



SPIRIT OF ST. MARK'S

March 2019

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



SERVICE
"Repent and Believe the Gospel"
March 6th - 7:00 pm
Imposition of Ashes
Holy Communion

Ash Wednesday



SUNDAY, MARCH 17th

6:00 pm Pot-luck dinner.
(Desserts provided)

Lenten program to follow.

Everyone invited!

See Peggy Smith for Questions



**JOIN US FOR CARRY-IN
BRUNCH / LUNCH**

SUNDAY, MARCH 31ST
Immediately following church
in Fellowship Hall.

Bring a favorite breakfast or lunch food to share. Beverages will be provided.

The entire congregation is welcome!

See Pam Guynes or Cindy Booker (Nurture & Care Chairs) for questions.

Dear St. Mark's Church Family,

As I was thinking about our last few months together, the beginning of a chorus popped into my head:

*We've come this far by faith, leaning on the Lord...**

We've certainly come far. Peggy has joined us as Director of Children and Family Ministries. Erin has joined the staff as Interim Youth Director (see the youth director announcement elsewhere in this newsletter). And Brenda is back at her desk. Our lay leadership teams have begun their work for 2019: Trustees, Staff-Parish, Finance-Stewardship, Care and Nurture. Hospitality. St. Mark's Cares.

Nominations and Leadership Development are exploring new ways of assisting people in discerning their gifts for ministry, as well as dreaming of new places for people to use their gifts. We have worshiped together, led by our choir, organist, and bell choir. We have welcomed new faces. We have had good, fun times together. We have shed tears as we have remembered and celebrated the lives of faithful departed saints. We have baptized babies. We have welcomed new members. Our confirmation class has been meeting weekly, as has our current new member class. We have been a church, the church, in the fullest sense of the word.

But wait, there's more! Our Task Force has done solid work with our consultant, Tony Mosley. Our Ad Council and Task Force have spent considerable time reflecting on our past and present, as well as dreaming of our future. From this reflection and envisioning, we have renewed our commitment to the Mission of the United Methodist Church. To this Mission statement our leaders have formulated a Vision statement and a set of Core Values (see the following page). Our Mission, Vision, and Core Values will serve as our "spiritual GPS," keeping us on the right path. As the years go by, we will perfect this document even further, as we ourselves seek to become more holy.

There is so much more that could be said. Indeed, we have certainly come this far by faith!

That chorus speaks to me also as I sense some anxiety here at St. Mark's. It's difficult not to be at least somewhat anxious. On February 24th I will be leaving after worship to attend the last two days of the four-day specially called General Conference (Read a brief description of the business of General Conference on page 4). I am not a delegate. I will be one of many hundreds of visitors, press, and curious. What will I witness in St. Louis? What will the General Conference decide? Will the denomination experience schism? And a question you may be wondering: Will St. Mark's be affected?

I confess that I have no clue what will happen when delegates and everyone depart St. Louis on February 26. However, I do know what will happen at St. Mark's on March 3, 2019, the first Sunday after the General Conference. It will be the first Sunday in Lent. We will gather here in our beautiful sanctuary for worship. Our confirmation class will join with their mentors, other leaders, and you in stating our Mission / Vision / Core Values. Those same Core Values will serve as the outline of my next sermon series. Following worship, our new member class will continue their study of the book, "A Disciple's Path." Moving forward past March 3, we will continue to be the church, loving God, loving one another, and loving our neighbors. It's who we are – the people of St. Mark's.

