



SPIRIT OF ST. MARK'S

April 2019

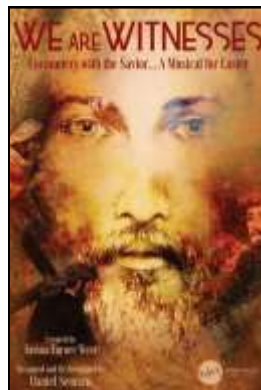
***The Mission of St. Mark's United Methodist Church is to make
Disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.***

PALM SUNDAY **April 14, 9:30 am**

Palm Sunday commemorates Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem and marks the beginning of Holy Week. As worship begins, we will invite the children to help us reenact the Palm Processional, with the waving of palms and singing Hosanna! Everyone who wants a palm will receive one.

Choir Cantata

Later in the service, our choir will point the way from Palm Sunday to Easter through their performance of ***WE ARE WITNESSES: Encounters with the Savior***, an Easter Musical by Kenna Turner West and Daniel Semsen. Throughout Jesus' ministry, people experienced divine appointments with Him that left them amazed and in awe. Directed by Chris Beiser, our choir will present the retelling of those testimonies in this inspiring new Easter Musical.



Egg Hunt

Following Palm Sunday worship, come outside for St. Mark's EASTER-IFIC EGG HUNT. Beginning at 11:30 a.m., there will be lunch, crafts and, of course, an Easter Egg Hunt! Bring your kids and friends! Fun for all ages!



Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service **April 18, 7:00 p.m. — St. Mark's Sanctuary**

Our Maundy Thursday Service will begin in the Upper Room, as we listen to Jesus' New Commandment and participate in The Last Supper. We will then Strip the Altar and reflect on the events of Good Friday via The Service of Darkness.

On Good Friday, April 19, the congregation is invited to attend The Way of the Cross, beginning at noon at the old Butler County Courthouse in Hamilton. In the event of inclement weather, the event will be moved to The Presbyterian Church, 23 S. Front Street, Hamilton, Ohio. St. Mark's will not have a leadership role in this service this year; however, Pastor Joe invites you to experience Good Friday with him at this service "so that you may increase the joy and thanksgiving you will feel on Easter Sunday morning!"

Easter Sunday

April 21, 9:30 a.m.

*Invite your family, friends, and neighbors as we celebrate the
Resurrection and what it means to live as Easter people.
The Easter hymns, brass, choir, beautiful flowers, and you!*

A Note from Pastor Joe...

Dear St. Mark's Church Family,

Grace and peace to you! We are in the midst of the Season of Lent, reflecting on our humanity and our relationship with God who "so loved the world that He gave...." This season of introspection rpreares us for Resurrection and new life in Christ.

This season has been full. Each Sunday we have emphasized one of our six Core Values. This has been a good practice for me, and I hope it has been for you as well. The **Choir** has presented beautiful music while rehearsing this year's Easter Cantata. The **Bell Choir** enriched our worship on March 31, and will perform again April 27. Our latest **New Member Class** continues their study of James Harnish' "A Disciple's Path." The **Confirmation Class** has been learning about the depth of God's Grace and the ways we make decisions through Scripture, as viewed through the lenses of tradition, reason, and experience. Our **youth** are meeting once again, establishing new and deeper relationships with Erin and one another. The **Wednesday Night Bible Study** have also begun meeting again, and also praying for the full recovery of their wonderful leader, Iris Jones. Other groups continue to meet: **Ruth Circle, Lydias, Wednesday Morning Men's Prayer Group, Thursday Evening Monthly Women's Group** (I apologize for surely missing others!). In addition to our regular groups, the Task Force and Administrative Council have continued their trainings with our Coach, Tony Mosley.

All this, and I haven't mentioned anything about the children! You can read more about them elsewhere in this letter.

I look forward to spending my first Easter with all of you. Please invite your friends and family to celebrate the Resurrection with us. We will sing the familiar Easter Hymns, with brass and choir, and connect the Resurrection story with our own lives, what it means to us, and to one another. I can't wait.

