

JUBILEE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



ST. MARK'S
United Methodist Church

FEBRUARY 2021

GIVE BLOOD SAVE A LIFE

February 21 at St. Mark's

See inside for more ways
to make a difference,
or visit stmarkscarmel.org

COVID-19 Reopening Plan Guidelines

CDC GUIDELINES: PHYSICAL DISTANCING, FACE MASKS, AND HAND SANITIZER AT ENTRY POINTS Continue to stay at home if you are high risk (65 and older, underlying health condition). Stay at home if you are sick, until at least 10 days past initial symptoms, AND 3 days fever-free (without medicine), AND no respiratory symptoms. Recommendations for cleaning and sanitizing will be followed in all phases. For updates check out the St. Marks website, stmarkscarmel.org/reopening. **Current Phase C Protocol**

Church Office—Office will be open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 AM– 12 PM. Limited staff contact. Outer entrance door will be unlocked for library drop-offs, bible study book pickups, Mission donations, etc., Monday-Friday 9:00 AM–4:00 PM. Appointments may also be scheduled.

Worship—Online worship only. Livestreamed on Facebook or watch from website. (See instructions for viewing on page 3). No Facebook account is necessary to view.

Adult Ministries—Online presence continues for small groups, studies and Sunday classes. Limited live gatherings must be scheduled with a facility request.

Student Ministries—Online presence continues. Limited live gatherings in the building allowed with Adult Supervision. Third Street rehearsal may resume in the building.

Children Ministries—Online presence continues.

Non-Church Meetings—Limited in-person meetings begin. Must be scheduled in advance.

Registering Attendance

We are grateful for your presence in online worship. Please register your attendance every week at stmarkscarmel.org/attend. Please include the names of all in the family attending worship. Thank you for being a part of St. Mark's wherever you are!

Communion

Communion is served the first Sunday of every month. Elements for home use with online worship are available for pickup in the church entrance the week before communion is served.



Grab-and Go Visit Guidelines

Until COVID rates show significant decreases in our area, the church staff thanks you for keeping your office visits as brief as possible. We still have contact-free missions drop-offs in the church entrance (Door #2), 9:00 AM– 4:00 PM, Monday-Friday.

For your convenience, we have new Grab-and-Go shelves in the entryway where you can:

- Pick up and pay for study books.
- Pick up Lent devotionals, Lenten gifts, Upper Rooms, newsletters, directories.
- Pick up Communion Supplies.
- Return and pick up requested library books.
- Return UMW missions donations.
- Other short-term drop-offs and pickups as arranged with the office.

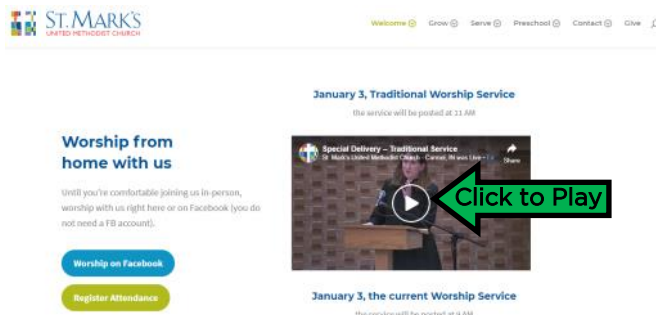
How to Access St. Mark's Videos and More On Facebook

- St. Mark's Facebook page can be accessed by anyone, with or without an account. It is where the St. Mark's services are livestreamed and where the most up-to-date announcements are found.
- Anyone can access the St. Mark's Facebook page by opening a browser and going to www.facebook.com/stmarkscarmel.
- Most weeks, services can be watched live at 9:00AM (The Current) or 11:00AM (Traditional) or can be watched any time after. Sundays with only one combined service will be noted as such.
- Once on the St. Mark's Facebook page, scroll down and find the service you would like to watch and click on it to watch. If the service is in progress, you will join in real time. If the service is over, the service will start from the beginning.
- You can also see photos, announcements, and interact with other viewers.



How to watch on the St. Mark's website.

- Go to www.stmarkscarmel.org/connected/
- Scroll down to **Worship from home with us** section
- Click play on the 9 AM or 11 AM service—both services will be available 5 minutes prior to the start time. If the service has started you will join in real time. If the service is over, the service will start from the beginning.



The Pastor's Place

Dr. Brian White, Lead Pastor

bwhite@stmarkscarmel.org

Dear Co-workers in Christ,

As I am writing this email our resident bishop, Bishop Julius C. Trimble, has called for 100 days of prayer in Indiana in response to recent events in our nation's capital and in support of a peaceful transition in our nation's government. In recent years there have been those who have postulated that just praying is not enough to get us to where God is trying to lead us. My personal belief in prayer is that it is often the way that God leads us to further action. The biblical writer James puts it this way: ¹⁴“What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? ¹⁵If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, ¹⁶and one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,” and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? ¹⁷So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.” (James 2:14-17, NRSV)



A few years ago, I taught a class at St. Mark's using Walter Wink's book, *The Powers That Be: Theology for a New Millennium*. One of the chapters in that book is called “Prayer and the Powers.” In that chapter Winks says that “Prayer is the field hospital in which the spiritual diseases that we have contracted from the Powers can be diagnosed and treated.” “Unprotected by prayer, our social activism runs the danger of becoming self-justifying good works.” “Intercessory prayer is spiritual defiance of what is in the name of what God has promised. Intercession visualizes an alternative future to the one apparently fated by the momentum of current forces. Prayer infuses the air of a time yet to be into the suffocating atmosphere of the present.”

