he served in Fort Benton, Montana, for a little more than four years. In 1960, after St. Mark had placed 14 calls, Pastor Senter came to Butte. While serving in Butte, Pastor Senter and his wife Lois were parents to three children, David, Anne, and Maria. Pastor Senter left the Montana District in 1967 when he accepted a call to Leslie, Missouri. Pastor Senter preached at St. Mark's February

17, 1988 History Day service and celebration. His wife Lois also attended the February 17, 1988 service.

**Reverend Martin Baumann: December 1967—
December 15, 1968 (vacancy)**

Pastor Martin Bauman of First Lutheran Church in Helena, Montana, became vacancy pastor for St. Mark congregation when Pastor Senter accepted a call to Leslie, Missouri. Pastor Bauman was educated at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, from which he graduated in 1941. While serving in the Montana District, Pastor Bauman worked with Lutheran Social Services, was president of the Montana Education Commission, and was Divide circuit counselor from 1963 to 1973. Pastor Bauman accepted a call to Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Spokane, Washington, in 1973 where he served until his retirement in 1983.

**Reverend George Ploetz: December 15, 1968—
December 1975**

Pastor George Ploetz, a native of New York, served 25 years as a research scientist, naval reserve officer, and an active layman before entering the ministry. In June of 1966 George Ploetz matriculated at Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield, Illinois, and graduated in December of 1968 with a Bachelors of Divinity degree. After accepting an assigned call to Butte on Reformation Day 1968, George Ploetz was ordained and installed as Pastor of St. Mark on December 15, 1968. Pastor and Marie Ploetz were the parents of six children: Lawrence, Frederick, Jo Ann, Janet, Judith, and John. Pastor Ploetz's first grandchild, Kristin Ploetz, was baptized at St. Mark in 1970. In December 1975 Pastor Ploetz accepted a call to Idaho Falls, Idaho. Pastor Ploetz died on February 15, 1983 serving the Lord full time until 10 days before his death.

Reverend Larry La Dassar: March 15, 1976—June 30, 1986

Pastor La Dassar came to St. Mark from Harlowton-Roundup, Montana, and was installed on March 15, 1976. Pastor La Dassar was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and attended Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Before coming to the Montana District, he served from 1967 to 1972 as an evangelistic missionary in the Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon). During his years of service in the Montana District he became chairman of the Social Ministry committee, a board member of Lutheran Social Services of Montana, a counselor to the Lutheran Women's Missionary League,

secretary/treasurer of the Montana District Pastor-Teacher Conference, and served on the Montana District board of directors. Pastor and Mrs. La Dassor were blessed with four daughters: Leah, Dawn, Amy, and Heather. Pastor La Dassor left St. Mark to accept a call to Minot, North Dakota.

Reverend Kenneth Reed: December 14, 1986—
April 4, 1996

Reverend Kenneth Reed, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Reed of Milwaukee Wisconsin, was born February 24, 1949. Pastor Reed attended Christ Memorial Day School, Concordia High School, and Concordia Junior College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. His Bachelor of Arts degree was awarded by Concordia Senior College of Fort Wayne, Indiana in 1971. Pastor Reed entered Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, and graduated in June of 1976 with a Masters of Divinity degree. Pastor Reed was ordained in his home town congregation in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Before coming to Butte, Pastor Reed served congregations in Braddock, Pennsylvania, and Steubenville, Ohio. Pastor Reed and his wife Christine had two daughters: Kathryn and Abigail; and two adopted sons Travis and Joseph. Pastor Reed resigned as pastor at St. Mark and as a Pastor in the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod in April 1996.

Reverend Christopher Wareham: January 5, 1997—
June 29, 2014

Chris Wareham was born on April 3, 1952 in Helena, Montana, and baptized in Boulder, Montana, on February 21, 1954 by Reverend Arnold Gierke, Pastor of St. Mark Lutheran Church in Butte, Montana. He graduated from Jefferson High School in Boulder, Montana in 1970. He attended Valparaiso University and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering in 1974. After returning to Montana, he worked as a civil engineer for two years, began preparation for the ministry in 1976, and graduated from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, in 1980. On July 12, 1980 he married Carolyn Elvers. The Wareham's had three children—Katie (Wareham) Rolf, Jonathan Wareham and Lisa (Wareham) Edwards; and three grandchildren—Jackson, Noah, and Oliver Edwards. Pastor Wareham served Emmanuel and Christ Lutheran Churches in Gettysburg and Lebanon, South Dakota from 1980-1984; St. Paul Lutheran Church in Spearfish, South Dakota, from 1984-1996; and St. Mark and Zion Lutheran Churches in Butte and Whitehall, Montana from 1997-2014. Pastor Wareham is retired and lives in Butte.

Reverend James Mavis: January 25, 2015—

James M. Mavis was born on June 22, 1955 in Butte, Montana. He is the son of Wesley and Irene Mavis, of Reno Nevada and the son-in-law of James and Arlene Collier of Carson City, Nevada. James Mavis married Christine Collier on May 29, 1982. The Lord blessed them with two sons: Matthew and Isaac.

