

**JUBILEE**

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



ST. MARK'S

United Methodist Church

December 2019/January 2020

# Christmas at St. Mark's

## Blue Christmas

Sunday, December 8 | 7 PM

## Christmas Eve

**5:00 PM** | Family Service

**7:00 PM** | The Current – Candlelight

**9:00 PM** | Traditional – Candlelight

**11:00 PM** | Traditional – Candlelight w/ Communion

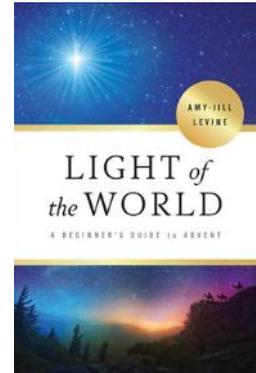
# Advent

## ADVENT STUDY

### A Light of the World: A Beginner's Guide to Advent

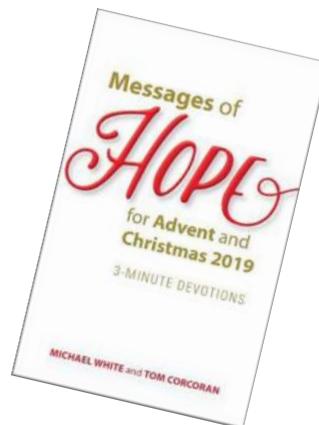
Sunday, December 1—Sunday, December 22 | 6:00 PM-7:00 PM

Led by Pastor Brian White, this four-week study will explore the history of the birth of Christ. Advent is not only the perfect time to read the story of the birth of Jesus but also is a great time to dive more deeply into the biblical texts that surround the event. In *Light of the World: A Beginner's Guide to Advent*, author, professor, and biblical scholar Amy-Jill Levine shows how the Gospel narratives connect to the Old Testament; highlights the role of women in first-century Jewish culture; and emphasizes the importance of Mary's visitation, the census, the stable, the star of Bethlehem, and the flight to Egypt. Books are \$14. Sign up on the Connections Table or on the website.



## Free Advent Devotionals Available in Gathering Area

Even three minutes of intentional devotion can change your day for the better. During Advent, spend time each day with a short scripture passage and reflection for practical, everyday wisdom. Pick up your Advent devotionals for adults (*Messages of Hope*) and children (*Advent A to Z*) in **the Gathering Area** to become closer to God and find hope in the promise of Christmas.



## **St. Mark's Presents- Carol Dennis and Company**

**Sunday, December 8 | 3:00 PM**

A trio of wonderful musicians will present a mixed bag from early Baroque, classical, late Romantic, 20th Century modern, and a selection of carols of the season in varied styles. The trio is comprised of Carol Dennis, flute, Jacob Thompson, cello and Kelleen Strutz, piano. The concert is FREE and open to the public with a reception to follow.

## **Blue Christmas Service**

**Sunday, December 8 | 7:00 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. If you are in need of a place to express your grief in community with others this Advent and Christmas season, join us at St. Mark's on December 8 at 7:00 PM for our Blue Christmas worship service. This will be a time of prayer and reflection as we offer our fears and pain to God

## **Christmas Cantata**

**Sunday, December 15 | 8:15 AM & 11:00 AM Services**

**THE THRILL OF HOPE BY JOSEPH MARTIN & HEATHER SORENSON**

A beautiful telling of the Christmas Story with traditional and contemporary elements The Cantata will be narrated by Mary Hayes and accompanied by the St. Mark's Orchestra.

## **Kidz Music & Praise Advent Musical**

**Sunday, December 15 | 2:00 PM**

"Crazy, Busy, Peaceful, Holy Night." Come see as a frantic family learns the true meaning of Christmas. The program lasts about 35 minutes.

## **December 29 Services**

All three services will be held on December 29: 8:15 AM, 9:40 AM and 11:00 AM. There will be no children's Sunday School classes. Childcare will be available only for age 3 and under in the Nursery. Activity packs will be available for the children in this family-themed service.

# The Pastor's Place

Dr. Brian White, Lead Pastor

[bwhite@stmarkscarmel.org](mailto:bwhite@stmarkscarmel.org)

Dear Co-workers in Christ:

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!" (Luke 2:14)

One of the things that I enjoy most about the Christmas season is the singing. It all started with a group of angels singing God's message to an unsuspecting group of shepherds. Each year many of us look forward to the opportunity to sing our favorite Christmas songs once again.



The words to one of my favorite Christmas songs were written by Henry W. Longfellow. In the third stanza of "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day" Longfellow writes:

And in despair I bowed my head:  
"There is no peace on earth," I said,  
"For hate is strong, and mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men."

As we examine our world this year it is easy to see ways in which hatred reigns. There are still countries at war with each other. People are still dying from hunger not because there isn't enough food in the world to feed all of us but because we can't seem to get it to the right place at the right time. It is still frightening to walk at night in almost any city.

Luckily, neither the Gospel story nor Longfellow's poem ends here. Longfellow continues:

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:  
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;  
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,  
With peace on earth, good-will to men:"

Christmas is a time to remember that God sent Christ to bring peace. It is a reminder that even when things seem out of hand God will ultimately prevail. It is a reminder that we are participants in the greatest struggle and the greatest celebration in all humankind. This Christmas season let us continue to sing the Angel's song: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men . . ."

