

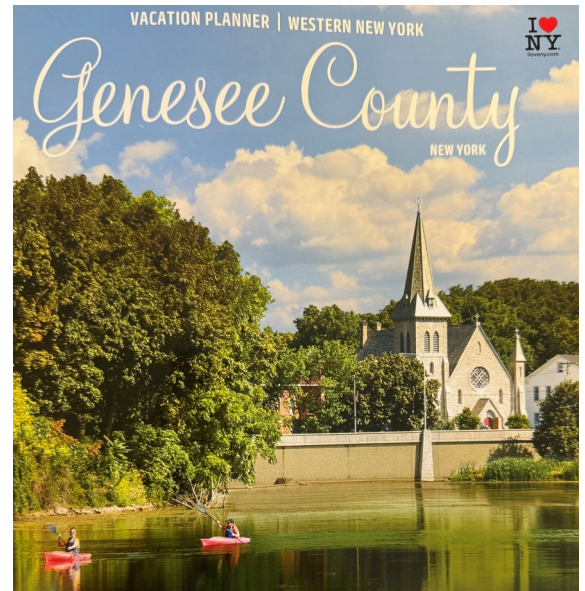
## St. Mark's, LeRoy

### **What are some significant moments in the history of your church that have shaped its identity today?**

From the beginning in 1817, St. Mark's has had a history of setbacks and challenges that have been met with faith and perseverance. Major building issues from a damp and drafty sanctuary to lightning strikes; financial crises that caused members to question the church's viability; and an evolving clergy presence starting with a traveling missionary to many other ways of ministry, have all shown that St. Mark's can work through problems.

### **What makes your church unique in the region and the diocese?**

St. Mark's notable English Gothic architecture is enhanced by its beautiful location on the Oatka Creek; it is often photographed and is currently used for the cover of the Genesee County travel guide. In addition, the church's carillon is a beloved sound in the local community. The church now hosts an annual concert series, welcomes a monthly stitching group, and is the home to "The Joy Project," a nostalgic display of Christmas from long ago that is free to the public and had over 1,000 visitors last Christmas season.



### **What are the most vibrant ministries or strengths of your parish today?**

St. Mark's has a strong feeding ministry by collecting food weekly for the local food pantry, by participation in the long-running Backpack Club (through the LeRoy Christian Community Project) which provides weekend meals for students, and by preparing sandwiches for the Garden of Love homeless ministry at the cathedral. The church has a solid commitment to Christian education, hosting classes for children and adults, and is the current leader in the annual ecumenical Vacation Bible School run by five churches.

### **Describe a moment in your community's life when you felt the presence of the Holy Spirit moving among you. What made that moment possible?**

For 14 years, St. Mark's provided a summer feeding program for children, which ended only because the school started serving meals. In the last years, when we were serving up to 80 meals a day, it felt like an impossible task for our small congregation. We forged ahead in faith, and a large contingent of "friends of St. Mark's" stepped up to work, along with many generous donors, who all helped make this ministry happen.

**How does your church engage with the local neighborhood, the civic life of your community, or diocesan and/or Episcopal Church-wide initiatives?**

The church has always participated in ecumenical opportunities, supports and works with local organizations, such as clubs and musical groups to provide space for them to meet, provides access to the parking lot which is a central community location, is partnering with the Rotary Club on a fundraiser, and assists local Episcopal parishes with their collections, fundraisers, and respite services. The church also runs a community discussion group.



**What are the hopes and dreams of your congregation for its next chapter?**

We hope to move past the idea of the former “glory days,” and look at new and meaningful ways to be a thriving church community that ministers to the people in LeRoy — in and out of the pews.