Pastor Mavis received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from the University of Nevada in 1981. He worked for Sierra Pacific Power Company in their accounting department for nine years. In August 1989 he entered Concordia Theological Seminary and graduated in May 1993 with a Master of Divinity degree. His vicarage year was at Our Savior Lutheran Church, Fallon, Montana. Upon graduation from the seminary, Pastor Mavis accepted a call to Trinity Lutheran Church in Elgin, Minnesota. He served at Trinity until 1995. In fall 1995, Reverend Mavis accepted a call to Trinity Lutheran Church in Miles City, Montana, and served there until May 2005. The Mavis's served Faith Lutheran Church, in Tucson, Arizona until January 2015 when he accepted a call to St. Mark Lutheran Church in Butte, Montana. St. Mark and Pastor Mavis celebrated his 25th year in the ministry in 2018.

The homes of St. Mark Congregation

The first Lutheran worship services were held by Rev. Fred Pfautenhauer in Caplice Hall at Park and Montana Streets in 1885.



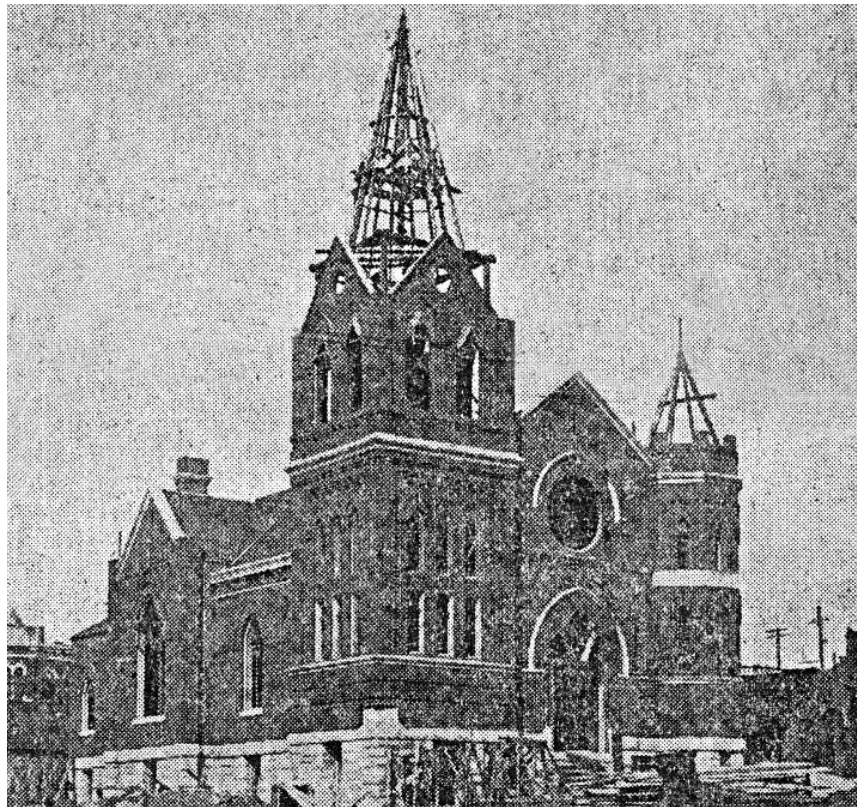
After the congregation was organized in 1886, services were held in a school house on Broadway Street by Rev. John Meyer of Helena. Clear photographs or other information about the school are available. In 1889 the congregation worshipped at the Plymouth Congregational Church on West Granite Street with Reverend Bartling as pastor. In 1890 the congregation purchased land at 67 West Silver Street and constructed a small chapel.



The chapel was used until 1903 when it and an adjacent parsonage were sold in preparation for the construction of the congregation's second church building at 223 South Montana Street. After the chapel was sold, but prior to completion of the present building, the congregation worshipped for five years at the Finlander's Hall (arched windows) at 318 N. Wyoming Street.



In November of 1908 the congregation dedicated its present building at 223 South Montana Street and has resided at the same location for 110 years. The only exception to worshipping at 223 South Montana came in 1925 when the congregation met at the Swedish Lutheran Church at 300 South Montana while repairs were being made to St. Mark's building. The photograph below appeared in the March 1, 1908 edition of the Butte Miner upon the occasion of the first use of the building by the congregation. Note the uncompleted steeple and the openings for the stained glass windows. By the time the church was dedicated in November of 1908 the windows had been installed and the steeple completed.



St Mark Lutheran Church under construction in 1908.



St. Mark Lutheran Church in September 2018. The 2004 addition is at right. The congregation moved one of the stained glass windows to create the entry between the addition and the original church. (T. Patton photograph)

Auxiliary organizations

The Sunday school

St Mark has always considered it a duty of every member to help provide Christian education for the congregation's children. Records show that a Sunday school was already established in 1889 and it operated continuously until about 2014. Despite the lack of a Sunday school, St. Mark held annual Vacation Bible School sessions with 8-15 children attending.

