



Christmas Eve Services

Celebrate with us at St. Mark's
the greatest joy of the season.

5:00 PM FAMILY WORSHIP

An interactive service specifically
designed for families & children
to enjoy together.

7:00 PM THE CURRENT

9:00 PM TRADITIONAL WORSHIP

11:00 PM TRADITIONAL WORSHIP & COMMUNION

Enjoy a service of carols, scripture &
passing of the light with candles.

Childcare for age 5 & younger available
during the 7:00 PM service only.

ADVENT.....	PAGES 2-3
WORSHIP.....	PAGES 4-5
MISSIONS.....	PAGES 6-10
ADULT MUSICPAGES 11
KIDS MINISTRY.....	PAGES 12-13
YOUTH MINISTRY.....	PAGE 14
ADULT EDUCATION	PAGES 15-16
GATHERINGS	PAGES 17-20
SPECIAL EVENTS	PAGES 21-22
COMMITTEES	PAGES 23-24
COMMUNITY NEWS.....	PAGES 25-26

advent

Advent Studies

ALL EARTH IS WAITING

Friday, 11/30-12/21 9:30-11:00 AM

All Earth is Waiting by Katie Z. Dawson This is the message of this Advent study, *All Earth is Waiting*: quite simply, we have a responsibility to care for this earth in preparation for Christ's return. Explore the Advent themes of hope, preparation, joy, and peace with the heavens and earth in mind and consider how all creation longs for the coming of Christ, taking seriously the notion that the good news of Christ is good news for all the world. Jackie Rowell will facilitate. Class will be 4 sessions. Book cost is \$5. Childcare is available with registration online. An optional/ additional devotional for this Advent season is also available for \$7.



Advent Devotionals

Pickup your free Advent Devotionals at the table outside the office. Children's devotionals offer a variety of activities, Adult devotionals are also available.



BLUE CHRISTMAS: DEVOTIONS OF LIGHT IN A SEASON OF DARKNESS

Sunday, 11/25-12/16 (Pastor Brian White),

6:00 PM-7:00 PM

The Advent and Christmas season is often associated with joy, love, generosity, and unity. But for many people, this time of year magnifies loneliness, anxiety, grief, and despair. While others are enjoying celebrations with their friends and families, those who are hurting often feel even more lost, abandoned, and alone than ever.



“Not all Christmases are white; some are blue,” Todd Outcalt writes. *Blue Christmas* is a devotional book for the 28 days of Advent and Christmas Day. Each devotion includes a scripture selection, meditation, prayer, and suggested Advent action. The book also features additional prayers, a “Blue Christmas” worship service, and reflection questions.

Blue Christmas reminds us that all of our Christmases, even the darkest ones, can be filled with honesty and hope if we are first willing to sit in silence and bring our deepest fears to God.

Blue Christmas Service

Sunday, December 9 | 7:00 PM

The “Blue Christmas” worship service may also be known as the “Longest Night,” a gathering on or near December 21. The worship service can be a meaningful part of the Advent season. This service is especially designed to give voice and hope to those who are grieving, or who are experiencing other types of losses or feelings of exclusion or despondence. This time of worship will take place in the sanctuary and will include songs and prayers that lead people to reflect on the darkness of our lives as well as reminding us that the light of Christ is an ever present promise that is fulfilled on Christmas morning. Please join us for this powerful time of worship.

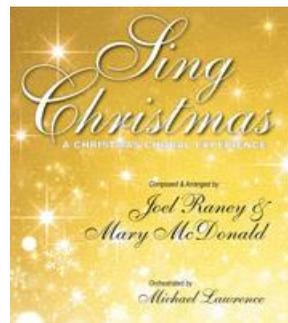
Christmas Cantata

Sunday, December 16 | 8:15 and 11:00 AM Worship Services

SING CHRISTMAS! (A CHRISTMAS CHORAL EXPERIENCE)

BY MARY MCDONALD AND JOEL RANEY

In this collaboration between two of the most popular sacred music arrangers in the country, Mary McDonald’s exuberant, dynamic style blends seamlessly with Joel Raney’s rhythmic and beautifully emotional music to provide a unique Christmas event that is sure to become the highlight of the season. The work comprises four stand-alone suites. Each movement includes original music combined with favorite carols, creating a perfect blend of familiar and new. The narration knits the suites into a thrilling and complete retelling of the Christmas story.



Children’s Musical

Sunday, December 16 | 2:00 PM

RED-LETTER CHRISTMAS

The children will share the meaning of the colors of Christmas and will perform beautiful songs such as “Oh Little Town of Bethlehem,” “Good Christian Men Rejoice”, and “Red-Letter Christmas.”



News From the Pastors

Dear Co-workers in Christ,

It is such an optimistic time of year! We enjoy the wonderful worship celebrations associated with Advent and Christmas. Soon, we will say goodbye to the events of 2018, good and bad, and look forward with anticipation to the events of 2019. As we look forward, we decide to make changes, to make our life better. In the secular world we call that “making resolutions.”



I drove by a church recently that had a message on the church sign that said, “Resolutions without repentance means repetition.” How true that is! If we make lofty resolutions but fail to ask forgiveness for our past failures and seek the power of the Holy Spirit, what chance do we really have of success? Not very much, I think.

David knew that. When confronted with one of the most painful mistakes of his life, his relationship with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah, he prayed this prayer: “Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.” (Psalm 51:9-12, NRSV)

Isn't that the noblest prayer that we can make as we begin a new period of time, “God, please forgive me and give me the strength to do better”? As I begin 2019, being the goal setter that I am, I will make a short list of things I would like to accomplish or areas in my life that I would like to improve. I am very confident, however, that my success at achieving those goals will not depend on my own ability but upon my willingness to rely on God.

In the end, what I want to be able to say at the end of 2019 are Paul's words, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” (2 Tim 4:7, NRSV)

Won't you join me?

In Christ's peace,

Brian

News From the Pastors

Hello St. Mark's family,

As we enter the season of snow, colored, lights, tradition, and hope my mind is going back to an old tradition from elementary school. My third grade Sunday School teacher, Mrs. Frey, had a book that she would read to her third graders every winter: *A Cup of Christmas Tea*. For those unfamiliar with the book, it's a poem that tells the story of a young man who goes to visit his great aunt. In the midst of the busyness of the season he decides to take the time to stop and share a moment with a beloved relation as well as a cup of Christmas tea.



