



SPIRIT OF ST. MARK'S

June 2020

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

A note from Pastor Joe: *Dear friends, I encourage you to read every page of this newsletter, especially the first four pages pertaining to our Guidelines for Phase One. I personally pledge to follow these Guidelines and I ask each of you to do the same. We will get through this Pandemic together! At least by now, we all know the church is not a building. The church is You! Your pastor and friend,*

Our Guidelines for Moving Forward

Dear St. Mark's Church Family,

Greetings in the name of our Great Healer, Jesus Christ.

Since Ohio and the rest of the United States has begun a process of opening businesses and services, your Administrative Council has deemed it necessary to put forth our own plan for re-opening. What follows is a set of Guidelines for Phase 1 (see next few pages) that are meant as beginning steps for bringing us back together.

These Guidelines are not fool proof. There is no way to eliminate all risk from catching this novel coronavirus. There is a sense that we have to learn to live with this virus in some way. We understand that some may find these Guidelines to be too strict. Others may believe it is still too soon for any public gatherings, however small. Some may choose to remain at home for a far longer time than others. Whatever individuals and families decide, we shall respect all in their decision making.

Also, these Guidelines are subject to change. As circumstances change, we are prepared to make the necessary revisions, either tightening or loosening these them as necessary.

As we move forward, slowly and cautiously, let us keep in mind these words from our bishop, Gregory Palmer:

“The crisis created by the rampant spread of COVID-19 has pushed us all into a new reality. But one thing that has not changed is that the church when at our best and in step with the Risen Christ has always been concerned for the total health and wellbeing of persons and communities. In some ways, many of us have been reawakened to a fuller richer picture of ministry. When the writer of the Third Epistle of John wrote the one chapter that is the epistle they began in this way: "Dear friend, I'm praying that all is well with you and that you enjoy good health in the same way that you prosper spiritually." (3 John 1:2) All of this is offered to you in that spirit and with that prayer. We are all in the business of good health for all God's children. To God be the glory.”

Your partners in ministry,

Administrative Council
St. Mark's United Methodist Church

Guidelines Continue On Next Page

PHASE ONE GUIDELINES FOR RE-OPENING ST. MARK'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR MEETINGS AND GATHERINGS:

For the safety and wellbeing of all who enter the St. Mark's United Methodist Church facility, all persons shall follow the three-phase restart plan as presented by our state and national governmental officials:

- a. Phase 1 – no more than 10 people gathering in one place with strict distancing Guidelines.
- b. Phase 2 – No more than 50 people gathering in one place with moderate distancing Guidelines.
- c. Phase 3 – No limitations on number of people.

Ohio is considered to be in Phase 1 at this time; therefore, these Guidelines are for Phase 1. These Guidelines will remain in effect until revised by Administrative Council.

Groups and committees are encouraged to continue virtual meetings whenever possible, or to hold meetings outside while maintaining social distancing measures of six feet, and while wearing face masks. If persons believe it necessary to meet inside the St. Mark's building, the following measures shall be taken:

1. In keeping with the state's Phase 1 Guidelines, no more than ten persons shall meet in any room at one time.
2. There shall be no more than two groups of 10 meeting in the building at any one time.
3. Rooms approved for use of up to 10 persons are Fellowship Hall, the narthex, and the sanctuary. Because of limited space and/or zero outside ventilation, all other rooms shall be occupied by no more than 5 persons at one time (our classroom "hotel" hvac units only recirculate interior air. Air brought in from the outside is considered to be less risky).
4. All persons shall do the following:
 - a. Enter through the kitchen door only.
 - b. Locate the Sign In / Sign Out Sheet found inside the kitchen door. The purpose of this sign-in / sign-out sheet is for contact tracing in the event it is discovered that someone was diagnosed or later diagnosed with Covid-19, and was at the church around the time of their illness (a copy of this sheet is on the last page of these Guidelines).
 - c. Before signing in, affirm that you do not have any symptoms of Covid-19: a fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell.
 - d. If you can respond "No" to all questions, sign in with your name, the purpose of your visit, the room you intend to use, and the date and time of your arrival.
 - e. Use sanitizer when entering the building and on a regular basis. Hand sanitizer will be available at the kitchen door and at other locations in the building.
 - f. Maintain social distancing of at least 6-feet between persons.
 - g. Wear facial masks. Extra facial masks will be available. Exceptions: Staff may work inside their own office without a mask. When outside their office they must wear a mask. They must meet with people outside their office. During live streamed worship, the worship team will not wear masks in order to communicate more clearly through microphones and online. There shall be no persons within 10 feet in front of the team as they speak or sing.