Prayer is not the end but the beginning of our efforts to make things “on earth as it is in heaven” which many of us pray every Sunday. Finally, Wink says, “No doubt our intercessions sometimes change us as we open ourselves to new possibilities we had not guessed. No doubt our prayers to God reflect back upon us as a divine command to become the answer to our prayer.”

Like our bishop, I will be praying for our congregation, our community, our nation, and our world. I will also be praying that God reveal to me ways that I can work to make positive things happen in all of those areas of concern. Prayer means making ourselves available to be instruments of God's Spirit in our world. Prayer means being open to confession as we realize our own mistakes and sins as well as calling others to accountability and contrition. Prayer means acting to change those injustices that are in our own power to change. Prayer is not passively talking to God but also listening for God's instructions to be agents of God's power and grace.

So, I do invite you to pray. And I invite you to search your hearts to be the answers to prayer in every way possible. Let us embody Jesus' greatest prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane: “Yet not my will, but yours be done.” (Luke 22:42, NIV) Instead of telling God what to do, what would happen if we let our prayers invite God to instruct us on how to be world changers for God?

In Christ's service,

Brian

The Pastor's Place

Julia Gonzales, Associate Pastor
jgonzales@stmarkscarmel.org

Hello St. Mark's,

Lately I've been reflecting a lot on "love."

The love that we have for friends...

The love that we have for family...

The love that we can share with romantic partners...

The love we have for God...

The love that we need to have for ourselves...

The love we have as Christians for all of God's creation...

The love that we have for our enemies...



And the fact that I wrote those last two as separate. Sometimes, when we are hurt and angry we can look at others and fail to immediately see them as a part of God's beautiful creation. Lovingly made and deeply known.

It feels depressingly simple to write it, but love truly is the hardest thing we can ever do, yet it is the thing that our world and ourselves desperately needs. Because love isn't always kindness and acquiescence. Sometimes love is saying "no." Sometimes love is setting time aside for ourselves, taking time to care for our own hearts and souls the way we care for others. And sometimes the things that we think are love, are in fact a lie. Greed, pride, possessiveness, fear, hurt...such things can grow and choke out the love that once existed. And then comes the hard part of determining: how can I best love someone after they have hurt me? Do I continue to love them and myself by walking beside them? Do I love them and myself by walking away? Every situation is different and there are no clear-cut answers to be given in a general letter. All I can say is again, the world needs love now as much as it ever has. And remember the words of 1 John 4:8, "The person who doesn't love does not know God, because God is love." (CEB)

Take care,

Julia

The Pastor's Place

Mary Ann Moman, Associate Pastor

mmoman@stmarkscarmel.org

Time for Repairs

Last spring when we first began to stay in our homes to avoid getting sick, I started watching a show on Netflix: The Repair Shop. I got hooked very quickly. The show is a BBC production. At the beginning of each episode families bring in broken heirlooms. By the end of the show the three objects are repaired by expert crafts people. The family member or members return and are in awe at the transformation that has taken place. There is no charge for the work that is done. Amazing!



In an episode I watched this week, an Arts and Craft chair was repaired for the granddaughter who remembered sitting in the chair with her grandfather. The artist not only repaired the chair but restored the memories of the granddaughter and her mother. It seems that there are often tears at the end of the show. Tears of joy.

What the viewer doesn't see is the amount of time and imagination it takes for the artists to make the repairs. I understand that it often takes weeks or months to bring the item back to life.

Oh, how I wish that the ills of our nation and world could be repaired in 45 minutes. We all know how long it takes to develop a vaccine to repair the health of our nation and world regarding COVID-19. Thankfully, two vaccines are now being delivered to health care workers, nursing home residents, and the most vulnerable. This process has been faster than most vaccine development and yet it has seemed so long. It has taken the collaboration of scientists around the world to do this.

I think it is going to take us much longer to heal the wounds of our democracy. It will take the hard work of listening and talking with people who disagree. I heard someone say: "most people just need a good listening to." I think that is a good strategy for these days. It is a strategy that will take time. No quick fixes.

The prophets cried out to God for help in their darkest days. "Lord, how long will I call for help and you not listen?" (Habakkuk 1:2a) and in the end the prophet says: "The Lord God is my strength." (Habakkuk 3:19a). We cry out and we listen. Moment by moment and day by day we listen to our family, friends and neighbors.

Like St. Francis of Assisi I pray we will be instruments of peace in an anxious world.

May it be so.

Mary Ann

February Mission Focus

Stephanie Cohen, Mission Coordinator
scohen@stmarkscarmel.org



Did you know?

Family Promise is a nonprofit organization, founded in 1994, in response to a crisis of family homelessness. While most traditional shelters separate by gender, Family Promise keeps families together, battling homelessness, while they work to get back on their feet. As the gap between housing costs and income continues to widen, more and more families are at risk of homelessness, increasing the likelihood families will separate, children will fall behind in school, and eventually drop out.

