

GOD'S PLAN...



Fund Appeal Campaign

February 2008

Transcends All Understanding

Calendar of Events



Public Kick-Off

February 9-10
Church Services

Member Gatherings

February 10-March 10

Commitment Services

March 15-16
Church Services

First Fruits Offering

March 29-30
Church Services

Final Approval

Congregational Meeting

March 31
Tentative Date

Exciting things happening at St. Mark's

The vote is in! Our school project is moving forward!

In the recent open forum/congregational meeting, St. Mark's members voted an overwhelming 102-2 to approve the ministry council's school renovation and addition plan.

Equally overwhelming has been the show of enthusiasm and support for the project. Hundreds of people attended school tours and the congregational meeting. They checked out floor plans, asked good questions and expressed desires for the future of our children.

"I think we just set a record," said congregational president Tim Fredrick, observing the long line of new voters waiting to sign St. Mark's constitutional book, which dates back to 1860. "It's encouraging we had such a positive turnout for this meeting. We need the entire congregation to participate in this project."

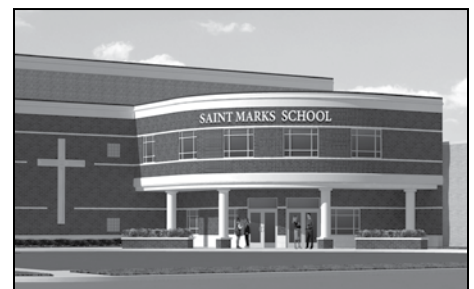
Record, or not—God gave us school tours and a congregational meeting that were history in the making. They were wonderful examples of St. Marks' dedication to our children and their Christian education.

St. Mark's also showed its support of Christian education at the high school level. Members voted to include Lakeside Lutheran High School in our fund appeal. Ten percent of appeal proceeds will go to Lakeside's debt retirement for its school addition and renovation.

So, where do we go from here?

St. Mark's now begins the competitive bidding process. These bids will enable us to calculate a final cost for our school. After Commitment Services on March 15-16, we'll know how much money our congregation can dedicate to this project. Based on this information, voters will then give their final approval at a congregational meeting, tentatively set for March 31.

We encourage you to join in the excitement at St. Mark's! Pray for God's guidance to those submitting bids. Pray and consider what you can commit to this project.

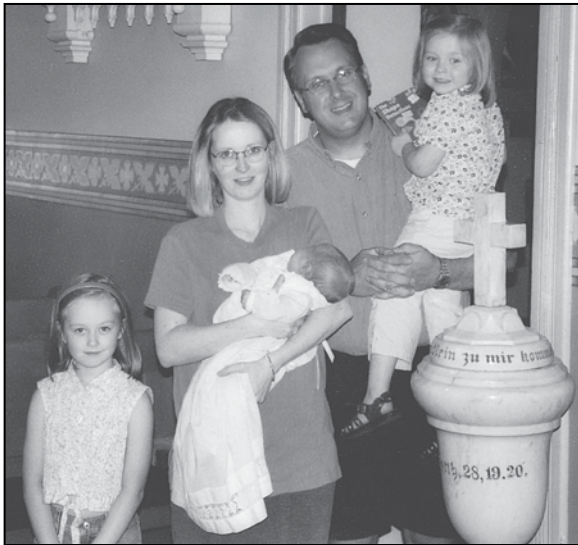


Exterior and interior renderings show the lobby serving as main entry into the school. The interior photo shows the office on the right and entrance to the gymnasium/activity center on the left.

St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran Church

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Traditions at St. Mark's



A family baptismal gown is tradition for the Asmus family as they celebrate God's saving grace at St. Mark's. Shown above are Amelia, Theresa (holding Isaiah), Matt and Elyse Asmus in August, 2004.

When I think of traditions, I usually think of the customs we practice while celebrating holidays; like the trip to grandma's house or baking cookies.

Traditions can come in many forms. Think of the long-standing tradition of singing "Silent Night" in German during the Christmas Eve services here at St. Mark's. A long-standing tradition for my family at St. Mark's regards baptism, and on Aug. 7, 2004, my son, Isaiah, kept the tradition. He was baptized that night while wearing the same baptismal gown worn by his sisters and most of his cousins. I wore that same gown about 37 years earlier when I was baptized, and my father wore it when he was baptized in 1928.

