



SPIRIT OF ST. MARK'S

APRIL 2021

THE MISSION OF ST. MARK'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IS TO MAKE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORLD.



Dear St. Mark's family,

We've just experienced a special Palm Sunday service. What is in store for the rest of Holy Week? Read on....

MAUNDY THURSDAY, April 1st: A 40-minute Maundy Thursday service premieres online only at 7 pm. or anytime after (No in-person worship)
The service, entitled *The Living Last Supper* is a combination of 12 stories from the apostles reflecting on their time with Jesus. The service will include special music Holy Communion (have your bread and juice ready to receive at home).

GOOD FRIDAY: A special Good Friday service has been pre-recorded and will be available online to you on Facebook. This very special service — with music provided by Chris Beiser, Hannah Hensler, and Sue Combs; scriptural narration by Mark Hensler, videography by Mrk Hensler, and Rick Kiefer on sound — takes you from the Last Supper, into the Garden of Gethsemane, through the trial, crucifixion, and ends at Jesus' burial. We hope this service provides a powerful message as we prepare our hearts for Easter Sunday.

EASTER EGG HUNT: Saturday, April 3rd at 1 pm. This is a day for us to bring some fun and joy to our St. Mark's children. Because of the pandemic, this event is not publicized to the public. So bring your family, and you can invite friends if you wish. We have 100s and 100s of eggs! Plus, a visit from the Easter Bunny!.

EASTER MORNING WORSHIP AT 9:30. "Christ the Lord is risen today. Alleluia!" We celebrate this holiest day of the Christian year with music by Kayla Goodman, Hannah Hensler, Mark Hensler, Sue Combs, and Chris Beiser. Linda Payne will serve again as liturgist. And, I pray that what I share this day will be a message of hope and encouragement for all. This service, like all other Sunday services, will be in-person and livestreamed. All are invited to attend, using your own judgement, whatever is best for you. If you do plan to attend, please respond to the attendance survey sent by email, or call the church office. Reservations are not required, but this will help us in our planning. Thank you!

My thanks to all of you for your active support of our ministries, and I pray that this week will be a time of spiritual renewal for all of us.

Peace,



ST. MARK'S MISSIONS and OUTREACH

This year's UMCOR Sunday offering total is

\$1,425

Thank you, St. Mark's church family, for your continued generosity and support of UMCOR!



What an amazing amount of donations we collected for Fairfield Food Pantry! **718 pounds** of non-perishable food, hygiene and cleaning supplies, and baby wipes and diapers! Thank you!!



In addition to all of this, we used St. Mark's Cares funds to put together **50 kid's Easter baskets** for the families that visit the pantry. A big thank you to Debbie Bryant for making this happen!





A feast of Mexican food was served to the residents of Serve City on March 27th, thanks to all the good cooks and bakers at St. Mark's! These meals are so appreciated! We will soon be able to return to staying, serving the meal, and fellowshiping with our friends at Serve City.

Our next meal will be May 8th - watch the bulletin and our Facebookpage for the chance to help with this.

APRIL MISSION PROJECT

This month we will be supporting the students who are progressing through the Butler County Juvenile Detention and Rehabilitation Centers. Because of the pandemic, many of the students' families are unable to mail their personal care items from home. They are requesting "hygiene bags" to give to their students. All items should be put in a large Ziploc bag and should only contain the items requested. **Please note the items that need to be alcohol-free.**

Toothbrush (non-battery operated)
Toothpaste (no alcohol)
Mouthwash (no alcohol)
Stick of deodorant (non-aerosol)
Shampoo
Conditioner

Bar of soap or bottle of body wash
Body lotion
Hair gel
Comb
Brush

Place your completed bags in the marked bins in the Fellowship Hall and the Narthex.
Deadline for bags will be Sunday, April 18th.





MUSIC MINISTRY

Chris Beiser - Director of Music

Hello Everyone, Welcome to Spring!