The Interfaith Hospitality Network, Family Promise's core program, 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. St. Mark's has been a long-time partner and supporter of IHN. When the pandemic hindered congregations' ability to host families, the Apartment Shelter Program was initiated. There are now 20 families in apartment shelters, 20 families in After Care, and 5 families in the Diversion Program. For more info visit www.fpgi.org.

IHN resumes in summer 2021! St. Mark's will be hosting again, one week only this year, beginning on August 29, 2021. More info and sign ups to help coming in July.

How can I help?

- Volunteer for a leadership position: With only one hosting week this year it's the perfect time to transition into these roles. Mentoring, instructions and guidance provided. Please contact Jeff Keyt, shellcreek5@gmail.com or Stephanie Cohen, scohen@stmarkscarmel.org for information.
 - ◇ **IHN Dinner Host Coordinator**-Ensure dinner hosts for each evening understand their duties, communicate updates as needed during the week
 - ◇ **Van Driver Coordinator**-Ensure van drivers understand their duties, able to drive a 15-passenger van, must be 25 years or older.
- Donate a Supply for the Family Promise Supply Drive (see page 8)
- Give online at stmarkscarmel.org/give

For more information, contact Stephanie Cohen, scohen@stmarkscarmel.org or visit stmarkscarmel.org/ihn/.

Donation & Service Opportunities

St. Mark's Blood Drive

Sunday, February 21 | 8:30 AM- 1:15 PM

Sign up now for the next Blood Drive! People Need People.

Can you help save a life and roll up your sleeve? Healthy individuals are

needed to donate blood today! The donation process itself poses no risk of infecting a donor with coronavirus, and Versiti staff are following CDC recommendations on how to properly defend against COVID-19. Visit [versiti.org](https://www.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 info. Sign up online at stmarkscarmel.org/signups.



Habitat for Humanity

WORDS OF THANKS FOR ACHIEVEMENTS

With all the challenges in 2020 we are grateful for volunteers like St. Mark's, who have continued to support the Habitat mission in our community. We celebrate:



- Completing 16 homes for first-time homeowners .
- Building homes and hope in El Salvador during our 6th Global Village trip in February.
- Opening our fifth ReStore location on West Washington Street.

Builds will start back up in February (*visit indyhabitat.org for more info on individual volunteer options*) with a continued emphasis on the health and safety of our homebuyers, volunteers, and staff. We look forward to beginning a new year, with new homebuyers eager to work hard alongside you to make their dream of homeownership a reality in 2021!

Family Promise Supply Drive

Help us stock the IHN/Apartment Shelters with the household items listed below: (Donations may be left inside Door #2 Monday-Friday, 9 AM- 4 PM)

Paper towels

Toilet paper

Toilet Bowl Cleaner

Liquid Hand Soap dispensers

Liquid Hand Soap Refill (32 + Oz)

Small First Aid Kit

Shower Liner with rings

Brillo pads (1 box of 12 +)

Dish Soap (32 ozs)

Laundry detergent (60 + loads)

13 gallon Trash bags (box of 36+)

Sponges

Dryer sheets (box of 60+)

Anti-bacterial Multi Surface Cleaner

Napkins

Pillows (New only, in original wrapping)



Because You Give, St. Mark's Gives!

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

- **Bishop's Christmas Offering:** \$2000
- **Brightwood Community Center:** \$886
- **Carmel United Methodist Food Pantry:** \$1875, 15 bags of food
- **Christmas Adopt a Family:** gifts and food for 5 families of IPS children
- **E. 10th UM Children & Youth Center:** \$1100, 115 Angel Tree gifts, 120 toy/books
- **Family Promise/IHN:** \$1309
- **Fletcher Place:** \$1300, 30 oatmeal containers, 8 bags food, 11 bags household items, 100 sack meals; and 175 toy/books to pre-school
- **Fletcher Place Christmas Program:** 270 cans of food, 90 toys/clothe items
- **Gleaners Food Bank:** \$1400.00
- **IN United Methodist Children's Home:** \$500
- **Indiana Blood Center:** 23 units of blood
- **Mustard Seed:** \$500.00
- **Open Doors Food & Clothing Pantry:** \$1875
- **Operation Classroom:** \$600
- **Red Bird Mission (Tree of Lights campaign):** \$9800
- **Third Phase Food Pantry:** \$1875, 18 bags food, 3 bags household items
- **UMCOR (Covid 19 Response & General Fund):** \$7230
- **United Methodist Student Day:** \$50
- **Wheeler Mission:** \$1000, 75 toys/books, 3 bags household items, 55 large bags of winter wear

Brightwood Community Center

Afterschool programs are hopeful to resume soon. Brightwood is excited for their new location and working through the pandemic challenges. Tutors will again be needed, Monday-Thursday. Plans include hybrid options for virtual as well as in person opportunities. Please contact Diane Newton at joediane244@att.net for more info.



St. Mark's Serving During a Pandemic

How is St. Mark's UMC continuing to serve our community during the pandemic? Below are just a few of the mission activities in which our members continue to give.

Panera Bread Dough-Nation-Weekly delivery of end of day Panera Bread food donated to food pantries or community centers.

Fletcher Place-Breakfast sack meals monthly

Soup's On at Roberts Park-Meals to go quarterly.

Servants At Work (SAWs) Wheelchair Ramp Build-In October members of St. Mark's joined hammers and nails to build another wheelchair ramp for a family in need.