Yours in Christ,



Relational Boundaries Workshop

Rev. Barry Burns, workshop leader

On Tuesday, April 30 from 6:30—8:30 pm the Task Force and Administrative Council invite the congregation to join them in receiving specialized training in Healthy Relational Boundaries.

This workshop will be led by Rev. Barry Burns, district superintendent of the Northwest Plains District. Some of you may remember that Barry was our neighbor at one time, as pastor of Lindenwald United Methodist Church.

Barry will cover various issues, including those related to power and vulnerability, social media and technology, as well as financial boundaries.

Participants will grow in discipleship and in better, healthier human relationships. All are welcome.

St. Mark's United Methodist Church

OUR MISSION

To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

OUR VISION

As followers of Jesus, we are called to be a community of believers who are on a journey creating new pathways to model God's love to our faith family, community and the ends of the world, purposefully making a positive impact in developing disciples of Christ.

OUR CORE VALUES

RADICAL HOSPITALITY Romans 15:7

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

All people matter to God and therefore to us.
We invite all to experience grace and full participation.
We love and support one another as a faith family.

PASSIONATE WORSHIP Psalm 84:1-2

How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God.

We gather to deliberately seek an encounter with God.
We believe God uses worship to transform lives, heal wounded souls, renew hope, shape decisions, provoke change and inspire peace and justice.

INTENTIONAL FAITH DEVELOPMENT Acts 2:42

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

We purposefully learn in community that helps us mature in faith from birth to end of life.
We learn to be a community of believers together growing in Christ.

HEALTHY, OPEN COMMUNICATION James 1:19-20

You must understand this my beloved, let everyone be quick to listening, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God's righteousness.

We communicate with each other with an open heart and open mind, loving one another as Christ has loved us.
We respect each other even when we disagree, listening carefully, doing no harm.

RISK TAKING MISSION, SERVICE & NURTURE Matthew 25:40

Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.

We participate with God in his mission working within our congregation, the community near us and the world beyond us.
We engage in genuine connections.
We seek transformation by finding our gifts and calling for God.
We make a positive difference in the lives of others whether or not they will be part of our community.

EXTRAVAGANT GENEROSITY 2 Corinthians 9:11

You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us.

We generously share and give that exceeds all expectations through active participation in stewardship of our time, talents, gifts and service.

St. Mark's Opportunities

(Fellowship, Participation, Study, Serve)



If you like to have a good time, meet people and eat - the Lunch Bunch would like to invite you to join us for lunch and socializing once a month at various restaurants around the area (we are always open to suggestions of places to eat too!). The Lunch Bunch is a group made up of 55 and older adults.

We will be meeting in April at Fireside Café, 6752 Cincinnati-Dayton Rd., Suite 103, Liberty Township, on **Wednesday, April 17th at noon.** Please see Bob or Carol Pittman or call 829-4548 for reservations by noon, Monday, April 15th.



The Ruth Circle will be meeting on
Friday, April 12 at 1:00 pm
in Fellowship Hall.
(Meeting a week earlier due to
Good Friday)

All women of the church are invited
to come and have fellowship.
There will be a short program and
refreshments.

Please see or call Pam Guynes
(779-6162) or Charlene Miller
(844-6793) if you have any
questions.



SALAD LUNCHEON & CRAFTS

FRIDAY, MAY 2

11 AM - 2 PM

Variety of hot and cold salads.

Variety of handmade craft items &
good used books.

Sponsored by the Monday Craft Group
Proceeds go to Parking Lot Fund

April Birthdays and Anniversaries

If your birthday or anniversary is not listed or is incorrect,
please contact the church office (513-844-1818)

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 1 - Bob Klingel
- 1 - Susan Moser
- 2 - Dave Booker
- 3 - Gay Kubik
- 6 - Diana Griffith
- 7 - Layton Edmundson (15 yrs.)
- 8 - Wilma Batt
- 11 - Bill Hurd
- 11 - Brandon Stanifer
- 13 - Gil Dole
- 14 - Joy Addis
- 15 - Cindy Miller
- 16 - Katie Chambers (8 yrs.)
- 19 - Randy Starkie
- 21 - Robert Keith
- 23 - Bob Pittman
- 24 - Max Stover
- 25 - Norma Cooper
- 28 - Tre Edmundson (19 yrs.)
- 28 - Dick Kuertz
- 28 - Sue Rumley
- 30 - Janice Kemp



APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

None in April



We are happy to welcome New Visitors to the St. Mark's Shut-In List. We thank Bob & Carol Pittman and Kathy Fitzpatrick. Also, we thank Mary Lou Knau who has come back on the committee.