In Christ's service,  
Brian

# The Pastor's Place

Julia Gonzales, Associate Pastor

[jgonzales@stmarkscarmel.org](mailto:jgonzales@stmarkscarmel.org)

Hello St. Mark's Family,

I was fourteen years old the first time that I went to Epworth Forest, a United Methodist summer camp at Lake Webster. I went with my high school youth group for a week in the summer and came back with the life-changing realization of just how fulfilling a relationship with Christ can be. The next summer I came home from camp with a call to ministry, a call that was reaffirmed with every passing summer and the experiences of the year. So to say I was excited to return to Epworth for the St.

Mark's Cornerstone Fall Youth Retreat is an understatement. Going back to Epworth Forest was in many ways like going home for the first time after starting college. It had changed and was certainly different from what I remembered, but the Spirit was still there. What was familiar still remained and the new only encouraged me.



Sometimes, though, the places we return to don't give us the same joy as they used to. Oh, we can still wonder and be amazed at them, but the wonder can all too easily transform to fear when the changes make what was familiar unrecognizable. As we prepare to step into 2020, consider this an invitation to stand together in wonder at what the Lord is doing in your personal life, in our worship at St. Mark's, in our denomination, in our state, in our country, and in the world. From Isaiah 43:19 (CEB): "Look! I'm doing a new thing; now it sprouts up; don't you recognize it? I'm making a way in the desert, paths in the wilderness." The Lord is going to make a way for all of us. It will be something new and probably something none of us are expecting, but we're not alone in these changes.

Take care,

Julia

# December Mission Focus

Stephanie Cohen, Mission Coordinator  
scohen@stmarkscarmel.org

## Tree of Lights



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.

### How Can I Help

Through our “Tree of Lights” campaign you may make a donation (a minimum donation of \$3.00 per honoree) *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 below, in the mission envelope or online at [stmarkscarmel.org/red-bird/](http://stmarkscarmel.org/red-bird/).

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: \_\_\_\_\_

# January Mission Focus

Stephanie Cohen, Mission Coordinator  
scohen@stmarkscarmel.org



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. Current projects include:

- Starting a medical clinic and pharmacy, dental clinic, eye clinic.
- Feeding centers for malnourished children.
- Community development projects, vocational training programs, water filters for schools and families, fuel efficient wood burning stoves.
- Work with volunteer mission teams and the local villages to offer an array of community development and improvement projects.
- Provide scholarships to Middle School and High School students. (The Government only provides education up to 6th grade).

Mission Guatemala's philosophy is based on John Wesley's teaching to, "Do all the good you can." For more information visit [missionguatemala.com](http://missionguatemala.com).

## How Can I Help?

- Sponsor a student for Middle School for \$25 per month.
- Sponsor a student for High School for \$50 per month.
- Make a Financial donation online or in the Mission Envelope during January.

## Mission Guatemala Mission Trip

**June 6-14**

Interested in serving in the highlands of Central Guatemala? Sign up now to join St. Mark's members for next year's mission trip: **June 6-14, 2020**. We will be hosted by Mission Guatemala to help improve the quality of life for their underserved Guatemalan people through various community projects. The team will also be provided a day of touring to experience the Mayan culture and get to know the people whom we are serving. Trip cost will be approximately \$1600. *SCHOLARSHIPS available for first time attendees. We have 8 spots left, don't miss out!* **Deadline to sign up is now January 2, with \$100 deposit.** Please contact Stephanie Cohen for more information, at 317-846-4912 or [scohen@stmarkscarmel.org](mailto:scohen@stmarkscarmel.org).

# Donation & Service Opportunities

## Angel Tree

On December 8th, 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 15.**



St. Mark's will provide a Christmas party for the children at East 10th on **Thursday, 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 Stephanie Cohen at 317-846-4912 or [scohen@stmarkscarmel.org](mailto:scohen@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! Invite your family & friends and sign up for a one-hour shift. (At least one person per shift must be 18 years or older.) Sign up at [stmarkscarmel.org/signups](http://stmarkscarmel.org/signups). Contact Stephanie Cohen for more information at [scohen@stmarkscarmel.org](mailto:scohen@stmarkscarmel.org)



## Soup's On!

### At Robert's Park

**Sunday, January 26**

The Roberts Park United Methodist Church Soup's On ministry provides a wonderful opportunity for us to carry out Jesus' command to "feed the hungry." Each Sunday, volunteers at Roberts Park serve lunch at 200-250 homeless persons and others in need in downtown Indianapolis. We have served 240 the last two times we have served. St. Mark's will be providing the meal on Sunday, January 26. Servers will meet at St. Mark's in Wesley Hall at 9:15 AM plan to leave at approximately 9:30 and return around 2:30. Mark your calendars for our next serving opportunities: April 26, August 30, and October 25.

How can you be involved?

- Join others from St. Mark's on January 26th and help serve lunch for those less fortunate. (23-25 volunteers are needed.)
- Provide food for the meal.

