



blessing in
ABUNDANCE

ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
BY THE NARROWS (ELCA), TACOMA, WA



God has been good to us at St. Mark's Lutheran Church by The Narrows! Our membership and our capacity for mission has continued to grow over the years, and we have found many ways to be engaged in meaningful ministry with people inside and outside our walls. As we continue to hear God's call to use our gifts in faithful and generous ways, we now have the potential to make an even greater impact by reducing our mortgage debt and redirecting that money to strengthen ministry at St. Mark's and in our community.

And God is able to provide you with every

blessing in abundance

We at St. Mark's have been blessed with a strong congregation, funds to support our staff and programming, and beautiful gathering spaces for worship and ministry. In utilizing the Church Assessment Tool (CAT) recently, we learned that the people of St. Mark's want to further expand our outreach to people in the congregation and in the community. A majority of you also said you are "in favor of our congregation moving forward with a debt reduction/retirement" campaign.

The time to "move forward" has arrived. Our congregation is launching the ***Blessing in Abundance*** campaign to raise \$1 million in gifts that will greatly reduce our \$2.3 million mortgage. By doing so, we will:

- Free up funds for ministries
\$60,000 in the next fiscal year, increasing to \$90,000 per year by 2020
- Save \$500,000 in interest payments.

Of the funds raised, 90% will be applied to our mortgage principal and 10% will be donated immediately to help others in our community.



This funding strategy will have not only immediate impact in our community but longstanding benefits for the ministry of St. Mark's. We are getting close to our goal of having enough staff support in all the key areas of ministry, but we are still relying on volunteers in a few critical positions. Going forward, those roles will need to be funded, and *Blessing in Abundance* will help us do that.

so that by always having

*enough of
everything,*

Additionally, stewarding one of our greatest resources, our church facilities, the campaign will help us create a deferred maintenance budget of approximately \$50,000 a year, which is what we will need to keep all our buildings and facilities in excellent condition.

Finally, the campaign will help us reach the goal of building up an operating reserve in our General Ministry Fund. Paying down our current mortgage to then channel those funds toward the mission of our church will allow St. Mark's to "have enough" and become a stronger congregation as we move into the future.



Ministry in our community is one of our strongest values. That's why we are sharing 10% of all *Blessing in Abundance* gifts with sister churches who are reaching out to people in Tacoma with words and deeds of love.

- As we have done in the past, we will give 5% of all capital appeal gifts to Peace Community Center (PCC) in support of their growing ministry in our city. This opportunity to share comes at a time when PCC is raising funds to renovate and expand the current facility, hire three new staff positions to work with high school students as Academic Coaches, and raise sustainability funding to support their elementary programming. As always, PCC strives to be a vibrant community of hope, where youth become life-long learners who act with compassion and confidence, using their diverse gifts for positive change.
- The other 5% of your gifts will be shared with a new mission congregation in Tacoma called Rock City. Rock City Church is led by Anne Jones-Barnes, who is being prepared for Lutheran Pastoral ministry through an ELCA program called Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM). The vision of this multi-ethnic and multi-generational Lutheran congregation includes monthly worship, public conversation around important issues, and health ministry with marginalized people. We are excited about the many ways that we can get to know the people of Rock City in the coming years!

you may share.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:8



how YOU can help

To reach our three-year goal of \$1 million, we ask that you prayerfully consider a generous gift to this campaign. Your regular gifts to the General Ministry Fund at St. Mark's are of utmost importance, and we want you to put that first in your Plan for Giving. Then, as you are able, please consider this opportunity to go above and beyond that with a gift or pledge to the *Blessing in Abundance* campaign.

There are many options for giving in a way that is meaningful to you and your family. You may make a one-time gift, or spread your pledge payments over the course of three years. Every gift will be a blessing, regardless of size.

Our actions today will determine how we serve each other and our neighbors in the future. The *Blessing in Abundance* campaign will strengthen our ministry and allow us to continue to share God's love and compassion for many years to come.

We ask for your prayers for support of this campaign as we begin this work together.



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