In 2013-2014 some children began attending church more regularly and St. Mark established "Kids Church" as a way to offer a Bible lesson and activities. Kids Church took place each Sunday during worship starting with the second hymn and lasting through the sermon. Starting in 2015, Pastor Mavis offered an object lesson each Sunday during church. After the lesson, those who wanted to could go to Kids Church. In fall 2017 St. Mark restarted a Sunday school with 7-8 children attending each Sunday.

Ladies Aid - Lutheran Women's Missionary League

As early as 1891 there was a ladies group at St. Mark known as the German Evangelical Lutheran Ladies Society. It was called the Ladies Aid and became a very active group involving all women in the congregation. The Ladies Aid prepared dinners in the church basement several times a year which were very popular and well attended. A favorite each fall was the sauerkraut dinner. Money collected from these dinners was donated to the church. The women's group collected clothing for the needy in Butte and overseas and sewed for Lutheran World Relief. In addition, the Ladies Aid donated the present lectern in the memory of their "Beloved pastor and his wife", Martin and Julia Hudtloff.

In 1942 the Montana district of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) was formed with St. Mark providing the first state president, Mrs. Clara Bethke. The LWML is a Synodical organization of women's societies within congregations of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. The LWML's objectives include: "to develop and maintain a greater mission consciousness among women of the synod through missionary education, mission inspiration, and missionary service."

Around this time a sewing group which had existed separately became a part of the Missionary League. Early meetings were in homes but later were in the church where the League continued to meet until 1985. Throughout the years there have been other circles (subgroups of the LWML) but none have lasted as long as the sewing group.

In 1978 the Mary-Martha LWML (the "evening" LWML) was organized to allow women who worked or had young children to participate in League activities. These ladies often could not attend daytime meetings of the older established LWML. In 1985 the "daytime" LWML became inactive and remaining members of the "daytime" and the "evening" groups joined together to become the present Mary-Martha LWML. The Mary-Martha LWML held monthly meetings, collected soap for Lutheran World Relief, sent mites to Missions, sewed for the Good Shepherd Home of the West, and collected used clothing for World Relief. A circle within the Mary-Martha LWML formed to provide needlework services for the congregation, continuing its long history of sewing groups.

In 1988 the sewing group began designing and stitching new Advent altar paraments. Later efforts produced Trinity paraments in 1990, Christmas paraments in 1993, Pentecost paraments in 1998, Easter paraments in 2000, and Lenten paraments in 2006. All of the new paraments are still in use in 2018.

In 2018, the Mary-Martha LWML no longer holds regular meetings. However, the group still sends dues to District, collects Monthly Mites, constructs 20-30 quilts for Lutheran World Relief, collects materials for sewing and school kits, provides care packages for Montana Tech students during finals, and distributes quarterlies to members.

Men's Club

Under the direction of Reverend W. Moehring, 21 men of St. Mark Lutheran Church met on January 21, 1938 for the purpose of forming a Men's Club. According to their records the club was active, holding meetings twice monthly until March of 1941. The club's objectives were to develop loyal members of the congregation and to stimulate interest in church work and Christian comradeship.

While the club was active, they purchased folding chairs, repaired and purchased hymnals, installed and cared for the signboard in front of the church, and were responsible for installing the railings on the exterior

steps of the church. The group contributed to the pastor's salary and supported the building committee with plans for the new parsonage and in general with church repair and maintenance.

The club served baked ham dinners which were well supported by the public. The men wore white aprons and jackets and were solely responsible for the dinners. The men also formed a bowling team.

On May 1, 1944, several years after the discontinuance of the Men's Club, a group of men met with Pastor Boernke to form a Lutheran Layman's League. No further information about a Layman's League is recorded in the records of the Men's Club.

St. Mark Youth Groups

Two young people's societies, the St. Mark Junior Club and the St. Mark Senior Club existed before 1925. By 1927 the two organizations had become the St. Mark Junior and Senior Walther Leagues affiliated with the International Walther League and the Montana Leagues. The Walther Leagues were named in honor of Dr. C. F. W. Walther who was one of the founders of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. Confirmed members at St. Mark younger than age 18 could be members of the Junior League; when older than age 18, a member of St. Mark could belong to the Senior League. The League's main objectives were to grow in Christian knowledge through the study of the Bible, foster Christian love and fellowship, learn to become active efficient church workers and Christian citizens by participating in the mission work of the church, and support charitable endeavors in their church and throughout the community.

In 1927 activities included putting on plays in the church basement, decorating the church and basement for special occasions, purchasing carnations for mothers on Mother's Day, honoring the newly confirmed members of the congregation, and sewing in their sewing club. There were also many fun times for the Walther Leagues such as ice skating at Holland Rink, Swimming at Gregson (Fairmont Hot Springs), barbecues at Little Basin Reservoir, going to the Columbia Gardens, and hiking.

