



THE LION'S ROAR

November-December-January-2023-24

From Fr. Robert Magoola

Dear St. Mark's Family,

After traveling all the way from Earth, one astronaut described his moon landing thus: "the moon's surface approached rapidly." Like him, I realize that the year's end is approaching very fast! It's been a busy year filled with activity, fellowship, much fun and, yes, some sadness too. All these things distracted me from counting the many hours and minutes, and now, shortly we will land upon the year 2024!

This year, we've had many visitors and gained a few people in our congregation. At the same time, we've lost some of our people: they are dearly loved and missed. Per God's word, we give thanks in all circumstances and keep moving right along the path that is set before us. As we continue in our common calling, I pray that our entrance will be wider than our exit.

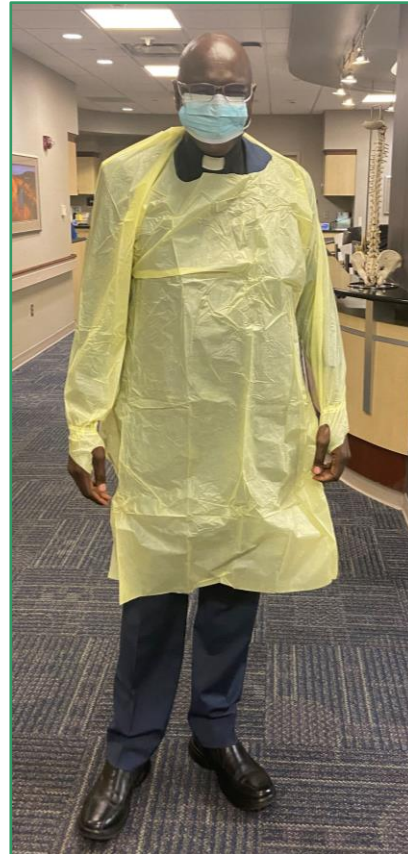
I am so thankful to all of you for your diligence in service and your generosity in sharing. Your varied offerings enable us to continue in fellowship with God and with one another. Additionally, our wardens and vestry have joined me in considering new ways of engaging our local community and colleges. More news will be coming your way as it becomes available.

At the November 6th Community Problems Assembly, I stepped down from my presidential role in Justice in Action's presidential. It's been my great honor and joy to serve our community in this manner. Thank you for your support. And now I'll join a research team that will delve into local housing issues.

During Advent you'll hear much about prayer. Let our spiritual preparation for Christmas and the arrival of the year, be to us a season of deepening our vertical relationship through prayer.

Rev. Robert Magoola, Rector

Robert +



Fr. Robert "styling" in hospital protective gear as he carries out pastoral care visits.

Notes from Annual Council

Held in North Platte, on October 26 – 28, 2023. St. Mark's on the Campus' three delegates were John Flint, Steve Shively, and Opal Doerr.

This year's Diocese of Nebraska (DioNeb) Annual Council was an event that enhanced spiritual and community renewal. The Festival Eucharist on Friday morning was inspiring thanks to the beautiful setting at Church of Our Savior, fantastic music, and a full house enjoying the clergy processional. In his sermon, Bishop Barker preached on what would become a recurring theme of the Council: reconciliation.

After the Eucharist, everyone reassembled at the conference hall. There were 49 clergy and 37 delegates present (a quorum) with 20 ministry/vender booths in an adjoining space. Everyone was assigned a table which allowed a mixing of participants – clergy and delegates, large and small parishes, urban and rural. Throughout the council, time and conversation topics were provided to help each table of attendees know each other better.

Bishop Barker's Address to the Council and the keynote speech by Will Thomas, UNL Professor of History and member of St. Matthew's Lincoln, both emphasized the importance of reconciliation. Thomas spoke of dealing with his family's "difficult history" as slave holders in the New England area. He asked the question, "Whose history did we learn?" A film titled "Anna" is one of the results of his team's effort to share history from other perspectives: <http://annwilliamsfilm.com/>

The theme of reconciliation continued throughout the Council with presentations by groups such as *Balancing the Scales of Justice*, *Sacred Ground / Racial Reconciliation*, the *Benedictine Way*, *Magdalene Omaha*, and more. The Diocesan-sponsored pilgrimage for Sacred Ground "graduates" to historic sites in the South powerfully communicated *DioNeb's* deep commitment to racial reconciliation. The shared images of the National Memorial for Peace and Justice (aka the Lynching Museum) in Montgomery, Alabama, were deeply moving. The museum commemorates over 4,400 people who were killed in racially motivated lynchings between 1877 and 1950, some of which occurred in Nebraska.

