



# **SPIRIT OF ST. MARK'S**

## September 2019

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



**SUNDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 29**

**Information on  
page 10**



**SUNDAY SCHOOL MINISTRY  
IS NEEDED**

**See all information, on page 11,  
on how you can help.**



**You can be involved in the Music  
Ministry at St. Mark's.**

**Chancel Choir - Rehearsals every  
Wednesday at 7:30 pm.**

**Hand Bell Choir - Rehearsals every  
Wednesday at 6 pm.**



**SAVE THE DATE:  
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27  
4 PM - 7 PM**

**St. Mark's Fall Festival and Trunk or Treat**



## *A Note from Pastor Joe*

Dear St. Mark's family,

It has now been two months since Linda and I spent our first night in your house at 4605 Fairfield Avenue. Every now and then, we get questions about our move.

"Are you unpacked yet?"

"How do you like the parsonage?"

"What's it like living next door to the church?"

Here are my answers:

"Yes, thanks to Linda!"

"Love it!"

"Convenient!"

There's something else about living at 4605 Fairfield Avenue. Sometimes, as I'm watching TV or reading, I think about the family who first called this house their home. I can almost feel their presence with me. All thirty-six of them.

That's right. Thirty-six. As in, 3-6. That's one HUGE family!

Of course, I'm thinking about the folks who gathered to worship God as a new church start in what was then a brand-new house. The two images below are of the same room. The picture at the top is our living room as it looks today. The older image below it was taken in 1953, the year of our church's founding. A much larger copy hangs in our Heritage Room. You should take some time to see it and other historical photos hanging in the Heritage Room.

In case you are trying to imagine how the pastor and spouse maintained their sanity while playing host to all of these people crammed into their living room week after week (!), you can rest assured that he and his family lived elsewhere, until the first phase of the church facility was completed in 1955.

For two years, this young congregation gathered to sing, pray, and worship the Lord in the very room I prop my feet up to watch tv, read, or rest. At times, I chuckle about that thought! Other times, I admit I don't think much about it. But, now and then, I can't help but get goosebumps.

Our living room is practically Holy Ground.

Our forebears prayed here. They sang. They laughed, they cried. Baptisms, the Lord's Supper, perhaps even weddings or funerals were held here. If these walls could only talk, they would tell of folks who celebrated life's joys, and cried when life brought tremendous sorrow. These walls witnessed folks being Jesus for others, comforting and encouraging one another, and going out into the new neighborhoods to invite others to join them in their already crowded "living room sanctuary."

I am thankful that at least one person in that old photo is still with us today. I enjoy listening to Jean Bennett share her memories of those days with me.

Yes, this place is brick and mortar, as is our church facility. We church folk are always in danger of making our buildings into something more than they are. Our love for them can slide into a form of idolatry. We need to be careful about that.

All the same, you and I are blessed that these structures have been bequeathed to us for our care. And, you

can be assured that Linda and I are blessed to call 4605 Fairfield Avenue our HOME. I am also blessed to be

Your pastor and friend,

Joe

PS. Very soon, we plan to have an Open House so you can have the opportunity to see your beautiful house, and our home. I promise to get the word out to you as soon as plans are made. On that day, I'll try to have my dirty socks picked up. No guarantees, though. Ha!



# St. Mark's Financial Update

Tim Mislansky, Finance Committee Chairperson

Greeting St. Mark's Family,

In July, you received a copy of your giving statement. We decided to provide this at the midpoint of the year so you could check your giving records for accuracy as well as show how your giving compared to your pledge. We heard feedback from a small number of church members that they were upset that the giving statement appeared as if it were a bill. It was not. It was a summary of giving to date, the amount pledged and the remaining amount of the pledge.

Pledging is not a firm commitment; it's an estimate of what people expect to give to the church during the year. It's not a formal obligation like a bill. We certainly apologize for any confusion. We did have several more members express appreciation to see where they stood on their giving, at least one member had us correct an error and several members "make-up" giving contributions they had missed.

In terms of our financial results for July, we received just short of \$26,000, but spent just over \$29,000 – meaning we once again spent more money than received. Year-to-date giving is \$195,600 which is up 8% over last year. Our total pledges are close to our target now with 56% of pledged dollars having been received about with about 60% of the year completed.

We paid our loans on time and the outstanding balances are just under \$74,000. And we have paid 7/12 of our annual district and conference apportionments.

Some of the increased spending was related to the upgrades to the church parsonage. To date, we have spent, \$11,000 on the improvements. This included paint, carpeting, refinishing the floors and new appliances. Of the total, \$2,500 came from money that had been set aside from rent payments from our former tenants to help with repairs and the remaining \$8,500 came from the general operating fund. Once all the initial expenses are completed, the move will save the church between \$200 and \$400 per month compared to paying a housing allowance. St. Mark's has also applied for an exemption from property taxes with the parsonage since it is no longer used for rental income.