Approved by SMUMC Administrative Council May 28, 2020

PHASE ONE GUIDELINES, cont'd.

h. Clean and sanitize surfaces after use. This includes, but is not limited to, door handles, tables, hard surface seating, and all surfaces touched in restrooms. Cleaning / sanitizing solutions and paper towels will be available in all areas of the building.

i. Use designated restrooms only and only one person in a restroom at one time, please. Restrooms available for use shall be the unisex bathroom by the offices, and the men's and women's restrooms closest to the narthex. All other restrooms will be closed and marked with a Closed sign on the door (The purpose of this is to more easily and thoroughly keep our open restrooms clean and sanitized).

j. Exit the building through the kitchen door, making sure to "sign-out" with the time of your departure.

k. These Guidelines are for anyone entering our building and are to be upheld by each of us individually and collectively. All of us will need to take responsibility to uphold these Guidelines.

Again, these Guidelines are for this State of Ohio Phase 1 period and shall remain in effect until revision or further notice of St. Mark's Administrative Council.

When will public worship resume?

Public worship inside the St. Mark's sanctuary is not likely to resume until our state reaches Phase 3. The timeline for Phase 3 is not known at this time.

We understand that many businesses and public facilities, including some churches, have opened. However, most health experts have deemed public worship – with many people who are deemed to be at risk, standing and sitting together in close quarters, praying, and singing together -- to be one of the riskiest practices during this pandemic. We believe that the safety and wellbeing of our congregation take first priority over our personal desires to worship together in the same room.

There will come that time when we will be together once again, and we look forward to that time. For now, however, we will continue to worship via live stream with the worship team from the safety of our homes. In order to maintain some sense of community, we encourage you to call, write, and begin to meet together in small groups. Meeting outside while maintaining social distancing is one of the safest ways to gather.

In conclusion, we offer these words from Governor Mike DeWine, spoken during his update on May 26:

"This is not about a political issue.... This is an issue of,

'How do I protect my neighbor?'

'How do I protect the people I love?'

'How do I protect people I don't even know?'

"This is about protecting each other, It's as old as the scriptures: **Love your neighbor.**"

We are yours in Christ,

The Administrative Council and Staff of St. Mark's United Methodist Church

See the next page for a sample copy of our Sign-In / Sign-Out Sheet:

Approved by SMUMC Administrative Council May 28, 2020

This is what our Sign-In / Sign-Out Sheets will look like. You will read and inwardly respond to the four questions on the Sheet. And, assuming you respond “No” to the four questions, you then sign and fill in all but the last column. You fill out your time of departure as you exit the building.

St. Mark’s United Methodist Church

COVID-19 PHASE ONE SIGN IN / SIGN OUT SHEET

Your health and safety are important to us.

Before entering our church, please ask yourself the following questions:

- 1. Have you or a member of your immediate household traveled outside of the United States within the last two weeks?
- 2. Are you or a member of your household currently ill with symptoms consistent with coronavirus e.g.; coughing, fever > 100° F [37.8° C], shortness of breath?
- 3. Have you received visitors from outside the United States into your home within the last 2 weeks?
- 4. Have you or a member of your household been directly exposed to a person confirmed to have COVID-19 within the last 2 weeks?

