

Staff Profile: Jim Wood, Facilities Manager

This is the fifth in a series of staff profiles, presented so that our St. Mark's family can get better acquainted with our staff. This time we are spotlighting Jim Wood, our Facilities Manager from 2001 to 2004, and since 2007.

--Donna Lunstrum, Connections editor

You are a true "son of St. Mark's," having been born and baptized into the congregation. What are your earliest memories of St. Mark's?

Some of my earliest memories of St. Mark's are attending worship services with my family. We would always sit about the fourth pew back with my grandparents. Some of my other memories are of being a student in the pre-school program at that time with Mrs. [Mary Ellen] Kaness as my teacher.

Do you have any funny or fond memories of pastors or your church involvement from your growing-up years?

Of course my favorite was the hotdog-eating contests on confirmation nights with Pastor Hess. He would join us for meals sometimes and have informal contests. I think he always won.

What's a favorite memory from your childhood, youth, or young adult years?

I have many memories and it's hard to pick one, but I think it's doing many activities with my dad, from Boy Scouts to him being able to coach some of my sporting events (baseball).

Tell us about your family....how you and Candace met....about your kids....what you like to do as a family...

My wife, Candace, and I met out at Boy Scout Camp in the area. I was a director out there and she got hired as my assistant. We worked 30 feet off the ground, hanging ropes and climbing from poles to set up a ropes course each day, so we got to know and trust each other pretty quickly. We have three boys: Jimmy, who is 7 years old; Brandon, who is 3 years old; and Nathan, who is 3 months



Left to right: Candace, holding Nathan; Jimmy; Brandon; and Jim

old. We love to do anything outside together, from camping to fishing to running and biking.

You're an Eagle Scout. Are you still involved with Scouting?

I am an Eagle Scout. I was in the troop that meets at the church. Getting my Eagle Scout taught me some great skills that I use today. I am still involved in Scouting and plan to get Jimmy involved with it this fall.

Tell us about how you came to work at St. Mark's.

I was going to school at Kirkwood to become a mechanical engineer. Once I finished that I wasn't sure what I was going to do. I was single and was volunteering at St. Mark's, running sound board for the 8:30 a.m. service, which was Celebration at that time, I think. Once Impact started, I was hired to help out with that service and take some of Jan Altorfer's [former Multimedia Director] tasks off her hands. That turned into the upkeep of the building a few years later. Working for the church that I grew up in . . . I couldn't turn any of that down.

We know that you enjoy being outside. What's your favorite season? What do you particularly enjoy about your job—and any outdoor aspects?

I lived in Texas for a few years and I did not enjoy the hot weather all the time. There was one December when we had the Christmas tree up and the windows open. So I think my favorite season is fall. I enjoy watching the leaves fall and the months leading up to the snow. What I enjoy about my job is being a part of everything that goes on here. Most things need some sort of tech support and all events need setup. I enjoy talking with all the partners at the church. I enjoy attending three services on Sunday morning and getting to watch people worship the Lord.

What are your favorite things to do away from work?

I like to fish, ride my bike, do anything involving my kids.

What are your favorite things to do when you can get a day or a few hours off?

Some weeks it's hard to get a day off or even a few hours off, but when I do, I enjoy hanging out with my kids. They don't stay young forever, and I don't want to miss that.

What's your favorite time in the church year?

My favorite time—and I'm not sure why I'm saying this, because it's also the busiest time—is Christmas time. There is always something special about the time leading up to Jesus' birth.

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What is your favorite worship song?

My favorite worship song right now is *Christ Is Risen*.

Certainly you've had some unexpected (maybe funny) things happen during worship services. Any you'd like to share with us?

"Unexpected" things are "frustrating" things at the time, but we can laugh at them later. I think the best one was when I bumped the light controller for the house lights and all of the lights went out! We also had the big flood of the basement during construction on a Sunday. Some others and I went down in our Sunday shoes and started cleaning up. At first we were trying to stay somewhat clean. But when I had to go out in the big muddy hole that is now Heartland, it just didn't matter after that.

[Editor's note: You may remember that Jim was given a pair of new shoes at the dedication of the new building. His had been destroyed in the muck and mud.]

What do people not know about our facility or the "tech world" at St. Mark's that you'd like them to know?

Something that most people don't know—though it's not very entertaining—is that we have 33 furnaces in or on the roof of the building that can all be programmed or controlled by a computer or phone. This system cut our heating and cooling costs last year by 10 percent or more.

What are three of your favorite things about St. Mark's? (And you can't answer "The people.")

One is the prep that goes into getting Sunday services ready, and the coordination it takes from the pastors to our worship leaders putting the order of service together, to tech building the service around that. It takes many



Jim Wood (far right) and some of the other members of the tech team (l to r): Gordon Salsman, Alan Erickson, and Jim Ogann

hours of work to put on a Sunday service.

Next I would say fixing things that break down or need replacing. It's these unexpected things that turn your week upside down and make you have to throw your task list away for the week and start over.

Last would be being able to step out the door and look at the great outdoors we have here.

What's one phrase or word you'd like people to think of when they think of you?

Helpful. I like working behind the scenes to make things happen—smoothly.

Anything else you'd like to tell us? It's a joy for me to work with a great staff and for all the great partners we have at St. Mark's. I enjoy spending my time here, doing whatever needs to be done.