Nurture and Care Committee
St. Mark's

St. Mark's Church Family,

We want to thank you for the cards, visits, and prayers during Mom's, Grandma's, and Great Grandma's illness and passing. It means a lot to us to know how much she was loved and will be missed by all of you.

Ruth, Kristina, Brandon, Connor & Erin Stanifer.



MATTHEW 25: MINISTRIES

I started volunteering at Matthew 25 about five years ago. I find it very rewarding, and anyone can do this work, including children, teens and adults. St. Mark's also collects empty pill bottles for them as part of our mission.

Matthew 25: Ministries was founded by Rev. Wendell Mettey and is based on the Bible verses, Matthew 25:34 – 40. *"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me"*

Matthew 25 is located on Kenwood Rd., Cincinnati. It is a nonprofit, international humanitarian aid and disaster relief organization. More than 99% of cash and in-kind donations go toward programs. The people they help are given a helping hand, positioning them to become self-reliant.

Consider signing up to go on our next trip in June. Check the bulletin board in the hallway and your Sunday church bulletin for details.

Charlene Miller

THANKS TO ALL WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE FAIRFIELD FOOD PANTRY WALK March 23, 2019



MISSION MOMENT

Good Neighbor Sunday will be on **May 5** this year: a time of worship, service and fellowship ending with lunch and sharing of experiences. Church will begin at 9:30 as usual, community service will follow an abbreviated worship and lunch will be served in the Fellowship Hall at 12:00. Many of the outreach and service opportunities we experienced last year will be available as well as new opportunities. The sign up sheets will be located in the Welcome Area during the month of April. Last year the feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and we can't wait to see how God leads us this year.

Fall Mission Trip – September 19 – 22: This fall we will be going on a mission trip to the **Appalachian Service Project in Jonesville, VA**, about a 4 ½ hour drive. We will leave from church Thursday morning, Sept. 19. That evening we will form work groups and be assigned a family and a project. We will get to know the families while working on Friday and Saturday and return to the center each day for an evening of fellowship, reflection, sharing, singing, playing and free time. We will leave for home Sunday morning. The cost is \$130 per person. No experience is needed to participate in this mission trip.

There will be a meeting after church on April 28 in the Heritage Room for all who are interested.

Also, don't forget there are opportunities to volunteer at **Shared Harvest** on April 25 from 1 – 3p and with the **Broken Bus** to prepare food for April 27.

MORE PHOTOS FROM THE FAIRFIELD FOOD PANTRY WALK - March 23, 2019



Let's Talk, and Listen

An Invitation from Administrative Council

As many of you already know, the decision was made at the Special Session of General Conference to keep our current statements about homosexuality, same-sex marriage and the ordination of LGBTQIA persons the same, with stricter enforcements to those who do not comply. This decision passed by a narrow margin of 54 votes. A disaffiliation plan was also passed providing guidelines for congregations who wish to leave the UMC for "reasons of conscience." These decisions are under review by the UMC Judicial Council which meets in late April.

The Administrative Council believes that these recent denomination give our congregation a perfect opportunity to practice "Healthy and Open Communication" (one of our Core Values) by beginning a conversation regarding these decisions. Late last year approval was given by Administrative Council to distribute a survey (seen on next page) to our church family. The hope is that the results of this survey will enable us to have a starting point for this conversation.

We respectfully ask that each member or regular attendee of St. Mark's Church, age 13 and older, complete this survey. Taking the time to complete this survey and turning it in will enable your voice to be heard, privately and discreetly (you are welcome to add your name if you desire). Additional copies of the survey will be available in the welcome center as needed. A wooden box marked "Survey Forms" will be at the Welcome Center in the narthex. Please place your completed survey in that box by April 21.