Winter Wear for Wheeler Mission-55 bags of warm winter wear collected!



2020 Mission Giving

Thank you for your generous support of Missions in 2020!

MISSION	YEAR-END TOTAL (\$)
Brightwood Community Center food for meals	1,113.45
Bishop's Christmas Offering for Children	2,000.00
Carmel UMC Food Pantry	2,945.00
College Care	120.00
East Tenth Children & Youth Cent	7,600.00
IN United Methodist Children's Home	500.00
Family Promise of Greater Indy	13,253.00
Fletcher Place Community Center	7,855.00
Gleaners Food Bank	1,400.00
Good Samaritan Network	4,410.00
Habitat for Humanity Greater Indianapolis	5,766.53
Hamilton County Kids Coats	1,000.00
Meals to various ministries	2,110.00
Mission Guatemala	6,439.78
Operation Classroom	6,880.00
Midwest Mission Distribution Center	4,651.85
Red Bird Mission	9,800.00
SAWs (Servants at Work, Inc.)	3,000.00
Society of St. Andrew	6,465.00
Mustard Seed of Central Indiana	2,000.00
UM Special Sundays	525.00
UMCOR (various)	10,930.00
UMM & UMW (given by)	3,000.00
Second Helpings	1,007.50
Youth Mission Work Trips Donation to Group Mission	1,000.00
Open Doors Food & Clothing Pantry	2,975.00
Third Phase Christian Center	2,975.00
Outreach Indiana	1,000.00
Wheeler Mission	1,000.00
TOTAL	\$118,268.00

Sunday Morning Offerings

KidzConnect: Live | 10:00 AM-10:30 AM

Kids ages 3 –4th grade are welcome to join together for a time of worship, Bible stories and games. We use Spark House curriculum materials and divide into several similar age grounds for part of our time together. Register for weekly Zoom codes at stmarkscarmel.org/kidzprogramming.

Kidz Music & Praise Rocking | 11:00 AM

Children ages 4-4th grade are invited to gather each Sunday on Zoom for worship, praise, and fun. Join Kidz Music & Praise rehearsals for the Lenten musical, *Shout! Hosanna*, each week. Contact Joyce Click (jclick@stmarkscarmel.org) for a musical packet, CD, t-shirt and Zoom invitation.

Club56:live | 1:00 PM Zoom

Club56 weaves together Bible instruction, some theology, and relationship building using the re:Form curriculum by Augsburg Press. During February students will be finishing a unit learning about Christian discipleship. All 5th & 6th graders are welcome to come join the fun! Contact Ramie Cooney (rcooney@stmarkscarmel.org) for more information and register for weekly Zoom codes at stmarkscarmel.org/kidzprogramming.

What Makes a HERO?

Parents Lenten Study

Sundays, 2/21-3/28, 1:00-2:00 PM

Led by Julia Gonzales | online | Books \$6
Learn more on page 15.

Programming During COVID

We miss seeing the children and their parents but encourage everyone to be safe and stay healthy.

- Check out the Connect with Kidz website, stmarkscarmel.org/kidzconnect to find weekly Kidz Church and Kidz Music & Praise resources.
- Join our St. Mark's Kidz Facebook page to watch a weekly Bible Story and object lesson and share what you are up to each

St. Mark's Preschool Registration

St. Mark's has one of the best preschools in town and registration is open now! 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 information or tour the preschool, please contact Director, Jen Weixler at (317) 846-4912 or preschool@stmarkscarmel.org

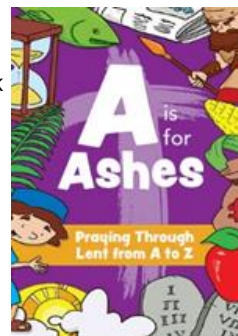


Lent Offerings

DEVOTIONALS

Families are invited to pick Lent Devotionals beginning February 17 to help prepare for Easter.

People often choose to give up something for Lent, but it is also a perfect time to try a new spiritual discipline of family devotional reading!





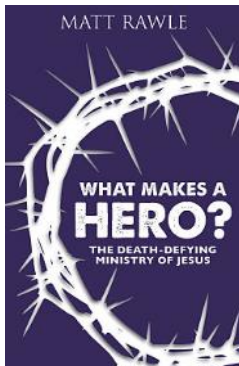
Weekly Gatherings

WEDNESDAY EVENINGS

Wednesday Night Bible Study | 5:00 PM
2/24-3/31

What Makes a Hero? by Matt Rawle

Looking at pop culture heroes and others through the lens of faith, *What Makes a HERO?* shows how Jesus turned the concept of hero on its head. Heroes help us discern the good, fight for what's right, define identity, execute justice, spark revolution, and save lives. In the Gospel story Jesus redefines being a hero and tells quite a different victory story—one obtained through humility, obedience to the cross, and an empty tomb.



THURSDAY EVENINGS

DKB @ Starbucks Join Don on Zoom until restaurants reopen. Parents and students are all welcome! Email DKB for login.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Join us for face-to-face Sunday School over Instagram Live.

AM Middle School (Instagram Live) - 10:00 AM

AM High School (Instagram Live) - 10:30 AM

Email Don Broad, dbroad@stmarkscarmel.org for more information.

