



# SPIRIT OF ST. MARK'S

## APRIL 2020

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

## HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Worship with your church family!  
Go to [www.fairfieldstmarks.com](http://www.fairfieldstmarks.com) or  
[facebook.com/fairfieldstmarks](https://facebook.com/fairfieldstmarks) for live streamed worship.

### Palm Sunday, April 5

#### PALMS!



April 5 is Palm Sunday! During “normal” years we worship together as a church family. Upon arrival, all receive palms, and the kids march around the church during the opening Palm Processional. Of course, this is not a “normal” year!

Even though we can't be together, we want to make this as special as we can, which is why we have delivered special faux palms to our families with kids. More palms are available, so please stop by and pick yours up today. Just call to arrange pick up. You can also participate with your own cloaks /coats, or branches from your trees!

#### HOLY COMMUNION

Bishop Palmer and his Cabinet have made allowances for congregations to receive Holy Communion together during these challenging circumstances. You can find a copy of the document explaining this process inside this newsletter.

Before we come together on April 5 at 9:30 and Maundy Thursday at 7pm, gather your juice and bread or cracker (see the instructions on the Guidelines) so we can partake together.

### Maundy Thursday, April 9 at 7 p.m.

*Maundy* means “commandment.” On Maundy Thursday, the emphasis is on the new commandment Jesus gave his disciples in the Upper Room on the night before his crucifixion: “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” — John 13:34-35.

On this Holy Night, we reflect on the meaning and implications of this commandment, and upon the deep love Jesus has for us.

### Good Friday Tenebrae Service, April 10 at 7 p.m.

The story of Jesus' betrayal, arrest, trial, crucifixion, and burial will be told according to Matthew in a service of gradual darkness interspersed with hymns and prayers.

### Easter Resurrection Service, April 12 at 9:30 a.m.

See Next Page....



# EASTER!

## April 12, 9:30 A.M.

Worship with your church family!  
Go to [www.fairfieldstmarks.com](http://www.fairfieldstmarks.com) or  
[facebook.com/fairfieldstmarks](https://facebook.com/fairfieldstmarks) for live streamed worship.

Dear St. Mark's UMC Family,

During this Corona Virus Crisis, we have been advised to keep our distance from people. We have been asked to stay in our homes unless we absolutely need to get supplies, or wish to take a walk and get exercise, or need to leave for some emergency. This situation is unlike any we have experienced. We laugh at the absurdity of it all, and laughter is good medicine! At the same time, we know this is serious. We know that across the world people have died, and more will die.

So, we remain inside our homes, waiting for it to be over.

In a very tangible way we are making a sacrifice so that fewer will die and more will be saved. And, by doing so, we are living a tomb-like existence. So, the Resurrection Story needs to be experienced especially now. Please tune in and join with us online as worship is live streamed on facebook live. Go to [facebook.com/fairfieldstmarks](https://facebook.com/fairfieldstmarks). By Sunday, you may also be able to reach the service by going to our website, [www.fairfieldstmarks.com](http://www.fairfieldstmarks.com).

### WE ARE ASKING FOR YOUR FLOWERS!

If you wish to assist us in decorating our chancel for Easter with flowers, you may pick up spring flowers (tulips or some other bright and spring flower), either from your own garden or from the supermarket or home improvement store as you shop for needed supplies. Deliver them to the church anytime between Sunday afternoon – Friday, April 10. If no one is present, leave them at the kitchen door. Someone will be around shortly to bring them inside. Be sure to mark your flower pot or vase with your name. If you want to pick up your flowers after Easter.

### WHAT ABOUT THE EASTER EGG HUNT???

After collecting over 1000 Easter Eggs filled with treats, we cannot have the Easter Egg Hunt. Bummer! So....we have the Easter Eggs in shopping bags – 25 eggs per bag. Eggs with Gluten-free and peanut-free treats are bagged separately. Please, please, please stop by the church and pick up as many Easter Eggs as you need for your family's own Easter Egg Hunt. You may pick them up on April 8 from 11am – 2pm. Peggy will be here at that time to assist you. If you cannot pick them up during that time, please call and arrange pick up. Also, please send pics of your children on Easter. We will post them on Facebook (Pics only, of course. No names.).

Finally, please read the document "Guidelines for Online Communion," found elsewhere in this newsletter. Pastor Joe will be following these guidelines as he administers the Sacrament on Palm Sunday and Maundy Thursday.

Be safe. Be kind to yourselves. You are special people. You are St. Mark's Church!