The longer days and sunny skies have finally arrived and I want to shout Hallelujah! I hope all of the Lenten/Easter music and services are a blessing to each you. What a beautiful variety of selections provided by many people throughout this season. A huge thank you to the 12 apostles, Mark Hensler, Rick Kiefer, Pastor Joe, and Sue Combs for all of their contributions to the Maundy Thursday service: The Living Last Supper.

Another group of thank you's to Mark Hensler, Hannah Hensler, Rick Kiefer, and Sue Combs for all their help in preparing the Good Friday service, especially since I added it at the last second! And then of course we can't forget Easter with even more musical specials from Kayla Goodman, Mark, Hannah, and Sue. I want to thank Penny Dole and Linda Payne for adding their talents to our Lenten services as well. We are so very blessed to have such talents in our congregation.

PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT TO READ THE NEXT ANNOUNCEMENT...

April 25 is going to be a music Sunday!

The top 10 favorite Christmas carol countdown was popular this holiday season so I'm going to do it again. This time we are going to countdown your top 10 favorite hymns. I need you to start nominating so I can get them tallied and the music prepared!

SO...vote for your top 5 hymns. If you are attending church, I'll have cards for you to fill out in the Narthex with your five hymn choices and you can either give the card to me or leave it in the basket where you pick up your Sunday morning bulletin.

From home, you can email me (cgbchoreo@aol.com), call me (513-907-7669), or leave your top 5 with Brenda through the church office.

You have til Sunday April 11 to get your nominations in. I am really looking forward to seeing what makes the list!

Now that the weather is getting warmer and the evenings longer before the sun sets, it's time to pick back up with choir lawn hymn singing! Look for an announcement soon for an exact starting date. I love this ministry and can't wait to get started again!

For behold, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land. Song of Solomon 2: 11-12.



Love to you all,
Chris Beiser

St. Mark's Children's Ministry
G.L.O.W.

Growing in faith - Loving God and one another - Outward reaching - Worshiping together

During the week before Holy Week, palm branches and packets for Palm Sunday and Easter were hand delivered to all St. Mark's children.

Look on the front page for information about the Easter Egg Hunt scheduled for Saturday, April 3 at 1:00 pm. It will be so much fun to see our children hunt for the 100s of eggs. Plus, it will be very special fun to see the Easter Bunny (thanks to Gunnar Marshall for arranging Mr. Bunny's visit!).

The Children and Family Ministry Team looks forward to the day when we will once again offer children's programming on Sunday mornings. As more of our servant leaders receive their vaccination we will have the people resources needed to pull this off. Safety is our priority, so as more are comfortable serving, this vital ministry will happen. Of course, we are always looking for potential servant leaders. Persons interested in serving may contact Peggy Smith.

Open to all, from teen thru adult

FAITHFUL and INCLUSIVE

New Classes begin -

Thursdays 6:30, April 8, 15, 29, May 6, 13, 20

Faithful and Inclusive allows you to gain an understanding of how United Methodists can be both obedient to God's Word and fully welcoming to LGBTQ persons in the church.

One aim of this class:

- To consider how United Methodist Christians committed to upholding biblical authority take a non-literal, yet serious, approach to their study of the Bible.

So far, 31 persons have taken this class. Great participation! We need at least eight per class, so please sign up. We will meet via Zoom. You will receive a Zoom invite after you sign up and closer to the meeting date. There is no cost. Call 844-1818 to reserve your place, sign up from the email you may receive, or find the announcement on our Facebook Page.

YOUTH GROUP HAPPENINGS

JULIE MISLANSKY, YOUTH DIRECTOR



March was a busy month for us; we painted our pottery, made sandwiches to be served on the Broken Bus, went for a hike at Harbin Park, and helped fill eggs for the St. Mark's Easter Egg Hunt. We also developed and wrote a new youth group covenant; to give our group purpose and direction - to help guide us in all that we do for fun and for the kingdom. We'd like to share our new Mission Statement with you:

St. Mark's leaders seek to provide a safe place for our youth to explore their faith and build relationships. Our goal is to become more like Christ. The purpose for every activity we do is to help teens grow in their faith, become more aware of God's love for them, and to share that love and compassion with others.