Upcoming Events

SPRING RETREAT

May 21-23

Look for upcoming details.

WORK CAMP

June 20-June 26

WEEK OF HOPE

July 25-30

Confirmation Class

Due to COVID-19, Confirmation Class will begin meeting March 21 after an orientation session for parents and students on March 14. For further details and information, please contact Pastor Julia at jgonzales@stmarkscarmel.org.

What Makes a HERO? Parents Lenten Study

Sundays, 2/21-3/28, 1:00-2:00 PM

Led by Julia Gonzales | online | Books \$6

Learn more on page 15.

Adult Discipleship

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

January 31: Spiritual “Walk” Alumni Zoom Gathering

If you’ve attended a Walk to Emmaus, Cursillo, Great Banquet, Tres Dias, Chrysalis Flight, or similar intensive spiritual weekend, sign up at stmarkscarmel.org/walkalumni. On Sunday, **January 31, 6:30-7:30pm**, St. Mark’s alumni of these events will meet on Zoom to connect and share their memories. Jennifer Cloud-Buckner and Mary Ann Moman will lead this meeting, plus a follow-up session for those interested in being part of a small covenant accountability group.

Weekday Morning Studies

If you missed signing up in January, see the full list at stmarkscarmel.org/studygroups for our studies on the apostle Paul, Jonah, Romans, and seeing Jesus from an Eastern perspective.

Online Sunday Groups

CUTTING EDGE (9:30 AM)

Steve Click (sclick52@gmail.com) follows the Revised Common Lectionary for weekly lessons.

FOUNDATIONS & FRIENDSHIPS (9:40 AM)

Begins *The Color of Compromise* in February. Email Doug (dthbrown@gmail.com) to join.

REEL SPIRITUALITY (11:00 AM)

Exploring Christian themes through film. Email Lydia & Terry Fourman (4manternlyd@gmail.com) for video links, current movies, & connection info.

VENTURE (2:00 PM ON 2/14, 2/28)

Call Jean Douglass or Jennifer Cloud-Buckner for connection info.

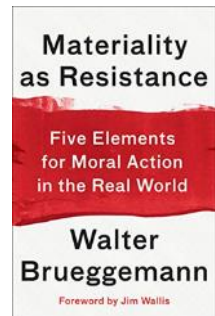
Sunday Evening Study

Materiality as Resistance: Five Elements for Moral Action in the Real World by Walter Brueggemann, **2/21-3/21, 6:00-7:15PM**

Led by Brian White | online | Books \$12
Sign up at stmarkscarmel.org/studygroups

In *Materiality as Resistance*, Walter Brueggemann defines materiality as using the material aspects of the Christian faith—as opposed to materialism, which places physical comfort and possessions over spiritual values. Jesus practiced materiality, not materialism, when he healed the bodies of the sick, proclaimed Jubilee to the poor, and fed the five thousand.

Brueggemann calls us as individuals and as a church to action: to reengage our materiality—food, money, body, time, and place—for the common good. This study will include a weekly video presentation and ties along with the Social Justice committee theme (page 20).



Weeknight PM Study Interest

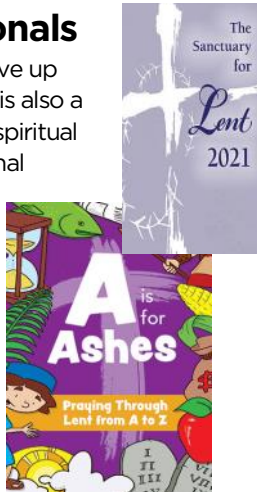
A recent congregational survey revealed more than 30 St. Mark’s folks are interested in a weeknight evening adult discipleship study. Sign up at stmarkscarmel.org/studygroups and Jennifer Cloud-Buckner, Adult Discipleship Coordinator, will be in touch about your schedule and any new study info.

Lent Begins February 17

A season of reflection, repentance, and preparation
Ash Wednesday (February 17) through Easter (April 4)

Pick Up Devotionals

People often choose to give up something for Lent, but it is also a perfect time to try a new spiritual discipline of daily devotional reading! Pick up your devotional copies—*The Sanctuary for Lent* for adults and *A is for Ashes: Praying through Lent from A to Z* for families—from the shelves in the church entrance. Doors are open Mon-Fri, 9:00am-4:00pm.



Lenten Gifts

Free Lenten coins and tokens are available in the church entrance. This year's gifts feature the Greatest Commandment (Matthew 22: 37-39) and Mother Teresa's quote "Do small things with great love."



Ash Wednesday Service

Wednesday, February 17 | 7:00 PM

Join us on Facebook Live for our Ash Wednesday service. More details to follow.

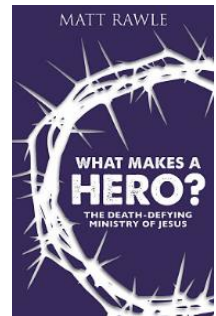


What Makes a HERO? Parents Lenten Study

Sundays, 2/21-3/28, 1:00-2:00 PM

Led by Julia Gonzales | online | Books \$6

Parents, join this 6-week study to connect with your kids in a new way! Your Club56 kids and Cornerstone Youth will be doing activities from *What Makes a HERO?* for Lent (see description on page 13). Adult books are available for \$6 in the church entrance. Sign up at stmarkscarmel.org/studygroups.



