



SPIRIT OF ST. MARK'S

October 2019

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

**SUNDAY,
OCTOBER 6TH**

**World Wide
Communion Sunday**

**Re-dedication of
Parsonage**

**Parsonage Open House
after worship service.**



COAT DRIVE

Info on pg. 8



BIBLE SUNDAY

October 20th

Bibles will be presented
to our 3rd grade students.

FALL FESTIVAL and TRUNK OR TREAT



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27th

4 - 7 PM

(Set-up for cars is at 3:30.)

Games, Crafts, Movie, Hot Dogs.



**You are encouraged to decorate your opened car trunk for Fall or Halloween.
Bring a chair and pass out candy to the children.
Even if you are not decorating your car, still come and bring candy to pass out
and have fellowship with your St. Mark's family.**

**This is a wonderful opportunity to share our St. Mark's love with the
community and socialize with our faith family.**

A Note from Pastor Joe



Dear St. Mark's Family,

October greetings! I enjoyed sharing the Lord's Prayer sermon series during the last ten weeks, and Good Neighbor Sunday certainly made for a fitting AMEN.

I want to share with you what's in store these next few weeks:

During worship on Sunday, October 6, the 4605 Fairfield Avenue property will be officially rededicated as the St. Mark's parsonage. Many helped to freshen and decorate this beautiful home to make it a source of pride once again. Immediately following Communion (it's also World Communion Sunday), all are invited to a Parsonage Openhouse. Linda and I are looking forward to this very much. (If you look in the living room, you will find a sign that will remind you of our upcoming sermon series.)

October 13 is Laity Sunday at St. Mark's, a day on which we celebrate the ministry of all Christians. On Laity Sunday we embrace our shared vocation (lay persons and clergy) to proclaim, grow in, and embody the good news of saving love in Jesus Christ. Led by our Lay Leader, Sue Luken, members of the congregation will share what took place on Good Neighbor Sunday, September 30.

October 20 begins a four-week series called *The Wonder-Full Life*, based on the classic movie, "**It's a Wonderful Life.**" Our spiritual practices help us to grow and maintain a sense of serenity, harmony, truth, compassion, gratitude, love and joy. But, these are not always words we use to describe the role of money in our lives. In the classic film, "It's a Wonderful Life," a crisis of money creates vastly diverse reactions from several characters that can hold up a mirror to our own relationships with money. In this four week series, we will "look" squarely in the face of our money issues in compassionate ways that can offer more depth of meaning, healing, and wholeness and a whole new "outlook" on what constitutes a wonderful life. This series will culminate on November 10th, on the day we consecrate our estimated offerings for 2020.



Finally, don't forget to mark your calendar for our annual Fall Festival, October 27 from 4:00 - 7:00 pm. It's going to be a great time.

I am looking forward to spending this autumn with you, and as always, I am blessed to be Your Pastor and Friend,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe".

All Are Invited:

Raising the Bar: Healthy Boundaries Training

Tuesday, October 22, 6:30 – 8:30 pm
The Rev. Barry R. Burns, Northwest Plains District Superintendent

How do we determine, create, and maintain healthy boundaries with one another? The Rev. Barry Burns has a wealth of knowledge, training, and experience that will enable him to help us go forward to the next level in our vision of becoming a truly healthy congregation.

All are invited and urged to attend this two hour training.





OCTOBER COAT DRIVE

The days are getting shorter and the temperature is going down- time to make sure everyone has a warm coat for the winter! Our annual coat drive will happen during the month of October. Please look through your closets to see if you have any gently used coats, jackets, sweatshirts or hoodies to donate. And, of course, we will take new ones as well! We will be collecting for men, women and children - any size. All donations will be shared with the following organizations:



THE CARING CLOSET - ministry that provides clothing to Hamilton students

DOUGIE AND RAY'S - mission that partners with Fairfield schools to help children

SERVE CITY - homeless shelter in Hamilton

THE BROKEN BUS - ministry that serves the homeless population in greater Cincinnati

MATTHEW 25 VOLUNTEERING

A volunteering date has been set for **Saturday, October 19th from 11:00-1:00 at Matthew 25 Ministries**. We always have a great time serving and laughing. We never know until we get there what we will do, but in the past we have sorted clothing, unpacked boxes with brand new sports jerseys, and filled giant barrels with liquid soap. There is always the option for sit-down jobs, so it is a wonderful opportunity for any and all ages and abilities. Sign up on the St. Marks Cares bulletin board and make sure to indicate if you need a ride.