Between March 1934 and April 16, 1937 the leagues were inactive. Later on, Pastor Moehring and his wife became the youth counselors and the Junior League organized a choir. Pastor Moehring bought the gowns for the choir as a gift to the youth group and the St. Mark Guild

furnished the caps. Some activities in the late 1930's and early 1940's included purchase of a tract rack for the church, saving postage stamps for missions, providing church annuals, and giving carnations to mothers on Mother's Day.

On October 30, 1940 the Walther Leagues became a Boy's Club and a Girl's Club. By February 25, 1941 the two clubs combined as there were not enough boys for the Boy's Club. On April 22, 1941 the clubs became inactive. After Pastor Boernke became pastor the youth group was reestablished as the Walther League Society. The Junior and Senior groups were combined into one organization. Activities after the reorganization consisted of buying a shuffle board, a miniature bowling set, and building a ping-pong table. The group hosted Easter breakfasts for the congregation. Delegates were sent to national conventions in places as far away as Washington D.C. and New York. The youth put displays in store windows in the uptown area, helped with Vacation Bible School, conducted some Reformation Day services, and organized junior and senior Bible classes. Other activities included folding bulletins for Sunday services, calling on members of the congregation, and helping to build a church in Seeley Lake, Montana. Recreational time was spent by bowling, playing softball, swimming, skating, and picnicking.

The 1977 synodical convention of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod declared that the Walther League was no longer serving significant numbers of synodical youth and ended its status as a Synod auxiliary. A new youth organization called Lutheran Youth Fellowship was organized by synod, but it and its successors never enjoyed the success of the Walther League.

The youth groups were very active from the mid-1980s until about 2007. After 2007, St. Mark's active group of children finished graduating from high school and left Butte for jobs, higher education, and the military. Few young children were in Sunday school at this time and most did not continue in Sunday school after confirmation. The lack of high school age children in Sunday school resulted in little interest in the youth group.

Statements from previous pastors

The following few pages contain statements from St. Mark's pastors about their memories of St. Mark. Pastors Boernke and Ploetz are deceased, but we have included memories sent along by their wives.

Pastor Boernke by Carol Boernke (1988)

I am sorry for such a delay in responding to your letter, but since the Centennial Celebration is in 1988 I felt I had lots of time. Now...Look! It's almost 1988.

I will have some pictures I can send, and you can pick out whatever you want or that fits your theme. I will explore my storeroom and locate them right after Christmas. (Of course, it may take a couple of weeks just to locate the boxes and/or albums, and find the right ones. After Linda's first baby was born two years ago she asked me for baby pictures of herself. I had pictures all over the dining room for days. There must be hundreds of pictures.

I'll also do what I can about making notes of special memories. Exactly when is the date for the Centennial? My memories of St. Mark are good ones but I don't know how historical they would be. I was so young back then I'm afraid I wasn't paying much attention to history. Mostly I remember things like when Mrs. Eno sent a quart jar of whipping cream that was so thick you could spread it with a knife. A most delicious treat -- and as a bride I didn't even know cream could be that thick. The senior Mrs. Heinzelmann brought coffee kuchen on Saturdays, because pastor should have kuchen. She tried to teach me how to make it, but when the sponge got to a certain stage I would ask if that were stiff enough, and she'd have to stir to check it. I never got another chance to touch it after that, so I really never did learn how to make her kuchen.

It is exciting that this is the Centennial year for St. Mark. Please let me know the time of the celebration. Will there be a booklet printed up ahead of time? Also, any suggestions you have that might help me. I'll be in touch.

Pastor Gierke (1988)

It was in the spring of 1949. The first adult education workshop in the Montana District was held at St. Mark Lutheran Church in Butte. The Reverend D.F. Boernke was pastor. This adult education workshop was sponsored by the Department for Parish Education of the Montana District of the LCMS. The Reverend Arnold E. Gierke was secretary under the able leadership of D. Oscar E. Feucht, who had in recent years been chosen to be in charge of adult education and family life for the synod. St. Mark congregation still held its membership in the English District of the LCMS. Nevertheless, it was chosen as the preferred place for this workshop because the Montana District wanted to draw the English District congregations of that area into itself, because it was the expedient thing to do area-wise.

After a very successful workshop came to an end, I drove the streets of Butte, steep and treacherous, so I thought. The city was a mining town, and the streets were cindered to enable travel without skidding.

Home again, I told my wife, "This is one place I don't ever want to live, Butte, Montana." And then promptly forgot about it.

Very much to my surprise and consternation, a call came through the mail informing me that I was elected to become pastor of St. Mark Lutheran Church of Butte, Montana. I was sure that we (my family and I) could not live there, and I was going to prove to the Lord and the District officials that I could not accept this call. Well, in the weeks that followed the Lord proved to me that my wife could now live in the high altitude, which she could not do the previous year, and that I could accept the call. We had nine wonderful and fruitful years there, Yes, years with both frustration and regret, but largely years of joy and satisfaction, in doing the Lord's work. They were years we will never forget. St. Mark Church has a beautiful brick edifice, beautiful stained glass windows, and a tremendous wood-carved altar. But the periodic strikes of the Anaconda Mining Company kept the congregation from growing. Every other year a strike would come and people would move away. A church attendance of 60 people on a Sunday morning was a large crowd. Accordingly, my emphasis and energies over the years were on evangelism and education. Many adult classes for membership were conducted. As many adults were confirmed as were children. We had a strong Sunday School. Teachers met every week in preparation for the following Sunday, and Vacation Bible School brought new prospects for membership. Thus church attendance grew. I loved the work. We all loved the moun-

tains. We loved the people. Wonderful folks, these mining folks and those who lived and worked with them.