*Sign up to help at [stmarkscarmel.org](http://stmarkscarmel.org) anytime or at the Ministry Table outside the sanctuary, beginning December 22.*

## Brightwood Community Center

Brightwood after-school tutoring and serving dinner meals are continuing. Tutoring opportunities are available Monday- Thursday, 4:00 PM-6:00 PM. Helping with homework and tutoring, for all ages. Please consider if you can donate your time to help these kids in need. For info on tutoring contact Diane Newton at [joediane244@att.net](mailto:joediane244@att.net)

Help also needed to serve and or prepare meals to the after-school program (cost of food provided by St. Mark's). Sign up online at [stmarkscarmel.org/signups/](http://stmarkscarmel.org/signups/) or contact Michelle White at [michelle.white@inumc.org](mailto:michelle.white@inumc.org)

## Habitat for Humanity

### MENTOR PROGRAM INFORMATION SESSION December 12 & 14

Want to make a difference in a family's life by walking alongside them as they become a homeowner for the first time? Become a Homeowner Mentor! If you are interested in learning more about the mentor program, please attend either of our info sessions at our main office (3135 N. Meridian St.). We'll review the time commitment involved, examples of support you could provide to a homeowner and answer any questions you have about the mentor program. Attending this session does not automatically lock in your commitment; rather, we hope it provides you enough information so that you can make a thoughtful decision before you decide to volunteer your time as a mentor. Contact Diane or Joe Newton ([joediane244@att.net](mailto:joediane244@att.net)) or 317-288-4523 if you have questions, or visit [indyhabitat.org/mentor/](http://indyhabitat.org/mentor/) to sign up online.

## Fletcher Place

### Breakfast Servers Needed

Located at 1637 Prospect Street, Indianapolis,

Fletcher Place is dedicated to alleviating poverty and hunger for families, youth and

homeless persons in their neighborhood. Help is needed to serve breakfast on the 4<sup>th</sup>

Thursday of each month; as many of the

months you are able to join. Volunteers meet at St. Mark's at 6:45am and return by 10:30am.

For more information or to help contact Stephanie Cohen at

[scohen@stmarkscarmel.org](mailto:scohen@stmarkscarmel.org)



## Mission In Action Day Thank You!

A big thank you to all who came together on October 26, for our annual day of loving and serving our neighbors, actively living out our motto; "Where Mission is a Way of Life". We had 148 volunteers sort, clean, organize, assemble, write, load, and more... even in the cold and rain! More importantly, they loved, cared and helped many people in need, locally and beyond. Much appreciation for your time and dedication. Special thanks to our project leaders below, who helped make the day happen:

- Assisted Living Visit: **Steff Mabe**
- Brightwood Clean Up: **Diane Newton**
- Changing Footprints: **Jim Campbell**
- Christmas Bags Robert's Park: **Lisa Smith**
- Church Outdoor Clean Up: **Jane Fecht**
- E. 10th Fall Festival: **Michelle Byrd**
- Hamilton Co. Kids Coats: **Marge Patterson**
- Mustard Seed: **Ann Fletcher**
- Potato Drop Coordinator: **Dave Martin**
- Potato Drop Pantry Coordinator: **Liz Rix**
- Legislative Advocacy: **Kate King/Amy Adams**
- Servants At Work: **Doug Brown**
- Soup's On-Sunday: **Trisha Stanearth**
- Third Phase: **Missi Koenig**
- UMCOR School Kit: **Trisha Stanearth**
- Childcare: **Ada Hoffmaster**



## Mustard Seed

The Mustard Seed is located in Fishers. It is an organization that helps the homeless by providing furniture and basic items once they are in homes. They are in immediate need of the following kitchen items: (Items can be left in fellowship hall in the bin or Janice Presley will pick them up).

Dinner plates	Salad Plates
Soup Bowls	Drinking glasses
Coffee cups/mugs	Bath towels
Forks, knives, spoons	Kitchen towels
Dish cloths	Pot holders
Bath towels	Full sheets
Queen sheets	Wash cloths
Hand towels	

## Team World Vision

We are so proud of the 17 St. Mark's runners and walkers that raised funds and participated in the Indianapolis Monumental Marathon and Half Marathon on Saturday, November 9th. Thank you for representing St. Mark's and for being a wonderful representation of how to be the feet of Christ.



## Because You Give, St. Mark's Gives!

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

- **Brightwood:** 2 meals served and ongoing tutoring
- **The Mustard Seed:** countless items every week
- **Fletcher Place:** 1 meal served, 18 containers of oatmeal, 7 bags of food
- **HCKC coat drive:** 655 coats
- **Changing Footprints shoe drive:** 276 pairs of shoes
- **Third Phase pantry:** 5 bags of clothes & household items, 8 bags of food
- **UMCOR school kits:** 80 kits
- **Christmas bags for Robert's Park clients:** 200
- **Society of St. Andrew:** 42,000 pounds of potatoes, \$ 5,542.60
- **Legislative Advocacy:** 40 postcards written to legislators about gun violence
- **Team World Vision:** \$13,785

## Interfaith Hospitality Network

December 8 - 15



Interfaith Hospitality Network is a ministry of Family Promise that provides emergency food & shelter, offers individual skill development & rehabilitation, advocates for economic stability, and strives to end homelessness for the families it serves. IHN partners with congregations in the Indianapolis area including St. Mark's.