(Continued on next page)



# St. Mark's Financial Update

Tim Mislansky, Finance Committee Chairperson

All of this leads to our cash position remaining very tight. We continue to borrow from designated funds on a short-term basis to meet cash flow needs. What this means is that on certain days, if we had to payout all the designated funds, we would not have enough money to do so.

At the most recent committee meeting, we discussed an article titled "5 Habits Your Church Must Unlearn to Increase Giving." The five bad habits are:

1. Churches don't talk about money.
2. Churches talk about money when they are desperate.
3. Churches only talk about money in connection with giving.
4. Churches ask new people not give.
5. Churches talk apologetically about giving.

The committee felt that St. Mark's had several of the bad habits. We seem to only talk about money at consecration Sunday or when we are desperate, and we often feel the need to apologize for talking about giving. We talked about how to break these bad habits as we move towards Consecration Sunday this year.

And as a reminder, we post minutes of our meetings on the bulletin board near the kitchen. Check them out for more details about St. Mark's finances. Should you have questions about opportunities to increase giving or about anything related to St. Mark's finances, please do not hesitate to ask me at church or to email me at [tmislansky@fuse.net](mailto:tmislansky@fuse.net) or call me at 513-759-0581.

Thank you,  
Tim Mislansky



# *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 at P.F. Changs, 9435 Civic Center Blvd, Streets of West Chester, on **Wednesday, September 18th at noon.**

Please see Bob or Carol Pittman or call 829-4548 for reservations by noon, Monday, September 16th.



The Wednesday Bible Study will begin on **Wednesday, September 4th at 7:00 pm** in the Fellowship Hall.

All welcome and bring your Bible. Iris Jones is the facilitator of the study.

The Tuesday Bible Study will begin on **Tuesday, September 10th at 10:30 am** in St. Mark's Heritage Room. The study will begin this season with Proverbs. All welcome and bring your Bible. Kathy Bradley is the facilitator of the study.



The Ruth Circle will be meeting on **Friday, September 20th 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 (779-9162) or Charlene Miller (844-6793) if you have any questions.



St. Mark's member, Norma Ruth Cooper, passed away on August 13th. Sympathy to her family and friends.



**ANNUAL CHURCH OUTING**  
to LaCOMEDIA to see **ELF**

*Matinee on Friday, December 6th*  
Leave at 10:15 am.  
**\$38.00 per person.**

*Just 20 tickets have been reserved. Please see Brenda Smoot if you are interested.*

# September Birthdays and Anniversaries

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



## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2 - Jim Beckett
- 2 - Dee Dee Edmundson
- 2 - Melissa LaMar
- 2 - Suzan Stracke
- 4 - Ruth Ritenbaugh
- 5 - Mike Booker
- 6 - Carol Ault
- 6 - Andy Shellman
- 7 - Chelsea Menke
- 8 - Pam Guynes
- 9 - Tari Randall
- 10 - Carol Pittman
- 12 - Pat Coyle
- 12 - Edith Davis
- 12 - Zelda Tuthill
- 13 - Mary Kay Bowling
- 13 - Casey Theodor - 8 yrs.
- 14 - Mindy Kuertz
- 15 - Linda Fenzel
- 15 - Jennie Marshall
- 20 - Ruth Stanifer
- 21 - Maryada Millspaugh
- 24 - Nancy Hole
- 24 - Peggy Woods
- 26 - Sherman Griffin
- 26 - Sue Luken
- 27 - Hannah Hensler
- 28 - Joe Addis
- 28 - Shirlene Norris
- 29 - Ray Smith

## SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 - Alan & Wilma Batt
- 1 - Mark & Jenni Hensler
- 3 - Dave & Cindy Booker
- 4 - Steve & Kym Nguyen
- 6 - Justin & Erin Theodor
- 9 - Sherman & Teresa Griffin
- 10 - Ben & Heather Chambers
- 11 - Larry & Cheryl Creach
- 14 - Don & Carol Ault
- 16 - Kraig & Vicki Cavender
- 16 - Denny & Sue Mullen
- 20 - Roy & Helen Brown
- 20 - Mark & Sue Luken
- 29 - Ron & Becky Hamblin



St. Mark's & Pastor Joe,

Thank you for the support after the recent passing of my father. I know we're new to the St. Mark's family, but you've really made us feel welcome. And thank you for the Hospice donation in my father's name. We're looking forward to getting to know you all better.

Kyle & The Robinson Family



# MISSION REPORT

## ST. MARK'S CARES MISSION MOMENT

### St. Mark's continues to be a church focused on missions!

Our July donation drive resulted in two overflowing bins full of school supplies. These were donated to **Dougie and Ray's** for kids in the Fairfield schools.

A group of ten adults and youth helped pack food boxes at **Shared Harvest Foodbank** on August 14<sup>th</sup>.

Our August mission campaign has wrapped up. We will be sending a check to **UMCOR/West Ohio Conference** in the amount of \$770.



Our **mission team** has been meeting and preparing for their trip to Jonesville, Virginia where they will work side by side with two families helping to make their homes safer and warmer and drier. The trip is Sept. 19-22<sup>nd</sup>. Please keep our team of eight and the ones they will serve in your prayers.