While pastor in Butte I was privileged to open mission stations at Boulder and Whitehall. At various times I also served as vacancy pastor in the Deerlodge-Anaconda parish, and for one year as vacancy pastor at First Lutheran of Helena. I ministered regularly at Warm Springs, the state mental hospital, and at Galen, the state tuberculosis sanitarium. I continued to serve as the Secretary of the Department of Parish Education until moving out of the District in 1958.

Thus St. Mark served much in the larger capacity of kingdom work over the years. To God alone be glory!

Fond and "fond" memories during my ministry at St. Mark, Butte, Montana.

1. The beautiful church, stained glass windows, and altar.
2. The mountains.
3. The weekly Sunday School Teacher's meetings, and the teachers who were there.
4. The very competent secretary, Helen Fell.
5. The opening of new mission stations at Boulder and Whitehall.
6. Thirteen baptisms at Whitehall one Sunday afternoon.
7. Fishing on Race Track Creek. Carl Thomsen's last fishing trip.
8. Dinners at Lydias.
9. Mrs. Peter McDonald's liberal portions of chocolate on the children's ice cream, and Grandma Busch's precious jewels: Louise; Rose; and Annie. Their Christmas feasts.
10. Gus Templin: "Give me the Baby."
11. Doris Shefelbine freezing for the entire baptismal service, letting the baby rest on the font, and she leaning against it.
12. Mary Chebul worried about a steer slipping on a banana peel thrown on the ground on the expanse of mountain between Butte and Missoula.
13. Walter Heinzelmann's faithful service as treasurer for more than 40 years and Ruth Heinzelmann's patience and good will for having Eugene in Kindergarten for 3 years and Karen for 2 years.
14. The night that Shef (Lowell Shefelbine) called and said: "Pastor, we've had a bad one. Gerald Brown got it good," and then going over to our English war bride Joan, and her two boys, Barry and Jerry, telling them that their Daddy was in heaven.
15. The assurance that large crowds would gather for both the sun-

rise and regular Easter services, in spite of the severe blizzard and cold. And so it was.

16. Our three faithful organists: Dorothy, Inez, and Laural, and how Dorothy turned two pages instead of one when the choir was singing the Hallelujah Chorus.
17. Oscar and Louise and their many personal kindnesses.
18. The helpful policeman, Ed Huhtanan.
19. Vivian Shrove's Tuesday doughnuts.

I should not have started to list anyone by name. I don't know where to stop.

Pastor Senter (1988)

Enclosed with this are a few pictures taken while we were in Butte. I hope some of them will be usable; apparently we didn't take many during those years. I hope I smiled more than these pictures might indicate...

Some history as I remember it:

Sometime during Pastor Gierke's last years in Butte, St. Mark purchased some property in the "flats" where most new houses were being built, in the hope of eventually starting a daughter congregation and possibly a Christian day school there. Neither of these was to be -- at least not yet. That vacancy dragged on for two years, during which approximately 14 calls were returned before I came. Pastor Ronald "Pete" Zagel, serving Anaconda was the vacancy pastor. During the vacancy the congregation remodeled the church basement and added the rooms on the west end of the building.

When I received the call, I had been serving Fort Benton - Geraldine for just over 4 years (my first), vacancies at Power - Fairfield (twice) and at Peace, Great Falls. I was chairman of the District youth committee from some time in 1957 until I left the District.

I felt that I was young, at 29. I think the District President Paul Freiburger agreed. His private counsel to me was: "Don't change anything for 6 months; then grit your teeth and don't try some more. I tried to follow that advice, at least to start with. But I was comforted in the confidence that a good board of elders (including Walter Heinzelmann,

old enough to be my grandfather at the time) would have given me loving counsel if they had felt I needed any.

Pastor Gierke had encouraged the district to start a mission at Whitehall. That group, by 1960, had been served by the vicar who started the work, a pastor who had remained about 2 years, and an unbelievable succession of vacancy pastors. The evening I was installed at St. Mark, I was informed that I had become the "closest pastor to Whitehall." I met with their voters and without benefit of any formal call, became their pastor also for the duration. I speak of Butte-Whitehall as one of the dual parishes which I have served in my ministry.

I served two vacancies at Anaconda and another at Bozeman. Pastor Oliver Jones, of Gold Hill Lutheran Church, persuaded me to join the Butte Ministers Association. One project of that group was to produce a weekly 30 minute panel discussion program on the local television station. I became chairman of the committee responsible for that, for a year or so, during which time I was moderator of the panel about every other week. Some members said I had "gone Hollywood" on them.