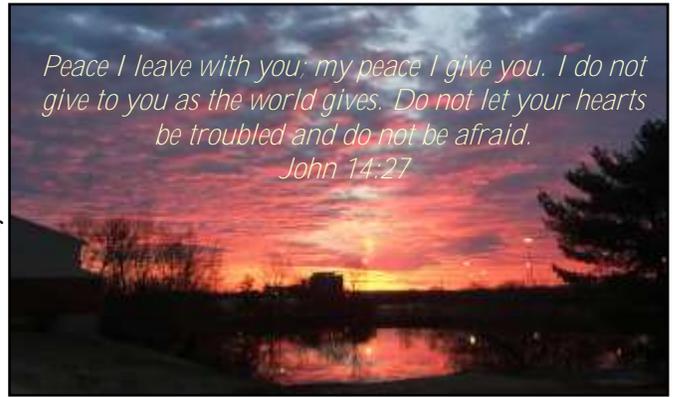
So, I encourage you: **be at peace**. The Holy Spirit is at work. Let us recommit ourselves to "keeping first things first" in our ministry – love God and love others. Read the remaining words to that chorus:

*Trusting in His holy word, He's never failed me yet.
Oh can't turn around, we've come this far by faith!**

We can't turn around, friends! Thank you for your continuing commitment to Christ and the ministry of St. Mark's Church. I am grateful for your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. Please call on me when you need me. See you in church Sunday!



*words and music by Albert A. Good



*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.
John 14:27*

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.

General Conference 2019

On Feb. 23-26, 862 clergy and lay delegates representing United Methodists around the world will gather in St. Louis for a special General Conference. Its only task is to seek a resolution to disagreements over human sexuality and LGBTQ inclusion, a debate that has been ongoing in our denomination for most of the last fifty years.

Delegates will be considering three main plans. One provides freedom and flexibility regarding same-sex weddings and gay ordination (One Church Plan). One maintains current prohibitions against same-sex weddings and gay ordination and increases punitive accountability (Traditional Plan). And one restructures the denomination into three main conferences based almost entirely on this issue (Connectional Conference Plan). There will be other plans and recommendations deliberated by GC2019, among them being the Simple Plan and the so-called Modified Traditional Plan. None of these plans are perfect, and each has its supporters and critics.

OVERVIEW OF PROPOSALS FOR GENERAL CONFERENCE

<https://www.greatplainsumc.org/files/way+forward/three+plans+summary+sheet.pdf>

WATCH - All open sessions will be livestreamed on umc.org, and you can also get to the livestream from The West Ohio Conference webpage.

GET THE FACTS - Reports from mainstream media may not be entirely accurate, so get your information from the best sources -umc.org, umnews.org, or westohioumc.org.

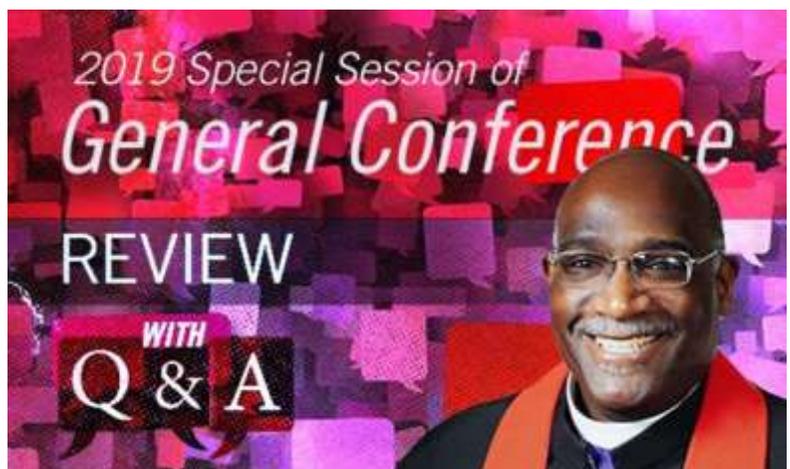
For more information, visit West Ohio's 2019 Special General Conference webpage. Westohioumc.org

Q & A with Bishop Palmer on March 2, after GC.

Bishop Gregory V. Palmer will host a simulcast on Saturday, March 2, at 10:00 am to review the actions taken at the 2019 Special Session of General Conference, which will be held February 23-26.

All interested West Ohioans are welcome to participate by attending the simulcast at one of 26 host sites across the Conference. During the event, participants will be able to email or text their questions to the Bishop. A recording of the simulcast will be available on the West Ohio website after the event.

