



# SPIRIT OF ST. MARK'S DECEMBER 2019

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

**BEGINNING DECEMBER 1  
ADVENT / CHRISTMAS  
WORSHIP SERIES**

## Heaven and Nature Sing! 300 Years of **JOY** to the World

*December 1, 4-7 pm  
Advent Celebration*

*Crafts, Pot-Luck, Children's Program  
plus,  
Singing around the outdoor Nativity*

*Choir Cantata December 15*

*Messiah*  
**HEAVEN'S GLORY**

## *Christmas Eve*

**6:30**

*Family Service  
for all ages  
Carols & Candlelight*

**11:00**

*Traditional Lessons & Carols  
Chancel Choir & Candlelight*



## *An Advent / Christmas Note from Pastor Joe*

*Weeping may linger for the night,  
but joy comes with the morning [mourning].  
- Psalm 30*

Dear St. Mark's Family,

As I write this letter this Church year is coming to a close. Very soon we will enter the season of Advent. You may recall that last year was the 200th anniversary of the beloved carol, Silent Night, and our worship all through Advent and Christmas was based on that carol.

This year is the 300th anniversary of another carol, Isaac Watt's "Joy to the World." So, it only seems logical that we should celebrate this milestone by basing this year's worship series on this wonderful carol.

That's just what we're going to do. Beginning the first Sunday in December, we begin a new worship series, entitled, *Heaven and Nature Sing: 300 Years of Joy to the World.*"

Some of you may be wondering about this choice of a series:

"Pastor Joe, after your loss...are you sure you want to allow this carol to be your entire Advent and Christmas focus? How can you sing "Joy to the World"?"

I get it. On one hand, I expect to laugh and smile and sing the carols in abandon. Between Christmas and New Year's our three surviving kids and their families will be descending on the parsonage. Our home will be filled with eight adults six kids, two cats, and one energetic labradoodle puppy (the newest member of our Franklin, TN family). We will have a blast.

On the other hand, I know there will be sadness and tears. I'm not the type that can hide my pain very well. I have great difficulty pretending to be "happy." I'm not into plastic smiles and fake frivolity.

So, I was a little apprehensive about this "Joy to the World" series, because I tend to equate "joy" with a surface "happiness." Thankfully, I'm learning. Series creator Marcia McFee has this to say:

The holidays can be a difficult time for those who are dealing with loss of some kind. And certainly, a worship series about joy can seem, at first glance, especially difficult to withstand. Joy might indeed be elusive. But the phrase from the Psalmist, "joy comes in the morning" could also be "joy comes in the mourning." Joy is not about denying suffering, but rather it is the embracing of the depths of all of life's emotions that is the very thing that allows us to feel the heights as well. Joy is possible when we understand suffering. It is the school of compassion and love.

Truth is, all of us have or will experience loss of one kind or another. So, I invite you to join with me this Advent and Christmas season. Enter into Advent. Embrace all of life. My hope is that, together, we will experience a deep and authentic JOY.

With Christmas JOY,

# St. Mark's Financial Update

Tim Mislansky, Finance Committee Chairperson



Greeting St. Mark's Family,

As I sit down to write this month's article, I have mixed emotions. I'm thankful for the blessings that St. Mark's has. We have a wonder-full church family and we are starting to see growth in attendees, members and ministries. We're seeing our church make a bigger impact in people's lives and for these, I am excited and encouraged.

And as of today, we've paid all but \$3,800 of our apportionments for 2019. Next month, we'll send in the final payment and reach 100% apportionment payments for the third year in a row! After years of paying little towards apportionments, we should be proud of these results.

But as I said, I have mixed emotions. I am discouraged as I prepare this financial report. In the month of October, we received about \$21,000 for the month. This was the lowest month of giving since May 2018, and it's the third lowest month we've had in terms of giving in the last five years.

I don't know the reason for the drop off but it's noticeable in what is coming in the offering. To pay the bills of the church, we need our giving to be \$28,000 per month. Each month, we borrow a little bit more from our designated funds to pay the bills. This is not something we can continue to do.