My memories of work with the congregation can be grouped mostly around three words.

Evangelism: We organized a canvass of several blocks of Butte soon after I arrived there, made some estimate as to how long it might take to cover the town (or at least as much as we might work with). I think we never did any more canvassing partly because we soon found that we got enough names from other sources, more than we needed. We had Ambassadors for Christ one weekend. We never got an organized evangelism group, but I do remember getting some ladies to make about a hundred or more phone calls for me once, which netted some good contacts. People came, people left, Butte had turnover of population.

Education: Again, nothing spectacular, but some good things. The Sunday school staff met weekly, for at least 30 minutes, to review the following Sunday's lesson. And they had a training course each spring and fall. Pastor Gierke had started this. Ruth Heinzelmann ran a pre-school until she could no longer do this, used her earnings to help assure that the congregation made its mission commitment each year.

Finances: Money became a problem, especially during the last couple of years. Maybe it was the drain of families during the long strikes (of which there were more than enough during that decade; I came during

the middle of a long strike, left in the middle of another). Maybe financial stewardship was not my strong suite. We did have some good contributors, but were strained.

We have fond memories of Butte and of friends made there, some of whom are still there. We pray that your present pastor and you can grow in every way and that your celebration will contribute to this.

Pastor Ploetz by Marie Ploetz Cramer (1988)

George Ploetz was ordained in the Lutheran ministry and installed as pastor of St. Mark Lutheran Church, Butte, Montana at the 7:30 P.M. worship service on December 15, 1968.

This was the highlight of Pastor Ploetz's life.

During World War II he had served four and one half years in the submarine service. After the war he became the manager of the Metallurgy and Ceramic laboratories of Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory, Schenectady, New York, and held many patents in the nuclear fuel and reactor control fields.

In 1965 he was nominated for the Silver Anniversary All-American football team by Sports Illustrated magazine and Alfred University where he played on an undefeated team in 1940.

He was retired from the Naval Reserve as a Captain. He was a Fellow and Trustee of the American Ceramic Society. During these careers he was an adult Bible class teacher at church and started a Bible class at lunch time at work. The Lord worked through His Word to show him that he was needed in the ministry and in June 1966, he entered Springfield Seminary with 2 boys in college and 4 children at home.

George received his call to Butte, Montana, on Reformation Day 1968. St. Mark thought they were calling a young candidate. They were surprised when he turned out to be a man 50 years old with 6 children.

It was a case of love at first sight. Butte was in the middle of a long strike and needed spiritual guidance. George and his family needed the warmth and love that they found upon their arrival in Butte. Before their arrival the men of St. Mark had added rooms and a bath in the base-

ment of the parsonage and the whole house was spotless and ready to receive the weary travelers with 2 children who had the chickenpox.

We all loved Butte, the people of St. Mark, the community, and the breathtaking mountains all around us. There were very few street signs in those days and Pastor George had quite a time locating all of the people, but he visited everyone right away. He also promised on his ordination to preach only God's Word and working together the congregation grew and became financially solvent. Pastor George loved Vacation Bible School. His favorite song was "This Little Gospel Light."

Pastor's family was all involved in helping with his ministry. Marie enjoyed the opportunity to have all of the congregation involved in making the special symbols for the Christmas trees. She also enjoyed being in the choir and will always remember the candlelight Christmas Eve services. She and Dutch Cloke embroidered the symbols on the white paraments. The pulpit paraments, made by Dutch Cloke, took 96 hours to make, a real labor of love.

The parsonage was a favorite stopping off place for the many transients who passed through town. Some months there would be 30 or more at the door.

It was wonderful to hear hymns coming from the belfry of St. Mark and the wonderful new organ. We were short of organists and after praying for help, the Lord sent 7 organists to St. Mark. It was a busy wonderful 7 years at St. Mark and being our first congregation they had a special place in our hearts.

When Pastor graduated from the seminary he prayed that the Lord would give him at least 10 years in the ministry. The Lord gave him a full measure of 14 years. Be careful what you pray for. Pastor George died February 15, 1983 serving the Lord full time until 10 days before his death.

Pastor La Dassar (1988)

Pastor Larry La Dassar began 10 years of ministry to St. Mark Lutheran Church on March 15, 1976. The theological turmoil of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in the late 1970's was also paralleled in the history of St. Mark. There was a need for Pastor La Dassar to lead St. Mark congregation back to a sound Scriptural and Confessional stance and practice. The theology and practice of "open communion", granting Christian burial to anyone, interdenominational unionistic involvements, strong charismatic influences, and reformed theology and practice resulting from complete acceptance of the Kennedy Evangelism Program necessitated a return to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. Such an effort brought about turmoil, conflicts, and tensions within St. Mark Congregation for a number of years. Brotherly Christian counsel from the Circuit Counselor and the District President was sought a number of times. Eventually a number of families left St. Mark and joined the ALC and LCA churches in Butte. A new lay leadership emerged from the "silent majority".