You are invited to join Pastor Joe and others in watching the simulcast at Community United Methodist in West Chester.



Heard the news yet?

ST MARK'S CHURCH DIRECTORY NOW ONLINE



Now you can access your church family directory online.* It's simple. All you need is a pc or Mac and the internet. Here's the address.

<https://servantkeeper.com/directory/SMUMC>

Password: **4601smumc**

Once you enter the password all of the families will appear. There are two "pages" of families. You can either scroll down to find the family you are looking for, or you can type the name in the bar at the top.

TIPS:

You only need the first few letters of the name. Every family that begins with those few letters will appear.

You can also search by first name. Just spell out the first name, followed by a "space." Hit "search" and all persons with that first name will appear.

Click on the "Individuals" tab if you wish to see each name listed.

When you click on a family, the individuals will be listed below the home address and phone number. Click on the individual names to find individual cell phones, emails, etc.

You can call or email from the directory by clicking the individual's phone or email address. Click on the home address to access a map and directions to the person's home. The default map should be google.

New Email? Change your cell number? No Problem. You can edit much of the information on your family and individual profiles without having to call the church office. Just click "Manage my Family Info" at the bottom of your family profile. You will need to set your own unique password so that you and the office will be the only ones able to access your profile.

For questions or problems accessing the directory or editing your profile, please contact the church office. *Of course, copies of the directory will continue to be published for those who need or desire a "hard copy."

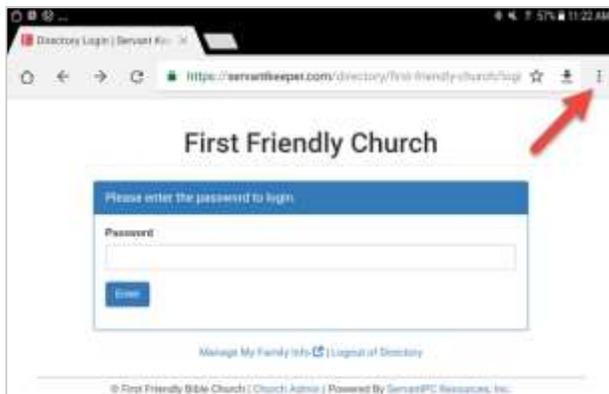
Keep Your Directory With You At All Times

Here's How to Put a Directory Shortcut on your phone or tablet.

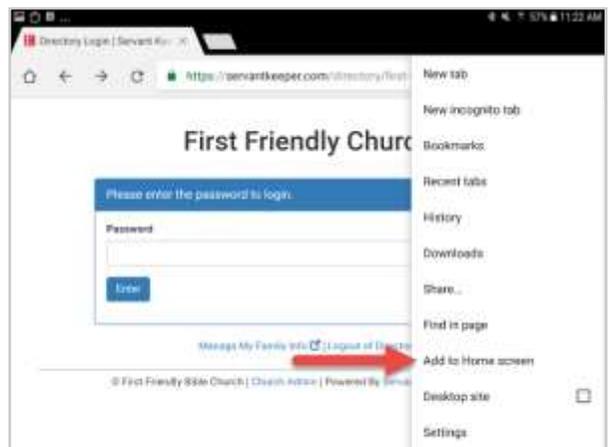
HOW TO PUT A DIRECTORY SHORTCUT ON YOUR **ANDROID**

(I-Phone / I-Pad instructions on next page)