St. Mark's will host IHN guests the week of December 8 and guests will be with us each night that week. 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 are struggling with homelessness. Volunteer needs include:

- **Dinner hosts** (5:00-8:00 PM) Share a prepared meal with our guests, provide companionship & fellowship, help with clean up after dinner.
- **Meal preparation** - Prepare part of a meal for 15 - 20 people and deliver it to St. Mark's.
- **Provide food** - provide prepared foods for lunch & breakfast (milk, lunchmeat, 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, December 8, and/or help remove beds and clean up on Sunday, December 15.
- **Transportation** - drive the van between St. Mark's and the IHN Day Center.
- **Donate**- 2 new twin-size blankets, 2 new pillows, laundry pods, sugar canisters, paper goods (plates, bowls, etc.)

This is a wonderful mission opportunity for the entire family. Please prayerfully consider how you can help. Sign up at <https://www.stmarkscarmel.org/signups/> or at a Ministry Table on Sunday mornings.

Contact Jeff Keyt (shellcreek5@gmail.com or 239-201-8207) or Stephanie Cohen (scohen@stmarkscarmel.org or 317-846-4912) if you have questions. Mark your calendar for upcoming dates to help in 2020: weeks of 2/23, 5/10, 8/9

### TASK COORDINATORS NEEDED FOR IHN 2020

**Dinner Host Coordinator:** Duties include making sure we have dinner hosts for each evening and that they understand their duties. You would also communicate during the IHN week any family updates, as they occur.

**Pantry Coordinator:** Duties include making sure the breakfast and lunch items (donated by church members) are stocked in the kitchen during each IHN rotation. Occasional shopping for supplemental items needed (paid for by St. Mark's).

For more information on serving in these leadership roles for 2020 please contact Jeff Keyt or Stephanie Cohen. Your help is needed to fulfill this wonderful mission!

# Music

Dr. Eric DeForest, Director  
edeforest@stmarkscarmel.org

## Music Opportunities this Fall

### CHOIR PRACTICE

Join the Chancel Choir and make a joyful noise with us! We accept any singer from high school age to 100! Rehearsals are Wednesdays from 7:30 PM to 9:00 PM.

### BELL REHEARSALS

Rehearsals are Wednesdays at 6:30 PM.

### JOIN THE ORCHESTRA

St. Mark's Orchestra plays about 10 times each year. Rehearsals are once the Wednesday before the service we are performing. Contact Ed Rowell, 317-727-2163 or [jackieanded@gmail.com](mailto:jackieanded@gmail.com) for more information.

## Save the Date

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

### CANTATA

The Thrill of Hope by Joseph M. Martin and Heather Sorensen

It's a beautiful blend of traditional and contemporary styles together with the telling of the Christmas story.

*St. Mark's* PRESENTS

**December 8 | 3:00 PM**

Carol Dennis Trio

The trio is made up of flute, cello and piano, and they will be performing a variety of music for your enjoyment. Come and hear some of your favorite holiday selections as well as some of your favorite classical pieces. The concert is free and open to the public, so please come and kick off your holiday season with some beautiful music.

**Sunday, April, 26 | 3:00 PM**

Indianapolis Children's Choir in Concert

**Sunday, July 19 | 2:00 PM**

The Retro Brothers

## 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 at 9:40 AM & 11 AM.

#### 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 use SparkHouse & Whirl lessons during the 9:40 AM and 11:00 AM service.

#### 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. The children will also be singing at the 5:00 PM service Christmas Eve.

## 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! Sunday programming is in the basement each week at 9:40 AM.



### THANK YOU KIDZ CHURCH VOLUNTEERS

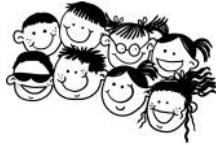
During this season of thankfulness, we encourage children and their families to take a minute and thank the fantastic Children's Ministry volunteers who serve us so faithfully.

## Christmas Eve Volunteers Needed

We are looking for children in grades 3-6 who would like to read the Christmas story from the book of 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 Ministry office or email [rcooney@stmarkscarmel.org](mailto:rcooney@stmarkscarmel.org).

## Kidz Night Out

Will Resume once  
construction is complete.



## Attention 3rd–6th Graders

Be sure to bring your Bible to church each Sunday so you can be learning from your own text. We use the NRSV translation for Kidz Church and Club 56 classes. Parents, if you would like help selecting a Bible for your child, the Children's Ministry team would be happy to show you some of the great editions we use at St. Mark's!

## Club 56 Christmas Party

**Sunday, December 22 | 2:00 PM-4:00 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 contest. Snacks will be served so Club 56ers and their friends are invited for fun.

## Club 56 Winter Retreat

**Friday, 1/25-Saturday, 1/26 | 6:00 PM**

Arrive at St. Mark's at 6 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 winter tubing at Koteewi Run in Strawtown from 12:00 PM–3:00 PM 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 PM pick-up on Friday and, if desired, return on Saturday morning for tubing. Signups will be available mid-December online at [stmarkscarmel.org/signups](http://stmarkscarmel.org/signups).

