

JUBILEE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



ST. MARK'S
United Methodist Church

December-January 2022

Christmas Eve!

at St. Mark's

5:00 PM

Children's Service

7:00 PM

Candlelight (non-traditional)

9:00 PM

Candlelight (Traditional)

11:00 PM

Candlelight & Communion (Traditional)

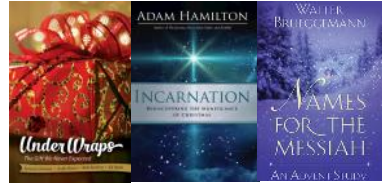
Advent

Advent Studies Beginning

It's a busy season as we prepare our hearts and minds for Christmas! Connect with others through these upcoming Advent studies:

***Names for the Messiah*, Sundays, 6:00-7:00PM | 11/28-12/19**

Led by Pastor Brian White



***Incarnation: Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas*. Wednesdays, 9:30am | 11/17-12/15 (no meeting 11/24) | Led by Lydia Fourman**

***Under Wraps*. Fridays, 9:30-11:15am | 12/3- 12/17 | Led by Stephanie Cohen**

See smarkscarmel.org/studygroups. or the GROW Tables in the Gathering Area to sign up and learn more.

Advent Gifts and Devotionals

Enjoy spending a couple of minutes each day of Advent with a short scripture reading and reflection to find hope in the promise of Christmas. Devotionals (for adults and families) and peace coins from the church entrance (Door #2) or as you walk past the Café area tables.



Blue Christmas Worship Service

Wednesday, 12/15 | 6:30 PM

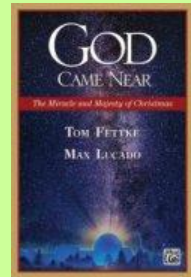
During the Advent and Christmas season we are often told to turn our hearts to thoughts of peace, joy, love, and hope, but for many the holidays can be a source of stress and grief. The season can remind us of loved ones who are no longer with us, broken expectations, a sense of despair, and often leave us wondering if joy will ever return. And that's okay. It is okay to enter the season of Advent and Christmas with pain rather than joy in your heart. That's the whole point of having a Blue Christmas worship service, a time and space in worship where we can come together as a community and acknowledge each other's pain. This will be a time of prayer and reflection as we offer our fears and pain to God.

Celebrate with Music on Sunday, December 12

Christmas Cantata

Sunday, December 12 | 8:15 AM & 11:00 AM

Travel back in time when Christ, the Son of God, became man. Based on the iconic Christmas writings by best-selling author Max Lucado, this new musical from veteran composer/arranger Tom Fettke features a blend of new songs, classic texts, and beloved carols. The result is a magnificent and unforgettable celebration of the Incarnation. It all happened in a moment - a most remarkable moment when **God Came Near**.



God Came Near will be conducted by Dr. Eric DeForest and feature the St. Mark's Chancel Choir and the St. Mark's Orchestra. Soloist will include Leslie French, Kassie Schaefer, Meridith Anderson, Marge Patterson and Roger Schmenner. The work will be narrated by Jonene McDermid and Robert Christ.

Carols @ the Current

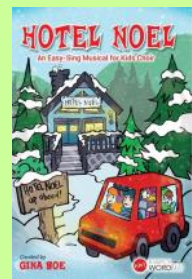
Sunday, December 12 | 9:40 AM

Take a break from stress and spend some time Picking up Joy through praise, worship, and fellowship! On December 12 at 9:40, join us for an (in-person only) service in Wesley Hall for a fresh take on some familiar Christmas carols and worship music.

Children's Advent Musical

Sunday, December 12 | 2:00 PM

Kidz Music & Praise will be performing the Musical, *Hotel Noel*. This musical retells the Christmas story in a humorous way. All are Welcome. Admission Free.



St. Mark's PRESENTS

Indy Winds Flute Choir

Sunday, December 19 | 3:00 PM

Please join us as the Indy Winds Flute Choir will present their holiday concert for us! The Indy Winds Flute Choir is based in Indianapolis and comprised of local flutists of all ages. Laura Recendez, director. Mary Sue McAlister, assistant director. The Indy Winds Flute Choir seeks to provide a fun and enjoyable environment to make music together and spread our love of the flute to the community! Comprised of approximately 25 members, they play piccolo, C Flute, Alto Flute, Bass Flute and Contrabass Flute and explore all kinds of musical genres.



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 note all Poinsettias this year will be White.

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 no later than 12/13.

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 13 for names to be listed in the bulletin on December 19. Live Poinsettias may be taken home after the 11:00 PM Christmas Eve worship service

The Pastor's Place

Dr. Brian White, Lead Pastor

bwhite@stmarkscarmel.org

Dear Co-workers in Christ,

Over the past two years we have adapted to perpetual changes in the health environment by going virtual in worship, beginning in-person worship again, then shutting down in the building activities a second time, and finally continuing a progressive reentry to the building. We have been living the cliché, two steps forward - one step backward. I remember talking to people in the spring of this year saying that surely we would mostly be back to normal in August only to have the Delta variant make that prediction inaccurate.



With vaccinations finally available for some of our children and some anticipation for vaccines being available for all ages there really is cause to be optimistic about our ability to return to normal activities in our church building. We are beginning to have recreational activities in Wesley Hall once more. Holy Walk will return this year. We will have our normal worship schedule for Christmas Eve.

There are many reasons to be hopeful as we enter into this Advent & Christmas season and as we enter 2022.

Having said that there are still challenges for us as we move into the future. We are making every effort to reconnect and reinvite people to the activities that they were a part of pre-COVID. We are trying to take the things that we have learned during the pandemic and retain the new practices that make sense to continue into the future. We will have financial challenges as we adjust to changes in attendance and giving patterns in our congregation. Eventually, the United Methodist Church will be able to convene a general conference and make decisions about our denomination and human sexuality.

