



# HEARTS OF PALM CENTER

PRELIMINARY CASE FOR SUPPORT



*Seeking and Serving Christ in All Persons*  
A New Vision for Our Old Friend, St. George





On behalf of our fellow Episcopalians throughout our diocese, I am so grateful to all of you at Saint Mark's Church and School for modelling the way in which a larger, well-resourced community can embrace and support a smaller, more challenged community to create a new partnership for mission and ministry. This is a unique moment in our common life, as the best of two communities are brought together to create a stronger, more effective ministry.

Not only will this new Hearts of Palm Center enable Saint George's Table to continue its decades-long ministry of providing and serving daily meals to hundreds of hungry guests, including families with children and young people, the Center will also be able to fulfil the vision of being a home to other service organisations that seek to assist the most vulnerable individuals and families in northern Palm Beach County. By maintaining Saint George's Chapel as a living part of the Center we are ensuring that an active worshipping community remains a witness to our faith in Jesus Christ who makes God's love real for all of us.

There is no other venture like this in the area.

I am both moved and excited that the leadership of Saint Mark's Church and School, and I am inspired by this gift that you are making to the community. I have been committed to this project from the beginning, and I am committed to supporting you in any way that the Diocese can. In addition, Kate and I shall be making a personal donation to this campaign, and we encourage you to give selflessly so that this dream may become a reality.

Together as the Church in Southeast Florida we Episcopalians can serve Christ in others in gratitude, courage, hope, and love, and make a life-changing difference for those whom we serve. I hope that you will join us in this most imaginative and exciting mission.

With every blessing,

*[Signature]*  
Bishop



As St. Mark's celebrates 60 years of mission and ministry, we are excited to give back to the community that has given so much to our church and school. The Hearts of Palm Center is one way we can say "Thank You!"

Building on the legacy of love that the former St. George's Church and Community Center provided, St. Mark's is offering a new vision for our old friend. The state-of-the-art building will support and sustain the feeding program for years to come. The space for our parish's Hearts of Palm ministry will make access to the community we serve easier and more fruitful. The chapel will ensure worship and prayer always guide the ministry from this place. Additional offices and communal spaces will allow for the collaboration of other agencies and persons who minister to the lowliest and neediest in our midst.

Our gift of this building is meant to honor others who are often overlooked, forgotten and left on the side of the road. The hopes and prayers of St. Mark's are that those who enter this building will find the heart of God awaiting their arrival to a home that often eludes them elsewhere. It's a joy to shine as a beacon of faith, hope and light as we seek to respect the dignity of every human being.

Faithfully yours in Christ,  
*[Signature]*  
The Rev. James B. Cook  
Rector



## Seeking and Serving Christ in All Persons: A New Vision for Our Old Friend, St. George

**Shining as a beacon of faith, hope and light**, St. Mark's is committed to the mission given to us in our baptisms: to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbors as ourselves, and to strive for justice and peace among all people, respecting the dignity of every human being. This mandate has motivated St. Mark's leadership to turn our attention in a more focused and intentional way to Riviera Beach and the community of St. George's Church and Community Center, a ministry site St. Mark's has supported for decades.

Following the May 2019 shooting death of Frank Killins outside the doors of St. George's while meals were being served, the rector and vestry of St. Mark's decided to act. An appeal was made to Bishop Eaton asking his permission for our congregation to implement a feasibility study to review the security, governance, finances, facilities, programs and sustainability of the Church and Center. Eighteen months later, the vestry boldly and faithfully requested the Diocese of Southeast Florida to deed the St. George property to St. Mark's, placing responsibility for ministry on that site to our congregation.

A new vision of St. George began to emerge as the leaders of St. Mark's -- along with the leaders of St. George's Church and Community Center -- worked together to imagine the next chapter of ministry at St. George. That dream is now becoming a reality as God leads us to embark on our newest mission to love our neighbors as ourselves.