## Children's Service Project

Look for information on a service project for December.

## MOPS

### (Mothers of Preschoolers)

St Mark's MOPS group has a few openings for mothers and moppets. Learn more at [mopsatst.marks@gmail.com](mailto: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!

## Preschool Registration

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



2020 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 the Director, Jen Weixler at (317) 846-8941 or [preschool@stmarkscarmel.org](mailto:preschool@stmarkscarmel.org)

## SAVE THE DATE

### VBS 2020

VBS will be July 6—July 10 from 9:00 AM–12:00 PM daily.



## **Weekly Gatherings**

### **SUNDAY MORNINGS**

**Cornerstone AM—Grades 7-12**

**9:40 AM**

Sunday School class for students in 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades. We first gather together at 9:40 AM to attend The Current. We will worship together and then gather at 10:30 AM in Room M .

### **SUNDAY EVENINGS**

**Cornerstone Fellowship - Grades 7-12**

**5:00 PM -7:00 PM**

Middle School and High School meet separately. The two groups join together at 6:00 PM for Dinner. Youth may stay until 7:00 PM for games in Wesley Hall.

### **WEDNESDAY EVENINGS**

**Third Street Rehearsal |5:00 PM- 6:00 PM**

Our Third Street Praise Band will meet to rehearse. Students who play an instrument, sing or run AV are encouraged to join us. Kody Emrich will be leading.

**Dig Deep- Grades 9-12 | 6:00 PM-7:00 PM**

High School students are encouraged to come dig deep into scripture on Wednesday evenings from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM. We will explore ways that the Gospel intersects with our broken world.

### **THURSDAY EVENINGS**

**DKB @ Starbucks**

Join DKB at Starbucks at 131st & Hazel Dell Parkway. Have a cup of coffee, conversation or just catch up. Parents always welcome.

## **Pizza Fundraiser**

**Sunday, February 2**

Earn money towards Work Camp, Week of Hope and Retreats by selling pizzas. We will begin selling in January and then assemble them on February 2.

## **Christmas Party**

**Sunday, December 22 | 5:00 PM**

We will gather in Cornerstone Commons for a Christmas party and White Elephant Gift Exchange. Please do NOT spend more than \$10 on a gift.

No signup is necessary. Just show up and celebrate!

## **Service Opportunities**

**WORK CAMP 2020**

**6/21-6/27**

One spot left.. Mission trip available for students currently in 8th-12th grade.

**WEEK OF HOPE -NASHVILLE, TN**

**7/26-7/31**

Mission Trip for students currently in 6th-8th grade. Signups are now active .

**ROOTS OF HOPE**

We continue the early stages of organizing small groups to serve at local food pantries and nursing homes/memory care facilities. Keep an eye out for these opportunities.

# Adult Discipleship

Jennifer Cloud-Buckner  
Jcloud-buckner@stmarkscarmel.org

Dear St. Mark's Family,

Whether or not you set New Year's resolutions, all of us experience some changes to our schedules and priorities during the Advent and Christmas seasons. If you're searching for deeper community or want to commit to new spiritual growth, we are currently collecting names for new Grow Groups and are offering new studies. Please sign up for more information on our website or on the Connections Table. If you're considering a Grow Group, I encourage you to read the following spotlight from Donna Schwartz and Jeff Keyt, leaders of the Beyond the Nest group.

Blessings,

Jennifer Cloud-Buckner, Adult Discipleship Coordinator

## Themed Study & Grow Groups

### ADVENT STUDY | 12/1-12/22

Sunday evenings in December, Pastor Brian White will lead a study of *Light of the World*. Read more in the Advent Section, page 2

### NEIGHBORS IN FAITH: CHRISTIANITY AND WORLD RELIGIONS

#### Sunday Evening Study | 1/5-2/2 | 6:00 PM

Using Barbara Brown Taylor's new book *Holy Envy*, Pastor Brian White will lead **Neighbors in Faith: Christianity and World Religions**. This 5-session study will explore Taylor's moving discoveries of finding the sacred in unexpected places while teaching the world's religions to undergraduates in rural Georgia. Looking at Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, Skepticism and Religious Relativism, this study will contemplate the many ways other people and traditions encounter the Transcendent. Throughout *Holy Envy*, Taylor weaves together classroom stories with reflections on how her own spiritual journey has been complicated and renewed by connecting with people of other traditions--even those whose truths are quite different from hers.

### SAMS (SCHOOL AGE MOMS)

#### Wednesday, 12/4 | 11:30 AM-1:00 PM

For moms of school-aged kids, SAMS will meet 12/4 to discuss *Brave Mom* by Sherry Surratt. Ali Lemberg facilitates.

### ENCOURAGEMENT GROUPS

Our Encouragement Groups always welcome new participants who encourage each other through the care and support of aging parents. Becky Mills leads a group twice monthly on Wednesday evenings, and Susan Jacques leads a Sunday morning group once monthly. Call the church office for details.