In the midst of all these decision points, our commitment to welcoming people into a relationship with Jesus Christ and the church is strong. We continue to find ways to grow in our relationship with God and with one another. We continue to be a congregation that strives to make mission a way of life and not just a Sunday morning experience. Our methods may change but our core values have remained strong and have carried us through many difficult time during this season and I believe these values will continue to carry us into God's future.

Most importantly, God has continued to be a sure and present help in the midst of these troubled times. People have often heard me say, "Whatever happens, God will still be God."

Pandemics will come and go. Denominational decisions will eventually happen. The presence and power of God will remain.

Jesus said to the disciples, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:19-20, NRSV)

In Christ's service,

Brian

The Pastor's Place

Julia Gonzales, Associate Pastor
jgonzales@stmarkscarmel.org

Dear St. Mark's,

Are we there yet?

I remember being the one to say those words as a child, but I also remember the exhaustion of being the recipient of those words. It's such a simple question, but when we stop and analyze it there's always more to find. Sometimes we ask if we're at our destination because we're bored and want to move onto the next thing. Sometimes we ask if we're there yet because we want to know how much time is left to complete whatever else we have going on during the journey. And sometimes we ask because we're in an unfamiliar place and we're scared. Nothing is what it's supposed to be, and we want to know if we'll ever reach the point where things make sense.



At *the current* this Advent season we're asking the question, "Are we there yet?" with a response of, "Do you have everything that you need?" Because a journey becomes even harder when we don't have everything that we need for the trip. And we can only have everything that we need when we realize where it is that we're wanting to go. For Christians, the ultimate goal of our journey is to be with God. To be in God's presence fully and completely. Advent is a season of preparation for not only the birth of Christ, but also for the time when we can be fully with God. And in the journey to draw closer to God the things that are needed most are peace, hope, joy, and love. For this current part of our journey, most of us weren't fully prepared. We didn't have an overflowing wellspring of peace, hope, joy, and love to draw from when the pandemic started and it's been hard to replenish those stores when everything continues to be topsy turvy. But the nice thing about any journey is that even when you're on the road, there are still places where you can stop and pick up the things you need. So this Advent season, take a break. Take a moment to stop and breathe. Find the things that give you peace and joy. Look for signs of hope and give and receive love wholeheartedly. Take a break in the journey so that you have the strength to make it the rest of the way.

We're not there yet, and that's okay.

Take care,

Julia

The Pastor's Place

Mary Ann Moman, Associate Pastor

mmoman@stmarkscarmel.org

On the Advent of a New Adventure

This is the waiting season. We wait for the celebration of Jesus' birth. But we want more than a party. We want the peace and promise of new life that Jesus' birth brings. I am reminded of the words in Luke 1:45, "Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her." She believed in spite of the outrageous words she heard.

Hope often starts small. We have a glimpse of what might be even though we see what is happening in the world around us. This small hope is nurtured as we remember what God has done in the past. In advent we are called, like Mary, to trust that we can follow God's radical leading to join with others who can see the world as God sees it.

As I move into retirement in January I am waiting. I'm making lists of things I need and want to do. Each page of lists has lots of white space because I want to have room for the new ways God is calling me. My vocation has not changed. The ways of fulfilling my vocation have and will change.

Every time I have moved to a new appointment I have felt that I have left things unfinished. The work has always been bigger than can be accomplished. In his book, *Life Work*, Donald Hall recounts a conversation with Henry Moore. Hall had asked Moore about the secret of life. Moore responded: "The secret of life is to have a task, something you devote your life to, something you bring everything to, every minute of the day for your whole life. And the most important thing is ---it must be something you cannot possibly do!" I railed against this when I first read it. I didn't want to be doing something for my whole life and find that it was impossible. But the older I have gotten the more I understand.

We move into Advent every year knowing that the world is not as it should be. Children go to bed hungry. Wars rage around the world. Poverty is a reality for more and more people. Our work as Christians is not finished. We continue to prepare for the birth of Christ with the expectation that there is hope; even if the hope is as small as a mustard seed. We hope.

My prayer for you is that you will live in hope.

Grace and peace,

Mary Ann



December Mission Focus

Stephanie Cohen, Missions Coordinator
scohen@stmarkscarmel.org

Tree of Lights Supporting Red Bird Mission



Did You Know?

- 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.
- The students, staff and families of Red Bird Christian School are meeting the challenges presented by the pandemic, laboring through hardships to complete academic requirements. Grants and gifts have been helping provide the technology to deliver online instruction and get equipment and access to each home. Delays in delivery of computer hardware have been a challenge but the students are progressing.

How Can I Help?

- Financial donations can be made online, stmarkscarmel.org/give or in the Mission Envelopes on Sunday.
- Honor someone special with the Tree of Lights campaign.

For more information on Red Bird visit stmarkscarmel.org/red-bird.

Tree of Lights

Honor someone special with a gift to Red Bird Mission, in St. Marks' *Tree of Lights* campaign! Honorees will receive a card acknowledging your gift and all donations will be given to Red Bird Mission in southeastern Kentucky, a distressed region of Appalachia. Visit stmarkscarmel.org/lights to complete the form online, with a minimum donation of \$5.00 per card. All money collected is given directly to Red Bird Mission and helps them continue vital ministries in this distressed region of Appalachia

Donation & Service Opportunities

Adopt a Family for Christmas

Would you or your small group like to sponsor a family in need this holiday season? For the third year in a row, St. Mark's is partnering with James Russel Lowell, in the IPS School District, to "Adopt a Family": provide children's toy/clothing gifts, and non-perishable food for the family in need. If interested, please contact Stephanie Cohen at scohen@stmarkscarmel.org or 317-846-4912. Gifts need to be delivered to St. Mark's by Thursday, December 9.