Later this year Isaiah will be keeping another family tradition when he starts school at St. Mark's. His Christian education, like my father's and mine, is made possible by the generosity of this congregation and its long-standing commitment to Christian education. This tradition is worthy of support for our children today as well as our children in the future.

I ask you to join me in prayerfully considering a gift to the capitol fund campaign.

—Matt Asmus, Campaign Co-Director

Equal sacrifice, not equal giving



Remember the story of the widow's mite?

The woman gave only two coins of little value, while others gave abundantly. Yet, Jesus commended her offering as worth far more because she, "out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on," Mark 12:44.

Equal sacrifice, but not equal giving

God gave us his Son to be our Savior. He's given us all we have. As his people, we give back to him as an act of faith and worship.

Take time to pray and consider. What can you willingly give out of love and thankfulness to God?

How we can give \$1,750,000

—	gifts at	—
1	gift at	\$150,000
1	gift at	\$75,000
3	gifts at	\$50,000
8	gifts at	\$30,000
15	gifts at	\$20,000
25	gifts at	\$12,000
40	gifts at	\$6,000
80	gifts at	\$3,000
—	gifts at	—

Giving is for three years *over and above* our regular giving.

Ways to Give

Cash, Real Estate, Stocks or Bonds, Life Insurance Policies or Cash Values of Policy,
Antiques, Works of Art, Jewelry, Coin or Stamp Collections, Income Tax Refunds, Irrevocable or Revocable Trust, etc.

Equal Sacrifice, Not Equal Giving

St. Mark's members have many good questions

How did we decide to renovate and add to our school building?

Since January 2006, St. Mark's planning committees have been studying the needs of our elementary school. Three possible solutions resulted from this study:

- Build a new school on the west side of town
- Purchase property and build a new school on the same block as church
- Renovate and add to our current school

Last spring, each St. Mark's family had the opportunity to voice its opinion through the Cargill Survey and indicate an intention of stewardship giving. Based on this information, St. Mark's has chosen to renovate and add to our current school building.

At this time, what do our building plans include?

- 11,776 sq. ft. gymnasium/activity center, including stage and storage
- 8,600 sq. ft. addition, including floor offices, health room, media center and computer lab
- Current gym converted into seven classrooms, music room and music practice room
- Update current heating, plumbing, lighting, windows, paint, ceiling and floor tile and lockers

Who is our architect/builder?

St. Mark's has contracted MSI General Corporation, of Oconomowoc, to design and build our school addition. As a design/build company, MSI will manage all the professional service providers necessary to complete the job. They will also manage the renovation of our current building.

What is the overall time frame for the project?

God willing, our plan is to start construction this spring and use the summer to complete a major portion of the renovation and new classroom

construction. We plan to focus on the gymnasium/activity center in the autumn. Our goal is to complete the project by January 2009.

What will be the student capacity of the new school?

After the addition and renovation, St. Mark's will have an estimated student capacity of 400-450.

We only have 260 students—do we need such a large capacity?

Yes, we do! Our school is a great tool in fulfilling St. Mark's mission "to serve all people of God's world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ on the basis of Holy Scripture."

St. Mark's hopes to further its outreach to the community. We're planning 3-Year-Old Pre-K, a program that will increase our enrollment and bring more families to church and school.

How will we use the new school?

The new building will be much more than a school! Contemporary church services, choir rehearsals, Kids 4 Christ Sunday School, organizational meetings—the list goes on and on. The new school will be a blessing to St. Mark's in many ways! It will allow us to continue our mission of reaching out in Christ.

Can we close Jones Street to public use?

St. Mark's values a positive relationship with its neighbors. With this thought in mind, we recently met with city engineering and building inspection departments regarding closing Jones Street. Due to necessary petitions and approvals for both the street closing and the building project, the city advised us to focus on our building project.

St. Mark's and St. John's will continue to temporarily block access to the street during each school day.

How will we conduct school during the construction?

Principal Fred Uttech is already planning for our students. He has begun inquiries with St. John's Lutheran School and Immanuel Lutheran Church. We will also hold classes in St. Mark's Parish Center.