### NEW GROW GROUPS FORMING

Looking to connect with a deeper community for encouragement, spiritual growth, and sharing with others in a similar season of life? We're collecting names now of parents of young families, baby boomers, empty nesters, and others with weeknight availability who have not yet connected with community. Childcare may be available on Thursday evenings. Typical meetings include vulnerability, compassion, and grace; sharing through life's events; and spiritual study on wide-ranging topics. Learn more at [stmarkscarmel.org/grow-groups](http://stmarkscarmel.org/grow-groups) or on the Connections Table.

## Winter Studies

### WEDNESDAY

PASTOR'S MEN STUDY, 6:30 AM-7:15 AM

PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDY, 9:30 AM-10:30 AM

*1 & 2 Peter & Jude* by N. T. Wright

Now thru 2/5 (No meetings 11/27, 12/18, 12/25 & 1/1) Facilitated by Pastor Brian White.

AM BIBLE STUDY, 9:30 AM-11:30 AM

*Isaiah: Trusting God in Troubled Times* by

Howard Peskett

Now thru 1/22 (no meetings 11/27, 12/25/1/1)

Led by Lydia Fourman,

### THURSDAY

AM STUDY GROUP, 9:30 AM-11:30 AM

*Everybody Always: Becoming Love in a World Full of Setbacks & Difficult People* by Bob Goff

1/9-2/13

What happens when we give away love like we're made of it? Bob Goff takes readers on an entertaining and inspiring journey into the secret of living without fear, constraint, or worry. He finds a truth that is simple to say, but hard to do: love people, even the difficult ones, without distinction and without limits. From finding the right friends to discovering the upside of failure, this study points the way to embodying love by doing the unexpected, the intimidating, the seemingly impossible. In December, books (\$13 each) will be on the Connections Table. Judy Woempner facilitates.

### FRIDAY

FRIDAY AM STUDY, 9:30 AM-11:30 AM

*Finding God Faithful* by Kelly Minter

1/10-2/28

Trace the path of Joseph's life in the Book of Genesis to observe how God's sovereignty reigns, even in our darkest moments, through provision, constant presence, and unstoppable purpose. This study will help you recognize when God is working during periods of waiting, to trust God's plan when life doesn't make sense, and to rest in the sufficiency of God's presence in every circumstance. In December,

books (\$15 each) will be on the Connections Table. Stephanie Cohen facilitates.

## Sunday Morning Groups

Check the posted room signs each week for temporary room locations.

9:40 AM

### VENTURE

Venture Class meets at 9:15 to begin with joys and concerns. December will feature guest speakers on Medicare (12/1) and democracy (12/8), and videos from *The Great Courses: History of Christianity II* (12/15 and 12/29). No meeting 12/22. Jean Douglass facilitates.

### OPEN DOORS/OPEN IDEAS

Open Doors/Open Ideas is currently discussing Adam Hamilton's *John: The Gospel of Light and Life*.

### CUTTING EDGE

Learn about the Bible by following the Revised Common Lectionary, an ongoing 3-year program through the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. Steve Click facilitates.

### FOUNDATIONS & FRIENDSHIPS

In January, F&F's will begin reading John Ortberg's *I'd Like You More if You Were Like Me*.

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

Discuss Christian themes and life values through movies, facilitated by Lydia and Terry Fourman. In December we'll view and discuss *Maudie* and new selections.

## Beyond the Nest: Grow Group Spotlight



Donna Schwartz, Jeff Keyt, Linda and Roger Schenk and Jim Waldron review their study books at their in-home meeting.



Bill Nicolai, Jeff Keyt, Kathy & Jeff DeaKyne help at Hamilton County Kids Coats.

As new residents in Carmel and new members at St. Mark's, Jeff Keyt and Donna Schwartz were looking for connections with others. "We missed small group study and relationships developed with friends from our former church," Jeff says.

After the 2016 Connections Fair, former adult education coordinator Lydia Fourman grouped several couples with similar requests. Donna explained, "As our group of eleven came together, we discovered we were all 'empty nesters.' We felt our identities were more than that, so we called ourselves 'Beyond the Nest.'"

Beyond the Nest studies and discusses a wide variety of subjects using books and videos, but their activities go beyond learning. "We enjoy meeting in our homes, including a Sunday evening snack before our study, participating in service projects together and celebrating the group. We have grown in our faith and service, supported and encouraged each other and developed lasting friendships," says Donna.

For anyone who is considering joining a Grow Group but isn't sure, Jeff says, "Don't wait for the perfect topic, teacher, or group. We're all searching for ways to grow our faith. The church is not a building. It's the people!"

**Learn more and sign up for Adult Study Groups, Grow Groups, and childcare at [stmarkscarmel.org/signups](http://stmarkscarmel.org/signups)**

# Open Groups



## UMW December Meeting

**Tuesday, December 10 | 7:00 PM**

All women of the church are invited to a celebration of Christmas on December 10<sup>th</sup>. Guest speaker will be Shannon Priddy, National President of United Methodist Women. Bring a dessert or appetizer to share. Come and enjoy , food, carols, and fellowship. No morning meeting for December.