Salvation Army Bell Ringing

The holiday season is here, and St. Mark's will help with bell ringing for the Salvation Army Red Kettle campaign! This is a great mission project for families and supports a good cause! Sign-ups are for Saturdays in December, at Needler's Fresh Market, in 2-hour shifts. Sign up at stmarkscarmel.org/signups. (at least one person per shift must be 18 years or older.) Contact Roz Sunderland at rozarian3@gmail.com or 317-506-9860 for questions.



Angel Tree

St. Mark's will once again provide gifts for the E. 10th United



Methodist Children & Youth Center's Christmas party. Look for angels on our Christmas tree outside the sanctuary, after December 1, symbolizing our annual Angel Tree gift giving. Each angel will bear the names of children at E. 10th. Select an angel and purchase a toy in the \$25 range, suitable for that designated child. Wrap the NEW gift for Christmas, **write the child's name and age** on the gift and deliver to St. Mark's by **Sunday, December 12**. The children will open their gifts at their annual E. 10th Christmas party, celebrating gifts of love from St. Mark's. Contact Stephanie Cohen at scohen@stmarkscarmel.org or 317-846-4912 for more information.

January Mission Focus

Stephanie Cohen, Missions Coordinator
scohen@stmarkscarmel.org



Did You Know?

- 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 Guatemalan people through health, education, and nutrition initiatives and meaningful missionary service.
- Guatemala has one of the highest rates in the world for chronic childhood malnutrition. In rural areas, the often underserved and under-resourced indigenous Mayan communities can experience chronic childhood malnutrition reaching as high as 70%.
- For over 11 years now, Mission Guatemala's nutritional initiatives have included full-time school nutrition programs, and weekly lunches served in a number of community public elementary schools.
- Additional projects continue: medical clinic and pharmacy, dental clinic, eye clinic, feeding centers for chronically malnourished children, community development projects, vocational training programs, water filters for schools and families, fuel efficient wood burning stoves.
- Because of the generous support from many partners, Mission Guatemala was able to purchase their clinic property in 2020, in San Andrés Semetabaj. For more information visit missionguatemala.com. Their philosophy is based on John Wesley's teaching to, "Do all the good you can."

How Can I Help?

- Sign up for Mission Trip to Guatemala June 4-12. For more information visit stmarkscarmel.org/mg/#mgmissiontrip.
 - ◇ Trip Cost is \$1,292.
 - ◇ Scholarships available for first time St. Mark's attendees.
 - ◇ 15 Spaces available.
 - ◇ COVID-19 Vaccination required.
- Make a financial donations online, stmarkscarmel.org/give
- Make a financial donation in the Mission Envelope on Sunday morning.

Donation & Service Opportunities

Brightwood Community Center

"I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat."
Brightwood



Community Center,
2140 N. Arsenal Ave, Indianapolis, is providing food for families at various locations near BCC every **second** Tuesday & Wednesday of each month. Your hands can help!

- Tuesday from 12:00 PM – 2:30 PM to sort and box food.
- Wednesday from 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM to box perishables and load recipient's cars in food distribution.

Please contact Diane Newton for exact location, more information, and to sign up at 317-288-4523 or joediane244@att.net.

Human Relations Day

Sunday, January 16

The United Methodist Human Relations Day is our next Special Sunday offering. Human Relations Day calls United Methodists to recognize the right of all God's children to realize their full potential as human beings and in relationship with one another. This special offering benefits neighborhood ministries through Community Developers, community advocacy through United Methodist Voluntary Services and works with at-risk teens through the Youth Offender Rehabilitation Program. Donations may be given online at stmarkscarmel.org/give



Fletcher Place Breakfast

Thursday, 12/23 & 1/27

"Worrying about where your next meal will come from, is one of the biggest concerns for our homeless friends. When COVID first hit, we had people begging us to stay open. They were terrified they would starve". Staff at Fletcher Place.

St. Mark's provides breakfast for Fletcher Place Community Center, on the 4th Thursday of each month. All food and supplies are provided by St. Mark's. Volunteers will meet at St. Mark's, load up supplies, then drive to Fletcher Place. Cooking is done in Fletcher Place's kitchen, packed in carry-out containers, and then distributed by staff at Fletcher Place. Thank you for helping keep hungry Indianapolis fed! Sign up today at stmarkscarmel.org/signups.

St. Mark's Blood Drive

Sunday, 2/6 | 8:00 AM-1:00 PM

Help us collect 30 units of Blood to replenish local hospital supplies, in urgent need of life-saving blood! Each day Indiana Blood Center must collect 650 units of blood from volunteer donors to meet the minimum needs of our area hospitals. Visit versiti.org to learn more about the continued importance of blood donation, and the steps Versiti is taking to keep our donors safe. Contact Mindy Davis at Melinda.kay.moore.davis@gmail.com for more information. Sign up online at stmarkscarmel.org/signups.



Soup's On at Roberts Park

Sunday, January 9

Can you help us prepare a hot meal for homeless in Indy? Each Sunday, volunteers help prepare lunch to homeless persons and others in need, in downtown Indianapolis. St. Mark's will be providing and distributing meals at Roberts Park UMC. Meals will be cooked onsite and then packed in carry-out containers. This Soup's On ministry provides a wonderful opportunity for us to carry out Jesus' command to "feed the hungry."



Sign up to help at stmarkscarmel.org/signups.

Because You Give, St. Mark's Gives!

Thank you for your generous support of the missions of St. Mark's. Since the November newsletter we have given to:

Brightwood Community Center: \$5,000

Exodus Refugee Immigration: \$649, 18 trash cans, 16 shower curtains & rods, 18 mops & brooms, 13 toilet brushes & plungers

Fletcher Place Community Center: 13 containers of oatmeal, carryout hot breakfast for 83

Hamilton County Kids Coats: 14 coats

Operation Classroom: \$5817

Roberts Park UMC: 250 sack meals & hot meals to go

Servants At Work: \$1,500 for wheelchair ramp build

Travel Size Toiletries for Homeless Shelters: 3 bags

Versiti Blood Center of Indiana: 30 units of blood donated

Wheeler Mission

Wheeler Mission is a Christian, non-denominational social services organization, which provides critically needed goods and services to the homeless, poor, and needy of central Indiana, including shelter. Help is offered without regard to race, color, sexual orientation, creed national origin or religion.