# *St. Mark's Opportunities*

## *(Fellowship, Participation, Study, Serve)*



**NO LUNCH BUNCH** until the Coronavirus health crisis is over.

Hope to be seeing everyone soon!



**SAVE THE DATE**  
**THURSDAY,**  
**OCTOBER 1ST**

The Ladies Monday Craft Group committee has rescheduled the Annual Salad Luncheon to Thursday, October 1st. There will also be a selection of Crafts and a Book Sale. All profits will go toward the Parking Lot Fund.



**VBS 2020 - June 14-18**

Rocky Railway (Jesus' power pulls us through)

Watch bulletins for more information.



Ruth Circle was scheduled to meet on Friday, April 17th. Meeting will be cancelled with the Coronavirus health crisis.

## **YOUTH GROUP NEWS**



Due to social distancing, we are shifting how we are “gathering” with ORV youth groups! Youth should check out the short video posted on Colocate Ministry Consulting’s Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/ColocateMinistryConsulting>) to find out how how they can win prizes through a new challenge we are participating in!



As always, if you need ANYTHING, please reach out to me at [erintheodor@gmail.com](mailto:erintheodor@gmail.com) or on my cell at (513) 748-1085.

# West Ohio Conference

The United Methodist Church

West Ohio Conference

## *Guidelines for Online Communion*

### *In Extremis*

*In this season in which we find ourselves, many have asked about the administration of the Sacrament via various forms of social media and other digital outlets. It is the position of Bishop Palmer and the Cabinet that, yes, you can administer the Sacrament of Communion, as long as you and your congregation understand the notion of In Extremis.*

*In Extremis* is a Latin term that came out of the European black death plague. It means *in an extremely difficult situation* and came into being around the year 1530. <sup>1</sup>*In Extremis*; arising out of contexts marked by extreme suffering and/or injustice ... is marked by a willingness to respond to the invitation to go beyond one's own situation and capacities, to accept overwhelming and powerlessness, (and) to adopt the undefended posture of Christian hospitality ... <sup>2</sup>*In Extremis* is the position of engaging in ministry because we are dealing with an extremely difficult situation that requires us to assume the posture of Christian hospitality.

*In Extremis* has some more modern examples. For example, on the other side of the 9/11 attacks on The United States in September 2001, the Roman Catholic church in the New York City area approved allowing the full Requiem Mass versus a Memorial Mass. The difference is the presence of a physical body, and in a Requiem Mass, Communion is served. While no body was present for most of these services, a Requiem Mass was allowed. This policy change was *In Extremis* and was deeply meaningful to thousands of people in the affected dioceses.

My first baptism occurred when I was a clinical pastoral education student in seminary. I baptized a dying child in the hospital where I was serving. Because the child's family was Roman Catholic and I was not ordained at the time, the rite was conducted *In Extremis*.<sup>3</sup>

Later, as an ordained pastor in the West Ohio Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, I served Communion to a member who was a patient on a respirator. I held up the Bread and the Cup. No one in the room received the elements, but everyone knew we had received the body and the blood of Christ. It was Communion *In Extremis*.<sup>4</sup>

This, however, is not a license to continue this practice when life returns to normal. Within our Wesleyan heritage, we must remember the place of Elders, Deacons and Local Pastors licensed for sacerdotal (priestly) ministries.

It is the position of the Bishop and the Cabinet, that this privilege is for a season and that there will be a return to practices in accordance with our liturgy. (*West Ohio Cabinet vote In Session, March 19, 2020.*)

<sup>1</sup>Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Online publication, 2020, Incorporated.

<sup>2</sup>Slee, Nocola, *Theological reflection in extremis: remembering Srebrenica*\* Pages 30-43, Published online: 01 Apr 2019

<sup>3</sup> & <sup>4</sup>Rev. Dr. Todd D. Anderson, Conference Superintendent, The West Ohio Annual Conference, The Ohio River Valley District, The United Methodist Church.

# Guidelines for Online Communion

## *Specific Guidelines for Practice for Online Communities*

"We believe the Sacraments, ordained by Christ, are symbols and pledges of the Christian's profession and of God's love toward us. They are means of grace by which God works invisibly in us, quickening, strengthening and confirming our faith in him.

"We believe the Lord's Supper is a representation of our redemption, a memorial of the sufferings and death of Christ, and a token of love and union which Christians have with Christ and with one another. Those who rightly, worthily and in faith eat the broken bread and drink the blessed cup partake of the body and blood of Christ in a spiritual manner until he comes." *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, Paragraph 104: Article VI – The Sacraments, pages 73-74.*

With this in mind, people of your congregation may participate in Holy Communion from their homes as you lead online worship.