The committees of the church have been busy planning for 2020. Spending is budgeted to be essentially flat, though there are several improvements to the church building and the parsonage that are desired. In other updates, we continue to pay our loans on time and we now owe just under \$71,000. The parking lot fund stands at about \$15,000 and is still well short of the \$35,000 needed to repair the sink, repave the lot and install new lighting for safety.

Pastor Joe just completed a sermon series on our Wonder-Full life. He challenged us in some ways with how we give and why we give. Do our outer giving practices align with our inner beliefs? And so I extend that challenge as well to all of us in our congregation.

“There are wonder-full things happening at St. Mark's. Do you see them? Do you want to be a part of them? Will you consider investing in them? Or investing more?”

I hope the answer to these questions is yes. It doesn't take much. And just like when we invest our time, when we invest our money in St. Mark's, the returns can be so substantial.

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.

Sincerely,  
Tim Mislansky



## NOVEMBER BLESSINGS

St. Mark's members were busy serving those in need this month! We had six volunteers who packed food boxes at Shared Harvest. We had five members who served the homeless while riding the Broken Bus, along with two others who helped provide the food, and we have nine servants who shared a pre-Thanksgiving meal at Serve City on November 22<sup>nd</sup>. A huge thank you to the many good souls who donated money to this cause so we could purchase the food!!



## SALVATION ARMY CHRISTMAS ANGELS

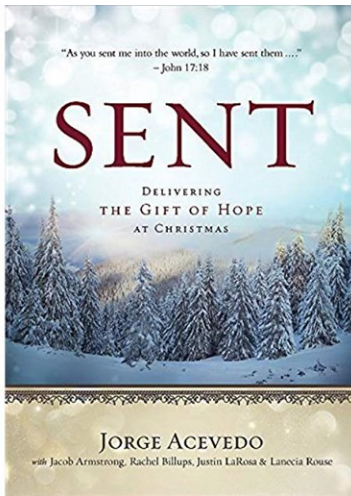
A St. Mark's tradition, the Christmas angels, have arrived and are available at the welcome center! We have enough tags to provide Christmas gifts for 50 children.

We have been asked to buy a coat, a pair of shoes or boots, and a toy, at an estimated cost of \$100. This might be a great opportunity for two or three individuals, couples, or families to join together to purchase the items for one child.

Check out the Black Friday sales and the Amazon deals and have all **your items back at church by December 8<sup>th</sup>**. You do not need to wrap the gifts; simply place all three items in one bag with the tag attached to the outside. Questions? See Karen Smith or Julie Mislansky.



# St. Mark's Opportunities



## ADVENT STUDY

Want to explore how, where and why Christ sends us to be his hands and feet, his heart and head out into the world? Join us as we study *Sent: Delivering the Gift of Hope at Christmas* by Jorge Acevedo.

**We will meet for four Monday nights on November 25, December 2, 9 and 16 at 7:00.**

If you missed the first night, that's OK! You can still join us! See Julie Mislansky (505-4061) for details and to get a study book.

Need a "Parent's Night Out?"  
We're here to help!

Drop your kids off at the church and we'll take care of the rest - dinner, crafts, games, and a movie. Don't have kids? Sign-up to help!

Donations will benefit  
St. Mark's Student Ministries.

Friday, December 6, 2019

5pm - 9pm

St. Mark's United Methodist Church

4601 Fairfield Avenue

Fairfield, Ohio 45014

Contact Erin for more details: (513) 748-1085

# YOUTH GROUP NEWS

## UP-COMING YOUTH EVENTS

12/1 - Advent Celebration 4 pm

Youth will be helping the younger kids with the readings, songs, and crafts.

12/6 - Parent's Night Out 5-9 pm (plus Youth 9 –11 pm)

Youth are in charge of this and will be helping the little ones with food, crafts, and games. We will then stay and “hang out” for a bit. **\*We are in need of some adult volunteers, so please let me know if you would like to help!\***

12/8 - **NO** Youth Group

12/15 - Youth Group Christmas Party 6-7:30 pm

12/22 - **NO** Youth Group

12/29 - Youth Group 6-7:30 pm

1/5 - Youth Group 6-7:30 pm

I'm always looking for people to assist with Youth Group, so if you feel called to help, please reach out to me at (513)748-1085 or at [erintheodor@email.com](mailto:erintheodor@email.com).