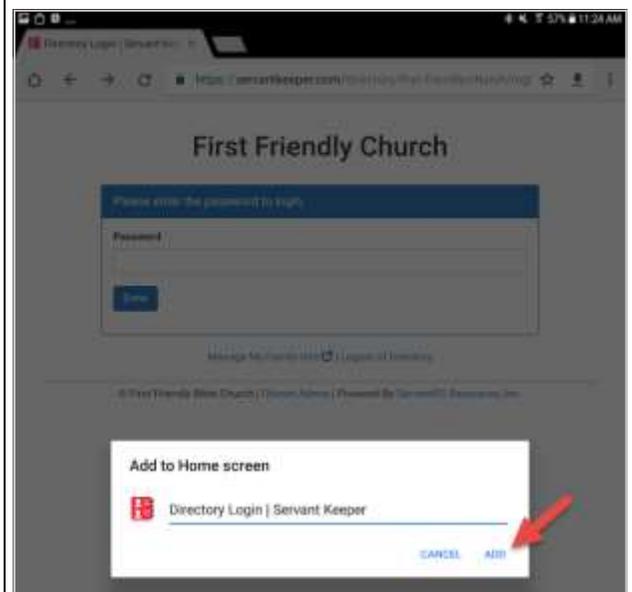
1. On your smart phone or tablet, open the Chrome browser.
2. Go to your Online Directory (<https://servantkeeper.com/directory/smumc>). (Instead of "First Friendly Church, yours will say "Welcome to St. Mark's Family Directory.").
3. Select the 3 dots in the top right-hand corner of your browser.



Choose the "Add to Home Screen" option.



On the "Add to Home screen" window, type the name you'd like to give your shortcut (or keep the default name). Click **[Add]** to continue.



You will now see a new shortcut on your device's home screen labeled with the name you entered in the previous step.

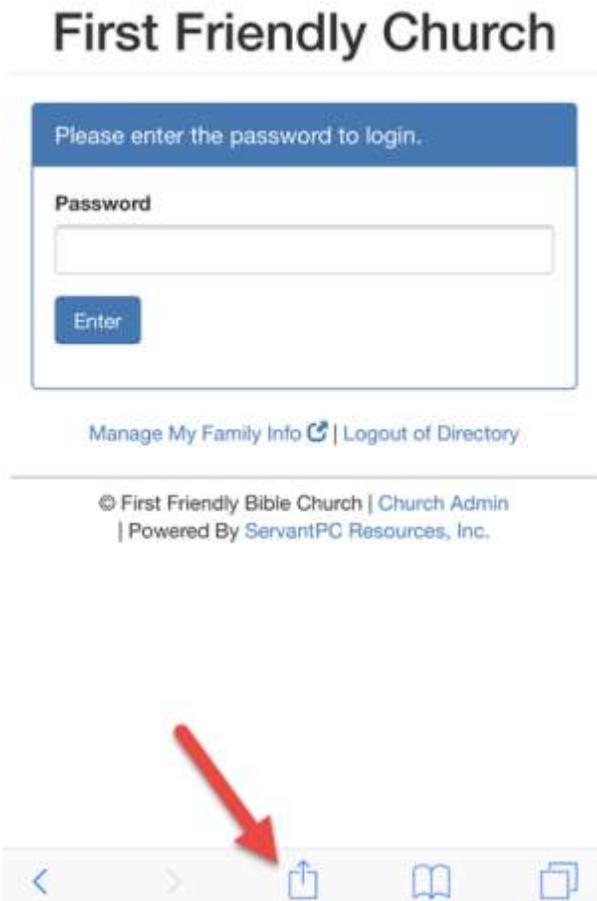
Use this icon to open the St. Mark's Online Directory.



Scroll down for I-Phone / I-Pad Instructions.