A new building named the *Hearts of Palm Center* will emerge on the existing St. George site. Not only will the facility house St. George Table (formerly St. George's Community Center), but it will also house our congregation's Hearts of Palm offices, a chapel and several other social service agencies dedicated to serving the guests and their families who come to St. George Table.

The *Hearts of Palm Center* signals a new chapter in the decades-long ministry of St. George's. Although the parish is closed, the spirit of that congregation will live on in a well-designed, well-managed facility. The Center will give everyone a safe place to gather and work, while setting an example of what sustainable and innovative architecture

can do to serve others with dignity and respect. The design of the building by architects Birse Thomas makes sustainability a key element that we hope will one day incorporate aquaponics gardening. This will enable St. George Table to grow its own vegetables while establishing a small agribusiness to support its feeding ministry.

The *Hearts of Palm Center* promises to serve as a ministry site for St. Mark's that not only meets the many needs of the Riviera Beach community, but also positions St. Mark's as a creative leader striving to shine Christ's light and hope.



Conceptual Design of the New Chapel

## Questions and Answers

**Q: Will St. George Table still serve meals to the homeless and hungry like in the “old” days?**

**A:** St. George Table will continue to rely on hundreds of volunteers who prepare and serve meals to hungry and homeless people living in the northeastern corridor of Palm Beach County. Dozens of churches, synagogues, businesses, schools, and civic organizations bring their favorite meals to the Table’s kitchen, where meals are prepared and served to guests. Even during the pandemic, nearly 200 meals were being served daily.

**Q: Why will St. Mark’s Hearts of Palm ministry be housed in the Center?**

**A:** The focus of Hearts of Palm is in Riviera Beach. Over the past ten years, HOP has provided assistance to more than 70 homeowners who needed help with roof repairs, yard clean-up, painting, moving, and other services. HOP also serves as a mission site for local and visiting mission teams and puts them to work in Riviera Beach and other communities. Being housed in the same building as other social-service agencies, HOP will be able to collaborate with partners in serving their clients as well.

### Two homes restored by HOP Ministry



**Hearts of Palm House**  
West Palm Beach



**Hearts of Palm House**  
Riviera Beach

### Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head: Pecola’s and Willie’s Dream Comes True



One of the first homes Hearts of Palm Director Karen Cook visited in the early days of founding this ministry was a home owned by Pecola and Willie. A code inspector from Riviera Beach had given the couple a violation, saying they needed to paint the house. As Karen and Pecola toured the outside of the home, Pecola took her to the back and pointed to the roof. Tarps covered the holes. When Karen saw the inside, she discovered that tarps were also hanging from the ceiling and mold covered the walls.

As they stood together in the yard looking at the roof, Karen was overwhelmed. She thought that this was way beyond her expertise and way more costly than she had imagined. However, God was not about to let those two women walk away. Karen looked at Pecola and said, “I don’t know how. I don’t know when. I don’t know who. But St. Mark’s is going to get this roof fixed and your home livable again!”

***And Pecola’s response? “I knew the Lord has sent me an angel.”*** Six months later, St. Mark’s HOP had put on a new roof, the

house was painted, and the inside walls replaced. Pecola and Willie had a home again; restoring their dignity and paving the way for Hearts of Palm to love our neighbors as ourselves.

## Hugs of Gratitude for a Job Well Done!

Eddie May owns a small daycare center she operates from the converted garage of her Riviera Beach home. Having fallen into disrepair, Eddie May's daycare needed some tender, loving care. A neighbor recommended Hearts of Palm and within a month, HOP turned Eddie Mae's daycare upside down and inside out! Thanks to a visiting youth group attending a HOP mission week from St. Martin's Episcopal Church, Houston, and a little help from contractor Angel Rojas and his team of St. Mark's volunteers, the daycare center was transformed: replacing faulty wiring and bathrooms, painting walls and decorating, replacing flooring, assembling new furniture, and providing new toys and books. Eddie Mae's business remains open today, grateful for the generosity and hard work of Hearts of Palm.