Through January St. Mark's is collecting personal items for those served at Wheeler Mission (men, women, and children) who struggle with poverty, hunger and homelessness. The #1 most need items are 1-Day Bus Passes. Passes can be purchased at buy.indygo.net, for \$4 each. Passers can be shipped directly to Wheeler Mission-Bus Ticket Program, 205 E. New York St, Indianapolis, IN 46204, or delivered to St. Mark's UMC.

Other donation items needed (new or clean gently used): bath towels (27" x 54"), twin fitted (deep pocket) sheets, twin fleece blanket, handwarmers, baby wipes (unscented hypoallergenic). Items may be dropped off at our donation bins inside door #2, between Monday-Friday, 9:00 AM- 4:00 PM.



Interfaith Hospitality Network Returns!

January 23-30, 2022

St. Mark's has been a long-time partner of Interfaith Hospitality Network, the hallmark program of Family Promise. IHN is a coordinated response of the faith community that provides emergency food & shelter, offers individual skill development & rehabilitation, advocates for economic stability and strives to end homelessness for the guests they serve. Each congregation in the network takes turns furnishing overnight lodging and meals during their assigned week, a few times each year. Our role as volunteers is fundamental to this program - we can make a difference by offering dignified compassionate assistance to families who have lost their homes.



Family Promise requires their guests (who are age eligible) to be fully vaccinated, as well as volunteers that will be in direct contact with guest families.

How can I help?

- **Dinner hosts** (5:00 PM-8:00 PM) serve and share a prepared meal with our guests, provide companionship & fellowship, help with clean up after dinner
- **Meal preparation** - Prepare part of a meal for 10-15 people and deliver it to St. Mark's
- **Provide pantry food** - provide store-bought breakfast & lunch foods
- **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 January 23, and/or help remove beds and clean up on January 30
- **Transportation** - drive the IHN van between St. Mark's and the IHN Day Center

SIGN UP TODAY at stmarkscarmel.org/signups. Contact Jeff Keyt, shellcreek5@gmail.com or 239-201-8207) or Stephanie Cohen, scohen@stmarkscarmel.org or 317-846-4912 for more information.

Sunday Morning Offerings

NURSERY & TODDLER CARE

Staffed by experienced, caring adults and teens, our nursery is here to help care for our littlest members.

KIDZ LEARN & GROW | 9:40 AM & 11:00 AM

Children have a blast learning about God, beginning with Worship followed by lively & age-appropriate stations taught by members of the congregation. We'll enjoy Bible Stories, experiment, crafts, and games!

CLUB 56 | 9:40 AM

For students entering fifth and sixth grade. 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!

KIDZ MUSIC & PRAISE | 11:00 AM

Make a Joyful Noise to the Lord with in-person and hybrid programming during this fun-filled hour each week. Children participate in this high-energy class that incorporates music, drama, art & puppets. Available in person and on Zoom. Contact Joyce Click, jclick@stmarkscarmel.org.

ADDITIONAL CHILDREN'S MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

- Check out the Connect with Kidz website at stmarkscarmel.org/kidzconnect/ to find weekly Kidz Church, Club 56 and Kidz Music & Praise resources.
- Join our [St Marks Kidz Facebook](#) page to watch a weekly Bible Story, worship and get family activity ideas and share what you are up to each week.

Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPs) at St. Mark's

12/2 | 9:30 AM-11:15 AM

Imperfect Friendships with
Amanda Anderson

12/9 | 9:30 AM-11:15 AM

Christmas Party & Gift
Exchange

1/6 | 9:30 AM- 11:15 AM

Happy New Year

1/20 | 9:30 AM—11:15 AM

MOPs group has a few openings for mothers and moppets. Learn more at mopsatst.marks@gmail.com. MOPs meets twice monthly on Thursday 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!

Contact Amy Bender at mopsatst.marks@gmail.com to register for MOPs or Ramie Cooney at kidzchurch@stmarkscarmel.org.



Christmas Eve Help Needed

We are looking for children in grades 3-6 who would like to read the Christmas story from Luke during the 5 PM Family Christmas service, light the Advent wreath candles, as well as serve as guides and ushers. If you or your child would be interested in participating in the service, please contact Ramie Cooney or Jackie Rowell in the Children's Ed office or via e-mail at rcooney@stmarkscarmel.org

Thank You 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! If you are interested in joining our team, please contact ki-dzchurch@stmarkscarmel.org

Preschool Dine-Out Fundraiser

CHIPOLTE | 12/8

Would you like a break from cooking during the week? Enjoy a take-out meal and benefit the St. Mark's preschool on November 8th. More details available at stmarkscarmel.org/events.

INUMC Children Matter Most All In!

February 19 | Franklin, IN

Children Matter Most – All In! is an opportunity for all who care about children to come together to learn, be inspired, and go back to their community with action steps to help children thrive. The United Methodist Churches of Indiana Children Matter Most conference team has been focusing on nonviolence, food insecurity, and partnering with schools. You will learn more about each of these focus areas and many other ways you can nurture children in your context at this event. Our goal is for St. Mark's to send a team. To learn more contact Ramie Cooney rcooney@stmarkscarmel.org and visit [Children Matter Most Initiative](http://ChildrenMatterMostInitiative.org).