Looking at my own mug of tea, I remember Mrs. Frey reading this book to our class and her generous spirit in allowing me to sit in on some of the readings, even after I had gone on to high school. Something about the gentle tone and steady voice combined with the love and peace of the words was truly comforting and spoke to a need inside of my soul. Every time the season of Advent approaches, I'm reminded of the simple pleasure in enjoying a good book and even better company.

And yet, the season of Advent can also be a time where some of life's hardships are felt all the more. Expenses can pile up, family pressure, disappointed hopes, and the ache when people that we love are not present are just a few examples of the stress people can face during this season. None of these concerns are trivial or should be treated as such. Yet, for all the heartaches and bruises, may you find time during this busy season to sit still (even more impressive if it's not during worship) and take in the familiar yet old story of a baby who was found wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. Whatever this season may hold for you, Christ's love for us will never fade.

Blessings,

Julia

DECEMBER MISSION FOCUS **Tree of Lights**



Supporting Red Bird Mission

Red Bird Mission, guided by Jesus Christ, empowers individuals and advocates justice by providing spiritual, educational, health, and community outreach ministries in southeastern Kentucky. The need is great in this isolated, rural area where chronic poverty, lack of jobs, poor housing and rugged terrain create obstacles to a fuller life. Red Bird Mission strives to meet the needs of their neighbors through ministry in five areas: Education, Health & Wellness, Community Outreach, Economic Opportunity and Community Housing Improvement.

Red Bird Mission is St. Mark's mission focus for December. Through our annual "Tree of Lights" campaign you may make a donation *in honor of, in appreciation of, or in*



memory of someone special and support this mission. A card will be sent to the person (s) being honored to let them know they have made a difference in your life and that a donation has been given in their honor. Forms are available on the next page, in the mission envelope in the Sunday bulletin during December or online at stmarkscarmel.org/red-bird/ We ask for a minimum donation of just \$3.00 per honoree. All money collected will be given to Red Bird Mission. Your donations to Red Bird Mission will help them continue vital ministries in this distressed region of Appalachia. Because You Give, St. Mark's Gives!

Angel Tree

On December 2, the Christmas tree in our narthex will be decorated with angels bearing the names of the children at the East 10th United Methodist Children & Youth Center. Please select an angel and purchase a suitable toy in the \$20 range for the child listed. Wrap it for Christmas, write the child's name and age on a gift tag (or use the angel) and place it under the St. Mark's Christmas tree by **Sunday, December 16**.

St. Mark's will provide a Christmas party for the children at East 10th on **Wednesday, December 19**, and *gifts will be given at that time*. (The children will open their gifts at the party, so we try to have gifts that are equitable.) If you would like to help with the Christmas party at East 10th, please contact Ali at 317-846-4912 or ALemberg@stmarkscarmel.org.



St. Mark's Tree of Lights

Honor someone special with a gift to St. Mark's *Tree of Lights* campaign! Complete the following and return with a minimum donation of \$3.00 per name. Place it in the offering plate or church office. Honorees will receive a card acknowledging your gift and all donations will be given to Red Bird Mission in southeastern Kentucky.

Please complete the following:

In honor of _____ In memory of _____

In appreciation of _____ Other _____

Please sign my card (i.e. Mom, Aunt Mary, Mr. & Mrs. Smith, Bob & Sue, etc.)

Address envelope to: (***Please print clearly and give complete address.***)

Name: _____

Address: _____ City _____ State _____

Zip Code _____

No card necessary

Your name: _____ Phone/email: _____

IHN Needs Your Help!

We have the unique opportunity this Christmas to support and share the love of Christ with homeless families as we help provide gifts for the Interfaith Hospitality Network guests at Christmas. Due to a gap week in scheduling a collaborative effort is being made by many congregations to support these families. Will you please prayerfully consider helping? St. Mark's will be providing Christmas presents for the families and gift cards for the parents to shop. It is a wonderful mission opportunity for the entire family. We won't know the make up of the families or their specific needs until closer to Christmas. If you are interested in helping sponsor the IHN families at Christmas, please contact Ali Lemberg at alemberg@stmarkscarmel.org

Salvation Bell Ringing

The holiday season is here and a St. Mark's tradition is upon us: bell ringing for the Salvation Army Red Kettle campaign!! This is a great mission project that is fun for all, and all for a great cause! We will ring at Kroger at 1217 S. Rangeline Rd. each Saturday in December, 10:00 AM-8:00 PM. Invite your family & friends and sign up for a one hour shift. (At least one person per shift must be 17 years or older.) Sign up at stmarkscarmel.org. We hope you'll be a part of this fun tradition that supports a wonderful ministry! If you have questions, contact Ali Lemberg at ALemberg@stmarkscarmel.org



JANUARY MISSION FOCUS

Mission Guatemala

Mission Guatemala is a United Methodist related organization with a mission to help meet the basic needs and improve the quality of life of under-served and impoverished Guatemalan peoples through health, education, and nutrition initiatives and through missionary service. Current projects include: medical clinic, pharmacy, dental clinic, eye clinic, feeding centers for chronically malnourished children, community development projects, vocational training programs, water filters for schools and families, and fuel efficient wood burning stoves. They also work with volunteer mission teams and the local villages to offer an array of community development and improvement projects. Mission Guatemala's philosophy is based on John Wesley's teaching to, "Do all



the good you can." For more information visit missionguatemala.com.

Financial donations to Mission Guatemala may be given using the mission envelope in your Sunday bulletin during January or given online at stmarkscarmel.org/give.

Because You Give, St. Mark's Gives!

2019 Guatemala Mission Trip

Sign up now to serve on next year's mission team to Guatemala July 20-28, 2019. We will be hosted by Mission Guatemala in the highlands of Central Guatemala. Cost of the trip will be approximately \$1,650. Team size will be limited to 15. The deadline for signing up for team is **January 1, 2019**. Please contact Joe and Diane Newton at joediane244@att.net or 317-288-4523 with questions.