If all of the above questions are answered “no,” you may enter.
A mask is required and all touched surfaces are to be wiped clean with disinfectant after use.

Please sign in and out below:

FIRST AND LAST NAME	PURPOSE OF VISIT	ROOM(S)	DATE	TIME IN	TIME OUT



St. Mark's Cares Update

Julie Mislansky

May was another spectacular month for finding ways to be the hands and feet of Jesus! Literally, using our feet, we walked, ran, biked, strolled, and exercised to raise money for Big Brothers Big

Sisters of Butler County! Thanks to an overwhelming response from our church family, we raised **\$1,107** to help support and defend the potential youth in our community! In addition, there were other members of our church who had their own team and raised money, so if we throw in their donations, **it's a grand St. Marks total of \$3,828!!!**



THANK YOU, ST. MARKS!!!

On May 12th, we kicked off a “**3-Day Drive Through Food Drive**” to help replenish the shelves of **Fairfield Food Pantry**. With no surprise, our church and our community rallied around this cause by donating **560 pounds of food and hygiene items and \$365!!** Many Fairfield residents contributed as they heard about the food drive via Facebook or by driving by. Several persons stopped and generously gave money. We were also blessed to be a blessing and help 6 individuals/families who needed food and supplies. The drive was a huge success and we will definitely do it again!



Lastly, using your designated giving to St. Marks Cares, we were able to provide meals that were served from the Broken Bus and Serve City. Both ministries are not using volunteers at this time, and we miss serving with our Broken Bus and Serve City friends, but its great we still have a way to help by providing the food.



What's coming up for St. Marks missions and outreach?

Broken Bus Snack Food Drive

The pantry shelves at the Broken Bus donation site (affectionally known as “the bus stop “) are almost completely bare. During the Covid-19 crisis, they have been passing out individually packaged meals to our friends on the streets, but to limit contact, they are not passing out other snacks, clothes and toiletries. To help other ministries and to limit waste of our resources, most of the snacks were donated to other missions; such as City Gospel Mission, Fairfield Food Pantry, and other causes in Middletown. The bus will soon be back out on the streets, fully stocked and passing out whatever is needed! So they need our help filling those snack shelves!!! Members of the **St. Marks Cares team will at church, in the parking lot by the kitchen door**, to collect your donations on:

Wednesday, June 10th 6:00-8:00 P.M.
Thursday, June 11th 10:00- noon

In addition, there will be a designated area in the Fellowship Hall and a bin outside the kitchen door for donations. These can be dropped off anytime during the week of June 8-12th during the office hours of 9:00- 3:00. THANK YOU for your generous support of the Broken Bus! Can't wait to get some of you back on the bus!! Read more about the Broken Bus at <http://thebrokenbusministry.org/> or like their Facebook page, “The Broken Bus Ministry” for updates.

SNACK FOOD ITEMS NEEDED

- Gatorade, Powerade, or Propel
- Soda (any kind, NOT diet)
- Individual packs of nuts or almonds
- Cereal bars (NOT granola bars)
- Peanut butter or cheese crackers
- Fruit cups (NOT applesauce)
- Individual bags of chips, any kind
- Individually wrapped beef jerky





Covid-19 Hygiene Kit Challenge

³⁴“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’ Matthew 25: 34-36

“Due to increased exposure to the COVID-19 virus, our neighbors returning from prison are at a higher risk of spreading the coronavirus back into the community. At the same time, incarceration comprises the immune system and one’s overall health, putting COVID-negative returning neighbors at a higher risk of coronavirus affliction upon their return to community. The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) has asked The West Ohio Conference for assistance in providing hygiene items and face masks to our returning neighbors.

All In Community, the WOC Disaster Response Ministry, and the West Ohio Conference United Methodist Women are challenging our members, churches, and groups to provide 4,000 returning neighbors with a health kit that will better protect the well-being of all community members by reducing the spread of COVID-19.”