The Youth Group (which consists of 6th-12th graders) meets most Sundays from 6-7:30 pm in the Youth room at church.

Erin Theodor - Youth Director





### **ST. MARK'S ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL - November 12, 2019**

In attendance: Sue Luken, lay leader/delegate; Julie Mislansky, Missions chair; Joe Payne, Pastor; Jennie Marshall, Family Ministries chair; Peggy Smith, Children's Ministries; Bob Hamp; Tim Mislansky, Finance chair; Lee Brinkmeyer, Trustees chair and Julie Dichtl.

1. Pastor Joe Payne opened the meeting in prayer.
2. Pastor Joe Payne and the Administrative Council discussed the agenda for the Charge Conference on November 17<sup>th</sup>. This included a review of the deceased members, a review of the Nominating Committee recommendations and a review of the 1<sup>st</sup> reading list for the removal of membership. It was decided that each committee would also present a report to the congregation.
3. Jennie Marshall, Family Ministries Chair, reported on the highly successful Trunk or Treat event. Over 375 children participated in the event. Twenty-two members of the church helped with the event.
4. Peggy Smith, Children's Ministries, reported that the Advent Celebration for the children will be December 1<sup>st</sup> at 4 pm, followed by a potluck dinner at 5 pm. It will also include a music program thanks to help from Choir Director, Chris Beiser.
5. Peggy Smith discussed the need to split the Sunday School children into two groups as the number of children has been increasing. After discussion, Julie Mislansky motioned, and Sue Luken seconded to convert the library room into a second Sunday School room. Motion passed. Tim Mislansky also reported that the daughters of Lynda Combs had requested the memorial funds for Lynda be used for children's services so these funds could help offset any cost associated with the second room.
6. The Administrative Council set the following days for board and committee meetings in 2020.
  - a. Administrative Council – monthly on the second Tuesday
  - b. Children and Family Ministries – monthly on the third Tuesday
  - c. Finance – every other month of the third Tuesday
  - d. St. Mark's Care – monthly on the third Thursday
  - e. Staff Parish – monthly of the third Thursday
  - f. Trustees – monthly on the first Thursday
7. The meeting was adjourned by Pastor Joe Payne at approximately 8:00 pm.

Next meeting will be January 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00.



# St. Mark's

United Methodist Church



## ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

Chairperson	Julie Dichtl
Lay Leader	Sue Luken
Lay Mem. Annual Conf.	Sue Luken
Family Ministry	Jennie Marshall
Nurture and Care	Pam Guynes
St. Mark's Cares	Julie Mislansky
SPRC	Kym Nguyen
Finance Chair	Tim Mislansky
Trustee Chair or Rep.	Elected by Trustees
Members at Large:	
2020	Charlotte Tierney
2021	Steve Nguyen
2022	Pat Fassnacht

## NOMINATIONS and LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

2020	Jim Beckett	Debbie Bryant
2021	Mary Pierson	Jim Jones
2022	Brenda Smoot	Gay Kubik

## STAFF PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

2020	Kym Nguyen	Suzan Stracke
2021	Kristy Theiss	Jenni Hensler
2022	Rick Kiefer	Pat Balarski

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

2020	Jennifer Rinker	Danny Thomas
2021	Gale Goodman	Cheryl Creach
2022	Pam Finfrock	Tim Mislansky

## TRUSTEES

2020	Lee Brinkmeyer	George Peters
2021	Jeff Gering	Marilyn Stewart
2022	Bob Mendenhall	Bob Hamp Penny Dole

**BOY SCOUT CHARTER REP.** Bob Hamp





## CHURCH CONFERENCE - November 17, 2019

Pastor Joe Payne opened the charge conference by welcoming Reverend David Meredith as our presiding elder. It was noted that there was 60 church members in attendance.

Pastor Joe and Reverend Meredith provided introductory welcome and gathering comments and led the congregation in prayer, song and scripture.

Peggy Smith, Director of Children's Ministry, reported that Sunday School numbers have increased and there is a need to add a classroom. Plans are in place to renovate a room downstairs for this purpose.