**Tuesday, January 14**

**9:00 AM—11:00 AM | 7:00 PM— 9:00 PM**

**Check our UMW website for breakout Interest Groups.**

*Childcare is available by registering your child at [stmarkscarmel.org/signups](http://stmarkscarmel.org/signups)*

## Education & Interpretation

### DECEMBER 2019

#### FLETCHER PLACE CHRISTMAS

During November, St. Markers donated gifts for the Fletcher Place Christmas Store. On Tuesday, December 3, the UMW will be bagging up and delivering the items to the store. We will meet at St. Mark's at 9:00 AM. After delivery and set-up of the donated items we will enjoy lunch together. We will also need some drivers to transport the items. If you are interested in helping with this endeavor, please email Linda Schenk at [lschenk@att.net](mailto:lschenk@att.net). We always have a great time!

### JANUARY 2020

#### WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT FOR ASCENT 121 STAFF

Teens that survive sex trafficking have endured extraordinary trauma. Working with those clients all day every day is very stressful to the Ascent 121 staff and frequently results in secondary trauma (stress, inability to sleep, challenges in maintaining relationships, overly emotional, depression, anxiety, etc.). As a faith based agency, scripture and words of

encouragement are sincerely appreciated by the staff.

At our January morning and evening meetings, UMW members will have a chance to write notes of encouragement to the staff who work with the teen survivors at Ascent 121. Note cards will be provided at both meetings and can be found at the sign-in table.

## UMW Reading Program

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.

Contact Susan Salter at [sbf5salter@att.net](mailto:sbf5salter@att.net) for more information.



## Second Saturday Breakfast Meetings

**Saturday, December 14 | 7:30 AM**

**Saturday, January 11 | 7:30 AM**

The UMM Breakfasts are held the 2nd Saturday of every month.

The speaker for December is Lorri Brune, from the Central Indiana Council of Girls on the Run that promotes health and exercise for young women.

The January speaker will be Susan Spillee of the State Health Insurance Program who will discuss Medicare and insurance for seniors.

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 contact Matt Hook, email [umm@stmarkscarmel.org](mailto:umm@stmarkscarmel.org) or call a UMM Board Member. You can also see what's going on at [stmarkscarmel.org](http://stmarkscarmel.org). Come and join us!

### **PRAYER HUDDLE**

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

## **Marksmen**

**12/5, 12/19, 1/2, 1/19 & 1/25 | 6:00 AM**

**Einstein Bakery (116th Street, Carmel)**

A community of career and family focused men seeking to develop relationships while we unplug from the daily stress that life can bring. Meet every other Thursday. For more information contact [marksmen@stmarkscarmel.org](mailto:marksmen@stmarkscarmel.org)

## Open Group Schedule

### Monday

#### COFFEE 'N CAMERAS

12/2, 12/19, 1/6 & 1/27 | 9:00 AM

This self-help camera group meets for conversation about photographic art & technique. Bring your camera & your questions. Contact Bob Wiens, [wiens@iquest.net](mailto:wiens@iquest.net) for more information.

#### CAREER CURVE

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. For more information contact Jim & Chuck, coordinators at [careercurve@stmarkscarmel.org](mailto:careercurve@stmarkscarmel.org).

### Tuesday

#### PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

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! Group meets December, March, May, July, September. Contact Judy Bonnet for more information at [jbonnet@stmarkscarmel.org](mailto:jbonnet@stmarkscarmel.org).

#### PAGE TURNER BOOK CLUB

January 21 | 7:00 PM-8:00 PM

**Leaving Time** by Jodi Picoult

Join us 3rd Tuesday of each month if you enjoy good books, discussions, and a shared evening with new/old friends. Contact Marcia Flora with any questions! No December meeting.

### Wednesday

#### ROMEOS (RETIRED OLD MEN EATING OUT)

Le peep | 11:00 AM

All men are invited for a weekly Wednesday lunch.

### Thursday

#### JULIETS

Holly Hock Hills | 12/19 11:30 AM

Juliets (Just Us Ladies Into Eating Out Together) every 3rd Thursday. Meet at a different restaurant every month.

#### BRIDGE

1:00 PM

Bridge Group meets weekly. For more information contact the church office.

#### CRAFT & HOBBY GROUP

Thursday 1/9 | 6:00 -9:00 PM

Friday, 1/10 | 9:00 AM- 1:00 PM

Meet monthly for time of fun and fellowship as we each enjoy our craft or hobby. Registration deadline to attend is 1/5. No December meeting.

Contact Kathy Bartel, [krbartel@gmail.com](mailto:krbartel@gmail.com), if you have any questions. Childcare for 1/10 children 5 & under.

# Special Events

## Cornerstone Youth Pizza Fundraiser

Sunday, February 2

The Youth will be selling Pizzas for pickup on Sunday, February 2 during the month of January. Look for a Youth and place your order! Watch for more details.



## UMW Dessert Extravaganza

Sunday, February 9

The Dessert Extravaganza will be held on Sunday, February 9th. Stop by the UMW table to select the perfect sweet treat for Valentine's Day! Desserts and treats are made by the wonderful bakers of our UMW, and proceeds go toward our sponsored missions. Bring a few extra dollars to church on the 9th and pick up a Sweet for Your Sweetie!



## Women's Pecan Sale!

Thanks you to everyone who have supported the UMW Pecan Sale!