Interfaith Hospitality Network

Sunday, February 10-17

Interfaith Hospitality Network is a program of Family Promise that offers hope for homeless families. They provide emergency food & shelter, offer individual skill development & rehabilitation, advocate for economic stability and strive to end homelessness for the guests they serve. IHN partners with congregations in the Indianapolis area including St. Mark's. We represent many different faiths and take turns hosting IHN guests several times each year. The role of volunteers is fundamental to the IHN program and many are needed each time we host, offering dignified and compassionate assistance to families who have suffered the ordeal of losing their homes.

St. Mark's will host IHN guests February 10-17, 2019 and we need *your* help to make it possible!

Volunteer needs include:

Dinner hosts (5:00-8:00 PM) Share a prepared meal with our guests, provide companionship & help with clean up.

Meal preparation - Prepare part of a meal for 15 - 20 people. Bring the meal to church by 5:00 PM.

Provide food - provide prepared foods for lunch & breakfast (milk, lunch meat, etc.).

Overnight hosts (8:00 PM-7:00 AM) - be part of a team that spends the night at St. Mark's and is on-hand to assist guests.

Set up, tear down and clean up - help set up beds and rooms on Sunday before our guests arrive or help remove beds and clean up on the following Sunday.

Transportation - drive the van between St. Mark's and the IHN Day Center.

Donate - new pillows, new or gently-used twin-size blankets, paper towels, paper cups.

This is a wonderful mission opportunity for the entire family. Please prayerfully consider how you can help. Sign up at stmarkscarmel.org/ihn or at a Connection Table on Sunday mornings. Contact Jeff Keyt (shellcreek5@gmail.com or 239-201-8207) if you have any questions.

Winter Break Food Bags for Forest Dale Students

This year we will partner again with Forest Dale Elementary to send home food bags with children over the holiday break. These bags provide fruit and basic meal supplies to feed children while school is not in session. We will be collecting the following items through **Sunday, December 16**. Please place your donations in the labeled bin inside Door 2.

12 oz box of Cheerios	3# bag of apples	3# bag Cuties or Clementines
1# bag baby peeled carrots	16 oz jar of peanut butter	24 oz jar of spaghetti sauce
1# box of pasta	5 oz can tuna in water	4 pk microwavable mac & cheese packs
6 pk applesauce	4 pk mandarin oranges	30-32 oz jar grape jelly
Loaf of bread	13 oz box Town House or Ritz Crackers	

Because You Give, St. Mark's Gives!

Thank you for your support of the missions of St. Mark's! Since our last reporting, we have given to the following ministries.

- **Brightwood Community Center:** 3 dinners have been supplied and served to the children, as well as, the ongoing tutoring
- **Carmel UMC Food Pantry:** 10 bags of food, 1 box of food
- **Fletcher Place:** 4 bags of food, 3 bags of toys
- **Hamilton Co. Kids Coats:** 38 coats, 4 pr. gloves, 6 hats, 2 pr boots, 1 pr snow pants, 29 scarves, 1 Ear warmer
- **IHN:** 2 pillows, 2 blankets, 144 diapers, 6 pairs of underwear, 43 bags of cloths
- **Indiana Blood Center:** 19 units of blood
- **Team World Vision:** \$56,823 raised by our runners and walkers
- **The Society of St. Andrew:** \$5000, as well as, 30,800 lbs. of apples delivered and/or coordinated by Terry Swagger, his granddaughter & Dave Martin

UMVIM Training

Sunday, January 27 | 2:00 PM

United Methodist Volunteers in Mission leader training is coming back to St. Mark's. If you have always wanted to lead a mission trip or your leader training has lapsed, please join us for the training on January 27 at 2:00 PM. For additional information or to sign up, please contact Ali Lemberg at ALemberg@stmarkscarmel.org by **January 1, 2019**. Please contact Joe and Diane Newton at joediane244@att.net or 317-288-4523 with questions.



Soups On!

**At Robert's Park
Sunday, January 13**

The Roberts Park United Methodist Church **Soup's On** ministry provides an opportunity for us to carry out Jesus' command to "feed the hungry." Each Sunday, volunteers at Robert's Park serve lunch to 200-250 homeless persons and others in need in Indianapolis. St. Mark's will be providing the meal on Sunday, January 13. Servers: we'll meet at St. Mark's at 9:15 AM, plan to leave at approximately 9:30 and return around 2:30 PM.

How can **you** be involved?

- Join others from St. Mark's on January 13 and help serve lunch for those less fortunate. (23-25 volunteers are needed.)
- Provide food for the lunch.

Sign up to help at stmarkscarmel.org in Sign Up Genius or at a Connection Table outside the sanctuary beginning December 9.

The O'Connor House

The O'Connor House is a Christian home to help single, pregnant, homeless women, improve life for themselves and their children. They are located at the corner of Village Drive and 146th Street in Carmel. One of our Mission In Action Teams worked at the O'Connor House. Through this activity we have learned of some donations that would be useful and greatly appreciated. Please feel free to contribute one of the following items: Gas Cards (Preferably Shell), Grocery Cards (Walmart & Kroger), Paper Towels, Toilet Paper, Printer paper, Laminator Sheets, Hand Sanitizer, All purpose cleaner, Bleach, Windex, Toilet Bowl Cleaner, Cleaning Gloves, Lyson Wipes, Dishwasher pods, Kitchen Garbage Bags, Ziploc Bags (all sizes), Aluminum Foil, Plastic Wrap, Diaper Rash Cream, Bottle Brushes, Baby lotion, Baby Wash, African American Hair Care products, Body Wash, Hand soap.

adult music

stmarkscarmel.org/music
Eric De Forest, Director
edeforest@stmarkscarmel.org

Join the Choir

It's a New Year, so try something NEW! Join the Chancel Choir and make a joyful noise with us! We accept any singer from high school age to 100! Rehearsals are Wednesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:00 PM. Please contact Dr. Eric DeForest at edeforest@stmarkscarmel.org with any questions.



Join the Orchestra

Orchestra is open to all ages 10-100 who want to glorify God with music. Performances once a month (August–April) Rehearsals are the Wednesdays prior to the performance.

Contact Ed Rowell or Dr. Eric Deforest for more information.

Bell Rehearsal

Bell Rehearsals practice Wednesday at 6:30 PM.

UPCOMING EVENTS

12/16	Cantata
2/10	St Mark's Talent Show
3/17	St. Mark's Presents Clare Longendyke, pianist

Can You Help Once a Month?