Two of the ways the youth want to be involved with St. Mark's are to help develop and maintain the courtyard area and to lead a worship service. We are talking to the Trustees about the first idea - more to come later! The second idea will happen (hopefully, fingers crossed) on Sunday, April 18th! Please support our youth by attending that Sunday or watching the livestream at home, and give us grace, as we lead the service for the first time



Finally, spring has sprung and flamingos are flocking!!

Yes, the flamingos are back! Watch for information in the bulletin or our Facebook page about how you can "flock someone's yard" OR buy flamingo insurance if you want to protect your lawn from the flock! The cost to flock a yard (and you can flock as many yards as you want!) will be \$10 per yard and insurance will be \$15. This will be happening during the month of April. Contact Julie at knauffjj@icloud.com or 505-4061 if you want to be involved in the fun! This fundraiser will be for future youth projects and missions!



PRAYER PARTNERS!

Family Ministries is excited to announce we are bringing back Prayer Partners!

We know that if you are praying for someone, you start caring for that someone, and relationships begin to grow.

We believe intergenerational prayer partners not only benefit the pair, but also helps families feel more connected to the church, and leads to growth in prayer life for all involved. We are a church FAMILY, and we want our kids to know that from a very early age!

To be a prayer partner, all that is asked of you is to pray regularly for your partner! You may want to encourage him/her with notes, cards, emails, remembrances on his/her birthday, and seeking them out at church for a chat. Anything beyond that will be up to the pair and his/her families. We will be encouraging our children and youth to make this a mutual relationship so that they are also praying and remembering their adult partner.

The only information that will be shared between partners will be name, address, and birthdate. Any info beyond that can be decided between the child's family and their prayer partner. We will plan a date sometime in the coming months, when we are back to full in-person worship, for our prayer partners to "meet."

Our goal is to have everyone in the church be a part of this ministry! Children, youth, and young adults are being contacted by Peggy and Julie about their participation.

If you are an adult, and want to be a prayer partner, please contact Peggy Smith, at p.smith@fairfieldstmarks.com or Julie Mislansky, at knauffjj@icloud.com and let us know.

We will also post about this on our Facebook page and you can respond there as well.



