



SPIRIT OF ST. MARK'S

The Mission of St. Mark's United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world...a world of justice, love and peace filled with people growing in the likeness of Jesus Christ.

NOVEMBER 2023

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NOVEMBER 4, SATURDAY:
WORK DAY (HELPING HANDS) at 9:00AM
Contact Jennie Marshall or Tonya Leguina
(See more details on page 11)

NOVEMBER 14, TUESDAY:
ST. MARK'S CHARGE CONFERENCE at 7:00PM

NOVEMBER 17, FRIDAY:
RUTH'S CIRCLE at 1:00PM (Fellowship Hall)
Contact Pam Guynes
(See more details on page 5)

NOVEMBER 26 & 24, HAPPY THANKSGIVING:
THE OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED
Contact Lyn Bucalo for questions

NOVEMBER 28, TUESDAY:
LUNCH BUNCH at 12:00PM
Contact Brenda Smoot
(See more details on page 5)

DECEMBER 3 AND 10, SUNDAY:
ADVENT CELEBRATION/POT LUCK at 5:00PM
FOLLOW THE CHRISTMAS STAR EVENT at 5:30pm
(See more details on page 9)

DECEMBER 7, THURSDAY:
OHIO MILITARY BAND
EVENING HOLIDAY CONCERT at 7:30PM
(See more details on page 5)

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR MARK

"ON YOUR MARK..."

Some things just sneak up on you.

One of those things is Advent. We gather for Thanksgiving and enjoy the fun times of the holiday, and just waiting behind the corner is Advent. There is some irony to the fact that a season of preparation is often the time we are least prepared.

Advent is a time of preparation,

however not for Christmas per say. Advent is a time we prepare for Jesus. Just as He came in history and fulfilled the Word of God, so He will come again just as He promised. It is a time we call ourselves to be ready to meet Jesus. Not just on Christmas morning, but in the many ways we can receive Christ in each day.



For the last several years I have done something different in worship for Advent. I have focused on one of the players in the Advent story. It is easy to rush the season and lose the significance of the story. This Advent season I will be preaching on Joseph. Joseph is one of the most important people in the Advent story. He was the guy God spoke to as well as to work out the logistics of the birth of the Christ Child. As important as Joseph is in the story, he says nothing. There are no recorded words of Joseph in the Scriptures. He is a man put into a challenging situation who has to live out his faithfulness in actions and not words. Join us this Advent season as we journey with Joseph through Advent.



As we think about Advent, it is important to have this programing note:

Christmas Eve is on a Sunday this year, and that creates some challenges in worship planning. This year we will have two services on Christmas Eve: One will be our normal 9:30 AM service and it will incorporate some of the events of our evening family service. We also have our traditional 11:00 PM Candlelight Service.



I encourage you to join us this Advent season and on Christmas Eve as we celebrate the season and the arrival of Christ in history and our lives.

***God Bless,
Pastor Mark***

MESSAGES FROM NEW COVENANT CHURCH

NEW COVENANT UMC IN PICTURES...



Author
Mrs. Belinda Serwaah Wireko

NEW BOOK RELEASE

AVAILABLE ON
amazon

Children's Book Launch

**November 18, 2-7pm,
Fellowship Hall**

About the Author

Mrs. Belinda Serwaah Wireko is a retired Nurse Practitioner. She developed her love of books at six years old when her father took her to the library for story time. This is her debut book. Belinda lives with her husband in Cincinnati, OH. She has five adult children and loves spending time with her eight grandchildren.

About the Children's Book

Nana's grandchildren are fascinated with Nana's hair. They wonder why their hair remains the same but Nana's hair keeps changing. Join Vera as she shows some of the different hairstyles.

MISSIONS AND OUTREACH

BEGINNING NOVEMBER 12

PARKSIDE GIVING TREE MISSION PROJECT:

This year, we are happy to provide Christmas presents to our neighbors at Parkside. A Christmas Tree will be in the Narthex with name tags. For information, contact Tari Randall.

Presents and gifts are to be wrapped and returned by DECEMBER 16, please. We plan to take them over to Parkside during the week of December 17. Thank you and look forward to another spectacular year of giving!



WESLEY HOUSE, NOVEMBER 14



We are looking for volunteers to help with meals. The theme is "Breakfast for Dinner."

Sign up on the Narthex bulletin board. For details contact Kym Nguyen.

SERVE CITY, DECEMBER 8

We are looking for volunteers to help with meals. We haven't decided on a theme yet. Sign up on the Narthex bulletin board. For details contact Charlotte Tierney.

Results from September:



We took hot and cold Turkey and Ham sliders with sides and desserts. Charlotte said that her car was full of food. Serve City was so very appreciative. Thank you to all who participated!

NAMI WALK/RUN 5K RAISED \$345!!!

Rain and a pop of sunshine during the Nami 5K walk on October 14 but regardless of the weather, these TWO ladies raised \$345 dollars.

Thank you to Tari Randall and Lynne Schumacker.



SEPT. RESULTS: THE CARING CLOSET

We dropped off 8 jeans, 6 packs of underwear, 5 pair of socks, 4 toothpaste, 3 bottles of shampoo/conditioner and 1-8 packs of soap. Thank you to all who donated!



The Caring Closet

DEC. IS SHARE THE WARM COAT DRIVE

We will be donating to coats again this year. More details to come but place your coats in the bins located in the Narthex. For details contact Tari Randall.



POINSETTIA ORDER FORM

Reminder that the Poinsettia order form is **DUE BY NOVEMBER 12, SUNDAY**. See the Narthex Welcome Counter for order forms.