**Q: What will the Hearts of Palm Center look like?**

A: Birse Thomas was selected by a team of volunteers from St. Mark's, because these architects demonstrated innovative and creative ideas on how to ensure guests arriving to the Center feel safe and respected. Using trauma-informed design principles, the new building will also feature flexible, open spaces with natural light and sustainable, responsible architecture. The Chapel will be the highlight of the building, but it will be a flexible space as well, allowing for intimate worship of only a dozen or a larger service of several hundred. Flexibility of space will be a hallmark of the Center.

**Q: What other features can we expect in the new building?**

A: The building intends to offer safe space for everyone. Crime prevention through environmental design means proper lighting in parking lots and entrances, video surveillance, access control, security, fences, and landscaping. These improvements will encourage local families that are not currently being served to feel safe and secure when they visit for meals or other resources. We are also excited that the building will make sustainability a key element to include native tropical vegetation, low flow plumbing, LED lighting, rainwater collection, and greywater recycling, bioswales, and permeable parking solutions to reduce flooding. The building orientation and large overhangs to decrease direct heating and Low-E insulated glazing on the windows and doors will help reduce heat gain and lower HVAC equipment sizes.

Plans for the new building include an aquaponics garden that could become a small agribusiness. The hope is that The Table will be able to grow its own produce and become a leader in food sustainability and growth in an urban center. This creates a 'social enterprise' for the Table that aligns with its mission and provides produce and possibly an earned revenue stream to support its annual operating budget.

**Q: What other non-profits are leasing space in the Hearts of Palm Center?**

A: Although no contracts have been signed, interest is growing throughout the Palm Beach County social service community for space inside the Center. The Lord's Place, Families First, the Health Care District, and others have already been meeting with St. Mark's leadership to discuss what space those organizations would require. Guests who arrive at The Table for meals would have the opportunity to access social-service programs and resources through our partners.

**Q: Will worship take place at the Center?**

A: St. George Chapel will be a recognizable and integral part of the new building. The Chapel will hold regularly scheduled services, much like the Peace Chapel on our Palm Beach Gardens campus. St. Mark's plans to call another priest to serve in Riviera Beach and to oversee the management of the Hearts of Palm Center and our Hearts of Palm (HOP) ministry.

**Q: Are materials from the existing St. George Church and Center being used in the new building?**

A: St. George Chapel will feature many of the original items from the church that served so many for so many years. Plans are even underway to repurpose the existing wood ceiling into the new design to honor the history of St. George's Church and help to continue the warm sense of peacefulness and pride in the communal spaces.