APRIL PICK ME UP MOMENTS

Thanks to Carol Pittman

- April 01, 2021 – God demonstrates His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8
- April 02, 2021 – Easter isn't just about one Sunday, it's about the journey Jesus took all the way to the cross.
- April 03, 2021 – He died so that we may live. 1 Thessalonians 5:10
- April 04, 2021 – He is risen! Matthew 28:6
- April 05, 2021 – Every day do something that will lead you closer to God. Anon.
- April 06, 2021 – Instead of trying to figure out exactly how and why God should speak to you, know that God speaks to you exactly the way you need to listen. Anon
- April 07, 2021 – A calm mind is the ultimate weapon against any challenge in life. Bryant McGill
- April, 08, 2021 – Faith sees the invisible, believes the unbelievable and receives the impossible. Corrie ten Boom
- April 09, 2021 – Anything given to God can become a pathway to joy. Elisabeth Elliot
- April 10, 2021 – There is always enough time to do the will of God. Elisabeth Elliot
- April 11, 2021 – The more you celebrate your life, the more there is in life to celebrate. Oprah Winfrey
- April 12, 2021 – Live in such a way that those who know you, but don't know God, will come to know God because they know you. 1 Peter 2:12
- April 13, 2021 – The only One who can satisfy the human heart is the One who made it. Cheronliz Kariko
- April 14, 2021 – Life is like a mirror, we get the best results when we smile at it. Anon
- April 15, 2021 – Fill your heart with love. Fill your mind with kindness. Fill your soul with peace. A. D. Williams
- April 16, 2021 – The God of love and peace will be with you. 2 Corinthians 13:11
- April 17, 2021 – Sometimes you have to make a decision that will hurt your heart but heal your soul. Trent Shelton
- April 18, 2021 – If you want to deepen your relationship with God, spend more time with Him. Anon.
- April 19, 2021 – Your strongest muscle and worst enemy is your mind. Train it well. Ganesh Lauker
- April 20, 2021 – Our God is an awesome God, and He loves to come to us in ways he knows will change us. Anon.
- April 21, 2021 – Open your eyes to the beauty around you; open your mind to the wonder of life: open your heart to those who love you and always be true to yourself. May Angelou
- April 22, 2021 – God is the One who gives us all we need, not this world. Anon.
- April 23, 2021 – Unless you try to do something beyond what you already mastered, you will never grow. Ralph Waldo Emerson
- April 24, 2021 – The only way to have a friend is to be one. Ralph Waldo Emerson
- April 25, 2021 – God is the strength of my heart. Psalm 73:26
- April 26, 2021 – Let go of every thought that isn't pushing your mind in a positive direction. Anon
- April 27, 2021 – The best things in life are free. And it's important never to lose sight of that. So look around you.....Wherever you see friendship, loyalty, laughter and love.....there is your treasure. Neale Donald Walsh
- April 28, 2021 – God is everywhere, so pray anywhere. Anon.
- April 29, 2021 – God can restore what is broken and change it into something amazing. All you need is faith. Joel 21:25
- April 30, 2021 – Before you speak, let your words pass through three gates: Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it kind? Rumi



St. Mark's Financial Update

Tim Mislansky, Treasurer

Hello St. Mark's Family,

We would like to welcome Don Menke and Bob Pittman to the Finance Committee. We appreciate them being willing to give their time and talents to St. Mark's and look forward to their participation. One of the main purposes of the Finance Committee is to find creative ways to turn their congregations into tithing congregations with attitudes of generosity as well as to develop stewardship campaigns to raise enough funds to meet the budget of the church. As we move into 2021 and beyond, the finance committee will continue exploring these opportunities.

We moved through February with decent results. Giving was down a bit but due to fewer Sundays in the month. We expect this to rebound in March since it has five Sundays. The expenses to "run the church" in February were pretty standard except for the \$2,000 bill for plowing of the lot due to the various snowfalls we had. Let's hope the rest of the year is snow free.

We are also ahead of our budget after two months. Giving is right on target for the budget and we've spent almost \$5,000 less than projected due to spending less than expected on lower utility costs, not paying the first installment for the annual conference house (we budgeted \$2,000 to rent a house but since the conference will not be occurring in person, we will not spend \$2,000 this year) and lower than budgeted repair/maintenance expenses. So, all together we are \$4,500 ahead of our budget.

Our money in the bank is at \$68,000. We have \$27,000 in the parking lot fund to do the lights and the trustees are currently obtaining quotes. Our excess cash (calculated as total cash less bills outstanding and designated funds) finished February at about \$5,600. As long as the number is positive, we feel good about our financial position.

The finance committee voted to use some of our excess cash to pay off the line of credit loan balance which was used for the concrete work at the parsonage. This leaves us with just one loan – for improvements done several years ago. That loan has a balance of about \$53,00 and around 7 years left until it is paid in full.

In summary, your continued generosity allows St. Mark's to be in a good financial position. Thank you! If you have questions about anything related to St. Mark's finances, please do not hesitate to ask either me or Gale.