Karen Smith  
George Peters  
Susan Bunte

Ray Smith  
Gale Goodman  
Pastor Joe

Sue Luken  
Devin Goodman

We will be serving a meal at Serve City on Monday, September 30<sup>th</sup>. We arrive at Serve City at 5:30, serve at 6:00 and are usually done by 7:00. If you have not served with us before, you may want to join us! The people there are super appreciative, and everyone leaves **feeling blessed. Check the sign up on the St. Mark's Cares bulletin board to sign up to serve** or help with food prep.







## MISSION SPOTLIGHT

### Brian and Tara Vinson, UMC Missionaries

St. Mark's began supporting Tara and Brian about three years ago. We felt it was important to support missionaries from our West Ohio Conference. We hope to have them come visit when they are back in the states for furlough. Please add them to your prayer list and all those around the world sharing the gospel of Jesus.

Rev. Brian Vinson is an ordained elder of the West Ohio Annual Conference. He serves as the coordinator of church planting in the Lusaka District of Zambia, a part of the South Congo/Zambia Episcopal Area. The church in Zambia is growing rapidly, resulting in need for new churches and for vital lay and pastoral leadership. Brian takes part in leadership development and coordination of volunteer church construction teams. He also seeks to raise awareness across the church of the United Methodist potential in Zambia and to raise funds to expand its ministries. Tara works with new church developers in the use of volunteers in church construction and helps to train Sunday school and other teachers for growing faith communities. Tara Vinson is a musician by profession. They have four young children: Jonathan, Andrew, Lily, and Matthew.



# GOOD NEIGHBOR SUNDAY

## SEPTEMBER 29

*Join us for a morning of blessing our neighbors!*

9:30 - SHORT SERVICE TO PREPARE OUR HEARTS

10:00 - SENT OUT TO BLESS OUR NEIGHBORS

12:00 - COME BACK TOGETHER FOR LUNCH AND REFLECTION

Look for sign-ups at the Welcome Center on September 8, 15, and 22

Many opportunities to serve will be offered.

JESUS REPLIED: "LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND." THIS IS THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT. AND THE SECOND IS LIKE IT: "LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF." MATTHEW 22:37-39

- Lift your voices in song at local Nursing centers.
- Join us on the Broken Bus & travel around Fairfield blessing people with breakfast and a smile.
- Take thank you notes and treats to our local police, firefighters and Emergency room staff.
- Help sort clothing and other tasks at the Broken Bus storage facility (the Bus Stop).
- Visit our service men and women at the local National Guard Armory.
- At church, pray for our neighbors, make phone calls of support and love to those **who can't be with us, make cards for people in need.**
- Visit and share communion with our members who are homebound or are in nursing centers.
- Make homemade treats to share with our neighbors.
- Help prepare a meal to take to our homebound members.





Have you ever thought about the importance of Sunday school? Sunday school not only teaches **children about God's love. It also gives them a safe place to be themselves, to be mentored by** caring Christian adults and to form lifelong friendships. You can part of this impactful, **inspiring ministry at St. Mark's**  
Please prayerfully consider serving our awesome kids. See or contact Peggy Smith for details.  
[p.smith@stmarksfairfield.com](mailto:p.smith@stmarksfairfield.com)

**Sunday Morning Music Leader**  
**One or Two needed**

**This servant leader opportunity is for a high energy youth or adult that loves music and kids.**

**Job Description** – The Music Leader will prayerfully *plan and lead songs* for children during the opening fifteen minutes of Sunday school. (worship time)

**Time Commitment** – Approx. 30 minutes of planning time with Peggy Smith once per month. 30 minutes prior to and during the start of Sunday school each week, and whatever is needed per individual, to prepare for each Sunday.

**Sunday School Shepherd**  
**Two needed**

**This is an opportunity for a caring adult or youth to become better connected to kids and families that are a part of the St. Mark's church community.**

**Job Description** - The role of a Sunday school shepherd is to:  
Be in prayer for their small group  
Welcome and connect with children and families in their group on Sunday mornings.  
Accompany their group to the assigned activity for that week.  
Debrief with group after activity and return to Campfire room for family pickup.

**Time Commitment** – Sixty minutes on Sunday morning.  
**Length of Commitment** Most Sundays Sept. – May.

**Activity Leaders**  
**Open for multiple leaders**

**If you enjoy having fun and being creative, this servant leader job is for you!**

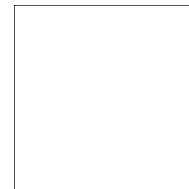
**Job Description** – Activity leaders prepare the planned rotation activity that is included in the curriculum. Options include Art, Bible Games, Tech, Cooking, Drama, Music, Science, and Videos. Activity leaders will also pray for and coect with children and their families.

**Time Commitment** – Two Sundays per Month. One hour each week, plus team meeting after church on months that you serve.

**St. Mark's United Methodist Church**

4601 Fairfield Avenue  
Fairfield, OH 45014

513-844-1818



**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  
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