2022 Summer Camps

KIDZ MUSIC PUPPET & DRAMA CAMP

June 20-24

CLUB 56 MISSION CAMP 2022

6/27-6/30 | 9 AM- 12:00 PM

VBS 2022

7/11- 7/15 | 9:00 AM- 12:00 PM

Club 56 Upcoming Events

CHRISTMAS PARTY/WHITE ELEPHANT

12/19 | 1:00—3:00 PM

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. We'll also have our annual Gingerbread House decorating context. Snacks will be served.

CLUB 56 SNOW TUBING

Koteewi Run, Strawtown, IN | January 15, 1:00-3:00 PM

This is a great event to invite friends. Sign-ups will be available in January on-line.



@ St. Mark's



Weekly Gatherings

SUNDAY MORNING

Club 56 (grades 5 – 6) | 9:40 AM

Students in 5th and 6th grade will meet in the lower-level den. Classes will dig-in to God's Word, learn how to apply the Bible to everyday life, play games and offer shepherding opportunities for the younger classes. As always, inviting friends is encouraged! stmarkscarmel.org/club56/

Cornerstone AM- Middle School | 10:00 AM

Middle School students will meet in Room M where we will discuss the weekly gospel passage from the Common Lectionary, as well as fellowship and, of course, donuts.

Cornerstone AM- High School | 10:30 AM

High School students will meet in Room N where we will discuss the weekly gospel passage from the Common Lectionary, as well as fellowship and, of course, donuts.

SUNDAY EVENING

Cornerstone Fellowship (grades 7-12) | 5:00 PM

We gather weekly in Cornerstone Commons for a time of games, fellowship, worship, a quick message, and small groups. We hope to be able to serve dinner each week as well.

THURSDAY EVENINGS

DKB@Starbucks | 5:00 PM-7:00 PM

DKB will be at the Starbucks at 131st Street and Hazel Dell Parkway from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. Feel free to join him for conversation, coffee, or just to catch up. Parents are welcome as well.

Upcoming Events

WHITE ELEPHANT GIFT EXCHANGE & CHRISTMAS PARTY

Sunday, 12/19 | 5:00 PM—7:00 PM

Join us from 5:00 to 7:00 pm in Cornerstone Commons for some Christmas themed games, our annual White Elephant Gift Exchange, and other surprises. All students in grades 7 through 12 are invited, and friends are welcome to join!

WORK CAMP

Sunday, 6/19– Saturday, 6/25 | Port Huron, MI

Port Huron, MI

Limited spots available. \$500 per student. Grades 8th through 12th or 14 years or older are eligible. Sign up at stmarkscarmel.org/workcamp.

WEEK OF HOPE

Sunday, 7/24– Friday, 7/29

Pittsburgh, PA

Limited spots. Grades 6 through 8 or 12 years of age. \$300 per student. Sign up at stmarkscarmel.org/weekofhope

Adult Discipleship

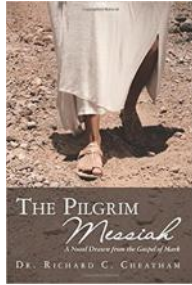
Dr. Jennifer Cloud-Buckner, Adult Discipleship Coordinator
grow@stmarkscarmel.org

Mark + *The Pilgrim Messiah*

WEDNESDAYS, 1/12-3/2, 9:30-11:00 AM

Led by Lydia Fourman | Hybrid online and Room J/K | Books \$15

Bring your Bible and get ready to experience the Gospel in a whole new way! This study will blend the Bible's Gospel of Mark with the warmly imaginative writings in *The Pilgrim Messiah*, a novel by Dr. Richard



Cheatham that brings Jesus's story to life from the Gospel of Mark. Jesus was both fully human and fully divine, and this novel will help you experience Jesus's rich humanity: tender partings with his family, his friendships with likeable followers, and his struggles in the wilderness and on the cross. Sign up online or on the GROW Connection Tables.

Practice Saying No with *The Best Yes Study*

FRIDAYS 1/7- 2/11, 9:30-11:00AM

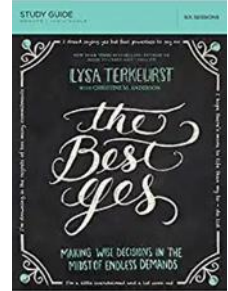
Led by Stephanie Cohen | Hybrid online and Room B/C | Study Guide \$9

Have you ever started a new spiritual habit—e.g., meditation, Bible reading, prayer, finding sabbath rest—but found it difficult to stick with it? Discipleship happens best when we create margin in our overwhelmed schedules and prayerfully learn how to prioritize our time with two powerful words: yes and no.

Bestselling author Lysa TerKeurst has learned firsthand that there's a big difference between saying yes to everyone and saying yes to God.

Drawing from scripture, God's wisdom and grace, and her own experiences, Lysa teaches us how to stop people-pleasing, how to say the "small no," and how to sharpen our own discernment about our time, choices, and the

lives God has planned for each of us. Study Guide is \$9. Optional full book is an additional \$9. Sign up online or on the GROW Connection Tables.



NEW: Encouragement Group for Widows

Beginning in early 2022, date TBD

Watch the bulletin and website for an info session about a new encouragement group for those who have been widowed. Our encouragement groups are for people in shared circumstances to share an empathetic, listening ear and their own experiences as they encourage each other. The monthly meeting check-in includes 3 questions: "What are you learning, what are you grateful for, what are you anxious about?" Please contact Jennifer Cloud-Buckner, grow@stmarkscarmel.org, or Meredith Anderson if you would like to be part of this group's kickoff and scheduling meeting.

Bob Goff's *Dream Big*

THURSDAYS, 1/13-2/10, 9:30-11:00 AM

Led by Judy Woempner | Hybrid online and Room B/C | Study Guide \$9

Bob Goff, the New York Times bestselling author of *Love Does* and *Everybody, Always*, is on a mission to help people recapture the version of their lives they dreamed about before fear started calling the shots. He wants them to dream big.