The Results of the survey will be shared at a later date. Thank you for letting your voice be heard, and for being a faithful part of the St. Mark's family.

Sue Luken, Julie Mislansky, Julie Dichtl, and Pastor Joe

(Another) Note from Pastor Joe...

There may be some who are wondering why "now" with this survey, especially around the season of Lent and Easter. Some may believe that what happens at the denominational level does not concern us. A thought may be that, regardless of the decisions made at the General Conference level, here at SMUMC all are welcome to attend our church and worship with us.

To some extent, I can empathize. I'm not excited about talking about this either, which is perhaps the main reason why my feet have been so dusty (see above)! I have hesitated because I know what St. Mark's has gone through during this past year. We have spent these last months seeking to become a healthy congregation. So yes, although I've hinted about it a time or to, I have been reluctant to broach this subject with the congregation as a whole.

However, I believe we must begin this conversation. The reason why we need to talk about this is because we know in our hearts that this conversation is not about a "subject," or an "issue." It matters to us here at St. Mark's. What is being decided at the denominational level concerns "our own." They are our own beloved church members, and members of our own families, our children, grandchildren, and grandchildren. The question at hand is not whether we "welcome" all people. We do that, at least theoretically. We want to make sure that our "welcome" is genuine, and real. No ifs, ands, or buts. This goes to our understanding of Scripture (yes, Scripture remains primary), and much more.

So, yes, let's have the conversation. After all, this does tie in with our Core Values of Intentional Faith Development, Healthy & Open Communication, and Risk-taking Service, Mission, and Nurture, right?

Blessings this Lent and Easter,
Joe

Attitudes Toward Difference Survey

Put a check next to each statement with which you agree. Bracket the 2-3 consecutive statements that reflect your current range of thinking about lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people.

- ___ 1. Homosexuality is unnatural and immoral. LGBT people are emotionally or psychologically ill.
- ___ 2. LGBT people should participate in reparative therapy or any other treatment available to help them change their sexual orientation.
- ___ 3. We should have compassion for LGBT people. They can't be blamed for how they were born.
- ___ 4. LGBT people didn't choose to be the way they are. If they could somehow become heterosexual, they would surely do so.
- ___ 5. Homosexuality is a phase that many people go through and most grow out of.
- ___ 6. LGBT people need our support and guidance as they wrestle with the many difficult issues associated with their lifestyle.
- ___ 7. I have no problem with LGBT people, but see no need for them to flaunt their sexual orientation publicly.
- ___ 8. What LGBT people do in the privacy of their own bedroom is their business.
- ___ 9. LGBT people deserve the same rights and privileges as everybody else.
- ___ 10. Homophobia is wrong. Society needs to take a stand against anti-LGBT bias.
- ___ 11. It takes strength and courage for LGBT people to be themselves in today's world.
- ___ 12. It is important for me to examine my own attitudes so that I can actively support the struggle for equality that LGBT people have undertaken.
- ___ 13. There is great value in our human diversity. LGBT people are an important part of that diversity.
- ___ 14. It is important for me to stand up to those who demonstrate homophobic attitudes.
- ___ 15. LGBT people are an indispensable part of our society. They have contributed much to our world and there is much to be learned from their experiences.
- ___ 16. I would be proud to be part of an LGBT organization, and to openly advocate for the full and equal inclusion of LGBT people at all levels of our society.

Attitudes Toward Difference Survey Scoring Guide

Find the numbers below that correspond to the bracketed range on your survey. Read the attitude and characteristics that encompass this range. According to the Attitudes Toward Difference Scale developed by psychologist Dorothy Riddle, this is where you stand with regard to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people.

1-2 Repulsion: LGBT people are strange, sick, crazy and aversive.

3-4 Pity: LGBT people are somehow born that way and it is pitiful.

5-6 Tolerance: Life for LGBT people is hard; anti-gay attitudes just make things worse.

7-8 Acceptance: Homosexuality is a fact of life that should neither be punished nor celebrated.

9-10 Support: The rights of LGBT people should be protected and safeguarded.

11-12 Admiration: Being LGBT in our society takes strength.