2020 MISSIONS/OUTREACH PLANNING

2020 is right around the corner, so St. Mark's Cares will soon be busy planning our outreach activities, projects and designated giving recipients. We are always open to hearing about new missions or ideas you might have that we could consider supporting! Please share your ideas with any members of our committee:

Julie Mislansky
Dianne Aiken

Sue Luken
Debbie Bryant

Karen Smith

Kym Nguyen

Charlene Miller

Marla George

Charlotte Tierney

We will be having our **2020 Planning Meeting on October 17th**, so let us know of your ideas before then. *Your designated giving makes all this possible!!*

HELP RUTH CIRCLE WITH A NO COST FUNDRAISER TO SUPPORT MISSION PROJECTS

During the last 13 years, Ruth Circle has raised over \$12,000 at NO COST to the participants, using the Kroger's Community Rewards Program. One hundred percent of the funds raised by Ruth Circle go to support missions, such as Fairfield Food Pantry, Caring Closet, Dougie & Rays, Living Water Ministries, Reach Out Lakota, St. Mark's Youth Group Mission Trip, just to name a few.

At this time, we have less than 15 church families participating in this fundraiser. Imagine the money we could raise if we had 50 families participating in this NO COST to you fundraiser. Even if you only spend a small amount at Kroger's, it all adds up. The more cards we have registered, the more money we can raise! Go to the website krogercommunityrewards.com and log in with your email address and password or create an account to sign up. Our group ID# is JU161 or you can search Ruth Circle to designate your rewards. You do not need to be a member of Ruth Circle to designate that your funds go to Ruth Circle. Family members can help too!

If you think that you have already designated that your funds go to Ruth Circle, please check the bottom of your Kroger receipt. It should have "You requested Kroger to donate to St. Mark's United Methodist Church".

If you have difficulty registering your Kroger Plus card, please see or contact Pam Guynes at 779-9162 or call Kroger customer service at 1-800-576-4377 and ask them to help you. They are very helpful.

A "Fresh Expression" of Church

Some members of St. Mark's are in the information-gathering stage as they consider the possibility of forming a new worshipping community in addition to our beloved St. Mark's family. This new worshipping community would be part of an exciting and growing new world-wide movement called Fresh Expressions.

Fresh Expressions began in 2004 for the purpose of assisting established churches in forming new faith communities outside the four walls of the church. These new faith communities are formed especially for those who have never been involved in church (un-churched) or who have left the church (de-churched). Fresh Expressions communities meet in a diversity of settings, including homes, restaurants, taverns, coffee shops, etc.

The Ohio River Valley District has begun to assist ORV churches in beginning Fresh Expressions communities around the district. A particular goal of the district is to work with a church in forming a Fresh Expressions Community in Butler County that is welcoming to persons who have not always been fully accepted and embraced because of sexual orientation, gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender identity, age, physical and/or mental abilities, social or economic status, family make-up, education, or faith background. The vision is to form a worshipping community that lives out the UMC slogan of Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors; and that affirms marriage equality and ordination for all persons regardless of gender identity and sexual orientation.

Last August, the ORV District held a training on Fresh Expressions for interested churches around the district. Those from St. Mark's who attended this training were intrigued and excited about the possibility of birthing such a Fresh Expressions Community here in Butler County as a ministry of St. Mark's. They will be meeting soon with the Rev. David Meredith, Director of Urban Ministry for the ORV District, to explore this possibility with him.