Jennie Marshall, Chair of Family Ministries, reported on the success of this year's events; The Egg Hunt, Movie at the Mark, and The Fall Festival. Multi-generational activities are always the goal.

Erin Theodor, Youth Director, provided a summary of youth events in 2019. There is always a need for more servant leaders to join this ministry. Plans for 2020 are to renovate the youth room.

Lee Brinkmeyer, Trustees chair, reported on the improvements made to the parsonage. Joe and Linda moved there in June of this year. Projects for 2020 include more updates to the parsonage and repairs to the parking lot as funds become available.

Julie Mislansky, Chair of St. Mark's Cares, thanked the committee members for their time and passion for mission. The church distributed over \$13,000 in designated funds to 10 missions and offered 33 volunteer opportunities to members in 2019. The church will be supporting four new missions in 2020; The Fringe Coffee House, Dougie and Ray's, YWCA Dove House Shelter and the Wesley Foundation at University of Cincinnati.

Sue Luken, Lay Leader, gave thanks for those who joined St. Mark's during the year, including Betty Jones, Jenn Specht, Kai Sines, Layton Edmundson, Olivia Edmundson, Shirley Grant, and Tari Randall. She reported that there were no baptisms in 2019. Sue also gave thanks for the saints who died this past year including Bob Janosik, Ethel Stanifer, Lynda Combs, Bill Hurd, Juanita Pool, Norma Cooper, Gary Weaver, Evelyn Rewerts.

Sue Luken read the names of professing members who have not been active in St. Mark's since November 2018. This was the first reading of the names. Finally, Sue recognized the Reverend Robert Klingel whose Charge Conference is here at St. Mark's.

Steve Nguyen, Chair of the Task Force, provided a closing report from the task force. He thanked those who served on the task force and those who participated in the surveys. He remarked that going through the tasks presented to us has been a large part of the healing process for our congregation. He encouraged everyone to re-read Tony Mosley's report and focus on the ten recommendations, asking ourselves "what can I do to make St. Marks a better place?"

Pastor Joe Payne reviewed the work of the Nominating Committee. He informed the congregation of those nominated for leadership positions on the Administrative Council and various committees.

Jim Beckett made a motion to accept the nominations. Sue Luken seconded. The slate was approved unanimously.

Kim Nguyen, Chair of the Staff Parish Committee, made a recommendation to approve Pastor Joe Payne's compensation for 2020 and it was passed unanimously.

Tim Mislansky, Finance Chair provided a financial update for the year. Tim thanked the committee members for their service along with Ruth Rittenbaugh and Cheryl Creach for their efforts in counting the offering each week.

Tim reported that the planned budget for next year is similar to 2019, but that there are some significant building and parsonage improvements needed that are not included in the budget.

Reverend David Meredith reviewed the 2019 Breakthrough Goals and Ministry Hopes and Dreams.

Reverend David Meredith led a brief discussion regarding 2020 Breakthrough Goals and Ministry Hopes and Dreams. After discussion, the congregation unanimously voted to set the same goals for 2020. He also reminded us of the need for a yearly audit of our books and ensuring our safe sanctuary practices and legal documents are updated and in good standing.

Reverend David Meredith closed the charge conference in prayer and song with the congregation. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.

**(Printed detailed minutes are on the hall bulletin board)**

# St. Mark's Opportunities

## (Fellowship, Participation, Study, Service)



### SENIOR'S CHRISTMAS PARTY / COVERED DISH LUNCHEON

Saturday, December 7

**- 1:00 pm**

#### Fellowship Hall

All seniors are welcome!

Bring a covered dish to share with everyone.

Wonderful time to have fellowship with your St. Mark's family.



### RUTH CIRCLE CHRISTMAS MEETING

Friday, December

**20 - 12Noon**

#### Fellowship Hall Covered Dish Luncheon

Bring a \$1.00 Grab Bag gift.  
All ladies invited.

If you have any questions, please see or contact Pam Guynes (779-9192) or Charlene Miller (844-6793).