HOW TO PUT A DIRECTORY SHORTCUT ON YOUR IPHONE / IPAD

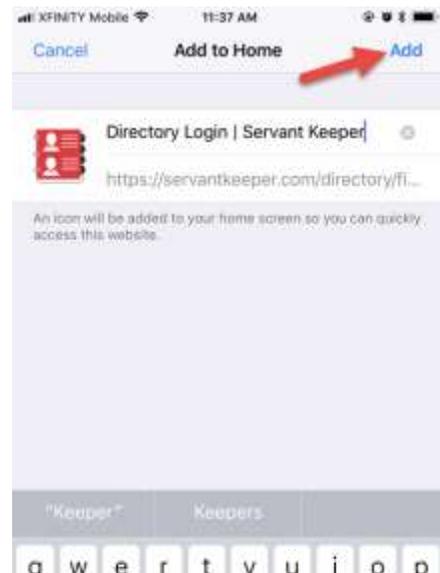
1. On your smart phone or tablet, open the Safari browser.
2. Go to your Online Directory (<https://servantkeeper.com/directory/smumc>). (Instead of "First Friendly Church, yours will say "Welcome to St. Mark's Family Directory."").
3. Select the share icon at the bottom of the screen.



Choose the "Add to Home Screen" option. You will probably need to scroll left to find it.



On the "Add to Home" window, type the name you'd like to give your shortcut (or keep the default name). Click [Add] to continue.



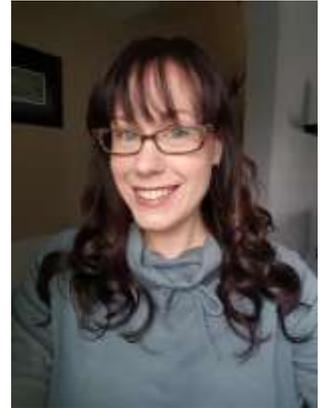
You will now see a new shortcut on your device's home screen labeled with the name you entered in the previous step. Use this icon to open the St. Mark's Online Directory.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ERIN THEODOR, ST. MARK'S INTERIM YOUTH DIRECTOR

"God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform....!"

For many months the staff-parish relations committee had been working diligently and faithfully toward filling the position of Director of Youth Ministries, with no success. The right person could not be found.

Meanwhile, God was stirring in the heart of the committee's chairperson, Erin Theodor. She sensed the Holy Spirit was nudging her to consider the position for herself, while individual church members encouraged her at the same time. After prayer, and consultation with Pastor Joe, Peggy Smith, and especially her family, Erin resigned her position on SPRC and applied for the position of interim youth director. After gaining the endorsement from Pastor Joe and an interview with the remaining SPRC members, the SPRC approved Erin's hiring and is pleased to announce her position as our Interim Youth Director.



This is a 15 hr. per week, six-month interim position, with the possibility of it becoming permanent at the end of the six month period. Erin's starting date was February 20, and the first event is planned for March 3.

Erin brings energy, enthusiasm, a love for St. Mark's youth, and a deep love of God to this position. She has a passion to affirm our kids as beloved children of God, and a desire to partner with the congregation in guiding them to become growing disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Please join Pastor Joe and the SPRC in welcoming Erin as our newest member of the staff! .

Read about our first Youth Event of 2019 on page 8.

TRUSTEES MAKE PLANS FOR 2019

St. Mark's Trustees held their first meeting of 2019 on February 19. Lee Brinkmeyer was elected to serve as chairperson. Jeff Gering will serve in an unofficial role as vice-chair and will assist Lee. Marilyn Stewart was elected secretary. The trustees and pastor thank these three persons for their willingness to serve in these important positions.

The trustees' goals for 2019 include completing the floor work in the narthex, installing windows in the church office and copier room doors, and installing a drop ceiling and replacing the defective light fixtures in the office hallway. Other goals include replacing water-damaged ceiling tile in Fellowship Hall, mulching the beds in time for Easter, painting and other minimal maintenance jobs. Many other long and short term goals were discussed. The completion of these goals is dependent on available financial and manpower resources.

The parking lot campaign was also discussed. The trustees resolved to work with the finance committee to keep this campaign before the people and to encourage the giving toward this project. The trustees and the finance committee are in agreement that this project will do much to make our parking lot safer for all who attend St. Mark's on Sunday and through the week.

ENCOURAGING NEWS — THANKS, ST. MARK'S!