Several Nebraska parishes are searching for clergy. Earlier in the year, *Come and See*, a discernment session, was held that focused on finding ways to better support small parishes in search of clergy. Bishop Barker noted that if anyone in the Diocese feels a call to serve as clergy, they will have the full support of the Diocese; "If you are called, we will find a way!"

Of course, there were multitude reports, financial presentations, appointments, elections, and other business. Two resolutions were passed: one directing that the Diocese of Nebraska request that the next General Convention adopt an optional worship alternative permitting the Exchange of the Peace at the beginning of the service and one proposing that the Diocese create a task force to create a clergy leave-taking policy for those occasions when churches face a change in clergy leadership.

Next year's Annual Council will be in Hastings, and we encourage you to be open to election as a delegate at the annual meeting of St. Mark's on the Campus on January 28th.

John, Steve, and Opal

Warm Clothing Drive for Gathering Place

We are again collecting cold weather clothing, cash donations, and personal hygiene items for clients of **The Gathering Place**. Several corporate entities have again been asked to support this effort.

Clothing items most needed include gloves, mittens, stocking caps, sweatshirts, and heavy socks. Clean, gently used clothing items are acceptable. Hygiene items most needed include ChapStick, toilet paper, and hand sanitizer. You can deposit items in the collection boxes in the Parish Hall or Narthex. Clothing sizes can be for adults and children, but men and women adult sizes are the primary need.

Please contribute no later than Monday, December 11. Cash contributions should be made out to SMOc with "Gathering Place Clothing" in the memo line. Contact Todd Sneller for more information.



A past year's donation to the Gathering Place

Focused Prayer – Dead Week & Finals Week

Here's a way to show our support for college students as they prepare for and take final exams. A special prayer card will be available in the pews, in Weekly Minders, on Facebook, and on the SMOc website during UNL Dead Week and Finals Week - December 1 – 15. During that time, keep the prayer card with you and read it in spare moments throughout your day, each day. (Prayer text below.)

-- *Opal*

Dear God, be with us,

Meet all students in these moments as they prepare for finals, farewells to friends, and a long winter break. Nourish these, your beloved children, with your wisdom. Strengthen them with your mercy. Shelter their sense of self-worth with your abiding love. Empower them to tend to their own spirits, even in this time of stress. Renew their minds, hearts, and bodies after anxious nights and weary mornings. Recenter them on the revelation of your steadfast hope.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Based on a prayer by the Rev. Kathryn Lester-Bacon, Director of Religious Life, Duke University Chapel

Reports and Updates

✱ **Making Strides Against Breast Cancer 2023:** Once again, St. Mark's on the Campus surpassed its fundraising goal for American Cancer Society's *annual Making Strides Against Breast Cancer* campaign. Online and offline donations total \$905 at press time, far beyond our team goal of \$600. St. Mark's ranks 21st among teams. Thanks to all for your gifts, support, and prayers. -- Peg



Holmes Lake on October 15, the calm before the fundraising walk that raised nearly \$100,000 citywide for the American Cancer Society

✱ **Clinic with a Heart Medicine Drive:** Thanks to every single one of you who donated to our Medicine Drive for *Clinic with a Heart*. St. Mark's was able to give this free clinic a good number of personal care products, tummy and cold meds, antibiotic and itch creams, and a generous supply of pain pills. *Clinic with a Heart* serves hundreds of uninsured and under-insured patients every year. Thank you for contributing to this mission and helping them to meet their goals. -- Pippa

✱ **Legacy Terrace Services:** One year ago, residents of Legacy Terrace approached members of St. Mark's about the possibility of an in-person worship service. Father Robert and Legacy Terrace each approved. We meet on the third Sunday of each month. The service has singing, Bible readings, a discussion of the gospel, and communion. The worship team is Father Robert and Makayla and Kevin Halverson. We are excited about the positive response. The average attendance is 13. -- Natalie

Right: Fr. Robert playing guitar at a Legacy Terrace service.



* **Art from Inside:** For a month, starting with a First Friday open house on October 6th, St. Mark's on the Campus hosted the 5th annual *Art from the Inside 2023* exhibition. The exhibit included over two dozen works of art by former and current inmates of the Nebraska Correctional Facilities.

The purpose of the exhibition is to create awareness and to advocate about inmate's art. Most of the work is for sale with the total sales proceeds going to the inmates and their families. Six of the works were sold during the exhibit.