From the West Ohio Conference UMC website

St. Marks Church is going to be a part of this challenge! These hygiene kits are much like the “flood buckets” that we have put together in the past for UMCOR, but with fewer and easier to find items! Also like the flood buckets, the items to go in the kits are very specific. A copy of the items and instructions for assembly are provided in this newsletter. An optional item for the kits is facemasks and **our Monday morning craft ladies have generously said they will make these masks for all the kits donated!** Thank you, ladies!!!

This is a great mission project for families to do together! There will be a collection bin in the Fellowship Hall for your completed kits. **All kits need to be turned in by Thursday, June 18th.**

Questions?? Contact Julie Mislansky, 505-4061, knauffj@fuse.net

West Ohio Conference

All In Community COVID-19 Reentry Kit Checklist

The All In Community COVID-19 Reentry Kits consist of hygiene products (similar to UMCOR Hygiene Kits), a washable facemask, and a note of hope. Use the checklist below for the list of items to include and instructions. **Please note some items have been added to account for local distribution and COVID-19 personal safety guidelines.** *Kits may be assembled without a facemask.* With proper hygiene and PPE resources, COVID-19 Reentry Kits can help reduce the spread of COVID-19 through and to high risk, vulnerable populations, including our returning neighbors.

One hand towel (15 x 25 –17 x 27 inches)

No kitchen, cleaning, or microfiber towels

One washcloth

No kitchen, cleaning, or microfiber towels

One comb

Must be sturdy with at least 6 inches of teeth
No pocket combs or picks
Rattail and combs without handles are acceptable but must have at least 6 inches of teeth

One toenail or fingernail clipper

No emery boards or metal nail files

Bath-size soap (3 oz. bar or larger)

No Ivory or Jergen's soap
Do not remove from packaging

Two, 2-in-1 shampoo & conditioner (travel size)

Original scents only – no strongly perfumed products
Do not remove seals

One adult toothbrush & toothpaste

Do not remove from packaging

10 adhesive bandages (¾ by 3 inches)

Common household bandages acceptable

One note of hope

Sign first name only
Do NOT include any contact information

One hand sanitizer (travel size preferred) -Optional

One gender-neutral washable facemask - Optional
One one-gallon size re-sealable bag

KIT ASSEMBLY INSTRUCTIONS

- * Lay hand towel flat on a table.
- * Lay the washcloth in the center of the hand towel.
- * Place all remaining items **except** plastic bag, mask, and note on top of the washcloth.
- * Fold the sides of the hand towel to cover the items.
- * Grasp the bundle tightly and roll over the remainder of the towel.
- * Write a brief note of encouragement and welcome to include in the kit.
- * Place the tightly rolled bundle, note and facemask (if available) in the plastic bag, where all three items are visible. Remove air and seal.
- * Groups/individuals supplying only facemasks may seal them in a plastic bag to be placed in hygiene kits later.

IMPORTANT NOTES.

- * All items must be new.
- * Do not wash any of the items, including facemasks.
- * Please include an encouraging note and welcome.
- * Do not include your full name, address, and any personal information in your note.
- * Contents of kits or the containers of kits should not be imprinted with advertisements, patriotic, military, violent or alcoholic/tobacco symbols.

There will be a bin in Fellowship Hall for your kits. Please drop off during office hours, 9-3 weekdays.

You can also bring them to our snack drive on June 10th or June 11th.
Deadline is Thursday, June 18th.

CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!

Interviews of our St. Mark's graduates may be seen on our Facebook Page,
www.facebook.com/fairfieldstmarks

Joey Specht

Son of Gary Specht and Missy LaMar
Graduate of Baden High School
Future plans, fall 2020: University of Cincinnati Blue Ash Campus, majoring in business

Jack Nguyen

Son of Steve and Kym Nguyen
Graduate of Georgetown College
Degree in Biology with focus on Pre Med
Future plans: Medical School. On waiting list for NKU and OU

Hannah Hensler

Daughter of Mark and Jenni Hensler
Graduate of Kent State University
Degree Bachelor of Fine Arts in Musical Theater
Future plans, post Covid-19: New York-bound for auditions

Kayla Goodman

Daughter of Devin and Gale Goodman
Graduate of University of Louisville
Degree in Music Therapy
Future plans, summer of 2020: Music Therapist at Hospice in Madison, Wisconsin

Plus, we recognize these grandchildren of our church family (These are the ones we know about).