Hello St. Mark's Family,

I want to start by thanking you for your generosity in January. Weather played a big role in the giving for the month. We had one Sunday with only about 30 people in worship and cancelled a second Sunday. When there's no church or little church, the offering plate suffers. And when we cancel church, we don't see a corresponding decline in bills. In fact, they probably get bigger (more heat for the church, snow plowing expense, etc.).

At the mid-point of the month, we were quite concerned about how much cash we had and whether we could pay all the bills. But the members of St. Mark's came through. Our last Sunday of January and first Sunday of February were strong giving weeks – some of the strongest we've had in a long time.

Now, we still are running really tight. We have just enough cash to pay the bills each month, but at least I'm not worried about paying the bills as they come in.

Total giving for January was about \$27,300. Our expenses for the month were high - at almost \$33,000 – as we have several bills that are for the entire calendar year, but paid in January.

We did pay both our loans on time and now owe just under \$80,000, and we made our apportionment payments as scheduled.

The January giving equated to about \$6,800 per week which is close to our budget needs of \$7,000. I'm hopeful that we can continue this pattern in February.

The parking lot fund sits at just short of \$8,000. We set a goal of \$35,000 to repair the sinkhole, repave the entire lot and install additional lighting for safety. Please consider a one-time gift to this fund to improve the safety of our facility. We hope to work with Trustees to share more of a vision about how your generosity can help us improve the safety conditions at St. Mark's.

We continue to see small, yet steady, increases in the number of families using electronic giving. This helps St. Mark's by allowing giving to be more predictable, especially when weather causes us to cancel church. It works just like having your insurance premiums or some other regular withdrawal from your checking account. And you can start and stop it at any time. If you are interested, you can visit <http://www.fairfieldstmarks.com/give> to sign up.

Should you have questions about St. Mark's finances, please do not hesitate to ask me at church or to email me at tmislansky@fuse.net or call me at 513-759-0581. All members are welcome to our Finance Committee meetings – the next one is Tuesday, February 12th at 7 pm.

Thank you,

Tim Mislansky, Finance Committee Chairperson

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 March at T-Bryd American Grille (formerly The Silver Tee), 4444 Hamilton-Mason Rd., Hamilton, on **Wednesday, March 20th at noon.**

Please see Bob or Carol Pittman or call 829-4548 for reservations by noon, Monday, March 18th.



The Ruth Circle will be meeting on **Friday, March 15 at 1:00 pm** in Fellowship Hall.

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.

Youth Group will be starting back up on **Sunday, March 3!**
6 pm - 8 pm

If you're in 6th grade–12th grade, I would love to see you there!

Come get to know your new Youth Director a little bit better!

Call or text to let me know you'll be there: (513) 748-1085

Erin Theodor



SAVE THE DATES

EASTER EGG HUNT Sunday, April 14th at 2 pm.

SALAD LUNCHEON Thursday, May 9 Details will be in the April newsletter.

VBS Planning has begun. Contact Peggy Smith or Jennie Marshall if you are interested in helping.



March Birthdays and Anniversaries

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

- MARCH BIRTHDAYS**
- 1 - Steve Griffith
 - 1 - Kristina Stanifer
 - 2 - Mike Aiken
 - 5 - Lee Brinkmeyer
 - 11 - Denny Mullen
 - 13 - Nick Alcorn
 - 14 - Kathy Fitzpatrick
 - 16 - Mark Luken
 - 20 - Chris Beiser
 - 20 - Mike Kinnard
 - 21 - Colin George (12 yrs.)
 - 21 - Tyler George (12 yrs.)
 - 22 - Pat Fassnacht
 - 22 - Carolyn Janosik
 - 22 - Stefanie Schneider
 - 22 - Kaden Theiss (8 yrs.)