**Q: Is St. Mark's alone in raising the capital for the building?**

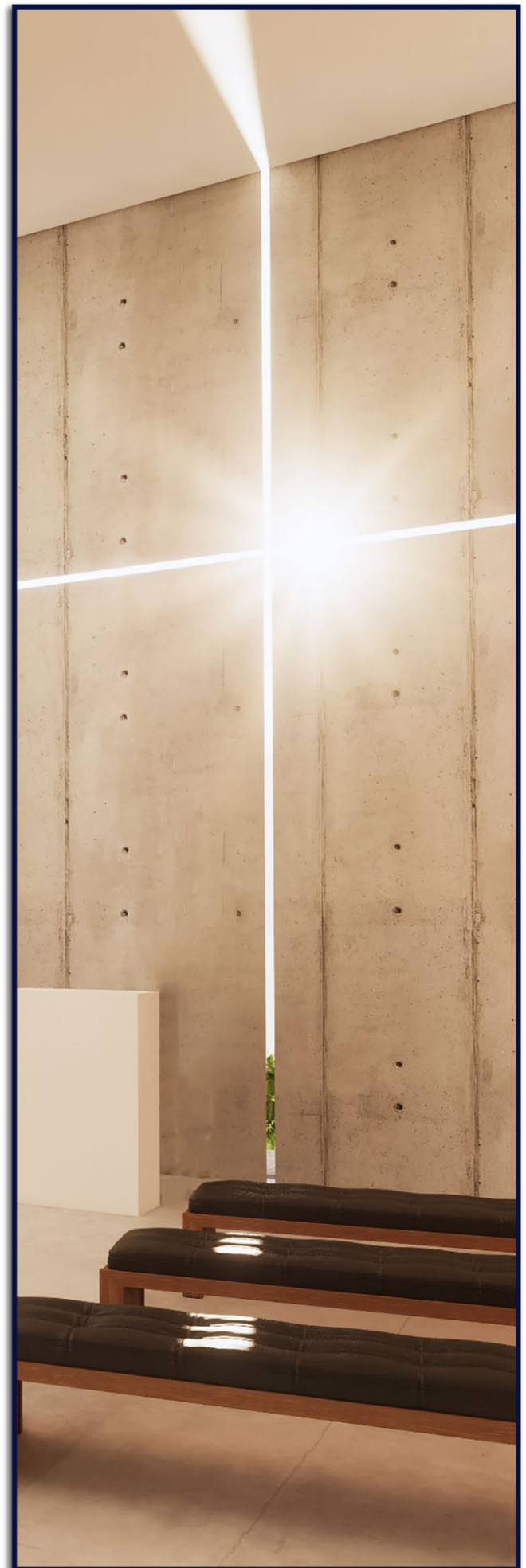
A: We hope that other Episcopalians in neighboring congregations catch our vision and join us in this Episcopal ministry. However, we are not going to make any assumptions, and the vestry is moving forward knowing St. Mark's is ultimately responsible for funding this project.

**Q: How large is the building?**

A: While the final plans have not been approved, we are estimating that the three-story building will be approximately 11,500 square feet. This includes a small apartment for a live-in custodian/security officer. Parking for 35 cars is also included along with an outdoor seating/gathering area for our guests.

**Q: Is St. Mark's responsible for running St. George Table?**

A: The Table is its own separate non-profit that will lease its space from St. Mark's as will the other non-profits in the building. Leases have not been drawn and the monthly "rent" has not been determined for any of the entities. The plan is that the leases will cover the costs to St. Mark's for managing the building. St. Mark's will most likely hire a receptionist, a custodian, security officers and a priest, but these are only preliminary plans.



**Q: Why St. Mark's and Riviera Beach?**

A: St. Mark's was founded by members of St. George's Church back in the 1960s. We have members today who were raised in that church. We are a founding congregation of the feeding center that has played such an important role in our life together at St. Mark's. We are returning to our roots and seeking to invest long-term in this community that is so near and dear to our hearts.

Through our HOP ministry, St. Mark's owns a home in Riviera Beach we lease to The Lord's Place. A graduate family from The Lord's Place is able to live in our three-bedroom home for only \$600 a month, well below the rental rates for a home of this quality. It's a wonderful way for St. Mark's to help in small way address the housing crisis low-income families face.

St. Mark's seeks to serve in Riviera Beach with the hands and heart of Jesus, and we want to be members of the community and not outsiders. By building the Hearts of Palm Center, St. Mark's is creating a space where collaboration among other providers will spur new ideas, generate cooperation and minister to our guests in a safe, secure, clean, bright, and welcoming space that values the dignity of each person who arrives.

**Q: How much is this going to cost?**

A: We are estimating that the cost will be around \$7 million, but that number has not been finalized. One of the variables is the possibility of trying to purchase several vacant lots to the west of our property. This would enable us to enlarge the building and/or build the aquaponics center we envision for The Table. The budget may also include an endowment, ensuring that funds are available in future to help offset building maintenance expenses.

**Q: What is the timeline on this project?**

A: Phase I – Will begin in 2023

Phase II – Will begin following construction of Hearts of Palm Center. The Aquaponics Building will be built adjacent to the Hearts of Palm Center, The Aquaponics Garden.



**A Gift of Public Art to The Spirit of Community.**

## Financial Plan

The projected budget is \$7,000,000.