Numerical growth at St. Mark Lutheran followed Butte's economic ups and downs. Just about the time St. Mark began to show some growth, an economic crunch would occur, and some families would move away looking for work elsewhere. The closing of the copper industry in Butte in the early 1980's resulted in a loss of membership over a number of years.

However, by God's grace, growth occurred in other areas. There was an increased interest in Bible Study which resulted in a firmer Biblical and Confessional stance. St. Mark congregation developed a strong commitment to District and Synodical Missions. God blessed St. Mark's giving so that in 1985, the congregation joined with other congregations in the Divide Circuit in Synod's Together in Missions program. Financial support over and above regular mission offerings was directed to Reverend Randy Benscoter and family in Papua, New Guinea.

God's blessings were further demonstrated by St. Mark's participation in Synod's special offering programs. Over \$24,000 was given to Forward in Remembrance and over \$16,000 was given to Alive in Christ. It must be pointed out that these gifts occurred during hard economic times in Butte.

There was also an increased involvement in activity directed toward Lutheran World Relief. The sewing group made quilts, and gathered and

boxed used clothing. The evening LWML collected and boxed as much as 1,500 pounds of soap a year. Sometimes the basement of the church smelled like a perfume factory from all the soap.

The early 1980's marked an increase in the number of students from Montana Tech attending worship. A ministry among these college students was begun. The early 1980's also saw the beginning of the Mary-Martha Circle, an evening LWML group. This auxiliary organization was begun to provide women who worked or who had young children the opportunity to participate in this mission minded organization.

The high cost of energy necessitated some physical changes to the church building. The stained glass windows were covered with Plexiglas. The attic was insulated with 18 inches of blown cellulose. A number of windows in the office area were insulated and boarded over. The office area was carpeted and the walls were insulated and paneled. All church activities and meetings were moved to Sunday, Monday, or Tuesday in a successful effort to become better stewards of our energy resources.

Several physical changes occurred in the parsonage during this period. New cabinets and counters were placed in the kitchen. A new dishwasher was added around 1980. The main floor bathroom was remodeled in 1985.

Pastor La Dassar's ministry at St. Mark ended June 30, 1986 when he accepted a call to another district.

Pastor Christopher Wareham (2018)

Psalm 116:12-13, "How can I repay the LORD for all his goodness to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD."

"...ALL HIS GOODNESS..." Wow, do I have a lot of thoughts about that phrase when I think about serving as Pastor of St. Mark Lutheran Church for 17½ years. The biggest thing that stands out in my mind is the great privilege of sharing God's Word through preaching and leading Bible Studies. As a former civil engineer I like numbers so here are a few to think about. I shared a message from God's Word (sermon) about 60 times a year or just over 1,000 times while here. At about 2,000 words per sermon, some of you may have heard over two million words from me in the pulpit. No wonder you're tired of listening to me! I also led 4 Bible studies per month for 9 months of each year which totals over 600

Bible studies. All these numbers are doubled if you count serving Zion Lutheran in Whitehall.

I hope the numbers don't sound like I'm bragging, but maybe I am a little. It's such a great blessing and privilege to study and meditate on God's Word, to spend hours each week with the Lord, listening to Him speak to me through His Word, and then get to share that with you! "... all His goodness to me..." That's what it is. And I had the privilege of doing it for 17½ years!

As I received a great blessing from this, I hope and pray that you received at least some small blessing from it. Whether it's the written Word, the spoken Word, the visual Word or the living eternal Word, Jesus Christ Himself, it's all about the Word. The Gospel of John calls Jesus the Logos, the Word and says, "The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth...From His fullness we have all received grace upon grace" (John 1:14, 16). I hope and pray that you too have seen His (the Word's, Jesus') glory and received from His fullness grace upon grace and been astounded to think about "all his goodness."

And when you've done that, the question should come to mind that David asks, "How can I repay the LORD for all his goodness to me?" (Psalm 116:12) David answers that question by saying, "I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD." That's a strange answer. David is saying, "God has been so good to me, so I have a question: how can I repay Him? Answer: by accepting more of His goodness, especially His gift of salvation."

What is the cup of salvation that God wants you to lift up with your hands of faith and drink deeply? This is the greatest goodness of all, the goodness that He shows in His Son Jesus Christ, the living eternal Word. Can you see Him bearing the cross? His shoulder and entire back are bleeding from the recent whipping they gave Him. He's staggering; He's barely able to carry the heavy load. He bears that cross for you. Your sins are the heaviest load on His shoulders.

See Him on the cross, lifted up between heaven and earth, a sight of cruelty and suffering, a sight that would tear anyone's heart out. For you the fainting and the thirst, the nakedness and the agony. For you the bowing of His head, giving up His spirit, sleeping in death in the cold dark tomb. For you He rises from the dead and proclaims victory over

death. For you He ascends to heaven where He pleads and prays to the Father to continue showering you with ALL HIS GOODNESS.