This ministry is just beginning, and is open to anyone who shares a similar vision. Look for more information and news on Fresh Expressions in the weeks and months to come. Specific questions can be directed to Sue Luken (513- 257-8862 / suzluken@hotmail.com) or Julie Mislansky (513-505-4061 / knauffj@fuse.net).

St. Mark's Opportunities

(Fellowship, Participation, Study, Serve)



NEED CONTACT INFORMATION FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

We need names & email addresses for our college students, whether they are living at school or at home. For the next few Sundays, there will be a College Student Sign-Up list at the Welcome Center. We want to include every college student at St. Mark's. This information will be used as a part of our Adopt-A-College Student Ministry, where one of the members of our congregation will occasionally drop the student a note or card to let them know that we are thinking about them and praying for them. The only time commitment for the student is a very short (5 minute) questionnaire that they will complete online and email back to a member of the Nurture & Care Committee. The student's name & email will also be shared with Pastor Joe to build his College Student Data Base. We already have names & emails for the following (so they would not need to register again): Trevor Abraham, Elizabeth Bunte, Hannah Hensler, Maddie Hensler, Zach Dichtl, Caitlyn Menke, Ciara Menke, Joe Mislansky, Autumn Roemer, Elle Nguyen, Jack Nguyen, & Will Nguyen.

Please see or call Pam Guynes (513-779-9161) for questions.



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 Smokey Bones, 9484 Civic Center Blvd, Streets of West Chester, on **Wednesday, October 16th at noon.**

Please see or call Bob or Carol Pittman 829-4548 for reservations by noon, Monday, October 14th.

This will be our last meeting for lunch until January because of the holidays in November and December.



RUTH CIRCLE

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18
1:00 P.M.
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 questions.

St. Mark's Administrative Council Minutes

September 9, 2019 7:00 p.m.

In attendance: Ray Smith, Admin Board chair; Sue Luken, lay leader/delegate; Julie Mislansky, Missions chair; Joe Payne, Pastor; Pam Guynes, Nurture and Care chair; Charlotte Tierney, member at-large; Kym Nguyen, SPRC chair; Jennie Marshall, Family Ministries chair; Steve Nguyen, member at-large and Task Force chair; Peggy Smith, Children's Ministries; Bob Hamp; Tim Mislansky, Finance chair; Lee Brinkmeyer, Trustees chair

Pastor Joe opened the meeting in prayer and a devotion, reminding us all to be open to gifts of peace.

Pastor Joe proposed that a potluck dinner and annual Church Conference be held on November 17th at 6:00 PM. Julie made the motion and Sue seconded. Motion passed with no discussion.

NURTURE—OUTREACH—WITNESS

NURTURE

Nurture and Care- Pam reported on recent business of the committee. "Thinking of you" notes are being sent to members who miss three weeks in a row, visits to our shut-ins and communion continue and we will soon be re-starting the college ministry.

Family Ministry- Jennie reported that the Movie at the Mark in August had an attendance of about 50 with a few visitors. Fall Festival Planning (Oct 27th) is underway and the various committees are being asked to take ownership of parts of the evening; food, baked goods, games, crafts, etc.

Children's Ministry- Peggy acknowledged her one-year anniversary with us and gave thanks to everyone. This past Sunday, a new Sunday School curriculum was started that shares the same story in three different ways each month, incorporating the different ways that children learn and retain new information. Sunday School numbers are growing, and Peggy is still in need for a few volunteers to be rotation leaders. October 20th will be 3rd Grade Bible Sunday, followed by a lunch and "Bible Boot Camp" for the new bible owners. December 1st is the first Sunday of Advent. The topic "Art of Invitation" will be discussed at the next Children's Ministry meeting. Finally, childcare will be available for those three and under on Good Neighbor Sunday.

Youth Ministry- Joe reported for Erin- The Sines boys and the Edmundson siblings and their visitors are regularly attending.