"I'm really excited about the new school!" says Gabriella Genz. "Mostly I like the computer lab, science lab and, of course, the gym! When I am in 5th grade, I'll be able to play in my school's new gym, and we won't have to rent the gym from the school next door."

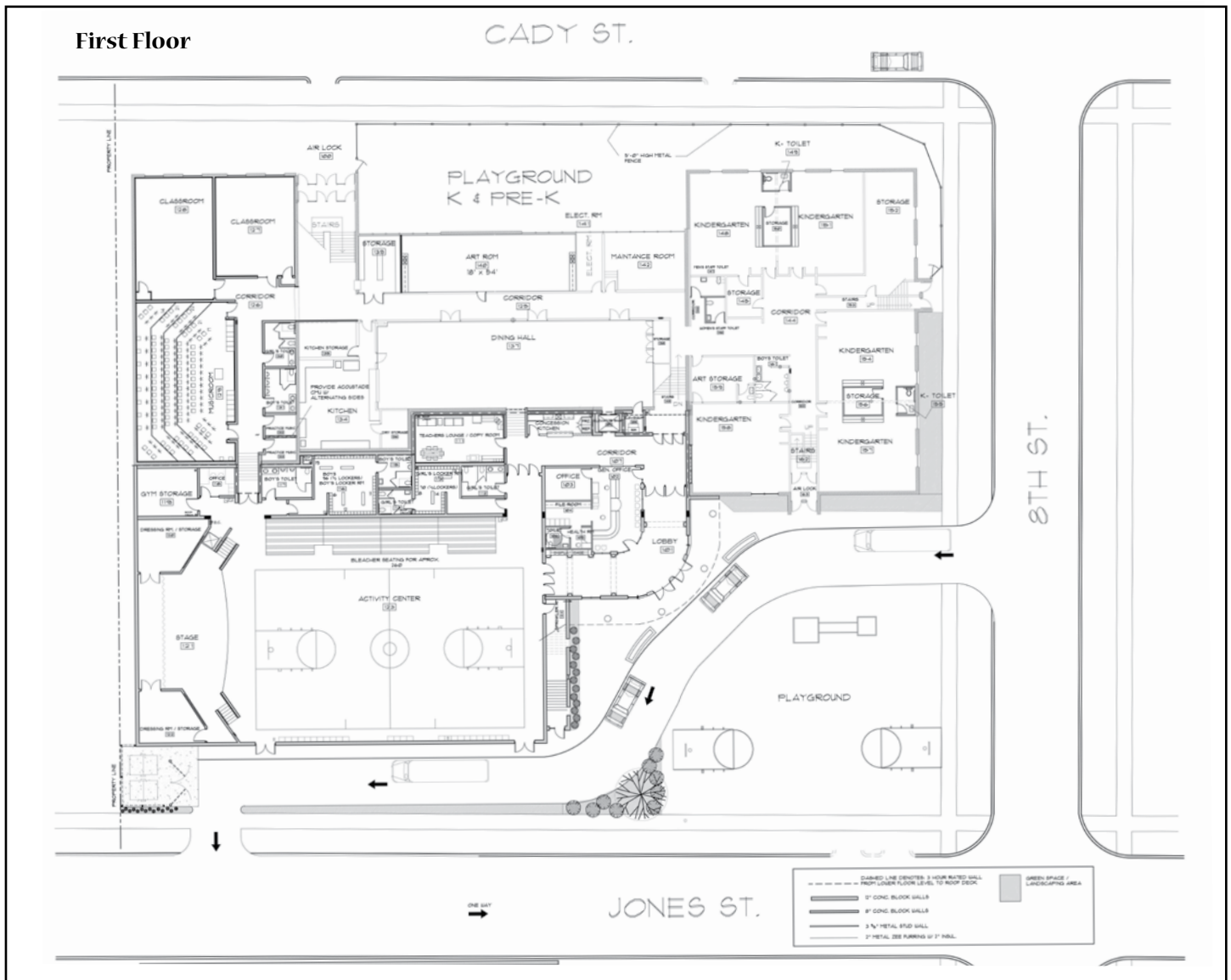
What about parking?