We are looking for team members to join our AV Ministry on Sunday mornings. Team members run the soundboard, LiveStream, lights and/or computer presentations. No experience needed and your commitment would be once every 4-5 weeks. Hands on training is available. contact Justin Vance at j Vance@stmarkscarmel.org or 317-846-4912 .



kids ministry

stmarkscarmel.org/kids
Ramie Cooney, Director
rcooney@stmarkscarmel.org

Education

SUNDAY PROGRAMMING



Nursery & Toddler Care

Staffed by experienced, caring adults and teens, our nursery is here to help care for your kids at all of our Sunday Morning Services.

Kidz Learn & Grow Preschool

Children have fun singing, learning Bible stories, eating snack and making fun crafts. Bible discovery and exploration is integrated in every lesson by our fantastic volunteer team.

Kidz Learn & Grow Elementary

Kids entering kindergarten through 4th grade have a blast learning about God at Kidz Church beginning with Worship followed by lively & age-appropriate activities (including games, crafts, and creative play) to accommodate various ways kids learn. Our fantastic Kidz Church leaders follow the Revised Common Lectionary and classes also include discipleship development following UM principles.

Kidz Music & Praise

Make a Joyful Noise to the Lord during this fun-filled hour each week. After a worship time with Kidz Learn & Grow classes, children participate in this high energy class that incorporates music, drama, art & puppets. All children are invited to sing at the 5 PM Christmas Eve service. Wear your favorite Christmas outfit and join us at 4:45 PM.

THANK YOU KIDZ CHURCH VOLUNTEERS

During this season of thankfulness, we encourage children and their families to take a minute to thank the fantastic Children's Ministry volunteers who serve us so faithfully

Club 56

Club 56 weaves together Bible instruction, some theology, service projects and relationship building. All 5th & 6th graders are welcome to come join the fun! Feel free to invite friends, grandchildren, and neighbors!



Sunday programming each week in the basement.

Upcoming Events:

12/16 Christmas Party, 3:00 - 5:00 PM
1/26 Ski Tube Outing & Overnight

ST MARK'S MOTHERS OF PRESCHOOLERS (MOPS)

MOPS has a few openings for mothers and moppets. Learn more at mopsatst.marks@gmail.com. MOPs meets twice monthly on Wednesday mornings for fellowship, learning and fun as well as monthly MOPS Moms' Night Out events, family play dates, and child-free monthly coffee/brunch dates. Come join the fun!

ST. MARK'S PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION

St. Mark's has one of the best preschools in town and will begin registering for 2019 classes in



January! Thankfully church families will again have priority placement because the preschool usually is filled to capacity. If you or someone you know (neighbor, grandchild) would like to learn more or tour the preschool, please contact Director, Jen Weixler at (317) 846-4912 or preschool@stmarkscarmel.org.

Club 56 UpComing Events

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Sunday, December 16 | 3:00 - 5:00 PM

Come enjoy the season with a Christmas party and White Elephant gift exchange. If you would like to participate in the optional gift exchange, bring a small gift (\$10 max or a re-gift of something in like new condition) and be ready for a rousing competition. Club 56ers are invited to bring a Christmas treat to share (plan a snack for 4 people and we'll have a variety of good eats to share).

WINTER RETREAT

Friday, January 25 – Saturday, January 26

Arrive at St. Mark's at 6:00 PM on Friday (a light dinner will be served). Club 56ers will play games, watch a movie, and have a lock-in sleepover before going tubing at a nearby resort on Saturday. Club 56ers will be back at St. Mark's and ready for parent pick-up at 5:00 PM on Saturday. This is a great event to invite friends. Students who prefer to sleep at home are welcome to have a "late over" with a 10:00 PM pick-up on Friday and, if desired, return on Saturday morning around 8:00 AM for tubing.

Sign-ups will be available mid-December on-line at www.stmarkscarmel.org/kidzfellowship/.

Kidz Mission Opportunity

BOOK DRIVE TO BENEFIT FLETCHER PLACE COMMUNITY CENTER

During the month of December Help the children of St Mark's bless other boys and girls by donating new and used children's books during December. This is a great way to clean out bookshelves before the holiday and children can experience the joy of serving. Books will be collected in a labeled Christmas box located in the education wing of the church. The entire congregation is invited to participate.

We hope to help children and families make the connection between the importance of reading-to-learn with great books available for sale in the Children's Holiday Book Fair, and gifting books to other boys and girls in Indianapolis for their own home collection.





Cornerstone Fellowship

Sundays | 5:00 - 6:30 PM

For all students in grades 7-12

Middle School and High School meet separately from 5:00 - 5:45 PM.

All grades gather from 5:45 - 6:30 PM for worship and a meal.

Cornerstone After Hours

Sundays | 6:30 - 7:30 PM

For all students in grades 7-12

After Cornerstone Fellowship, the gym will be open for various activities.

The purpose is simply to spend time together where students feel confident to invite friends

Third Street Rehearsal

Wednesday | 6:30 - 7:30 PM

Students currently in grades 7 - 12 are welcome!

Third Street is Cornerstone's Praise Band and is always seeking singers and instrumentalists to join us! ALL are welcome!

Rehearsals will take place weekly, with the goal of leading worship at retreats, some meetings, and Cornerstone Sundays!

Cornerstone Christmas Party

Sunday, December 16 | 5:00 - 7:30 PM

Students in **grades 7 through 12** should plan to attend and bring friends!

There will be dinner, music, games and more!

Bring a gift (\$10 limit) to share in our White Elephant Gift Exchange!

Also, wear your ugliest Christmas sweater.

There WILL be a prize!

Ski Trip

Saturday, January 19 | 8:00 AM - 11:00 PM

A Cornerstone gathering to spend some time together in fellowship on the slopes-skiing and snow tubing. Any youth in grades 7-12 are welcome to attend. However, youth Middle School students may only snow tube unless a parent attends and skis with their youth.

Estimated cost \$100.00 (includes 8 hour lift ticket, ski equipment and food during the day.

Sign up at stmarkscarmel.org or contact Don Broad, dbroad@stmarkscarmel.org.

Dear Friends,

Here we are in the season of being thankful... As a reminder to myself and to each of us, I want to share a paragraph from Bob Goff's new book, *Everybody, Always*:

The next time you're tempted to boast, just say under your breath, "It's not about me."