With enthusiasm and practical revelations, this study will help you uncover the wild and exciting dream for your life that you've hidden from yourself--and help you take the steps necessary to achieve it. We will use the Study Guide (blue cover), but a optional copies of the *Dream Big* full book (yellow cover) are available for \$8.



Other New Studies in 2022

Keep an eye on stmarkscarmel.org/studygroups for other weekday and short-term studies in the new year and descriptions of ongoing Sunday morning classes, as well.

Suicide Prevention Workshop

Learn more at stmarkscarmel.org/QPR and on the Events page in this newsletter.

Connection Tables are Back!

When you are looking for study books and *Upper Room* devotionals, check the

entryway (door #2) shelves and the GROW Connection Tables in the Gathering Area. Pay for study books in either location or online at stmarkscarmel.org/give. Select "Study Books."

Fertility Struggles

Encouragement Group

Led by Pastor Julia Gonzales | Java House Coffee in Midtown Carmel | 12/9 & 1/13

This monthly encouragement group is offering support to women who have had struggles with fertility and miscarriages. If you are interested in joining this group, please email Pastor Julia at jgonzales@stmarkscarmel.org for future meeting times and any location changes.

A Lifelong Journey of Discipleship

Where are you in your lifelong journey of faith? Whether you feel a bit stuck, are just beginning your trip, or want to find new ways to nurture your continued path of growth, let St. Mark's help guide you through six areas of discipleship that help us in **Welcoming** God and all others (through a life of worship and hospitality); **Growing** in knowledge and grace (through a life open to Jesus and obeying Jesus); and **Serving** our neighbors locally and globally (through a life of service and generosity). Visit stmarkscarmel.org/discipleship to access a survey offered by INUMC that helps support your development as a maturing disciple. Questions? Contact Jennifer Cloud-Buckner at grow@stmarkscarmel.org.

Sign up for studies and see full descriptions of Sunday Morning Groups at stmarkscarmel.org/studygroups.

Open Groups

Christmas Gathering

Tuesday, December 14 | 6:30 PM

Please join us for this joyous gathering when both the AM and PM sessions meet together for an



evening event. Carolyn Marshall from Lucille Raines, along with a resident, will be presenting an update on this caring community facility and the ongoing programs. We are thrilled to be back in the gathering area and share a carry-in buffet. Bring a dish to share and enjoy a fun-filled evening of fellowship, inspiration, Christmas activities and unique surprises! Invite a friend!

Tuesday, January 11th | 9:00 AM & 7:00 PM

The January meeting will be our next regular meetings. More information can be found stmarkscarmel.org/umw on the St. Mark's website.

Interest Group News

Cultural Insights

January: Ann Baker will inform us about similarities and differences between Spain and the United States and many of their celebrations and Holidays.

February: Kathy Lentz will share about her experiences in South America.

March: Ramie Cooney will share stories and inform us about living in Ghana.

April: Pat Parks will bring glimpses of the years they were able to live in London and her visits to neighboring European Regions.

Caring and Sharing

Your donations have been greatly appreciated. We prepared and delivered 20 baskets. Please let us know who might be blessed by one of these baskets. For a list of donations being collected contact Sonja, clod1725s@aol.com or visit stmarkscarmel.org/umw.

Bookworms 2022 Books

January **The Bookwoman of Troublesome Creek** by Michele Richardson
February **The Chilbury Ladies Choir** by Jennifer Ryan

Please obtain your own copy of **The Bookwoman of Troublesome Creek**. Gail should be able to get copies of the other books through the library.

The UMW Reading Program

Monday, January 24 | 7:00 PM

"Your Window to the World" meets five times a year. Sample selections in the Nurturing for Community category are: *A Road Called Down on Both Sides* By Carolyn Kurtz, *The Unstoppable Garret Morgan* by Joan Dacicco, *Gum Moon* by Jeffrey L. Staley. For more information contact Kathy Lentz, kathylentz@gmail.com

Bakers Needed

The annual Dessert Extravaganza will be held on February 13. We are asking all our bakers and candy makers in the church to contribute if they can to this worthy event.

Items should be dropped off at the church on Saturday, February 12 between 10 and noon. If nuts are in the recipe, be sure to mark them accordingly. Look for signups in January at the UMW Meetings or online.

UMM Breakfast Meetings



Saturday, 12/11 & 1/14 | 7:30 AM

The United Methodist Men invite all men to our in person meeting. The United Methodist Men Breakfasts are held the 2nd Saturday of every month. Please plan to attend and invite other men to join us for this special gathering.

UMM provides a supportive fellowship of men who seek to know Jesus Christ, to grow spiritually, and to seek daily God's will. UMM has donated to many Missions. Some of the groups we donate to are: Family Promise, East 10th Methodist Youth Center, Fletcher Place, Habitat for Humanity, Wheeler Mission, Second Helpings and SAW.

For more information about UMM or to be added to the email list, contact John Clodfelder, email umm@stmarkscarmel.org or call a UMM Board Member. You can see what's going on at stmarkscarmel.org/umm. Join us!

Marksmen

A community of career-and family-focused men seeking to develop relationships while we unplug from the daily stress that life can bring. We meet periodically. if you have any questions or would like to be put on our , email list, email marks-men@stmarkscarmel.org.

Open Gyms Basketball- Tuesdays Volleyball-Wednesdays

Open Gyms most Tuesday and Wednesdays for anyone 16 and older.



Contact Ed Rowell, jackieanded@mail.com for information on Volleyball and Mark Moore, mvm2920@aol.com for Basketball.

Open Group Schedule

Mondays

COFFEE 'N CAMERAS

Monday, 12/13 | 9:00 AM

This self-help camera group meets for conversation about photographic art & technique. Bring your camera & your questions. Contact Ken Shultz, ken_shultz@sbcglobal.net for more information.