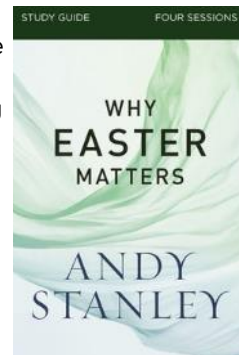
Friday AM Lenten Study

Why Easter Matters by Andy Stanley,
3/5-3/26, 9:30-11:00AM

Led by Stephanie Cohen | online | Books \$8

As we prepare for Easter, pastor and author Andy Stanley looks at some of the people whose lives intersected with Jesus in the weeks leading to his crucifixion. Each of them had an agenda that put them at odds with God and Jesus. If you've ever resisted, defied, or tried to bargain your way out of what you thought God wanted, you'll recognize a bit of their stories.

Sign up: stmarkscarmel.org/studygroups.



Open Groups

UMW Meeting

Tuesday, February 9 | 9:00 AM & 7:00 PM



If you are new to UMW, Welcome! For information on how to connect on Zoom, please contact Mary Etta Yoho, Maryetta.yoho@gmail.com. Below are the groups available. Interest Groups will be meeting after the general meeting (via Zoom) For more information on Interest Groups, go to stmarkscarmel.org/umw.

Morning Interest Groups

Bookworms—The group will be reading in February *The Long Way Home* by Saroo Brierle. Gail Lee facilitates.

Spiritual Growth—The group is using *Finding Peace in an Anxious World* by Erin James-Brown. Pastor Mary Ann Moman facilitates.

Color and Chat—Coloring isn't just for kids! Come enjoy fellowship while coloring with UMW friends. This group will color and discuss pages with inspirational quotes and scriptures.

Evening Interest Groups

Bookmarkers—Group will be reading *The Midwife of Hope River* by Patricia Harman. Debbie Skinner facilitates.

Spiritual Reflections—Spiritual Reflections is studying *Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit: Growing in Christlikeness* by Christopher J.H. Wright. Books are available in the church entrance for \$10. For info, contact Holly Moore, holly.e.moore693@gmail.com.

Special Mission Recognition

Every year St. Mark's UMW awards a special Mission Recognition Pin to individual(s) who have gone the extra mile to promote mission in our UMW and church programs. At our Zoom 2020 Christmas Gathering we were honored to recognize the following individuals who give so much of their time and talents for others' benefit. They are so very deserving of this recognition:

- Joyce Click
- Bill and Jane Fecht
- Gail Lee

"Timothy 1:6 I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is with in you"

Congratulations to all of you and thank you for sharing the gifts that God gave you.

UMW Reading Program

Monday, March 29 | 7:00 PM (Zoom)

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 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 for more information.

UMM Breakfast Meetings



The United Methodist Men Breakfasts are held the 2nd Saturday of every month.

Saturday, February 13

February will be a Zoom Meeting. 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 or to be added to the email list, contact Tom Roberts, email umm@stmarkscarmel.org or call a UMM Board Member. You can also see what's going on at stmarkscarmel.org/umm. Come and join us!

Marksmen

2/11 & 2/25 | 6:30 AM

Meeting at St. Mark's

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 at St. Mark's.

Please bring your own Coffee. If you have any questions, email marksmen@stmarkscarmel.org.

What to Expect When Meeting in the Building

- 6 ft social distancing
- Masks at all times
- **No food or drink allowed for indoor events, other than personal water bottles. Water can be refilled.**
- Water fountains will only be available for bottle refilling.
- Food and drink may be distributed or purchased when the event is outdoors if it is pre-packaged or from an authorized vendor (i.e., food vendor following health guidelines)
- If attending a meeting, go directly to your assigned meeting room. No meeting rooms will be available unless scheduled in advance.
- No Childcare is available until further notice.
- Parking Lot meetings may be scheduled. Areas will be assigned.
- Any non-church related meeting requests will be reviewed and considered by St. Mark's task group on a case-by-case basis.
- No athletic events allowed in Wesley Hall at this time (volleyball, basketball, pickleball and dodgeball).
- Connection tables will not reopen before Phase D
- Limited office hours Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9 AM- 12 PM
- Restrooms are open for emergency use.
- Sign outside the door should be turned over to indicate the room has been used and needs to be cleaned.
- **Number of people in rooms is limited. Please make sure you register or notify your leader if you are attending in person.**

Open Group Schedule

Mondays

COFFEE 'N CAMERAS

Will resume when we return to building

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

CAREER CURVE

10:00 AM (Meets on Zoom)

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.

Tuesdays

PAGE TURNER BOOK CLUB

Tuesday, February 16| 7:00 PM-8:00 PM

The Dutch House by Ann Patchett

Join us the 3rd Tuesday of each month if you enjoy good books, discussions, and a shared evening with new/old friends. In January we will be picking the books for the upcoming year. Please send Marcia Flora your suggestions and note if they are fiction or non-fiction and also the author's name. If you have any questions, contact Marcia Flora, mflora1950@yahoo.com.

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! We'll not meet again in person until further notice. Contact Judy Bonnet for more information at bonnetjim@icloud.com.

Wednesdays

ROMEOS (RETIRED OLD MEN EATING OUT)

Currently meeting at St Mark's, Room J/K

All men are invited to meet weekly in the Parking Lot. asks will be required.