“How can I repay the LORD for all his goodness to me?” I can’t. You can’t. He doesn’t want us to. Just take the cup of salvation in your hands of faith – it’s the cup of suffering that Jesus went through for you – take that cup, lift it up in your life, drink from it deeply, and give thanks and praise to the Lord who saved you at such a great cost to Him, but at no cost to you. Then call on His name. When you’re in trouble, go to Him for help. When things are going well, give Him thanks and praise. Think often about “all His goodness to you” and then “...lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD.” You’ll experience more of His goodness every day for the rest of your life and into eternity.

It was a great blessing to experience “all His goodness to me” during the time I was pastor of St. Mark Lutheran Church. I count it a privilege and thank the Lord for my time here. Truly He helped me grow in my walk with Him, worked everything out for the good and blessed me and my family greatly.

To our Heavenly Father who made us and loves us, to His Son Jesus Christ who died and rose for us, and to the Holy Spirit He sends into our hearts be all the glory!

Sources

Many resources were consulted by the authors and many people contributed to the document. All individuals who contributed to this history are gratefully thanked for their kindness and support. Sources consulted included the English written records of St. Mark Lutheran Church; history booklets written for previous St. Mark anniversaries; letters from former pastors who are still living or from their wives; the Montana District of the Missouri Synod's archives; the Butte-Silver Bow Public Archives; old issues of the Montana Standard and the Butte Miner newspapers; the World Museum of Mining; Butte City Directories for 1889, 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1906, and 1908; and photographs loaned or donated to St. Mark Lutheran Church.

The 2018 update relied on St. Mark bulletins, minutes of the Voter’s Assembly and Planning Councils, and memories of members. The updated text was reviewed by Judi Case, Cheryl Hansen, Mary Patton, Retired Pastor Christopher Wareham, and Pastor Mavis. Thomas Patton was the primary author.



Undated photograph of the altar area, St. Mark Lutheran Church. Note lack of communion candles. Also old communionware. The cross and candelabra are still in use in 2018.



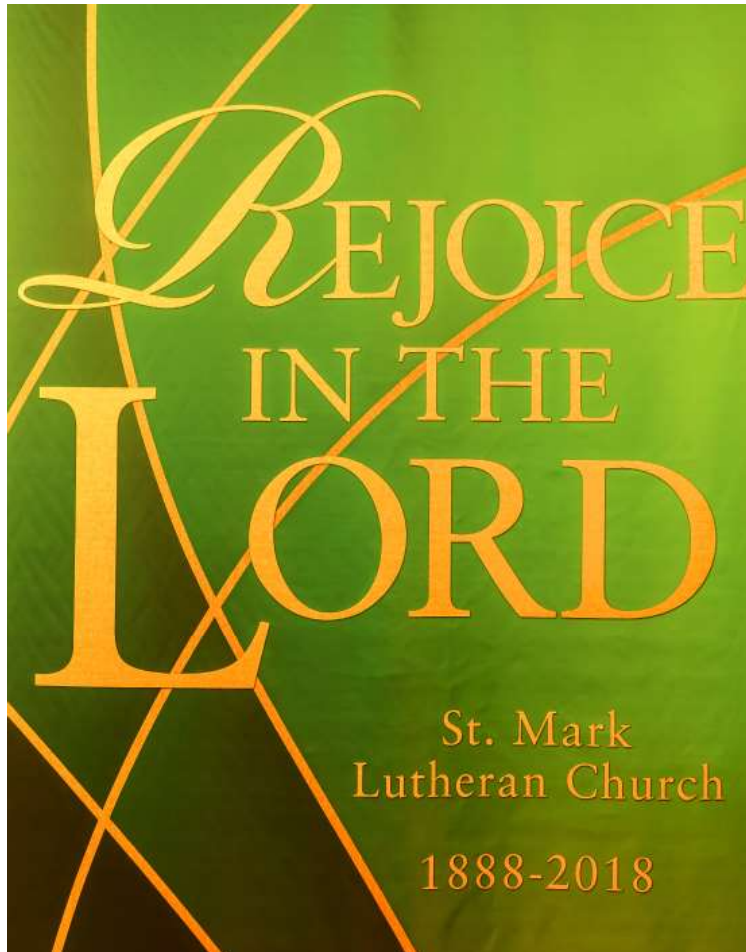
Pastor's Conference at parsonage 67 West Silver, Butte, Montana. From left to right are: L. Reque; M. Hudtloff; E. Wachsmut; P. Krezschman; T. Rodsatter; L. Carlson; M. Mertz; A. Lobitz; and N. Berg.



Hudtloff residence (second story) on South Dakota Street, prior to construction of the parsonage. Pastor Hudtloff is at right.



Centennial Banner--St. Mark Lutheran Church



130th anniversary celebration banner—St. Mark Lutheran Church

Glory, honor, power, strength, wisdom, and might are yours our God. We have seen and beheld Your wonders, we have received from Your most gracious hand the benefit of our life, we have been given out of the depths of Your love the sanctification of the saints, and now claim the beauties of Your presence.

AMEN