

Your generosity at work!

Remember the days before Covid? If I think hard I can. Well before Covid, and before I (Pastor Matt) ever got here, this congregation decided to welcome members, ministry partners, and visitors by investing in our historic building. You wanted this to be a space used for the ministry of God's kingdom and for the glory of God for decades to come. And you didn't just hope for this, you stepped up and made it happen with the Rooted in Faith campaign! In 2020 offices were added, two sets of restrooms were renovated, HVAC was installed in the Christian Education wing, and two classrooms were created to house a child development center. These investments are already bearing fruit!



After many (many) months of preparations, the final logistical challenges and installations are happening to allow our partner, the nonprofit Christine W. Avery Learning Center, to provide high quality early childhood education for 20 children and their families in St. Mark's building. With many thanks to our faithful team led by Jenny Simmons, we anticipate children in the building by mid-September. Praise be to God!

Early this year I got a call from the folks at Lutheran Services Carolinas (LSC). In coordination with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, LSC wanted to support refugees admitted by the federal government and arriving in this country with little more than suitcases. They were looking at Asheville as a candidate, but to do this, LSC would need a base of operations in the area from which a few staff members could work. Rent doesn't come cheap in this area, and to make matters more difficult, government guidelines mandate that the office would need to be accessible by public transportation. Well the Spirit just may have been blowing around here, because as it happens we had a pair of rooms with new HVAC units that were only getting light use each week, AND we're right off the bus line! The details are not finalized (and won't be until Sept/Oct when the federal government officially weighs in), but our investment in our building, made possible by your generosity, may mean that we can support LSC this fall as they provide care for "the least of these" arriving to begin a new life.

And of course our facilities allow us to continue to host two large Narcotics Anonymous groups each week. Praise God for our faithful partners in this ministry of change and support for those battling addiction!

Our building is doing what it ought to be doing. It's a space to gather for worship, but it's also more. It's a place where we serve those in need, following the example of Jesus. Thank you for the ways you equip St. Mark's for this ministry. You do it with your volunteer hours; you do it with your building fund gifts; you do it with your support of our budget. Thank you for making this ministry happen!

Pastor Matt