Thursdays

JULIETS

Due to COVID-19 Juliets (Just Us Ladies Into Eating Out Together) will not be eating out until later in 2021. Look for our schedule. Contact Barbara Johnson, (317) 863-2689, timberblj@gmail.com.

BRIDGE

Currently not meeting

For more information contact the church office.

CRAFT & HOBBY GROUP

Join us on Facebook at "St. Mark's UMC Craft & Hobby Group". Share what you've been working on or get ideas for new projects! Contact Kathy Bartel, krbartel@gmail.com, with questions.

Committee News

Finance Committee

I was humbled when I was asked to be entrusted to continue as your finance chair through 2021 and honored to report our financial position – thank you for your trust; I pray and hope that the vaccines and our lives normalize sooner than later... Regardless, we know that OUR GOD is and will always be here; we continue to be blessed. That does not mean we are not stressed; we all have our concerns. I can report that we, as a congregation, have done our part.

THANK YOU! Donations for 2020 were \$12,821 or 1.2% FAVORABLE to budget as pledges caught up and then some during December. Again, thank you! As I have been reporting all year, we anticipated a decrease in overall giving, which we did experience: we collected approximately \$65k less than the prior year (or 5.6%) and over \$71k (or 6.1%) as compared to the prior five-year moving average.

On the expense side, overall expenses, before any conference tithes, were \$70,765 FAVORABLE to budget YTD, and yet no staff wages, hours or salaries were compromised. This is a tribute to the staff and the diligence exercised when managing expenses. Admittedly, without Sunday services for much of the year and offices being closed except on a limited basis, we could more easily reduce expenditures, but that sometimes is not always the case. It took self-control and a level of consciousness I certainly admire. We also incurred several unusual one-time expenses.

Consequently, we ran an overall surplus of \$83,585 for the year before any conference tithes; as such, we are paying approximately 69.3% of our annual conference tithes, leaving a zero deficit/surplus for the year.

On a proforma basis, our conference tithes would have totaled \$120,625 or 11% of contributions and miscellaneous income. Given the continued uncertainty of the pandemic on church and preschool operations, and the eventual vote at general conference, the finance committee voted to not access reserves to pay any further tithes for 2020. You may recall that the original budget anticipated paying no tithes this year.

As for 2021, we have a balanced budget, and we anticipate paying 100% of conference tithes, even if it means paying them from reserves accumulated over the past years. We will continue to monitor our expenditures, and I expect for expenses to be mitigated for several months in 2021 given expected church operations. We expect to be able to meet all church obligations, staff wages, salaries and preschool staff salaries even if the latter are not operating at 100%. I thank you for your continued faithfulness, prayers, and for the support of St. Mark's.

Feel free to contact me should you need further information.

Faithfully yours,

Bill Nicolai

Social Justice Committee

“Upholding the Cause of the Poor & the Oppressed”

“As a church we are called to support the poor and challenge the rich. To begin to alleviate poverty, we support such policies as: adequate income maintenance, quality education, decent housing, job training, meaningful employment opportunities, adequate medical and hospital care, humanization and radical revisions of welfare programs, work for peace and efforts to protect creation’s integrity” (United Methodist Social Principles, ¶163.E)

This year, the Social Justice committee invites you to learn more about socioeconomic disparities. As United Methodists, we are called to challenge the systems and practices that have led to economic inequality, poverty and hunger. Look for some announcements about upcoming conversations with fellow St. Markers and experts in the field of socioeconomic disparities. Get started by reading one or more of the following books:

- *Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help (and how to reverse it)* by Robert D. Lupton
- *Born on Third Base* by Chuck Collins
- *Having Nothing Possessing Everything: Finding Abundant Communities in Unexpected Places* by Michael Mather
- *Evicted* by Mathew Desmond

Social justice doesn’t stop with education. Check out these organizations that are actively working to eliminate socioeconomic disparities and look for ways to take action along with the Social Justice committee during 2021.

- Bread for the World Institute:
www.bread.org
- Pathway Resource Center:
www.pathwayindy.org

- Indianapolis Urban League: www.indplsul.org
- Global Rich List: Allows you to see where you are amongst the richest people in the world. Howrichami.givingwhatwecan.org
- General Board of Church and Society
www.umcjustice.org/

Library

Stop in soon to visit your St. Mark’s library which is open from 9:00AM to 12:00PM on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. New arrivals are located on shelves under the courtyard window. Signout cards will be found in the back of each book and can be left in the box on the signout table. Returned books can be left in the return box just inside the main entrance, Door #2. Be assured that all returned books are “quarantined” before shelving for your safety.



The St. Mark’s card catalog can be accessed on the checkout table computer just inside the library door, or on your phone or tablet. Go to <https://stmarkscarmel.org/library/> and click on Electronic Catalog. Search by title, author, subject or keyword to find both fiction and nonfiction titles for all ages, including our youngest readers.

Can’t find a book? Leave us a note and we will let you know when it becomes available.

Donations are always welcome, as are suggestions for purchase.

Stewardship

**FAITHFUL, HOPEFUL,
LOVING**



The Stewardship Committee is wrapping up their work in support of the 2021 budget at St. Mark's and we would like to thank everyone who has helped make this year's stewardship emphasis a success. As of January 14, we have the following numbers to report:

Operating Fund

Total to date received: 248 commitment cards totaling \$871,802.