Say it a dozen times a day. Say it a thousand times a month. Say it when you wake up and when you go to sleep. Say it again and again: "It's not about me. It's not about me." Say

it when you bless a meal or do something wonderful or selfless or when you help hurting people.

Make it your anthem and your prayer. When we keep track of the good we've done, or love people with an agenda, it's no longer love... We can either keep track of all the good we've done, or all the good that God has done. Only one will really matter to us...

Let's try kindness. Let's reach out to others generously. Let's be grateful and share Christ's hope with all.

With grace and peace,
Lydia

Sunday Small Groups

9:40 AM

VENTURE

This group meets at 9:15 to share concerns and listen to "The Great Courses" a varied series on religious and theological studies and Rick Steve's Travelogue Series Jean Douglass facilitates.

OPEN DOORS/OPEN IDEAS

Share and discuss various Christian and life themes. For Advent, they are discussing *Sent: Delivering the Gift of Hope at Christmas* by Jorge Acevedo. This group shares leadership.

CUTTING EDGE

Uses the Common Lectionary for Bible discussions & lessons. A 3 year program that cycles through old and new testament verses of the Bible. Steve Click facilitates.

FOUNDATIONS & FRIENDSHIPS

Share and discuss Christian themes through various authors. They are currently reading and discussing *Everybody Always* by Bob Goff. Their next discussion will center around one *Ordering Your Private World* by Gordon MacDonald. Doug Brown and John Flora facilitate, with classmates sharing leadership too.

11:00 AM

JOURNEY

Share and discuss the Bible scriptures from the Old and New Testament and Psalms based on the Revised Common Lectionary. Jonathan Barclay facilitates.

REEL SPIRITUALITY

View and discuss Christian themes and life values through movies. Together they watch 30-40 minutes of a movie, then discuss it, continuing the movie to completion for 3 to 4 weeks. Upcoming movies are [Beyond the Next Mountain](#), [I Can Only Imagine](#) and [For the Life of the World](#) Lydia and Terry Fourman facilitate.

Study Groups

SUNDAY

6:00 –7:00 PM

Blue Christmas: Devotions of Light in a Season of Darkness by Todd Outcalt (11/25-12/16) See page 2 for details.

WEDNESDAY

6:30–7:15 AM EARLY AM BIBLE STUDY

Galatians: 10 Studies for Individuals and Groups by N.T. Wright (9/12-12/12)

Philippians by N.T. Wright (1/9-2/27)

Ephesians by N.T. Wright (3/6-5/15)

In Philippians, Paul, writing from prison, certainly knew what it was like to have plans interrupted. But he maintained robust confidence in God's overruling power, even when everything seemed to be going wrong. The next book, Ephesians, Paul expressed his joy and amazement at the larger story of God's plan to save us in Jesus the Messiah. Pastor Brian White will facilitate.

9:30-10:30 AM Pastor's Bible Study

Philippians by N T Wright (1/9-5/15) See above for description. Pastor Brian White facilitates.

9:30 –11:30 AM BIBLE STUDY

Blue Christmas (Starts at 10 AM) finishes December 5. **Awakening Grace** by Matt LeRoy and Jeremy Summers .Before you even knew his name, God's gentle voice was calling out to you; his gentle strength drawing you close to him. Spiritual formation is not about tools or formulas but submitting to God's grace, guiding you on an unpredictable journey into the heart of God. Learn nine spiritual practices--such as covenant friendship, worship, and generosity--that will awaken your soul to God's grace.

Thursday

9:30– 11:00 AM

No Other God by Kelly Minter (10/25-12/20)

Walking With God in the Desert by Ray Vander Laan (1/10-2/21) When going through a difficult period of life, we often feel as if we are in a de-

sert. It's easy to think God has disappeared. Instead, discover that it's only when we are totally dependent on him that we find God closer than ever and can experience God's amazing grace and provision. This 7-week study includes DVD sessions showing places in the holy lands. Judy Woempner facilitates.

FRIDAY

9:30– 11:30 AM

All Earth is Waiting (11/30-12/21) The message of this Advent study, *All Earth is Waiting*; quite simply, we have a responsibility to care for this earth in preparation for Christ's return. Explore the Advent themes of hope, preparation, joy, and peace with the heavens and earth in mind. Consider how all creation longs for the coming of Christ, taking seriously the notion that the good news of Christ is good news for all the world. Jackie Rowell facilitates

To sign up for Adult Bible Studies register for stmarkscarmel.org/studygroups.

Childcare is available with registration 72 hours in advance online at stmarkscarmel.org

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Look for details on St Mark's website.

An invitation and reminder: St. Mark's has four fun and meaningful ways (at least J) we can GROW in our Christian Adult Education opportunities.

- **Sunday Morning Study Groups-classes that meet at 9:40 and 11:00 am before/after worship**
- **Weekday Study Groups-classes that meet on a regular basis throughout the year**
- **Grow Groups-5-12 people who gather as a small group on a regular basis throughout the year**
- **Themed Study Groups-classes that form around a specific chapter of life for a 4-8 week support**

Please check out the specific groups below, and know you are always invited to participate and ask questions on your spiritual journey.

gatherings

Second Saturday Breakfast Meetings

We meet the second Saturday of every month at 7:30- 9:00AM in Fellowship Hall.



Saturday, 12/8 Christina Starace

Servants at Work-A Mission of 2nd Presbyterian and St. Luke's Dealing with the construction of wheelchair ramps.

Saturday, 1/12 T.J. Land
Grand Park of Westfield

United Methodist Men provides a creative supportive fellowship of men who seek to know Jesus Christ, to grow spiritually, and to seek daily his will.

For more information about UMM, please check out the UMM Bulletin Board in the Narthex near the coffee area, contact Dean Solesky, email umm@stmarkscarmel.org or call a UMM Board Member. You can also see what's going at: stmarkscarmel.org. Come and join us!

PRAYER HUDDLE

Join us at the back of the sanctuary before the traditional services at 8:15 and 11:00 AM for a brief prayer in support of our worship leaders

MARKSMEN

The MarksMen is a community of career and family focused men seeking to develop authentic and intentional relationships while we unplug from the daily stress and craziness that life can bring. We aim to grow closer to Christ through Service and Outreach, Enrichment and Education, Friendship and Fellowship.