We are surprised but pleased that pecans sold so quickly this year. As you probably know, all proceeds from the sale go to support UMW Mission Projects across Indianapolis and Indiana. Thanks for making our donations possible to those in need.

# Committee News

## Trustee News

Work continues to proceed on the renovations. Keep checking posted signs for temporary room assignments. Thank you all for your patience during the construction. Our latest timeline of construction is projected for late December completion.

We are continually reminded of our aging building infrastructure. As cooler temperatures started it was discovered the mechanical units that feed the sanctuary needed repairs which were completed. The units are over 20 years old and at some point will need to be replaced but the repairs should serve us for now.

## Library News

We are under Construction! Visit our new library in January in the old Parlor. Books can still be returned in the return box located in the Gathering area or where the old Library was located.

## Social Justice

### Welcoming the Stranger

Ours is a nation born of strangers who, regardless of the circumstances of their arrival, chose to make the United States their home. They, like us, are here to raise families, to worship, to contribute to our country's growth, strength and civility.

The United Methodist Church recognizes, embraces and affirms all persons, regardless of country of origin, as members of the family of God. We affirm the right for all persons to equal opportunities for employment, access to housing, healthcare, education and freedom from social discrimination.

The St. Mark's Social Justice Team urges you to join us in "Welcoming the Stranger," our winter focus. We'll explore ways to strengthen understanding and appreciation of our neighbors from different countries, communities, cultures and faiths, "loving them as we do ourselves" (Lev. 19:33-34).

Look for more information coming soon on a special Pastor's study, movie screening, book discussion and ways you can actively participate in welcoming the stranger.

Visit our Connections Table to learn more and join our Friends of Social Justice email list to receive regular updates from St. Mark's Social Justice Team.

"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it." — Hebrews 13:2

# Community News

## Directory Updates

Ken & Diane Shultz  
12762 Kiawah Drive  
Carmel, IN 46033

Phyllis Gidley  
12130 Old Meridian St, Apt 105  
Carmel, IN 46032

Tony & Jennifer Rhine  
770 Sugarbush Drive  
Carmel, IN 46877

## Sympathy

To Holly Moore and family for the death of her father, Roger Gallatin.

To Steff Mabe for the death of her aunt.

To Teresa Espey and family for the death of her father, David Bright.

To Jennifer Fogo for the death of her nephew, Grant Waggoner.

## Holiday Office Hours

The office will be closed December 24 through January 1.

Regular office hours are:

Monday & Friday—9:00 AM– 3:00PM

Tuesday-Thursday—9:00AM– 4:00PM

## Volunteer Opportunities

If you are interested in serving as a liturgist or coffee host during the new year, please contact Amy at [aadams@stmarkscarmel.org](mailto:aadams@stmarkscarmel.org). Many hands make light work!

## Text to Give

Giving as easy as a text!

Did you know that giving to the ministries St. Mark's is as easy as texting a friend?

If you haven't set up the new Text 2 Give feature, please visit our website [stmarkscarmel.org/text2give/](http://stmarkscarmel.org/text2give/) for more information. No credit cards fees apply. (Depending on your phone program, texting fees may apply)

## In Our Congregation

St. Mark's Friends,

I want to thank the many persons who sent cards and made phone calls to me expressing their best wishes for my recovery after hip replacement surgery. Your cards and phone calls meant a great deal to me and brightened my days. It has been a long recovery, but I am doing fine. Thank you for keeping me in your prayers.

Jack Armstrong

Dear St. Mark's,

We are very grateful for all of the expressions of love from our church family during Pastor's Appreciation Month. We are thankful for the cards, baked goods, and other kindnesses from individuals in the congregation as well as the Center for the Performing Arts gift certificates which will provide an opportunity to have some great experiences in 2020.

Thank you for being a part of our life in ministry and for expressing your appreciation for us and the calling God has placed upon our lives. May God bless all of us as we continue our ministry together.

Pastors Brian, Julia, and Mary Ann

## 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. Please remember:

Annette Dunlap	Clara Breisch
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
Jane Roberts	Dub Taylor

## Annual Chili Cook Off

**Sunday, January 26 | 5:00 PM-7 :00 PM**

The Annual Chili Cook off will be held January 26. Competitors needs to bring at least 5 quarts of Chili. Non-competitors need to bring a side to share. Prizes will be awarded. Sign up will be available first week of January online and at the Connection Table.



## Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who took the time to have their picture taken by Lifetouch. We are excited for the new St. Mark's directory coming out in early 2020.

A big thank you also to the many volunteers who helped make the photo sessions a reality. From the volunteer coordinators to the hosts and hostesses and the calling team who encouraged people to sign up. We have a mighty village here at St. Mark's and I am grateful!!

God Bless,  
Missi Koenig



## SAVE THE DATE

### St. Marks Talent Show

**Sunday, February 9 | 12:30 PM**

Free lunch and entertainment. Anyone interested in performing in the talent show, please contact Dr. Eric DeForest at [edeforest@stmarkscarmel.org](mailto:edeforest@stmarkscarmel.org) no later than Sunday, January 26.



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](http://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 15** for names to be listed in the bulletin on December 22. Live Poinsettias may be taken home after the 11:00 PM Christmas Eve worship service.