This compares to 251 commitments totaling \$860,730 for same period last year.

Major Repairs and Maintenance Fund

Total to date received: 118 commitment cards totaling \$ 101,053.

This compares to 132 commitments totaling \$121,897 for same period last year.

We are incredibly thankful to have an increase of over \$11,000 in pledging for the 2021 operating budget. While pledges are down for the building fund, we are confident we will see an increase in this fund as we identify and move into our next building project.

Overall, we want to express our deepest gratitude for the continued generosity of St. Mark's members. 2020 was a difficult year but your commitments for 2021 give a sense of optimism and hope as we move into God's future for our church.

Mike Warren,
Stewardship Chairperson

Trustees

As I write this on January 8, 2021, we are in the final days of doing the building work. They are painting the renovated areas for storage, AV room, and the Kitchen. Next week the new kitchen equipment will arrive, including the new dishwasher and its counters, warming oven, island tables with prep sink, and the new hand wash sink.

Juan Mercado, our facilities manager, is removing wallpaper in the hall, from the already renovated area down to the fellowship hall entry area. Then he is having the walls repaired, and he is painting them.

The area is looking wonderful. Since you cannot see the area a few pictures are below.



Community News

Directory Updates

George & Janice Jackson
14270 Arcadian Circle
Carmel, IN 46033-2414

Emily Hardin
1077 Pendleton Parkway #107
Neenah, WI 54956

Michelle McClelland
6031 Doverton Drive
Noblesville, IN 46062-7698

Births

Miles Jeffery Risinger was born November 20. His parents are Ashley & Seth Risinger; brother Mason; grandparents Amy and Jeff Risinger and Mike and Jenny Rundle; great grandmother Nyla Johnson.

Erin Elizabeth Digby was born on December 23rd. Parents are Sarah and Drew Digby; grandparents are Karen and Peter Reist.

Sympathies

To the family of Clara Breisch at her passing.

To Mary Etta Yoho at the death of her husband, Devon Yoho.

To Trisha Staneart at the death of her mother, Nancy Poolman.

To Pat Warrick at the death of her husband, Mike Warrick.

From the Congregation

Dear Church family,
Thank you so much for all we've been through. Continue in your walk as Larry and I are doing. I'm doing better and feeling stronger and so grateful for all the prayers.

Can't wait until we can all be together in church and worship together.

Love,
Sharon Roach

Dear St. Mark's Family,
Thank you so much for all of the support since losing my mother in December. All of the cards, calls, texts, e-mails, Facebook posts have been appreciated more than you know. I have been spending a lot of time in Ohio with family but my church family was never far away. I feel you all with me everyday. Every time I look at the plant sent to the funeral home, I smile.
Trisha Staneart

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:

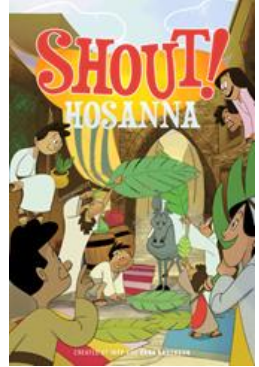
Annette Dunlap	Mary Hart
Jane Roberts	Ola Morrow
Betty Lachman	Mary Pielemeier
Jerry & Phyllis Delp	Hilda Meyers
Judy & Tom Hebenstreit	Don Ranck

Save the Date

Children's Lenten Musical

Sunday, March 21 | 2:00 PM

All are invited to enjoy the Lenten Musical, *Shout! Hosanna*, to discover a deeper understanding of the need for salvation, and encounter the beauty of worshipping Jesus with timeless worship songs. *Shout! Hosanna* is an engaging easter musical created by Jeff and Dana Anderson with friends set in the middle of an Easter Flash Mob asking about the celebration.



Club 56 Mission Camp

Monday, June 14- Thursday, June 17

Mark your calendars! Fifth and sixth graders are invited to participate in our annual local mission camp June 14-17, 2021.

VBS Rocky Railway

Monday, July 19- Friday, July 23

We will host Rocky Railway Vacation Bible Camp from 9 AM-12 PM. Registration for volunteers and participants will begin April 1st.



St. Mark's Pen Pals

Dear St. Mark's family,
Happy New Year and
God's peace to all! I
pray you had a joyful
holiday and that you
are staying healthy. I
miss seeing you in per-
son and am looking
forward to being back
together in the coming
months.



I continue to try to find fun new ways
to keep us connected. For those who
participated in the Christmas Card Challenge
in December, I hope that brought you some
extra Christmas joy. Now I am hoping to
connect people one-on-one with the long
standing communication tool of pen pals.

Did you know that at the 1964/1965 World's
Fair, the Parker Pen Company featured a
computer that paired pen pals? Can I pair
you with a St. Mark's pen pal? If you are
interested in participating, email me at
mkoenig@stmarkscarmel.org. Once people
are paired, they can determine the method
and frequency of communication. When we
are able to start gathering again in person,
we will have a pen pal party for people to
meet in person.

If you are looking for ways to stay connected
at St. Mark's, I would love to help you find new
opportunities. Please don't hesitate to contact
me.

God Bless,
Missi Koenig
mkoenig@stmarkscarmel.org
317-846-4912

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ST. MARK'S
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



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