As with each pastor and local church, there are numerous expressions of presenting and receiving the bread and the cup, Christ's broken body and shed blood.

Here is what is necessary for any expression, celebration or participation.

1. Scriptural setting: Holy Communion is celebrated in the context of worship. When you worship online, you are part of the context. When a Scriptural context has not been presented, read one of the following Scriptures to set the context: *Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29.*

2. Service of Word and Table: Communion liturgy found in The United Methodist Hymnal, The United Methodist Book of Worship, or other appropriate source. The consecration of the bread and the cup provides the opportunity for the whole community to participate in the broken body and shed blood of Jesus.

**3. Grape juice (have enough available for those gathered in your location): Grape juice is preferable. If you do not have grape juice, use your best judgment on a replacement. The point is to participate in the body and blood of Christ.**

**4. Bread or crackers (have enough available for those gathered in your location): Use your best judgment on what to use.**

5. Pastor to lead the liturgy: You, as the pastor, should take the lead. Participating online will have special meaning and benefits. Holy Communion is still a community act of worship.

6. Share your experience: After receiving Communion online, please email your district office letting us know that you participated in receiving Holy Communion. If possible, snap a quick photo and include it with your email as well. We share because we have not been here before. We are all learning. Sharing your experience helps all of us learn, grow and find new ways of being in relationship as the body of Christ.

This Sunday, April 5, and Thursday, April 9, receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion as administered by Pastor Joe online.  
Facebook.com/fairfieldstmarks.



## ST. MARKS CARES UPDATE

It may seem like everything has been cancelled or postponed. Fairfield Food Pantry 5K, of which we were a sponsor, postponed. Serving a meal to University of Cincinnati college students; cancelled. UMCOR Sunday offering; postponed. Serving a meal to our friends at Serve City; not cancelled, but we have to drop off the food and can't connect with the residents. Shared Harvest volunteering on April 23<sup>rd</sup>? Most likely cancelled.

But guess what is not cancelled?? **Being the hands and feet of Jesus!** Being a light in this darkness that many are experiencing. Reaching out to others (but not touching!) by phone, mail, social media, "drop and dash" care packages left at people's doorsteps. God has other plans for the way we minister to others during this time. Should we be sad and disappointed that all is cancelled and that our lives seem to be turned upside down? Maybe just a little, but then we must move on. We must seek His will and His plans for loving our neighbors. And St. Marks has been doing just that! I love that expression, "the church has left the building." (side note- if we ever get matching St. Mark's t-shirts, I think they should say that!)

Our members continue to use their prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness to make sure others are feeling loved, cared for, and connected. Even though the Fairfield Food Pantry 5K didn't occur, they still have our \$500 bronze sponsor donation and that money is feeding people in our area who have lost their jobs, or school kids who aren't getting those meals at school. Our UMCOR Sunday offering didn't occur, but it will happen when we are back together, and those extra dollars will be needed for relief around the world. We haven't been able to physically serve meals to those experiencing homelessness, but your gifts to the Broken Bus and Serve City that you've given in the past and continue to give, are being used to support local restaurants as we buy meals from them and "drop them off" at Serve City on April 6<sup>th</sup> and via the Broken Bus. The church continues to serve, God is good, and that will never be cancelled!





Beyond that, we have a team of friendly, caring phone callers who have been checking in on our homebound friends and our “older” members. They have been making weekly and sometimes twice weekly calls to over 80 persons/couples for the past three weeks. They have had some needs and we have a team who has taken care of those needs. But more importantly, I’ve heard so many positive comments both from the callers and those who have received the calls what a blessing it has been to have these conversations and to feel connected. To that end, we’ve decided that **everyone** needs to feel loved and connected and we are expanding this “caring calling ministry” to include everyone who attends St. Marks. We are in the process of recruiting callers and organizing everyone into groups. By this time next week, you should be receiving these calls. If you haven’t received a call by April 10<sup>th</sup>, please let me know, and I will figure out where the glitch is. (Julie Mislansky 505-4061)

Lastly, we do have a supply of toilet paper, paper towels, tissue, and a limited amount of cleaning supplies at church. If you need any of these items, please let Joe or I know! If you can’t get to church to get it, we will deliver! But remember, it will be a “drop and run,” because we love you!

**Blessings to all! Stay healthy and hopeful!!**





## St. Mark's Financial Update

Tim Mislansky, Finance Committee Chairperson

Greetings St. Mark's Family,

I hope that all of you are healthy and well. I know many, including some in our congregation, have been hit hard with business temporarily closing, unemployment or with being furloughed. In addition to the anxiety we all feel about the coronavirus, they also have the real concerns with their personal financial situation. Your entire St. Mark's family feels for you and is praying for you during these times.