A loss of parking is inevitable. To compensate, St. Mark's has the option of paving the gravel lot on Madison Street. Our goal is to also acquire properties within the church block as they become available.

And the playground?

The loss of playground space is also inevitable. To compensate, plans are to create an enclosed playground on the Cady Street side of school. This playground will be for the primary grade children.

cont. page 4



What will this project cost?

An estimated cost is \$3.75 million.

Are furniture and fixtures included in this cost?

The construction proposal includes counters, cabinets and marker boards. It does not, however, include desks, chairs, tables and other furniture items. St. Mark's will begin a "wish list" program for these items.

Why proceed now with the building project?

According to financial institutions, construction costs historically increase an average of six to seven percent each year. At six percent, our costs would increase \$226,000 each year.

How will we pay for this project?

To start, St. Mark's members voted to appropriate \$434,399 from multiple congregational reserve funds.

St. Mark's has also set a goal of raising \$1,750,000 over the next three years in the "God's Plan...Transcends All Understanding" fund appeal.

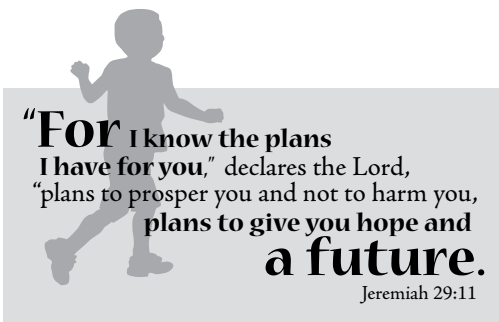
From where will the rest of the funds come?

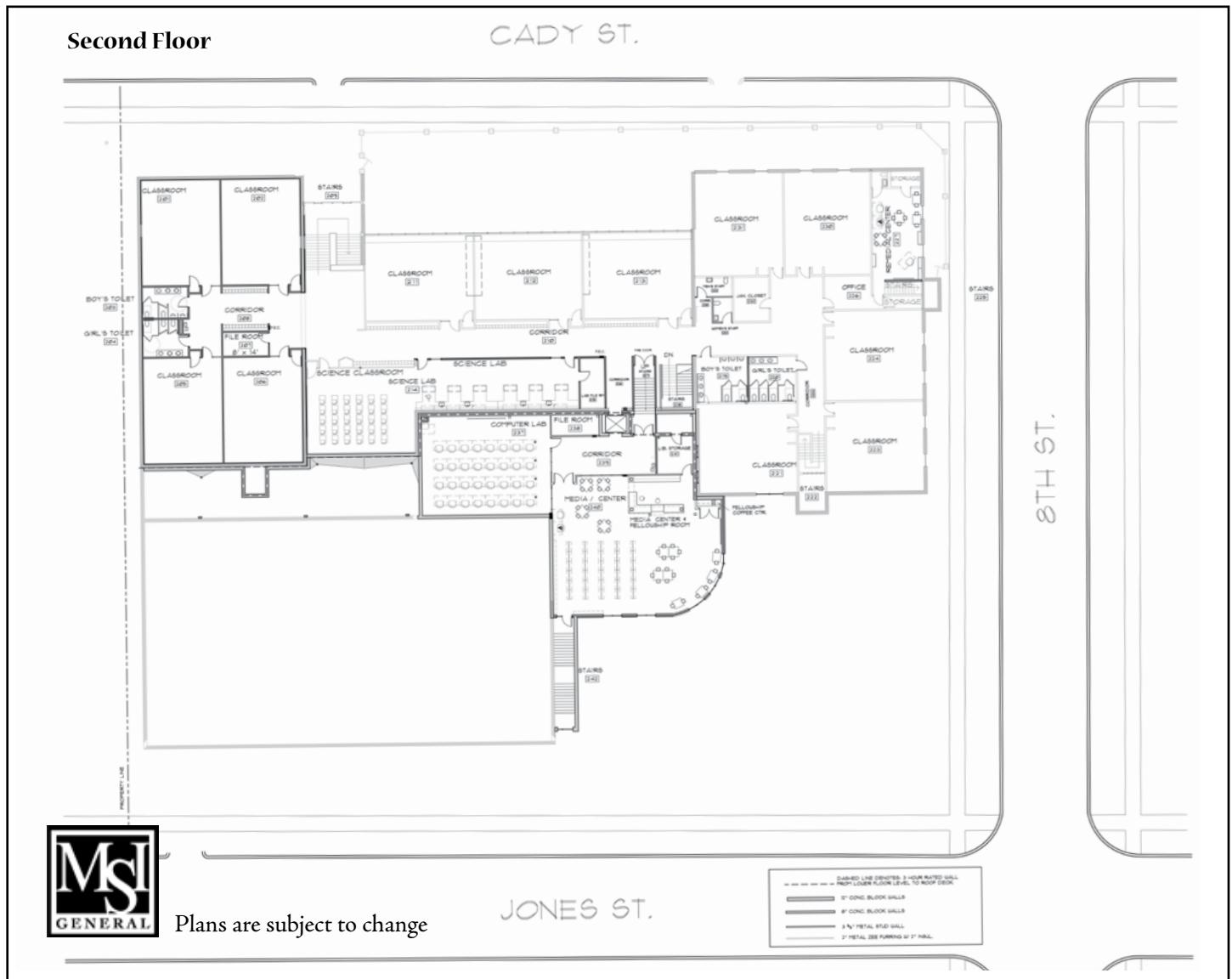
Depending on the results of this appeal, we will hold a second fund appeal in the following three years.