### PARENT'S NIGHT OUT

Friday, December 6th 5 - 9 pm

The Youth are in charge of this and will be helping the little ones with food, crafts, and games.  
**See more information on page 5!**

**We are in need of some adult volunteers, so please let me know if you would like to help!**  
Erin Theodor, Youth Director (513)748-1085 or erintheodor@gmail.com

#### Thanks to St. Mark's Ruth Circle for Sponsoring NAMIWALKS 2019

The 17th NAMIWALKS Butler County reached its goal of \$67,000 with 40 walk teams and 330 participants on October 12, 2019 at Hamilton Fitton Center. St. Mark's Ruth Circle was once again a Kilometer Sponsor helping NAMI reach its goal at the once-a-year fundraiser. The mission of NAMI is to improve the quality of life for families and individuals impacted by mental health disorders through education, support, advocacy and stigma reduction. NAMI is distinguished as a fiscally responsible, vibrant, and well-respected organization. It provides research-based education and information, plus advocacy and support.

For more information, see [nami-bc.org](http://nami-bc.org)/or contact Suzan Stracke.



#### Dear Friends,

I want to apologize for the tardiness of this note - however, I really want to express my appreciation and thanks for all your phone calls, prayers, visits, etc. during my recent health issues. I don't think I could have endured some of those days without knowing that your love and support were out there pulling for me. Parkinson's is quite a "battler" but I'm putting up a good fight. I have had some improvement in last couple of weeks and pray that continues. Nothing would be a greater joy than being able to come to Sunday's services - to see everyone again - and to hear the wonderful St. Mark's choir again. How I miss that Wednesday Camaraderie!

Again, my sincere thank you for your caring!

God bless you, Sandy Ronningen

# ***December & January Birthdays and Anniversaries***

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

## **DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

- 1 - Gavin Grathwohl (16 yrs.)
- 2 - Paul Schutte
- 3 - Phyllis Tunning
- 4 - Tari Wolf
- 6 - Bob Mendenhall
- 8 - Charles Bryant
- 8 - Cheryl Creach
- 9 - Michele Leyrer
- 10 - Cory Stewart
- 14 - Ben Gallihugh
- 14 - Flo Moore
- 14 - Jennifer Rinker
- 14 - Joyce Zugelter
- 17 - Linda Prohaska
- 18 - Rick Broshear
- 19 - Cody Sines (15 yrs.)
- 20 - James Kuertz
- 21 - Pam Finfrock
- 24 - Marlis Hatton
- 24 - Charlene Miller
- 27 - Cindy Brown
- 27 - Nancy Bumpus
- 29 - John Best
- 29 - Pat Sena
- 29 - Tom Tierney
- 30 - Ira Begley
- 30 - Katie Luken



## **JANUARY BIRTHDAYS**

- 1 - Trevor Abraham
- 2 - Brian Begley
- 4 - Jerry Jones
- 4 - Joann Keith
- 5 - Helen Brown
- 5 - Ron Hamblin
- 5 - Kai Sines (13 yrs.)
- 7 - Shelby Creager (8 yrs.)
- 8 - Donal McDaniel
- 8 - Ann Shellman
- 8 - Kallie Theiss (5 yrs.)
- 9 - Elizabeth Oppong-Amoah
- 12 - Brooke Becker
- 12 - Norma Cox
- 12 - Addison Kuertz (3 yrs.)
- 19 - Jerry Hartwig
- 20 - Bud Aydlett
- 22 - Beth Phillippo
- 22 - Pat Pitman
- 22 - Terri Roemer
- 25 - Larry Miller
- 26 - Betty Roark
- 27 - Sue Lintner
- 28 - Ciara Menke
- 28 - Caitlin Menke
- 29 - Betty Jones
- 30 - Bob Hamp
- 31 - Eric Leyrer

## **DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES**

- 14 - Bud & Shirley Aydlett
- 27 - George & Belinda Peters
- 28 - Marty & Gay Kubik
- 29 - Tom & Charlotte Tierney



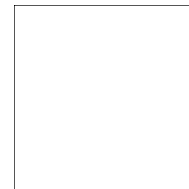
## **JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES**

- 5 - Carl & Beth Phillippo
- 7 - Mike & Dianne Aiken
- 16 - Dale & Elaine Shreve

**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