Sincerely,
Tim Mislansky, Treasurer
Gale Goodman, Finance Chair

from our Bishop, Gregory V. Palmer, reprinted from last week's Ohio River Valley News and Notes

OWNING OUR STUFF

Dear friends of Jesus Christ:

I was crestfallen a week ago today when I heard about the tragic loss of life and the enormous physical and moral injury inflicted upon those left behind. My dismay is multi-layered. First of all, there is an apparent singling out of a particular racial, ethnic group. I am well aware that the presumed perpetrator claims otherwise regarding targeting. But layered upon the clear ratcheting up of violence in word and deed toward Asian Americans, race and ethnicity cannot be discounted as a salient factor. The resurgence of anti-Asian rhetoric and violence is hardly new. Old as it is it is nevertheless unacceptable in a civil society. It is abhorrent for people of Christian faith. Or at least it ought to be. We are those who make the claim that upon every person is stamped the image of God. If that which we have preached and taught is true it cannot be true only as an intellectual exercise. It must be embodied.

Secondly the alleged gunman claims in affect that he was trying to exorcise the demonic forces that haunted him. I fully support anyone running in the opposite direction of bad behaviors. But running toward firearms and then turning them outward toward the perceived source of temptation is bad theology and terrible sociology. It is too simplistic and places all of ones troubles outside of the self and is therefore an avoidance of real soul work. Further, in the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, violence as a problem-solving method personal or societal is short sighted at best and no solution at all at worst.

We have been tracing the life and ministry of Jesus during these Lenten days. Next week, Holy Week, we reach a particular climax. One of the things that dawns on me anew at this stage in the liturgical cycle each year is how much Jesus identifies with our hopes and dreams as well as our pain and suffering. In the course of that he seeks to break the cycles of violence, rage, alienation, and hatred. The message of every Easter is his victory over the worst makes it possible for us to be victorious over all the obstacles to living a God centered, abundant life. But it starts with owning our stuff and standing with all of our wounded fellow pilgrims on the human journey. This week we must name our Asian sisters and brothers specifically and stand with them and for them against all that would seek to dehumanize them. In the name of Jesus let's stand with each and all upon whom the image of God is imprinted.

Blessings and Peace in Christ Jesus.



FROM STAFF PARISH

Spring has arrived and we are slowly but surely emerging from the pandemic!
There is a renewed enthusiasm and excitement as we prepare for the future at St. Mark's.

SPRC would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of Pastor Joe's hours (below).
We are encouraging Pastor Joe to adhere to his time off as much as possible to refresh
Physically, mentally, and spiritually, so that he is able to be fully present for all of us
each week. Thanks in advance for your support - SPRC.

Hours: Tuesday afternoon - Sunday morning

Off: Sunday afternoon, all day Monday, Tuesday evening.

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
- 2 - Dave Booker
- 3 - Gay Kubik
- 5 - Athena Edmundson (2 yrs.)
- 6 - Diana Griffith
- 7 - Layton Edmundson (17 yrs.)
- 13 - Gil Dole
- 14 - Joy Addis
- 15 - Cindy Miller
- 16 - Katie Chambers (10 yrs.)
- 19 - Randy Starkie
- 23 - Bob Pittman
- 28 - Tre'el Edmundson
- 28 - Dick Kuertz
- 28 - Sue Rumley



APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

- 12 - Rich & Karen Turner



Dear friends at St. Mark's,

Thank you very much for the beautiful Floral arrangement at the time of Marilyn's passing. We appreciate your thoughts and prayers. Marilyn loved you and thoroughly enjoyed being with you.

Sincerely,
Jim, Jeff & Aric Cattran

Church Family,

Thank you all so much for the outpouring of love and support doing this difficult time. The cards, prayers, flowers and texts meant the world to me.

Love, Tari Randall

St. Mark's Family,

Gay and I would like to thank our church family for all of your prayers, cards, emails, notes and messages regarding the passing of my sister, Danielle. They have given us comfort and the knowledge that we are not alone but supported by many who care for us.

Marty Kubik

April Worship Calendar

April 4—Easter

April 11—Bishop Palmer delivering the sermon on video

April 18—Worship led by our Youth

April 25—Music Sunday

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, Julie Mislansky

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Worship Service:
Sundays 9:30 am
Live Streamed