Building construction and furniture, fixtures, and equipment	5,450,000
Adjacent land for future aquaponics program	200,000
Reserve for contingencies	500,000
Reserve for non-payment of pledges	500,000
Campaign operating costs	350,000
Total	\$7,000,000

## The Campaign

Under the guidance of St. Mark’s vestry and staff leadership, a \$7 million campaign is being planned to raise funds to build the building and endow a building maintenance fund. Outlined below is a gift chart that indicates the levels and numbers of gifts required to meet the goal.

Gift Range	Number of Gifts Required	Number of Prospects Required	Total by Size of Gift	Cumulative Total	Cumulative Percentage
1,500,000	1	5	1,500,000	1,500,000	21%
500,000	3	12	1,500,000	3,000,000	43%
250,000	4	10	1,000,000	4,000,000	57%
100,000	8	32	800,000	4,800,000	69%
75,000	10	30	750,000	5,550,000	79%
50,000	14	42	700,000	6,250,000	89%
25,000	16	48	400,000	6,650,000	95%
10,000	17	51	170,000	6,820,000	97%
5,000	21	63	105,000	6,925,000	99%
2,500	30	90	75,000	7,000,000	100%
Totals	124	383	7,000,000		

Donors to the campaign will have the opportunity to be recognized through a variety of naming opportunities.





**Conceptual Design of the Multi-Purpose Gathering Space**

**Representative naming opportunities include:**

**Ground floor:**

- Entrance/reception
- Main dining room/flexible space
- St. George Chapel
- Stained glass windows
- Cross wall
- Altar
- Sacristy
- Kitchen
- Lower-level garden
- Parking (The preliminary layout has 19 spots on site and 8 on street parallel parking)

**Second floor:**

- Meeting room/flexible space
- Offices

**Other:**

- Rainwater collector/greywater recycling system
- Security system/technology throughout building
- Elevator
- Solar panels

## Ways You Can Help

There are many ways that an individual, foundation, organization or corporation can support this campaign through a gift designated for this purpose.

**We encourage all Campaign donors to make a commitment through a multi-year pledge.** This is a formal statement of intention to the Campaign, payable over one to three years. With a pledge, you may complete your gift by making regular payments over time, allowing you to give more generously than you originally may have considered. Recurring gifts can be made weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annually, fitting the budget and needs of each donor.

We encourage all types of gifts that can also benefit you in the manner that fits your circumstances and heart.

**Donating appreciated securities or real estate** may provide considerable tax advantages when transferred to St. Mark's before being sold. For example, your gift will provide a two-fold tax benefit, creating an income-tax deduction in the year of the donation, and helping avoid the capital gains tax that would have been incurred when sold. Examples also include IRA distributions, 401K funds, and other types of investments.

Planned and deferred gifts in the form of bequests, charitable trusts, and life insurance policies can sustain your legacy forever. We would be happy to speak with you about leaving a legacy gift.

### Among the types of gifts, we accept:

- Stocks
- Bonds
- Mutual Funds and ETFs (exchange-traded funds)
- Bank Products
- Annuities
- Retirement Account Funds
- Life Insurance

### Other ways you might help:

- Attend an informational gathering
- Host a campaign related event
- Invite a friend to join you
- Become a campaign volunteer

## ST. MARK'S VESTRY

Rev. James B. Cook, *Rector*

Cathy Harrington, *Senior Warden*

Jerry Evans, *Junior Warden*

Stephanie Cassatly

Sidney Stubbs

Timothy Coppage

Teri Trotter

Linda Duhy

Bill Wachter

Dave Dupont

Jess Wojtanowski

John Favole

Ken Wright



**Please call or email for more information:**

Charlotte Pelton  
561-329-3686  
[charlotte@charlottepelton.com](mailto:charlotte@charlottepelton.com)

Mary Lewis Moews  
561-309-3296  
[mary@charlottepelton.com](mailto:mary@charlottepelton.com)



A BEACON OF FAITH, HOPE, AND LIGHT

3395 Burns Road • Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410-4394

561.622.0956 • [www.stmarkspb.org](http://www.stmarkspb.org)