PRAYER & SUPPORT GROUP

Thursday, 6:00 AM

12/6, 12/20, 1/3, 1/17 & 1/31

We meet at 6:00 AM every other Thursday morning at Einstein Bagels (116th Street) for our prayer and support meetings.

ROMEO's Lunch Group

Wednesday, 11:00 AM

LE PEEP RESTAURANT

12213 N. Meridian Street

All men are invited to join the ROMEOs (Retired Old Men Eating Out) for a weekly Wednesday lunch. They meet at 11:00 AM. For more information or questions contact Don Mehl, 317-844-0789.



Monthly Meetings

Tuesday, December 11 | 7:00 PM

CHRISTMAS GATHERING

All women of St. Mark's are invited to UMW's gathering. Come enjoy this special time of year with your old and new St. Mark's friends, fellowship, and food. No regular groups meet for December. Bring an appetizer or a dessert to share.

Tuesday, January 8 | 9:00 AM, 7:00 PM

All women of St. Mark's are invited to United Methodist Women's gathering Tuesday for coffee, conversation, devotion time & special interest groups. We look forward to seeing you!

Childcare provided. To register for childcare, please click on the link "Childcare Registration" on St. Mark's website. stmarkscarmel.org

Morning Groups

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

The group will be studying **Embracing Wholeness: An Earth Perspective for Covenantal Living** by Jessica Stonecypher. This study will explore our relationship with creation, others and ourselves. We will engage in conversations with Biblical texts, current realities and possible ways to respond. Mary Ann Moman facilitates.

BOOKWORMS

UMW morning book discussion group. The book selected for January is **Little Fires Everywhere** by Celeste Ng. While the books are seldom of a religious nature we will ask the

question, "Do you see God's grace or redemption at work in the book?" Facilitator Gail Lee

MAKE IT AND TAKE IT

We will not be meeting in December. Everyone is encouraged to attend the Christmas gathering on Tuesday the 11th of December in the evening. In January we will be making something at our regular meeting time. We will announce this fun project in January. Facilitated by Marilyn Roberts and Kathy Dycus.

SAMS (SCHOOL AGE MOMS)

SAMs (School Age Moms) will meet two Tuesdays a month. There will be a discussion group for the UMW morning and evening gatherings, and then we will meet the last Tuesday of the month. We will be using "**Where Mom's Connect**" as our guide. Facilitator: Ali Lemberg.

Evening Groups

BOOKMARKERS

Join us at BookMarkers, the evening book group discussion. We read anything and everything, and enjoy a lively discussion, fellowship and support. Please come, even if you haven't had a chance to read the book. We add an extra meeting in May and in the summer. No December book. The book for January is **Before We Were Yours** by Lisa Wingate. Contact Deb Skinner, dskins25@hotmail.com or call 317-574-1997 with any questions.

SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

Applying Biblical study to our everyday lives. This group uses a series of videos and study guides to help us apply the teachings of Jesus to our life challenges. We will be using the DVD **Israel's Mission** by Ray Vander Laan which explores welcoming strangers and prodigals the Lord longs to embrace. Facilitator: Beth McGill.

SAMS (SCHOOL AGE MOMS)

See Morning Group for description

2019 Pledge for UMW

Through the UMW channels of mission giving, we can help to provide hope and security to marginalized people both locally and beyond. In this season of giving, UMW members can thank God through our service, prayers, pledges and offerings. Your 2019 Pledge will help support the numerous mission programs of St. Mark's UMW.

Cash donations or checks are welcome. Checks should be made payable to St Mark's UMW. For questions, please contact Karen Demler, UMW Treasurer @ 317-407-2339 or karend21856@gmail.com

We are thankful for the enthusiastic, involved members of St. Mark's UMW.

UMW Mission

DECEMBER

Fletcher Place Christmas Store

Members of the UMW have the opportunity to pack up and deliver the items donated for the Fletcher Place Christmas Store. January

Hope Center

Donations of gently used, clean women's clothing of any size would be greatly appreciated!

Arts and Crafts Marketplace Update

Dear UMW members,

We want to thank all of you for the great success of the Arts and Crafts Marketplace on Saturday, November 3. We appreciate everyone who donated, baked, worked and shopped at this event. Couldn't have done it without all of you! Final numbers are not in yet but looks like this is the BEST one we've had. The Candy Cane Café really outdid itself - so good. A WONDERFUL place to eat and rest. Kathy Dycus- VP of Fundraising; Lynn Akerhielm-Event Chair; Ada Hoffmaster- Table Rental and Craft Table; Gale Lee- Baked Goods Table; Marilyn Roberts and Kathi Hall- Candy Cane.

UMW Reading Program

Monday, January 29, 2019 | 7:00 PM

Every year the United Methodist Women's National Office recommends a diverse range of books with the intention of broadening exposure to a variety of concepts. This program organizes books into five categories: Education for Mission, Leadership Development, Nurturing for Community, Social Action and Spiritual Growth.

Our UMW Reading Program group selects a book from each of the categories meeting five times a year for book discussion and fellowship. The St. Mark's library has the UMW books on a cart on the right side of the library.

The first reading category and the discussion date for 2019 is:

January 29 - Education for Mission

We will decide on the future dates at our first meeting.

Our next discussion is Monday, January 29, 7:00 to 8:30 PM in the Church Library. You are welcome to attend and learn more about the program even you have not read a book.

Check out the National UMW Reading Program website at: <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/readingprogram>

Do not hesitate to contact Susan Salter at Sbf5salter@att.net or 317-848-1194 if you have any questions.

Coffee 'n Cameras

Monday, 12/3, 12/17, 1/7

9:00 - 10:00 AM

Do you enjoy photography? This self-help camera group meets for conversation about photographic art and technique. Bring your camera & your questions or your latest work to share with the group. The group will be meeting offsite January 21.



Contact Bob Wiens, 317-402-5617 or wiens@iquest.net, with questions.

The Page Turners Book Group

No December Meeting

Tuesday, January 15 | 7:00 - 8:00 PM

The Storyteller by Jodi Picoult

If you enjoy good books, interesting discussions, and a shared evening with new/old friends. Start reading now. Join us for our next gathering where we will be deciding on the next 12 books to read. To sign up to lead a book discussion or to be added to the email list for this group to go stmarkscarmel.org. Contact Marcia Flora, 317-670-9976 or mflora1950@yahoo.com, with questions.