Task Force- Steve reminded the group that the Boundaries Training, presented by Barry Burns, will take place on October 22. Steve shared that many of the task force members are asking "where do we go from here?" and what, if any, is our next task? Discussion was held about the value of the task force if or when we would need help bridging the gap between leadership and laity and/or to help with any conflict or communication issues that may occur. The Admin Board requested the Task Force meet to assess Tony Mosely's recommendations to assure that we have addressed all of them and report back to the Admin Board. This report will also be shared at the Church Conference.

OUTREACH/WITNESS

St. Mark's Cares- Julie shared an update on missions and outreach happenings in the past few months. Our UMCOR offering was \$770, Good Neighbor Sunday will be celebrated on Sept. 29th, a volunteer date at Matthew 25 is set for Oct 19th, the mission trip has been postponed to March 26-29th due to multiple health issues on the team and the committee will meet in October to plan our missions/outreach for 2020. Julie encouraged anyone with new missions or outreach ideas to share them with the group before that time.

Lay Leader Report- Sue Luken reported that she and other St. Mark's members attended an Ohio River Valley

District training about Fresh Expressions. A Fresh Expression is a form of church for our changing culture, established primarily for the benefit of those who are not yet part of any church. The district is especially interested in launching a Fresh Expression in Butler County for the LGBTQ+ community and their allies. A team from St. Mark's is in the early stages of exploring the feasibility of beginning such a ministry. They will be meeting soon with Rev. David Meredith, pastor of Clifton UMC, to gain insight and advice towards this mission.

REPORTS FROM ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES

Staff Parish Relations Committee- Kym shared that they completed the pastor evaluation and are working on staff evaluations next. In October the SPRC will have their annual meeting with the District Superintendent or Assistant to the DS. SPRC will be taking care of the food preparation for the 5th Sunday Luncheon/Good Neighbor Sunday and will also be coordinating the games at the Fall Festival.

Trustees- Lee reported that the parsonage has been updated. Renovating the parsonage bathrooms is on the horizon, along with repairs to the parking lot. These projects are on hold until resources are raised to pay for them. Pastor Joe personally thanked those who worked to get the parsonage ready for move-in. He and Linda plan to have a rededication of the parsonage and Open House after church on October 6th.

Finance- Tim reported that we had \$27,000 come into the church during August. That's \$1,000 better than July and \$4,000 better than August last year. The monthly expenses were \$28,000 so we spent \$1,000 more than was given. We are still borrowing for our designated funds to make ends meet. We are still on target to pay our apportionments to both the district and the conference. Our loan balances are now about \$72,000. Consecration Sunday will be November 10th and the 2020 budget will soon start. Finally, the finance committee discussed a potential capital campaign to refinance the loans and complete needed repair projects around the church and parsonage. He indicated that the committee had general support for the idea. Joe, Lee (Trustees) and Tim will be meeting soon to discuss what would be covered by it.

OTHER REPORTS

Ray shared that Julie will be stepping down as secretary of the Admin Board due to multiple new responsibilities. Someone to take care of this task will be needed.

REPORT OF THE PASTOR

Pastor Joe shared that he has been having get acquainted meetings with several families who have visited in the past few months. He indicated that the families have felt welcomed by the St. Mark's family. Joe has also been setting up visits with members and regular attendees who were not able to visit with him last year. He also shared how much he enjoys his birthday and anniversary phone calls to members.

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Ray Smith.

Next meeting will be November 12th at 7:00.



St. Mark's Financial Update

Tim Mislansky, Finance Committee Chairperson

How Are We Doing?

First, the encouraging news: St. Mark's received just over \$27,000 for the month of August 2019, which was about \$4,000 higher than August 2018 and \$1,000 higher than the previous month. Our year-to-date giving is up about \$17,000 from last year or about 8%. We've also spent about \$10,000 less this year than in 2018.

In other important news, we paid our loans on time and the outstanding balances are almost \$72,000. We have also paid 8/12 of our annual district and conference apportionments.