Josie Ritenbaugh

(Josie and her dad have been caring for our lawn for the last several years)
Daughter of David and Barbara Ritenbaugh
Graduate of Fairfield High School
Future plans, fall 2020: University of Toledo, majoring in Exercise Science, on a Pre Med Track

Gillian Null

Granddaughter of Mike and Dianne Aiken
Graduate of Ohio University
Future plans, August 2020: Medical School at University of Cincinnati

Sidney Elizabeth Henderson

Granddaughter of Rick and Terrill Broshear; daughter of Tracie and Kevin Henderson
Graduate of Fairfield High School
Future plans, fall 2020: Wittenberg College, playing Lacrosse

Megan McDonald

Granddaughter of Rick and Terrill Broshear
Graduate of Clemson University in Nursing



St. Mark's Financial Update

Tim Mislansky, Finance Committee Chairperson

Greetings St. Mark's Family,

I hope all of you are healthy and well, and continuing to cope with our unique situation amidst the pandemic. I certainly miss seeing you in the church building on Sunday's, but know that St. Mark's continues to do God's work outside the four walls of 4601 Fairfield Avenue.

Here's an update on where we stand financially. Our giving to St. Mark's has remained solid. We had received almost \$29,000 in May compared to \$25,500 in May 2019. For the year, total receipts for the church are up 9% over last year. Even more impressive is that through May 2020 is our best year in terms of total giving since 2012. This is certainly a sign of a generous and healthy church. The graph below shows the total of our giving.

We've continued to manage our expenses through the pandemic. In May, our total expenses should be about \$26,000 meaning we brought in \$3,000 more than we spent. Another sign of good news. All of our major payments, including our loan payments and apportionments, continue to be paid on time. We've paid just over \$16,000 in apportionments so far this year. And we've reduced our two loans to a total of \$63,500.

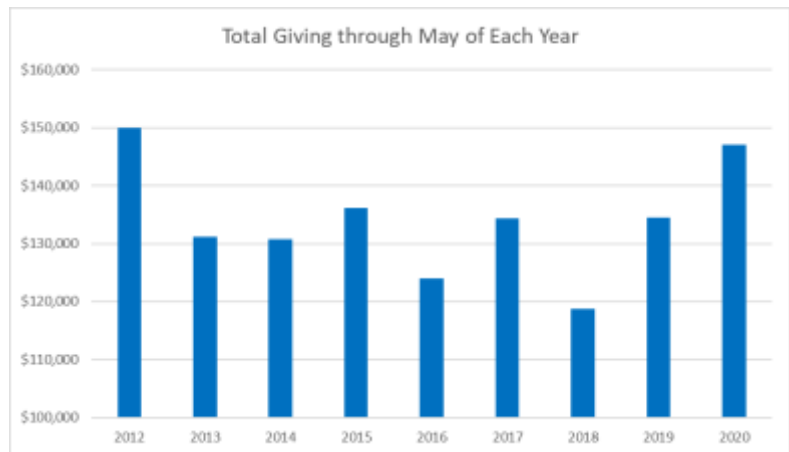
Giving remains crucial these next few months as we begin our work to re-open the church building. While it will still be awhile until we are ready as we follow the governor's and the bishop's guidelines, there are things we can do to get ready – such a purchases of hand sanitizing stations and supplies necessary to increase the safety for our members.

