



**COME
AND
SEE**

An Invitation to encounter
the risen Jesus at St. Mark's
Episcopal Church

COME AND SEE...

“Come and See” is a simple invitation. When they first encounter Jesus, Andrew and John ask him “Where are you staying?” Jesus tells them to “Come and see.” (John 1:39) When Philip encounters Jesus, he invited him to “follow me.” He can’t help but tell his friend Nathanael, who asks if “anything good can come from Nazareth?” Phillip answers as if on cue: “Come and See.” (John 1:46) This is an invitation, not only to encounter God in our thoughts, or in our prayers, but in our whole lives. These disciples, and by extension you and I, are invited to “*abide*” with our Lord, to drink deeply from the well of God’s wisdom, love, and grace. But this is not to be a temporary encounter. Once we have tasted this living water, we are invited to become a disciple ourselves! When we “Come and See” we are invited to find our place in this new family.



The Very Rev. Stephen Kidd
Rector, St. Mark's Episcopal
Church, Gulfport MS

We strive to continue this legacy here at St. Mark's: to invite, welcome and include all who come through our doors, to make room at the table for all who desire to “Come and See.” In the next few pages you will find some of the ways you can grow in love and service as part of this family. There are opportunities to worship God in beauty and holiness, and communities who gather to learn more about scripture, the Church, prayer and themselves. See the many ways we join together to offer our gifts both to our Church family and to those in need in our wider community. I hope you will accept this invitation to find your place here among us: to dwell with us in love, service and worship. I hope you will share with us your unique gifts to the glory of God and his Son Jesus Christ. And finally, I invite you to prayerfully consider making a pledge of financial support, to help us continue offering a place for all who desire to “Come and See.”

COME AND SEE...

A PLACE TO WORSHIP

In the Anglican tradition our service is ordered by our Book of Common Prayer and our music is drawn from our Hymnal 1982. It is our custom to celebrate Holy Communion each week. During this service we gather together to read scripture, to receive instruction, and to pray for the needs of this community and the wider world. We also confess our shortcomings, hear assurance of God's forgiveness, and receive nourishment in body and spirit to return to the world again for another week of service to God.

At our Baptism we promise to seek and serve Christ in every person we encounter. We hope you will join us for worship. We offer Holy Eucharist at 8am and 10am on Sunday Mornings, and 5:30pm on Wednesdays. Our Centering Prayer group meets twice a month. Special services often take place at our outdoor chapel, and once a year we gather on the beach for an Epiphany Celebration and Bonfire!



COME AND SEE...

A PLACE TO LEARN

St Mark's is a community who loves to learn. We have a time for "Holy Questions" each Sunday between the 8 and 10am services. Godly Play is offered for our younger children, and the Bible and Me (BAM) is offered for older children and teens at 11am. We study a book of the Bible each semester on Wednesday nights at 6:30pm.

Our Episcopal Youth Community meets weekly. An "Inquirers Class" is offered each Fall to learn more about the Episcopal Church. Special seasonal offerings and book studies are offered on various weekdays. And intergenerational events occur throughout the year inviting all ages to learn together.



COME AND SEE...

A PLACE TO BELONG



At St. Mark's we love to be together. Our Bishop often brags that the best brisket in Mississippi is served at St. Mark's! We gather several times a year as a parish to share great food and better fellowship. Our Episcopal Men's Fellowship gathers monthly for their Grill n Chill event. This inspired the ladies of the church to create Ladies' Night Out! The Seniors Group meets monthly for studies and fun outings.



Our teenagers meet each week for EYC, and attend retreat weekends and summer camp sponsored by the Diocese of Mississippi. Wednesday night dinner between our Eucharist service and Bible study is a delicious highlight of the work week. And Coffee Hour after the 10 am service is a great place to meet new people and enjoy a donut. These communities and others strive to offer a place to belong for everyone!



COME AND SEE...

A PLACE TO SERVE

Our congregation is a talented bunch, and we put those gifts to use in a variety of ways! It takes a team of folks to make our Sundays happen. Our choir, ushers, readers, acolytes and Lay Eucharistic Ministers serve during Church, while our altar guild is hard at work behind the scenes. Sunday school teachers, coffee hosts, and other volunteers make sure we offer quality formation and hospitality to all who stay after church.

Our Pastoral Care teams assist the clergy in caring for the sick, homebound, bereaved, and others in need. They provide cards, casseroles, phone calls and visits to those who might otherwise feel forgotten and alone. Our Quilters provide hand made quilts for each person at their Baptism. The Buildings and Grounds team cares for our physical space, so we can welcome all to enjoy them. Our Vestry and other leadership committees ensure that we are good stewards of all we have been given, and help lead the congregation into the future with joy, confidence and hope!



COME AND SEE...

A PLACE TO GIVE



A fundamental value of Christian community is generosity, and we seek to live into this call through our life together. Our Outreach Committee offers a variety of ways to serve those in need in our wider neighborhood. We provide counselors at Pass Road Elementary with food each month to distribute to students from food insecure households. Our congregation sponsors a weekly team for Feed My Sheep in downtown Gulfport. We partner with the Mental Health Association of South Mississippi and Gulf Coast Community Ministries to support and serve our homeless neighbors. St. Mark's is very active in disaster response and recovery work when the inevitable storms affect our region. We believe that our love for God is best expressed in our love and care for our neighbors.



What Can I Do?

Grow:

Commit yourself to a discipline of growth for the coming year. Get involved with a class, ministry, guild or group which will stretch you in a new way.

Pray:

Pray for St. Mark's: our people, our mission and our future together. Begin with the prayer for stewardship below.

Give:

Give to the building up of God's Kingdom in this place. Prayerfully consider your gift of financial support for St. Mark's, then complete and return a pledge card. www.stmarksgulfport.com/give

Serve:

Share your time and talents to the glory of God and in the service of others. Get involved with a ministry of St. Mark's or one of our many ministry partners in the community.



Prayer for Stewardship

Loving God, I come to you in thanksgiving, knowing that all I am and all that I have is a gift from you. In faith and love, help me to do your will. Give me the wisdom and insight to understand your will for me and the fervor to fulfill my good intentions. I offer my gifts of time, talent and wealth to you as a true act of faith, to reflect my love for you and my neighbor. Help me to reach out to others as you have reached out to me, in Jesus' name. Amen.