St. Mark's is also actively pursuing grants through various foundations.

Will giving to the project have a negative effect on our regular church budget?

No! We are asking that your three-year gift be *over and above* your regular giving. We don't want to undermine our present ministries with reduced giving. As a matter of fact, our regular giving will need to increase as the ministries increase.





When will I make a commitment?

St. Mark's is holding Commitment Church Services the weekend of March 15-16. Members can turn in commitment cards at any of these services or mail it to the church office.

How long is my commitment?

The financial commitment is for the length of the fund appeal, which is three years. Members can give weekly, monthly, annually, or in a lump sum.

When do I begin giving towards my commitment?

St. Mark's will hold First Fruits Offerings Services the weekend of March 29-30. You may begin your giving at any of these services.

Will my commitment be private?

Yes. The givings you designate on your Commitment Card will be recorded in confidence, just as your regular offerings to church are recorded. St.

Mark's will encourage and celebrate our giving as a whole congregation in praise to God.

How will I know what to give?

The answer is between you and God. We are asking you to be open to the journey of prayer, faith and sacrifice when it comes to your gift. Take time to pray and ask for the Lord's guidance. Commit an amount that is in praise and glory to God.

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God's plan transcends all understanding: Then and Now

The year was 1854. Our spiritual ancestors had come to the new world seeking a better life for their families. Exciting as the opportunities seemed, they no doubt had concerns and anxious moments. Still, our Savior Jesus promised to be with them and holding onto those promises, our ancestors started a new congregation.

What a bold decision! And, clinging to Christ, our ancestors would immediately do something even bolder—they went on to establish their own school. No, they did not always understand every detail of God's plan. However, from God's Word they knew his plan included their children and grandchildren.

Along the way there have been many challenges. Facility needs have changed. Education needs and costs have changed. Generations have come and gone, yet for over 150 years



St. Mark's first school, built in 1864, was located on Jones Street, where our gymnasium now stands.

each has taken up the sacred task of Christian education for the children of St. Mark's, both at the elementary and the high school levels.

God's Plan Will Again Transcend All Understanding

As in the past, St. Mark's needs and the challenges are great. As in the past, this project is not about brick and

mortar; it is about Christ and our kids. With this project, we are working in time for eternity.

How will Christ bless St. Mark's this time as we address our needs? We already know his plan of salvation transcended all understanding when he willingly gave his Son to live and die for us. We already know his plans for us in heaven will give us joy and glory that transcends all understanding. We already know that it transcends our understanding that God would include sinners like us in his plans for calling more people into his kingdom. Certainly, God's plans to bless our congregation will also exceed anything we could imagine.

Confident of God's blessings and guidance, we again with joy and trust resolve to meet these challenges.

—Pastor Michael Jensen