13-14 Appreciation: There is value in diversity. Homophobic attitudes should be confronted.

15-16 Nurturance: LGBT people are an indispensable part of society.

Adapted from: Riddle, D. (1985). "Homophobia Scale." In Opening Doors to Understanding and Acceptance. ed. K. O'bear and A. Reynolds. Boston: Unpublished essay.

Your Rating:

1-4\ Your personal feelings may be preventing you from accepting and respecting LGBT people.

5-8\ You are somewhat accepting, but may not be willing to actively work against anti-LGBT bias.

9-12\ You are willing to provide support and work toward equal rights for LGBT people.

13-16\ You are able to fully embrace LGBT people as equal and valuable members of the community.

Food for Thought:

Are your attitudes toward LGBT people based upon experience or preconceptions? Are you as accepting of LGBT people as you are of people from different racial, ethnic or religious backgrounds? Why or why not? Have you ever had an LGBT friend? How might your attitudes help or hinder you from being an ally for LGBT people? What can you do educate yourself about LGBT issues and improve your attitude with regard to LGBT people?

New Ministry for Preschoolers



This Spring a new ministry for pre-schoolers is being launched. Beginning Easter morning, our Nursery room will become the Nursery – Preschool room.

Infants and toddlers will continue to receive care, while Lauren will lead children ages 3 - PreK in an age-appropriate lesson just for them.

The hope is that this new plan will be better for our younger children as well as our older ones.

Thank you to Peggy and Lauren for working out this new arrangement!

Congratulations to Kym Nguyen, Staff Parish Chairperson and member of Ad. Council
 Suzan Stracke, new member of Staff Parish
 Lee Brinkmeyer, Trustees Chairperson and member of Ad. Council

Updated 2019 Leadership Roster

Administrative Council

Chairperson	Ray Smith
Lay Leader and	
Lay Member Annual Conf.	Sue Luken
Dir. Children / Family Min.	Peggy Smith
Family Ministry	Jennifer Marshall
Care and Nurture	Pam Guynes
St. Mark's Cares Chairpersons	Karen Smith & Julie Mislansky
SPRC Chairperson	Kym Nguyen
Finance Chairperson	Tim Mislansky
Trustee Representative	Lee Brinkmeyer
Members At Large	
2019	Julie Dichtl
2020	Charlotte Tierney
2021	Steve Nguyen
Pastor	Joe Payne

Nominations and Leadership Development Committee

Pastor	Joe Payne, chair
Lay Leader	Sue Luken
2019	Ruth Ritenbaugh, Gail Hartwig
2020	Jim Beckett, Debbie Bryant
2021	Mary Pierson, Jim Jones

Staff / Parish Relations Committee

2019	Beth Ewald, Jerry Hartwig
2020	Kym Nguyen, chairperson; Suzan Stracke
2021	Kristy Theiss, Jenni Hensler

Finance Committee

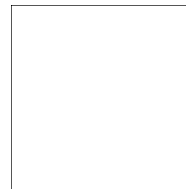
2019	Tim Mislansky, chair, Doug Ewald, Tom Tierney
2020	Jennifer Rinker, Janice Chaney
2021	Gale Goodman, Cheryl Creach

Trustees

2019	Don Stewart, Don Menke, Shirlene Norris
2020	Don Hegner, George Peters, Lee Brinkmeyer, chair
2021	Jeff Ghering, Marilyn Stewart

St. Mark's United Methodist Church

4601 Fairfield Avenue
Fairfield, OH 45014

**St. Mark's Staff**

Pastor, Rev. Joseph M. Payne -
Joe's cell #614-531-2373
Pastor Emeritus, Bob Klingel
Admin. Assistant, Brenda Smoot
Director of Music, Chris Beiser
Organist, Sue Combs
Director of Children & Family Ministries, Peggy Smith
Interim Youth Director, Erin Theodor
Nursery Director, Lauren Dichtl

Church Office Hours :

Monday — Thursday
9:00 - Noon, 1:00 - 3:00 pm
Friday - Office Closed

(513) 844-1818
Fax: (513) 844-2828
fairfieldstmarks.com

Worship Service:
Sundays 9:30 am