Despite this good news, our ongoing challenge has not changed. As of the end of August, our cash position continues to be in a negative position. Why is this? You may remember that our giving was down significantly in 2018. We were also without many of our staff for a portion of 2018. This was hard on us. But, the reduced staff did help us to stay afloat financially. We squeaked by in 2018, but with our reserves depleted. This year, our giving has increased to 2017 levels. It's good that we have increased our giving, but we still need to regain a healthy reserve. In order to avoid late-payment fees, we are forced to borrow from designated funds on a short-term basis. Our hope is to reach a point where we have enough funds in reserve to ease our cash flow problem. \$10,000 at minimum, and four times that ideally.

"How Can I Help?" E-Giving!

One relatively easy way to help ease this cash flow challenge is by giving electronically. E-Giving now represents about 15% of what is given each month. Electronic giving is a great way to benefit our church, as it creates consistency in giving. And, it's a great benefit for you. No more writing checks or catching up after a missed Sunday or two.

If you would like to begin giving electronically, go to www.fairfieldstmarks.com and click the "Give" tab.

In October, I plan on setting a few times after service to be in the Narthex to answer questions and help anyone get set up on it.

Why Do We Use E-Giving? - Ray & Karen Smith

E-Giving helps Karen and I to keep to our budget if we miss a week at church. Since the tithe comes out on a regular schedule, we don't miss out on our commitment to give.

A second reason to electronically give is the benefit of having our statements of record emailed to us each month and also at the end of the year. This simplifies our records for tax purposes.



Continued next page

St. Mark's Financial Update

Another Way You Can Help

Another way you can help is by remembering that we are partners in ministry! Together, we share the light of Christ with each other, our community, and the world.

All of our funding for ministry comes from you, our members and regular attendees. On November 10, we will have the opportunity to consecrate our 2020 estimates of giving cards to God as our promise of support for Christ's Church. As a church, we accept the biblical standard of the tithe, and encourage all of our congregants to step up giving toward or beyond a tithe. Your gifts are a blessing to the Lord.

Looking Ahead to 2020

Your Finance Committee is getting ready to begin our budget process for 2020. Each committee and staff person will be asked about their hopes and dreams for what they want to accomplish at St. Mark's to meet our mission and be the church God wants us to be. Our budget is based on our financial estimates,

Tax Advantages to Consider

And last, we have a reminder about a way you can support the church with your generosity. Did you know that you can make a direct gift from your IRA to St. Mark's and avoid federal income taxes? It's called a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). Read up more about this opportunity elsewhere on the next page.

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 or call me at 513-759-0581.

Thank you,
Tim Mislansky



Where Does Our Dollar Go?

For every dollar given to St. Mark's:

- 49 cents goes to staff salaries and benefits
- 23 cents goes to facilities – such as the building, utilities, repairs and the parsonage
- 13 cents goes to paying our apportioned funds.
- 11 cents goes to administration for the church such as insurance, and office machine-related items.
- 4 cents goes to worship and ministry related expenses.

A Tax Advantage: Quality Charity Giving

In an effort to share information about the many opportunities for those in our Congregation to offer their gifts, the Finance Committee has this information on IRA Charitable Rollover Gift. We hope this information is helpful as you look for ways to share gifts to support the ministries and mission of our church.



Benefits of making an IRA Charitable Rollover Gift

Per the tax code, if you are over 70½ and have an IRA you must begin taking annual distributions from your IRA. These distributions are called RMD's (Required Minimum Distributions) and are subject to income taxes. But, there is a way to avoid income taxes on these distributions. You can make donation to the Church by making a QCD (Qualified Charitable Contribution). Currently, the donation is limited to \$100,000 per year.

Benefits:

- 1 Donation can satisfy your annual RMD requirement up to the amount of your gift.
- 2 Allows you to give from pre-tax assets and exclude the distribution from taxable income.
- 3 Helps avoid limitations on charitable deductions and the potential exposure to higher tax brackets.
- 4 It is simple and easy to do, simply notify your IRA Custodian.
- 5 Minimizes the effect on your cash flow. The gift comes from your assets not your checking account.