Tuesdays

BASKETBALL OPEN GYM | 7:00 PM

Join us every Tuesday for Open Gym Basketball for ages 16 and above. Contact Mark Moore, mvm2920@aol.com for more information.

PAGE TURNER BOOK CLUB

Tuesday, 1/18 | 7:00 PM-8:00 PM

The Clockmaker's Daughter / by Kate Morton

Join us the 3rd Tuesday of each month if you enjoy good books, discussions, and a shared evening with new/old friends. If have any questions, contact Marcia Flora, mflora1950@yahoo.com . No December meeting.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Friday, 1/14/22 | 11:00 AM | Chapel

Join us as we prayerfully knit and crochet prayer shawls that will be used to provide comfort and solace to people in need. Supplies are available. Men are welcome too! Contact Judy Bonnet, bonnetjm@icloud.com for more information .

Wednesdays

ROMEOS (RETIRED OLD MEN EATING OUT)

Le Peep | 86th & Keystone | 11:00 AM

All men are invited to meet weekly at Le Peep's. Contact Don Mehl for more information at djmehl2004@aol.com

VOLLEYBALL OPEN GYM | 6:30 PM

Join us every Wednesday for Open Gym Volleyball for ages 16 and above. Playing experience is recommended. Come ready to have fun! For more information contact Ed Rowell, jackieandedrowell@gmail.com.

Thursdays

JULIETS

Thursday, 12/16 | 4:00 PM

Hollyhock Hill | 8110 N. College

Juliets (Just Us Ladies Into Eating Out Together) Contact Barbara Johnson, (317) 863-2689, timberblj@gmail.com , or text 303-918-6308 by **12/12** so correct reservations can be made.

CRAFT & HOBBY GROUP

Thursday , 1/13 & 2/10 | 6:00 PM-9:00 PM

Join us for a time of fun and fellowship as we each enjoy our craft or hobby. We will follow all guidelines established by the church at the time of our gatherings.

RSVP to Kathy Bartel, 317-294-4908 or krbartel@gmail.com. There will be no gathering in December.

Committee News

Trustees

The Sanctuary refresh is done. New chairs for the front should be in. Thanks to everyone who helped bring a new look to our sanctuary. We are looking forward to using it in the Thanksgiving and Christmas season.

Working on getting a quote for the youth wing new roof and investigating an insurance claim. The roof repair/patch has been completed.

New Furnace and AC has been installed for the hallway down to Fellowship Hall.

The UMW Candy Cane Café used the new kitchen . They shared some very nice and positive comments about it. They especially liked the warming oven.

Juan is almost done painting the youth wing hallway. The youth are going to do the wall décor.

Thank you for all your contributions that support these and other projects we are doing keep our old church ready to serve our religious and mission programs

Childcare Job Opportunity

St. Mark's is looking to hire several (paid) childcare staff. Childcare helpers needed during weekday mornings and occasionally during the early evening. All training provided. Please contact Ramie Cooney at rcooney@stmarkscarmel.org to apply or for more information.

Stewardship

During the month of November, we centered our worship around a series of messages of Fearless Generosity. By now we hope that most of you have submitted a promise of giving card for 2022. This will help the church as we plan ministries for the new year. Thank you for your support of this important part of church life.



If you have not submitted a promise of giving card it is not too late to do so. You can do this online at our church web page, drop you card in the offering baskets on Sunday morning, or drop you card off at the church office in person or by mail.

We look forward to a new year and following God as God calls us into new areas of witness and mission. It is through everyone's generosity that the work of God through the church moves forward!

Finance

I wanted to take a moment to say thanks to everyone: I have served as your Finance Chair for the past two years and it has been an honor and privilege, and I appreciate the support I have received from the congregation and finance committee.

Thankfully, it has not been necessary for me to present to the congregation because, thanks to your generosity, we have been able to meet all of our obligations, in spite of the events over the past two years. This has taken a certain amount of creativity and we end 2021 and enter 2022 with some financial challenges before us.

You may have heard before that contributions through the summer always “slump,” that is, we receive lower contributions in the summer and rely on higher contribution toward the end of the year to make our budget work. This year, donations for September and October were \$24,000 less than what we would have expected based on the last six years’ trends.

I pray that we will play “catch up” in November, and December will close out as we have done in the past: on average, December’s contributions represent nearly the equivalent of two month’s donations – **December is that important in the life of the church.**

We have benefitted from help through a PPP grant, fewer expenses due to reduced church activities, and one-time gifts to help offset shortfalls in our tithes and offering in 2020 and 2021. While we are grateful for these revenue streams, we are committed to making sure ministries are supported within the giving commitments of people like you sitting in the pews and worshipping

at home. Your pledges and continued donations are critical to St. Mark’s.

2022 will also be a challenge. We have begun our budgeting process and have developed several contingency plans. Undoubtedly, we will be making several significant cuts in the budget for 2022 but we will still need our members to continue to give, and also to consider increasing their giving, if we are to continue supporting the mission and ministry of the congregation, to which God is calling us. Many years ago, my mother directed me to Malachi who provided my assurance: *“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. “TEST ME ON THIS,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.”* Mal 3:10

Thank you, and should you need further details or input, feel free to reach out to me. Again, thank you.

Bill Nicolai, Finance Chair

Library



Stop by the St. Mark’s library soon to see the many Christmas books and DVD’s available to help you prepare for Advent and Christmas. A complete listing is available through your online catalog at stmarkscarmel.org/library by using the search term “Christmas” and a printed list of holiday titles is also available on the checkout counter just inside the library door. Many Christmas and Advent books are displayed in the Library on the shelves under the courtyard window and on the top shelf in the children’s section.

The Library is open from 9:00 to 3:00 Monday through Thursday, from 9:00 to noon on Friday, and from 8:00 to noon on Sunday. The book return box is located just inside Door #2 for your convenience.