Career Curve

Mondays @ 10:00 AM

A support and resource group for those who have suffered a job loss, are unemployed or under-employed and seeking a change. The mission of Career Curve is to provide individual job search strategies, and informal counsel associated with the challenges of a job search. Contact Jim & Chuck, coordinators at careercurve@stmarkscarmel.org, if you would like more information.

Craft & Hobby Group

Thursday, 12/13 & 1/17 6:00 - 9:00 PM

Friday, 12/14 & 1/18 9:00 AM—1:00 PM

Join us for a time of fun and fellowship as we each enjoy our craft or hobby.

Registration deadline to attend is Monday, 12/10 and 1/14. Child care is available for children 5 & under. Childcare must be requested at least 72 hours in advance by registering.

Contact Kathy Bartel, 317-294-4908 or krbartel@gmail.com, if you have any questions. Register to attend Craft Days at stmarkscarmel.org/groups.

JULIETS

Friday, December 14

Holly Hock Hills

Ladies, join the JULIETS (Just Us Ladies Into Eating Together) for lunch! We are meeting **Friday, December 14** this month. Usually we meet the 2nd Thursday of every month. The group meets at a restaurant for lunch, laughs,



and fellowship together. All women are invited, young or retired, stay-at-home or working - whatever stage of life you're in! Check the website to find out which restaurant we will be visiting.

Please sign up by 12/9 at the Connections Table behind the sanctuary. If you have questions, please contact Kat Howe, chattykat52@att.net or 317.431.6295

special events

Chili Cook Off

Sunday, January 27 | 5 :00 PM

Calling all Chefs and chili lovers, St Marks will be hosting our annual chili cook-off on the evening of Sunday January 27 in Fellowship hall. Bring a chili to complete, bring one to share, or just come with a side or dessert and enjoy. Contact the office for more information



SAVE THE DATE

St Mark's Talent Show

Sunday, February 10 | 12:30 - 2:00 PM

Come and enjoy some of your favorite St. Mark's performers. Free admission and lunch included.

Anyone interested in participating in the talent show please see Dr. Eric DeForest no later than January 21, 2019.

Mental Illness Book Discussions

Saturday, February 2 9:30 - 11:00 AM

First, We Make the Beast Beautiful-A Journey Through Anxiety by Sarah Wilson

Saturday, March 16 9:30 - 11:00 AM

The Noonday Demon- An Atlas Of Depression by Andrew Solomon

You are invited to a series of three book discussions related to mental illness to be held at St. Mark's . Each book provides a perspective from individuals who live with bipolar disorder, anxiety or depression. Please feel free to share this information with others. The first discussion will take place on November 10 at 7:30 AM and will highlight Looking at Recovery Through the Rear View Mirror: A Bipolar's Story.

Journeys of Paul Cruise

Sunday, May 19- Thursday, May 30

AN INVITATION TO TRAVEL WITH PASTOR WHITE

Pastor White will be leading a group through Educational Opportunities Tours experiencing the "Journeys of Paul." This tour includes stops in Italy and Greece and will depart on **May 19, 2019** and return on May 30. For more information pick up a brochure outside the church office in the plastic holders, or available online at stmarkscarmel.org.



Children's Ministry (Christian) Book Fair

November 14-December 4

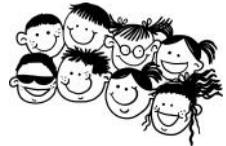
SALE

We are excited to host a Family Christian Book Fair offering books from Sparkhouse Publishing. Christian-themed books, devotionals, Bible stories, and Bibles will be available for viewing with ordering to begin on November 14-December 4. Books will be delivered to the church and available for pick-up on December 21st. Parents & Grandparents, this is a great way to add some Christian cheer to your Christmas this year!

Kidz Night Out

Friday, December 14 6:00 - 9:00 PM

Parents, enjoy a date night during the busy holiday season! Children ages 4-10 years-old are invited to join the fun from 6-9 pm at St. Mark's. Parents will drop off their children and children will enjoy Christmas-related activities, a movie, and a (nut-free) snack throughout the evening as they are supervised by Cornerstone Youth. Sign-up at <http://stmarkscarmel.org/sundaykids> and contribute \$15 per child (or \$30 per family) to benefit youth mission trips and retreats. Contact Ramie at rcooney@stmarksumc.org or (317) 846-4912 for more information.



Friday, January 18 6:00 - 9:00 PM

Parents, kick off 2019 in style! Children ages 4-10 years-old are invited to enjoy activities, games, a movie, and a (nut-free) snack throughout the evening as they are supervised by Cornerstone Youth. Sign-up at <http://stmarkscarmel.org/sundaykids> and contribute \$15 per child (or \$30 per family). This monthly event serves as a fundraiser for youth mission trips and retreats. Contact Ramie at rcooney@stmarksumc.org or (317) 846-4912.

committees

2019 Stewardship Campaign

OPPORTUNITY KEEPS KNOCKING AT ST. MARK'S

To all those who have pledged during our Commitment Sunday, November 11, and in the weeks since, thank you.

Your devotion to St. Mark's will enable us to plan effectively and pursue the best opportunities that God sets before us.

For various reasons, we know that some of you have not been able either to send in your Commitment Cards yet or to pledge online. This month, the Stewardship Committee will be following up with those who have not yet pledged. The easiest way to pledge is to do it online at stmarkscarmel.org/pledge.

Alternatively, if you need a replacement commitment card, you can call the church and we will mail one out to you.

We hope to be able to conclude the campaign by the end of the year.

Thank you for your support of all that St. Mark's does.

The Stewardship Committee



Social Justice Committee

Social Justice Ministry to Focus on "Human Sexuality and Our Faith"

You may have seen the social justice poster at the Connection Fair or in the gathering area this fall. Members were invited to indicate their three top social concerns listed in the *UMC Social Principles*. Civil and Human Rights, specifically LGBTQ Rights, was the most frequently cited issue.

The United Methodist Church is currently in a time of deep discernment over how to recognize and welcome LGBTQ people as a part of the life and ministry of the Church. The *Commission on the Way Forward* was created in order to explore options concerning the *Book of Discipline's* wording regarding human sexuality. Delegates will vote on proposed plans at a special conference to be held February 23.