- 23 - Bill Dichtl
- 23 - Jim Jones
- 24 - Barb Lowry
- 24 - Judy Scofield
- 24 - Cameron Smoot (18 yrs.)
- 27 - Dick Brewer
- 27 - Bob Grammel

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 - Jim & Betsy Jones
- 6 - Don & Marilyn Stewart
- 7 - Wayne & Tari Randall
- 7 - Andy & Ann Shellman
- 17 - Rich & Joyce Zugelter
- 31 - Danny & Debbie Vanderpool



St. Mark's Family,
 Thank you for the many cards, prayers, phone calls & concerns during Bob's illness & death. Thank you also for the lovely flowers. May God bless each of you.
 Carolyn Janosik & family

St. Mark's Family,
 Your kind expression of sympathy will always be remembered.
 Family of Ethel Stanifer

Dear St. Mark's Family,
 We are so appreciative of the prayers of support, basket of greenery and the cards of sympathy. Thank you for all the love you have expressed - our hearts are filled with warm fuzzies.
 The Phillippo and Kahmann Families

Rev. Joe Payne and all members,
 We sincerely appreciate your kindness to our family during the illness and death of our sister, Ethel Stanifer. We thank you for the visits to Ethel and the finest service on her funeral day. The food you furnished was delicious and all persons in the dining room, so very kind.
 We thank all of you,
 Darrell, Iva & Phil Willis

MISSION REPORT

Mission Spotlight

The Fairfield Food Pantry has been serving local residents since 1997 with a mission to provide a balanced and nutritious emergency food supply to those with special needs in a loving, caring and supportive manner. They rely upon food donated by individuals, churches, schools, community organizations, scouts, youth and community institutions. In addition, the pantry buys food from Shared Harvest Food Bank, Kroger, Sam's, Walmart and other local vendors. They moved last year after an automobile crashed into their building and are now located at 78 Donald Drive, Fairfield, OH.

This year their major fundraiser, the **Fairfield Food Pantry 5K Run/Walk**, will be held on Saturday, March 23rd at 9 am at Waterworks Park, 5133 Groh Lane, Fairfield, OH 45014. St. Mark's has supported the food pantry for many years through year round can good donations and support of their 5K Walk. Last year 18 walkers braved cold, snowy weather to support this worthy cause in addition to being a sponsor of the Walk. This year, we are again a sponsor and are hoping to increase the number of walkers.

Pre-registration is \$30 and may be completed online through March 21. The registration fee on the day of the race is \$35. You may pick up your Bib and T-shirt and also register on March 21 and March 22 from 3:00 - 7:00 p.m. at the Fairfield Food Pantry. Kym Nguyen is leading this effort and will be available to help with registration and answer questions.



2019 plans

Earlier this year, the St. Mark's Cares Committee considered several options for expanding service and outreach opportunities. In addition to financial support and providing opportunities for Matthew 25, Shared Harvest, Serve City, Fall Festival, Fairfield Food Pantry, UMCOR, Good Neighbor Sunday, Salvation Army Christmas Tree Angels, Parkside Nursing Home, a mission trip and the Broken Bus; we will add a collection for Big Brothers/Big Sisters and provide opportunities for the church to mentor children on the waiting list beginning July/August. Also, the Choir and the Thursday Night Small Group Ladies are providing snacks for individuals in the NA group, we are looking into providing a VBS experience for the kids at Living Water this summer and the Heifer Project is underway. Thank you for your support and involvement in outreach and service.



WORKING AT MATTHEW 25

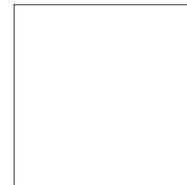
WORKING AT SERVE CITY



**Children's Ministries and St. Mark's Cares
are teaming up to Fill the Ark!**

Heifer International is celebrating 75 years of working with communities to increase income, improve nutrition, care for the Earth and end world poverty and hunger. They go about this "teach them to fish" mission by providing families with animals for nutrition and income. St. Mark's has supported this ministry several times in the past and decided this would be a great Lenten mission project. We will start collecting on March 10th and finish up on Easter. Individuals, families, small groups, etc. will be encouraged to team together to buy animals and help us Fill the Ark! Watch for more details in the bulletin about how to get involved. In the meantime, **visit Heifer.org to learn more about this project!**

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