Community News

Directory Updates

Hilda Meyers
3895 S. Keystone Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46227

Dorothy Ensign
8405 Clearvista Place
Room #206
Indianapolis, IN 46256

Mary Jo Pittman
196 Moose Court
Westfield, IN 46074-7423

Sympathies

To Susan Sveen at the death of her mother, Troy Kassing.

To Lisa Stenger at the death of her father, Jim Poole.

To family of Mary Ann Davis at her death.

To Trent Dougherty at the death of his father, George Dougherty.

To Anna Flohr at the death of her nephew, John Theron Schroeder.

Preschool Registration

St. Mark's has one of the best preschools in town and will begin registering for 2022 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.



To the Congregation

Thank you to all of you who participated in and supported the 2021 UMW Craft Fair. Shout out to the UMM for helping us with setting up and taking down tables. UMW is grateful for their new members, as well as the opportunity and participation in the Prayer Journey, for the Pecan sales and the increased opportunities for fellowship and sharing time together as activities build resources for our Mission Programs.

UMW Board

Circle of Care

The Circle of Care list includes St. Mark's members 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.

Myrnych Anderson	Doris Carlow
Don Ranck	Jean Anderson
Annette Dunlap	Dorothy Ensign
Phyllis Gidley	Rosa Groot
Judy Hebenstreit	Georgia Herzog
Betty Lachman	Dorothy Mecca
Hilda Meyers	Ola Morrow
Melvin & Marlene Myers	Jane Roberts
Mary Ann Pielemeier	
Jerry & Brenda Weikel	
Jerry & Phyllis Delp	

Upcoming Events

Chili Cook-Off

Sunday, January 30 | 5:00 PM-7 :00 PM

The Annual Chili Cook off will be held January 30 in Wesley Hall. Competitors need to bring at least 5 quarts of chili and any toppings that they prefer to serve with their chili. Hot dogs, chips, and cookies will be provided. Everyone will have a chance to vote on their favorite chili and prizes will be awarded to the winners. Sign up will be available the first week of January online at stmarkscarmel.org/signups and at the Connection Table in the gathering area.



St. Mark's PRESENTS

Upcoming Concerts

Indy Winds Flute Choir | Sunday, 12/19 | 3:00 PM

The Carol Dennis Trio (Flute, Viola, Piano) | Sunday, 3/20 | 2:00 PM

Cello Recital with Lori Horner, Cello | Sunday, 5/15 | 2:00 PM

Cornerstone Super Bowl Pizza Sale

Help Cornerstone Student Ministries raise money for their mission trips, Work Camp and Week of Hope while at the same time getting some awesome pizza that you can cook on Super Bowl Sunday or freeze for a later date. Pizzas range in cost from \$15—\$17 depending on type of pizza.

Cornerstone students will be taking orders for pizzas throughout the month of January. On Super Bowl Sunday pizzas will be available for pickup.



events

Pecan Sale

Pecan Sale

Once again the UMW will be selling pecans for the Holidays! Visit us at the connection tables behind the Sanctuary on Sunday mornings.



"Sweets for the Sweet"

UMW Dessert Extravaganza

Sunday, February 13

The Dessert Extravaganza will be held on February 13. Stop by the UMW table between services to select the perfect treat for Valentines' Day. Desserts and treats are made by the wonderful bakers of our St. Mark's UMW, and proceeds go toward sponsored missions. Bring a few extra dollars to church on February 13 and pick up a Sweet for your Sweetheart!



St. Marks Talent Show

Sunday, February 13 | 12:30 PM

Look for details in January. Anyone interested in performing in the talent show, please contact Dr. Eric DeForest at edeforest@stmarkscarmel.org no later than Sunday, January 30.

Holy Walk Through Bethlehem

Friday, December 3 & Saturday December 4

Holy Walk through Bethlehem is a re-enactment of Our Lord's Nativity. St. Mark's held their first Holy Walk in December 1999. The Walk was developed by drawing upon similar events held at Homer UMC in Michigan and Simpsonwood UMC in Georgia.

holywalk@stmarkscarmel.org.

Reservations are required to attend Holy Walk this year. To make your reservation sign up at stmarkscarmel.org/signups *If you are volunteering on Friday or Saturday, a reservation is NOT required. Cast members will be able to walk through without a reservation.*

Please indicate the number of people in your party, when choosing your slot. Please arrive 5 minutes prior to your slot. There will be a short wait in the Sanctuary and a program will be provided. Groups will be limited to 10-15 people. Masks will be required at all times during your stay in Bethlehem.

If you have had ANY COVID symptoms or have been exposed, please DO NOT attend. You can go back to your sign up and cancel your reservation at any time. Cost of admission is free, but we welcome canned goods that will be donated to local food pantries.



QPR Suicide Prevention

Sunday, February 6 | 2:00-4:00pm

Books \$5

Do you struggle with how to respond to a friend, colleague, or loved one who feels depressed, hopeless, overwhelmed and could be considering suicide? Join us February 6 for QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) Suicide Prevention Training. QPR is an evidence-based program teaching how to recognize and respond to warning signs, clues and communications of suicidal people and how to get help for the person who has suicidal thoughts. It is not a form of counseling, but rather a way to **act** vigorously to prevent a possible tragedy. Attendees will receive a QPR booklet, card of warning signs, methods to encourage a person to get help, and community resource lists. **QPR training is recommended for adults of all ages, regardless of your life stage. Students in grade 9-12 are welcome to attend with an accompanying parent.** Advance registration is required by **January 30** on the church website. Go to Signups or directly to stmarkscarmel.org/QPR . If there are snow closures, attendees will be notified and the backup date will be February 20. Thanks to St. Mark's member, certified QPR instructor, and private counselor Carlabeth Mathias, MS, LCSW, LMHC, for presenting this workshop. Questions? Contact Jennifer Cloud-Buckner, grow@stmarkscarmel.org.



ST. MARK'S
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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