The best news is that we've stopped borrowing from ourselves to pay our current bills. In the past I've reported that our cash in the credit union was less than the designated funds by as much as \$10,000. The tremendous financial support and the lower expenses the past two months have reversed that situation. Now we have about \$4,000 more in the credit union than our total designated funds. Thank you again!

Two months ago, I described our finances in the newsletter as "fragile but stable". Thanks to your faithfulness and generosity, I am thrilled to report that St. Mark's is in the best financial position over the past one to two years.

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.

Sincerely,
Tim Mislansky



STAFFING UPDATE

The SPRC regretfully accepted the resignation of Erin Theodor as Director of Youth Ministry. Erin said she loves St. Mark's and St. Mark's youth, but she could not adequately do the job while also serving as fulltime funeral director, wife and mother of Casey and Morgan. SPRC is currently accepting applications for the position.

SPRC is also accepting applications for the position of Part-time Administrative Assistant / Bookkeeper. The job description for this position is available from chairperson Kym Nguyen or Pastor Joe upon request..

CHILDREN / FAMILY MINISTRY

The Pumpkin Patch has been tilled! Thank you to Dick Roemer and his father for graciously tilling our garden at no charge This year, Pastor Joe and Linda will have a small garden at one end, and the rest will be our Pumpkin Patch.

Gardeners of all kinds, inexperienced and experienced are wanted! Many of you have planted seeds and they are ready to be placed in the ground. This is your opportunity to work with Pastor Joe, Peggy, and Jennie to get them planted and off to a good start. Contact Pastor Joe for scheduling.

Thank yous...

Thank you to the Craft Ladies for making facial masks for anyone who needs one during the pandemic.

Thank you to Jeff Gering for trimming the shrubbery on the church grounds.

Thank you to Bob Hamp for spearheading so many projects at church during this time.

Thank you to the worship team for leading us in worship week after week. Beautiful!

Thank you to the Stewart's for their excellent painting of our children's classroom.

Thank you to Pam and Cindy for their amazing detail work in our kitchen.

Thank you to Danny for the beautiful new kitchen shelves.

Plus many many more thanks, too many to mention. Thank you, St. Mark's!

June Birthdays and Anniversaries

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

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

3 - Lisa Bowman
3 - Kym Nguyen
6 - Will Nguyen
7 - Christopher Cooper
7 - Nancy Lewis
8 - Charlotte Tierney
9 - Brian George
9 - Dale Shreve
10 - Sue Beckett
11 - Janice Chaney
13 - Aidyn Edmundson
13 - Don White
14 - Heather McDaniel
15 - Karen Smith
16 - Helen Mullen
17 - Terri Espig
20 - Becky Hamblin
21 - Rich Stracke
24 - Tim Mislansky
25 - Mark Hensler Jr.
26 - Debbie Hill
26 - Ardean Pitman
27 - Wes Flannery
27 - Kristy Theiss
28 - Don Stewart
29 - Sue McDaniel
30 - Terrill Broshear
30 - Mike Fitzpatrick

JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

1 - Rick & Janis Kiefer
3 - Helmut & Terri Espig
8 - Greg & Megan Kuertz
10 - Rick & Jennie Marshall
19 - Larry & Sue Miller
19 - Dan & Judy Scofield
20 - Greg & Joann Keith
24 - Bobby & Jennifer Rinker
25 - Bob & Judy Klingel - 60 yrs.
25 - Cliff & Cheryl Klug
25 - Tim & Maria Mullen
25 - Rich & Suzan Stracke
26 - Matt Guion & Alicia Booker
28 - Eric & Michele Leyrer



(513) 844-1818
Fax: (513) 844-2828
fairfieldstmarks.com

Worship Service:
Sundays 9:30 am
Live Streamed

FABRIC NEEDED!

The Morning morning Craft Ladies of St. Mark's are busy making facemasks for anyone who needs them! They are quickly depleting their fabric supply! If you have 100% cotton fabric you'd like to donate to the cause, they would greatly appreciate it. You can drop it off during office hours at the church. Thank you!!