Rules:

To complete a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) from an IRA to a charity, the IRA owner must:

Already be age 70½ on the *date of distribution*.

Submit a distribution form to the IRA custodian, requesting that the check be made payable *directly* to the charity.

Ensure that no tax withholding is being done from the QCD to the charity (as the money must go to the charity to qualify, and as a non-taxable distribution no withholding should be necessary).

Send the check directly to the charity, or to the IRA owner to be forwarded along to the charity.

While the process of completing a QCD to a charity is fairly straightforward, the key administrative requirement is that the distribution check must be made payable *directly* to the charitable entity. If the funds go to the IRA owner and are then passed along to the charity, it is still a taxable distribution to the IRA owner and not a QCD.

Under IRS Notice 2007-7, Q&A-41, it is permitted for the check to be *mailed* to the IRA owner, as long as the check is payable *to* the charity, but a check payable to the IRA owner that is merely endorsed over to the charity does not satisfy the QCD requirements.

The above is for information only. Contact your tax preparer or accountant for your particular situation.

Looking Ahead: Church Conference November 17

Church Conference will be held here at 4601 Fairfield Avenue in Fellowship Hall on November 17, beginning with a potluck at 6 PM. This will be a time to celebrate and give thanks for the blessings of the past year, and to look forward to 2020. Professing members of St. Mark's are eligible to vote, but all are welcome to attend.

Included in the Church Conference, besides the meal, will be a time of worship, and time devoted to sharing. Pastor compensation, Membership Audit, and Election of Officers for 2020 are on the Agenda. Ministry Leaders will present a summation of past year's ministries and their goals for 2020.

October Birthdays and Anniversaries

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

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 - Cheryl Klug
- 1 - Sue Miller
- 2 - Stanley Amoah
- 3 - Jack Nguyen
- 3 - Richard Shaw
- 5 - Gale Goodman
- 5 - Rich Mischell
- 6 - Gary Weaver
- 7 - Carolyn Roark
- 9 - Sheila Boggs
- 9 - Roy Brown
- 9 - Don Menke
- 10 - Nancy Miracle
- 11 - Bob Netherland
- 15 - Sue Mullen
- 16 - Hugh Guynes
- 17 - Don Ault
- 17 - Larry Creach
- 20 - Anne Hennen
- 21 - Joe Mislansky
- 22 - Jenni Hensler
- 23 - Danny Thomas
- 25 - Eleanor McCollum
- 27 - Marty Kubik
- 29 - Alan Batt
- 30 - Maxine Craig
- 30 - John Smith



OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 5 - Wade & Nancy Lewis
- 11 - Gil & Penny Dole
- 13 - Greg & Charlene Pullem
- 14 - Bob & Shannon Knau
- 17 - Steve & Peggy Woods
- 19 - Rick & Terrill Broshear
- 23 - Brian & Marla George
- 30 - Rich & Cindy Mischell



St. Mark's,
Thank you for your cards,
flowers, thoughts and
prayers for the passing of
my mother.
George & Belinda Peters

THANKS to Mary Pierson for
volunteering in the church office one
day when Brenda was gone.

Send Us Your Family Photos for the Directory!

St. Mark's has an online directory that you are able to access as a part of the St. Mark's family. Just type in this address: servantkeeper.com/directory/smumc
Our unique password is **4601smumc**

That's all there is to it!

To make our directory even better, we need a portrait or your best snapshot photo of your family. We will use this photo for your family profile, and crop individual images for each person in your family. Please send your photos to Cheryl Creach at creachcs@gmail.com

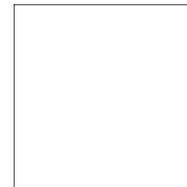
By December we will print some copies of the directory for those who prefer to have a hard copy.



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