Art from the Inside is an invitational exhibit organized by Gerldine Dobos, artist and gallery owner, and her colleague, Robert Heist. The exhibit was initially shown for one month at the G. Dobos Studio in Lincoln. This is the first year to display the works at a second venue like St. Marks' on the Campus.

In addition to the First Friday open house, Gerldine and Robert were invited to Adult Forum to discuss the exhibit and its goals. The exhibit was open for viewing every Sunday after the morning services and during weekly church office hours.

For more information about the plans for the 2024 Art from the Inside, please contact dobos.geraldine@gmail.com.

United Thank Offering

Change for change? Paying it forward? Yes, the United Thank Offering does that. The coins and dollars collected in these little boxes can have a big impact. The focus for 2024 UTO grants will be "**Welcoming the Stranger among Us.**" In 2024, UTO grants will assist projects/programs that minister to people who are isolated due to cultural differences, life experiences, disabilities, or mental health issues. They can also be used to address truth talking, acknowledge historical trauma, or establish pathways to healing. All parishes are invited to apply for a UTO grant.

There will be a UTO box on the SMoC kitchen counter during most coffee hours. There are additional boxes available from the Church Office if you'd like to collect change at home. On the Epiphany, we will gather the UTO boxes and send in the collected funds. Questions? Please contact Opal.

Mark your calendars!
St. Mark's on the Campus Annual Meeting (and Potluck)
will be on January 28, 2024!

Coming Events & Activities

* **Thanksgiving Potluck Lunch:** On Sunday, November 19th, St. Mark's on the Campus will host a Thanksgiving potluck lunch after the 10:30 am Eucharist. This is both a celebration of the completion of our stewardship campaign and a parish Thanksgiving celebration. The Special Events committee will provide beverages, tableware, and decorations. You can bring whatever food you'd like to share, but – if needed – here are suggestions based on the first letter of your last name:

A – G: Desserts: obviously sweet stuff

H–P: Main Entrées: proteins (meats, legumes with rice, dairy)

R–Z: Veggies/Fruits/Salads: fresh, canned, dried

If you'd like to bring traditional "Thanksgiving" foods, that's fine, but NOT necessary! If there are leftovers of your "dish," please plan on taking them home. And, of course, help with set-up and clean-up is always greatly appreciated!

* **Advent is Coming – Quickly!** For Advent, we typically have an Advent wreath. Each Sunday in Advent, before the 10:30 Eucharist, we light one more candle after reading a brief prayer. This is a simple, joyful devotion! If you'd like to be part of it, please contact David in the office: smoc.office@stmarks-episcopal.org

* **Second Sunday Soup Suppers:** Second Sunday evening activities begin with Inclusive Bible Study at 5:00 pm, followed by a free soup supper at 6:00 pm in the Parish Hall. Both students and congregation members are welcome to attend!

Second Sunday Suppers will continue during UNL's second semester. Upcoming dates include Dec. 10, Jan. 14, Feb. 11, Mar. 10, and Apr. 14. January's date may seem odd since regular undergrad classes start the following week, but foreign students and students attending pre-session classes will be on campus.

There will be a sign-up for soup providers posted outside the Church Office. If you can, please pick a day or two when you can bring soup to share. It does not need to be a huge amount – there will be multiple soups.

* **The Epiphany on January 7th:** For the past few years, we've commemorated the Epiphany with an Epiphany Cake (aka King Cake) with symbols baked or embedded. The symbols used last year included a ring (eternity), thimble (missionary service), dime (stewardship), cross (prayer), and heart (charity). Other symbols are welcome. Would you like to help gather symbolic objects? Or bake the cake? No special recipe required! If you'd like to help, contact Opal.

* **Campus Blood Drive at SMoC:** The UNL Campus Red Cross has been working hard to increase blood donations. They've hosted several blood drives at various campus locations. On Wednesday, November 29, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm, St. Mark's on the Campus will be the location. Donations are by appointment only. For further information, email: crc.unl@gmail.com.

Justice in Action Update



The second annual Justice in Action Community Problems Assembly was convened on November 6 by co-chair Fr. Robert Magoola. More than 300 people were in attendance. Two new faith organizations -- First Plymouth Congregational Church and Denton United Methodist Church -- were added to the membership of JIA. A new slate of officers was approved by JIA Network members, including Todd Sneller serving as the At-Large member.

