

Saint Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church

2013-2017 Pastoral Strategic Plans

We the members of Saint Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church developed this Pastoral Strategic Plan in response to the expressed needs of our Parish. It is intended to identify our Parish members' stated goals for improvements to our facilities and programs that will increase parish member involvement, provide various outreach programs to the community and allow members to grow in their faith. This Plan identifies seven major focus areas: Community, Worship/Spiritual Development, Stewardship, Parish Outreach, Facilities, Education/ Formation and Communications. Each focus area includes specific strategies we would like to accomplish over the next five years. These items were derived from the recommendations made by Parish members during the Fall of 2012 and Winter of 2013 planning meetings, the CARA Survey and "Our Charism" Meeting.

I. Community

Develop an environment where we gather to glorify God in a loving and accepting community.

- Improve and expand upon our current community building activities
- Continue to develop new ways to welcome newcomers into our parish community
- Develop strong dynamic middle and high school youth programs
- Develop and leverage Faith Groups that have neighborhood identities
- Continue to support the Feast of Saint Mark's Festival so that it builds community within Saint Mark's Parish and the greater Birmingham Area

II. Worship/Spiritual Development

Glorify God through participation in the Mass, devotions and sacraments that lead us to spiritual growth through prayer, retreats and private devotions.

- Develop and implement family friendly opportunities
- Continue to strive toward a "parent friendly" space during Mass
- Enhance participation in Mass, Devotions, Eucharistic Adoration and Sacraments
- Participate in and host Diocesan wide activities
- Explore different worship and music opportunities for our youth

III. Stewardship

Embrace the responsibility we have to our community and to God by giving our time, talent and resources, while meeting our church's current financial obligations as we prepare for the future.

- Increase the participation of families giving time, talent and treasure as they take ownership for the success of the parish
- Retire current Parish debt by 2020 while at the same time establishing a reserve for future facilities

- Be good stewards of God's earth
- Provide transparent fiscal responsibility/accountability
- Complete a Parish Area survey map showing all communities, churches, apartments and other living complexes along with community gathering areas

IV. Parish Outreach

Provide service to others enabling us to model Christ's example as we promote a culture of life to reflect the Church's preferential option for the poor.

- Build a strong vibrant Saint Vincent DePaul Society
- Continue to increase awareness among parishioners of all Pro-Life issues surrounding the sanctity of life from conception through natural death
- Maintain strong support of our current outreach ministries and missions, (such as First Light and Greene County) while reviewing other outreach and service opportunities that support children and families in need in the greater Birmingham area
- Develop Ecumenical relationships to encourage shared ministries and fellowship

V. Facilities

Provide a central location with a spiritual environment for worship, fellowship, education and service that is accessible, safe and comfortable.

- Review and adapt the Master Plan for Saint Mark's Parish to ensure timely expansion of facilities to meet the Parish needs, with special attention to the effects of resulting growth in the surrounding geographic area and the flexibility for an onsite Child Development Center
- Continue to make the Church site more attractive and accessible
- Increase visibility, accessibility and awareness of our location including opening a primary entrance off Hwy 119
- Periodically evaluate the use of a multi-purpose field for Church activities

VI. Education/Formation

Develop programs for adults, youth and children that deepen our Catholic Faith through an understanding of Sacred Scripture and Apostolic Tradition.

- Develop more engaging and dynamic programs that help our youth be more involved and feel positive about being a part of our Catholic Community
- Continue to encourage the partnership with Our Lady of the Valley Catholic School to provide our parish families the opportunity for parochial education
- Determine if having a child development center (infant to four years) at Saint Mark is viable
- Develop methods to transmit the Faith and reach out to all in response to the Papal Synod regarding New Evangelization

VII. Communications

Continue to improve our overall communications.

- Form a Communication Committee to evaluate and implement a detailed communication plan
- Publish a current Parish Photo Directory
- Connect Saint Mark Parish with appropriate Social Media communication tools in an effort to put a dynamic and welcoming electronic face on our Parish Community
- Build the awareness and visibility of Saint Mark in our community so that people moving into our Parish boundaries are readily able to learn about Saint Mark and join our Parish
- Continue to develop the quality and usability of our Web Site
- Build a useable data base of Parish members