Regardless of the outcome of the vote, our Church remain steadfast in its support for laws in society that uphold the rights of LGBTQ people. As United Methodists we hold that ***"Certain basic human rights and civil liberties are due all persons. We are committed to supporting those rights and liberties for all persons, regardless of sexual orientation. (Social Principles, P162.)"***

Stay tuned for more educational and advocacy opportunities regarding "Human Sexuality and our Faith" beginning in January. For more information on LGBTQ Rights check out the following links:

[UN Free and Equal Fact Sheet](#)

[UMC Commission on a Way Forward](#)

LIBRARY NEWS

The holidays are here and St. Mark's library has many books and DVD's to help you prepare for Advent and Christmas. A complete listing of these is available through your online catalog at www.stmarkscarmel.org by using the search term "Christmas". The list is also available on the checkout counter in the library. Stop by soon to explore our outstanding Christmas collection and choose titles to help you and your family enrich your holiday season. Many Christmas and Advent books are displayed on the lower shelves just inside the library door and on the top shelf in the Kid's Corner.

New Arrivals

The Christmas Star – Donna VanLiere's heart-warming story of second chances.

A Christmas by the Sea – A brand new holiday story by popular Christian author Melody Carson.

The Next Person You Meet in Heaven – The long-awaited sequel of Mitch Albom's best seller, "The Five People You Meet in Heaven".

The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the complexities of commitment with the wisdom of God – Based on his series of popular sermons, Timothy Keller explores what marriage should be according to the Bible.

This Life I Live – Rory Feek, one of Nashville's premiere songwriters, tells the story of his extraordinary life and the woman who changed it forever.

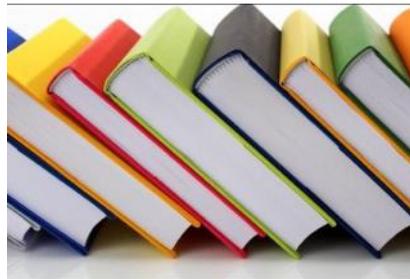
Through My Father's Eyes – Franklin Graham reminisces about the life and teachings of his father, Billy Graham.

Everybody Always – Bob Goff follows his best-selling book, "Love Does", with this journey into living without fear or worry by loving people, even difficult people, without limits.

House of Living Stones – Novelist Katie Schuermann tells a whimsical and touching story of life in small town America, following the life of Pastor Fletcher and his new choir director.

Good Good Father – Chris Tomlin's beautifully illustrated book for children telling them the story of God's love. (children's shelf)

The Preschooler's Bible – An ideal follow-up to "The Toddler's Bible" with stories for bedtime, family devotions, or story time. (children's shelf)



community news

Directory Updates

Kaycee & Christopher Port
9148 Umbarer Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46216

Barbara Holcomb
1110 Redwood Blvd, Apt A
Hudson, OK 44236

Sympathies

To Brian White and his family at the death of his father, Russell.

To Tom Beckman and his family at the death of his mother, Ruth.

To Cyndy Kendall at the death of her father, Jim.

New Babies

Maxwell Carter Risinger was born on November 4. He is the son of Ashley & Seth Risinger; brother to Mason; grandson of Amy & Jeff Risinger and Mike & Jenny Rundle; great grandson of Nyla Johnson.

Charlotte Eve Barclay was born on October 30. She is the daughter of Avery Barclay; granddaughter of Jonathan and Mary Barclay; and niece of Connor Barclay.

Prayer Requests

This ministry provides prayer support on behalf of those in need. Requests for prayers can be sent to prayers@stmarkscarmel.org

If you would like to become a member of the prayer chain and provide prayer support for those in need, please send an email to staff@stmarkscarmel.org.

In Our Congregation

On Sunday, October 14, a group of parishioners joined together and came to The Mustard Seed of Central Indiana, here in Fishers, and volunteered with several hours of their time.

Their labor of love was evident in the huge amount of work that was accomplished, from organizing household furnishings to cleaning an old moving furniture donations from a local nursing facility and a university dorm. Their hard work has assisted the mustard seed in many ways that my words would fall short and bring little recognition of what they were able to accomplish.

Colin P. Lemon
Executive Director, Mustard Seed

Dear St. Mark's folks,

Thank you so much for your many expressions of love and sympathy at the death of my father, Russ White. I have been strengthened knowing that your prayers and well wishes have been with me and with my family. Please continue to pray for my mom and she makes the hard transition to life without her husband of 64 years.

Brian & Michelle White

Circle of Care

The Circle of Care list includes St Mark's member and friends who are homebound or in a care facility. Your prayers for these brothers and sisters in Christ mean so much to them and to their families. Please remember:

Annette Dunlap	Barbara Frazer
Lois Hardin	Mary Hart
Betty Lachman	Ola Morrow
Jerry & Phyllis Delp	Bea Gilson
Mary Pielemeier	Charles Reid
Judy & Tom Hebenstreit	Don Ranck
Jean Smith	Vallie Williams
Leonard Sheats	Kay Major
Judy & Tom Hebenstreit	

Holy Walk

Thank you from the bottoms of our hearts to the MANY of you who helped make Holy Walk possible. This is such a wonderful community event, made extra special by the fact so many different church members come together to make it happen. We were honored and blessed to have gotten to know so many of you.

St Mark's - where mission is a way of life and we are thankful that it is a part of OUR lives.

Lynn & Rob Akerhielm



celebrating 2018





Help decorate St. Mark's for the holidays with your purchase of a poinsettia

- In Honor Of
- In Celebration Of
- In Memory Of

special persons or groups in your life.

A donation of \$8.00 per recognition is requested to cover the cost of the poinsettia and other greenery that make the Advent season so special at St. Mark's.

Please fill out the form online at stmarkscarmel.org/poinsettias or use the form here and place it in the offering plate with your payment or drop it off at the church office.

POINSETTIA ORDER FORM

Your Name

Your Email

Your Phone #

_____ # of Honorees (\$8.00 ea.)

Total amount due: \$ _____

In honor of:

In memory of:

In celebration of:

Orders must be placed by December 9 for names to be listed in the bulletin on December 23. Live Poinsettias may be taken home after the 11:00 PM Christmas Eve worship service.