Following the Listening Sessions conducted at St. Mark's on the Campus and other JIA member organizations a few weeks ago, eighteen areas of community concern were identified. After a review, three issues were identified as being of most concern this year: **Affordable Housing**, **Living Wage/Economic Concerns**, and **Crime and Violence**. Attendees were presented with a ballot with these three issues and a fourth option, **No New Issue**, which was added by the executive board. Last year's two issues, **Mental Health Services Access** and **Justice System Reform/Diversion Programs** are both ongoing, complex issues. The board wanted to present the option of **No New Issue** for consideration because last year's issues will continue to be front and center in 2024 and beyond. After more than 300 Network members voted, the Assembly chose to add the issue of **Affordable Housing** to the list of issues to focus on in 2024.

On November 30th, a Research Meeting will be convened at 6:30 pm, at Christ United Methodist Church, 4530 A Street. More details will be announced soon. If you are interested in attending meetings related to mental health services, justice system/diversion programs or affordable housing, please plan to attend the November 30 meeting. Any expertise or research support you can provide in these areas is valuable. The work and input of JIA members is essential to our collective efforts to seek justice in these important areas that impact the lives of family, friends, and community members. For more information, please contact Todd Sneller, Mark Musick, Lucy Webster, or Jeanine Jewell.

The JIA meeting on November 6 at Eastridge Presbyterian Church was a full house!



Prayer for the Homeless

from Connie Backus-Yoder

Dear God,



Left eye tear here. Right eye tear will be joining me soon. Holy is your name. You care for the weak and lonely.



You know how I have tried to be strong during my difficult days. You know how I've tried to buckle up and suck it in when I have had to sleep out under the stars. It is doable in warm weather, but God, now it is getting chilly.



We tears moisten the eyes of those who pray to you, those who need and want shelter. But soon, I'm afraid we will be released in a torrent because the rest of our body and soul cannot endure any longer.



We are on the edge of society, among those who care little about those who are not in their network. We fell out of that network years ago.



Yes, God, there are those who work for our benefit, but sometimes they have their own problems to manage, and helping us seems way too overwhelming. There is so much opposition to helping us, the poor and marginalized.



God, I'm hoping that your word is right, that in Psalm 56:8 it says, "You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle." Collect me God, and my brother and sister tears, right and left tears.



Help those who are trying to help us. Give them wisdom to know how to best meet our problems head on, or sneakily, if need be.

Grant us strength, O Lord, so that when the sun rises, we will be able to greet the day, however difficult, with grace and hope.

In Your name we pray. Amen.

A Letter from Deacon Christine

Dear Body of Christ at St. Mark's on the Campus:

Going through Susan Robinson's papers, I see cards from several of you. These touch my heart, that you kept in touch with her! Father Magoola, too! I'm proud of the ways we all cared for her. Seeing the death dates of her parents made me think about how young she was when they brought her to church. I wonder if her folks knew she would lose them at such a young age! Having a church home was good for Susan! I always think of ministry as our sacred privilege. I'm proud to be sharing ministry with all of you.

Blessings, Deacon Christine

The Lion's Roar is the quarterly newsletter of St. Mark's on the Campus Episcopal Church at 1309 R Street, Lincoln, NE 68508. This is the November – December – January 2023-24 issue. For information about items in the newsletter or to include an item in the next newsletter, contact the editor, Opal Doerr, at odoerr811@gmail.com, or the church office, smoc.office@stmarks-episcopal.org. Photo credits: Rev. Robert Magoola, Pippa Lawson, Peg Sheldrick, Nan Hanway, and Opal Doerr.

Regular On-Going Activities

- * **Sunday Worship:** We worship at **8:30 am** and **10:30 am** on Sundays. This includes in person in the church and (at 10:30) via [Facebook Live](#). Later that same day, the video can be viewed on our *YouTube* channel (search for **SMOC Lincoln**) and linked from our [website](#).
- * **Adult Forum:** Meets at 9:30 am on Sunday mornings, in person, in the Parish Hall. Come enjoy the discussion over a cup of coffee or tea. Due to holiday celebrations and travels, discussion topics in late November and in December will be somewhat free form. Suggest a topic or ask a question!
- * **Healing Service:** Deacon Rich leads a Healing Service at 9:00 am on the first Saturdays of the month. All feeling a need for healing of any kind are welcome.
- * **Mondays** are Fr. Robert's day off.
- * **Church Office hours** are Monday through Thursday, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm.
- * **Vestry:** The Vestry meets monthly in person in the Allington Room at 12:15 pm, usually on the 1st Sunday of the month. Meetings are open to all parishioners via *MS Teams*. If you would like to attend a vestry meeting via *MS Teams*, contact David for the link. The next three meetings are on Dec. 3, Jan. 7, and Feb. 4.
- * **Communications Committee:** "ComCom" now meets twice a month via Zoom on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays, at 2:00 pm. Guests and new members are welcome. An interest in good church communications is the only requirement (besides access to Zoom). If you'd like a Zoom invitation, contact Opal.
- * **SMoC Choir Practice:** The choir practices on Wednesdays, from 5:30 – 6:30 pm, in the Sanctuary. If you are thinking of joining, drop in, check it out! After all, choir members have the best seat in the house on Sundays!
- * **Prayer List – Prayer Chain:** For changes to the **Prayer List** (Sunday intercessions), please contact David in the [Church Office](#). For changes to the **Prayer Chain** (emergency prayer & daily prayer), please contact [Peg Sheldrick](#).
- * **Birthday recognition?** Would you like to receive a birthday card from your St. Mark's church family and be included by name in the Sunday "birthday prayer?" If you would, please share your name and birthday (just month and day) with David in the [Church Office](#).