So, in many ways, I'm troubled with writing about St. Mark's finances. While we don't have much, we do have enough to get by and our situation, while not good, is not dire either. Here's an update on where we stand financially.

As of the last day of March, we have \$27,000 on deposit at the credit union. We have about \$3,500 in bills that I have not paid yet. We also have \$35,000 in designated funds. So, we are "in the hole" about \$10,000. We are not concerned about running out of money any time soon, but we will most likely be borrowing more from our designated accounts.

We typically pay our bills as soon as they are received. However, most companies give you 30 days, so we are starting to take advantage of the extra days to extend our cash.

During the two weeks we did not have worship, we received about 20 to 30 envelopes of giving for about \$7,000 as well as our electronic giving. Thank you to those who dropped off or mailed a check and continue to support St. Mark's. And we understand if you've had to suspend your giving due to your personal financial situation.

The admin board approved the trustees to spend about \$4,000 to remove trees from the yard of the parsonage. These are the trees that have had roots grow into the sewer line and created the messy back up in Joe's basement. Delaying this fix, would put the parsonage in jeopardy of a repeat event and even more costly repairs.

The conference is offering a \$3,500 grant per church to help cover the costs of clergy insurance and benefits. Joe's insurance and pension are about \$3,000 per month. We applied for the grant today and hope to hear soon. If received, this will cover a little more than one month. This is money that's available because we pay our apportionments!

It costs about \$25,000 - \$28,000 to run the church in a normal month, but we are cutting back where we can. Since we aren't using the building for service, we stopped the cleaning contract – saving nearly \$700 per month. There are other small savings here and there we are seeing.

If money gets really tight, we have about \$9,000 available on our line of credit as well as about \$8,000 in available limits on credit cards. We are still making normal payments on the loans and paying the credit card in full each month. I don't expect to need this but it's nice to know it's there.

All in all, the finances at St Mark's are probably best described as fragile but stable. Yes, those words are somewhat opposite, but I think they accurately describe where we are. 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



# *April Birthdays and Anniversaries*

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

## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 1 - Bob Klingel
- 1 - Susan Moser
- 2 - Dave Booker
- 3 - Gay Kubik
- 6 - Diana Griffith
- 7 - Layton Edmundson (16 yrs.)
- 8 - Wilma Batt
- 11 - Brandon Stanifer
- 13 - Gil Dole
- 14 - Joy Addis
- 15 - Cindy Miller
- 16 - Katie Chambers (9 yrs.)
- 19 - Randy Starkie
- 21 - Greg Keith
- 23 - Bob Pittman
- 28 - Tre Edmundson
- 28 - Dick Kuertz
- 28 - Sue Rumley



## APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 - Rich & Karen Turner



**St. Mark's Family,**

I would like to thank everyone for the prayers, cards, and phone calls during and after my surgery.

A special thank you to Judy and Pastor Bob for the meal they brought to us.

Much love, Debbie Flannery



**St. Mark's Family,**

**Thank you** for sending cards while I recovered from my concussion - they were very much appreciated, as well as the phone calls.....

Peggie Wyatt



## **A TIME TO BE THANKFUL**

I am personally **THANKFUL** for the church services on the internet. Thanks to those in front of the service and those behind the scenes!

**THANKFUL** for those who arrange for our loved ones to get groceries and other needs at this trying time.

**THANKFUL** for the music within the services.

**THANKS** to Brenda who keeps us connected. A special **THANKS** to Pastor Joe as he stands at the helm and keeps us going! May God bless each and every one of these church folks!

Lois

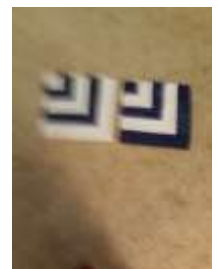


**St. Mark's Family,**

Thank you for the plant given to me in memory of my Mom. It has a place of honor beside an orchid that I also received from a friend. My sincere appreciation to all who sent cards, emails, texts and came to the funeral. It means more than I could ever say. The pain of losing my Mom has been lessened by the love and support I have felt from my church family.

Thank you,  
Julie Mislansky & family

# What Some Members of Our Church Family Are Doing During the Covid 19 Crisis



## More Pics!

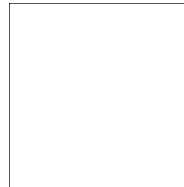




**St. Mark's United Methodist Church**

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](http://fairfieldstmarks.com)

Worship Service:  
Sundays 9:30 am