Christmas Decorating

Christmas is still weeks away, but let's think ahead a bit! Because we use the wall behind the altar as a projection surface, we will not be hanging the stars this year. So, there won't be *as much* ladder work. Let's try doing this in phases:

Sunday, Dec. 10, 11:45 am-ish: Decorate the Parish Hall (no ladder needed)

Sunday, Dec. 17, 11:45 am-ish: Decorate the Sanctuary (ladder needed)

Sunday, Dec. 24, 11:45 am-ish: Arrange poinsettias and finish any remaining bits

If you can lend a hand one or more of these dates, please add it to your "To Do" list!

SMoC Calendar – November 12 – January 30

See Page 9 for additional regular & ongoing activities not listed here.

Sun	Nov 12	Inclusive Bible Study / Soup Supper	Parish Hall	5:00 / 6:00 pm
		▶ Hofer Recital	Sanctuary	6:00 pm
Thu	Nov 16	Communications Committee mtg	Zoom	2:00 pm
Sat	Nov 18	National Federation of the Blind	Parish Hall	9:00 am - Noon
Sun	Nov 19	Potluck – Thanksgiving	Parish Hall	11:45 am
		▶ Legacy Terrace Eucharist	Legacy Terrace	2:00 pm
Wed	Nov 29	UNL Campus Blood Drive	Parish Hall	9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Thu	Nov 30	JIA – Research Kickoff	4530 A St	6:30 pm
Sat	Dec 2	Healing Service	Sanctuary	9:00 am
Sun	Dec 3	Advent 1: Eucharist	Sanctuary	8:30 & 10:30 am
		▶ Vestry Meeting	Allington Rm	12:15 pm
Mon	Dec 4	UNL Dead Week begins – Student Focus prayer begins		
Thu	Dec 7	Communications Committee mtg	Zoom	2:00 pm
Sat	Dec 9	Hardy Recital	Sanctuary	1:30 pm
Sun	Dec 10	Advent 2: Eucharist	Sanctuary	8:30 & 10:30 am
		▶ Inclusive Bible Study / Soup Supper	Parish Hall	5:00 / 6:00 pm
Mon	Dec 11	UNL Finals Week begins & Final day of Warm Clothing Drive		
Sat	Dec 16	National Federation of the Blind	Parish Hall	9:00 am – Noon
		▶ SCA Yule Party	Parish Hall	1:00 – 7:00 pm
Sun	Dec 17	Advent 3: Eucharist	Sanctuary	8:30 & 10:30 am
		▶ Legacy Terrace Eucharist	Legacy Terrace	2:00 pm
Thu	Dec 21	Communications Committee mtg	Zoom	2:00 pm
Sun	Dec 24	Advent 3: Eucharist	Sanctuary	ONLY 10:30 am
		▶ Carols with the Choir	Sanctuary	TBA
		▶ Christmas Eve Eucharist	Sanctuary	5:00 pm
		▶ Jesus Birthday Party & Desserts	Parish Hall	6:30 pm-ish
Sat	Jan 6	Healing Service	Sanctuary	9:00 am
Sun	Jan 7	The Epiphany – Eucharist	Sanctuary	8:30 & 10:30 am
		▶ Vestry Meeting	Allington Rm	12:15 pm
		▶ Turn in UTO boxes	Parish Hall	Noon
Sun	Jan 14	Inclusive Bible Study / Soup Supper	Parish Hall	5:00 / 6:00 pm
Sat	Jan 20	National Federation of the Blind	Parish Hall	9:00 am – Noon
Sun	Jan 28	SMoC Annual Meeting	Parish Hall	11:45 am-ish