MONTHLY FELLOWSHIP and GATHERINGS

RUTH CIRCLE NOVEMBER 17, FRIDAY, 1PM

(FELLOWSHIP HALL)

All Women are Welcome!

Join us this month as Lyn Bucalo will talk about her small jewelry business with samples for purchase. It will be a fun time to celebrate sisterhood as well as connect with each other.



If you have questions, please contact Pam Guynes at (513) 313-5092 or email at Pamguynes2@gmail.com

MONTHLY LUNCH BUNCH NOVEMBER 28, TUESDAY, 12PM

(The Century Inn)

The popular Lunch Bunch, will meet at **The Century Inn located at 10675 Springfield Pike, Woodlawn**. This is one of Ohio's oldest Inns, Est. 1806. Come fellowship with your St. Mark's family. There is no joining or requirement, so come when you can but you must make reservation by November 26.

Contact Brenda Smoot at (513) 316-1807 for details and placing reservations.



Lunch Bunch at O'Charley's in September and then at The Back Porch in October.

There is always a great crowd!



"Special Christmas Concert on December 7" by the Ohio Military Band

Please join us on **December 7 at 7:30 PM** as St. Mark's welcomes the Ohio Military Band for an evening holiday concert. Mark Hensler has been the director of the group for nearly 30 years. The band will be joined by Sue Combs, the St. Mark's Choir, Chris Beiser, and other guest soloists. Start off your holiday season with festive music such as "Sleigh Ride", "The Christmas Song", and "Christmas from the '50s".

You can find out more about the band on their website at <https://ohiomilitaryband.com> or their Facebook page.

We hope to see you there! (Free admission)



LADIES FELLOWSHIP LUNCH NOVEMBER 19, SUNDAY AFTER WORSHIP

(Perkins on Nilles Road, Fairfield)

Sign up at the Narthex Welcome Counter
Contact Sue Combs for details.



MUSIC MINISTRY

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

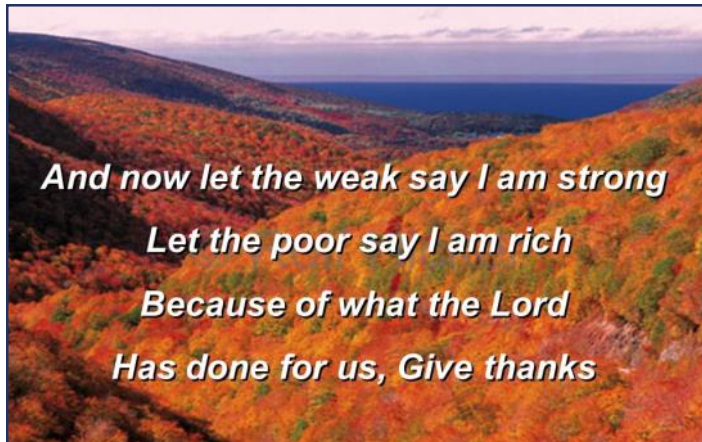
CHRIS BEISER



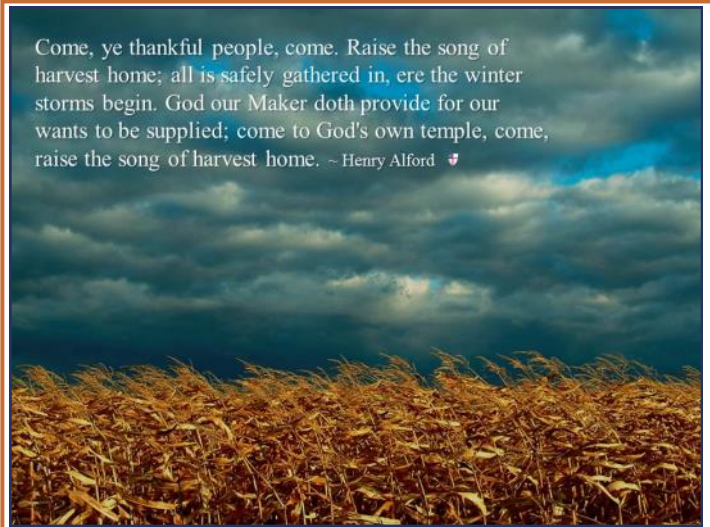
We are heading quickly into that time year when there are all sorts of friends and family gatherings for the holidays.

I wanted to make sure you had some wonderful music opportunities marked on your calendars before things get too crazy!

First off, Greater Hamilton Civic Theater is presenting, "All Wrapped Up for Christmas." This is an original holiday revue filled to the brim with great holiday sacred and secular music. The show is directed by Sue Combs with me assisting her with choreography. The dates are Thursday 11/30, Friday 12/1, Saturday 12/2 @ 7:30 PM, and Sunday 12/3 @ 2:00 PM. All performances are at Parrish Auditorium on the Hamilton Campus of Miami University. Call (513)737-PLAY for tickets.



Next up...Mark Hensler conducting, the St. Mark's choir singing, Sue on the organ, and myself will be joining together in the return of the Ohio Military Band Holiday Concert on Thursday December 7, @ 7:30 PM in the sanctuary of St. Mark's. I'm so excited for this wonderful group to be back with us again this year. We had a festive time last year and this year looks to be even better!



Come, ye thankful people, come. Raise the song of harvest home; all is safely gathered in, ere the winter storms begin. God our Maker doth provide for our wants to be supplied; come to God's own temple, come, raise the song of harvest home. ~ Henry Alford

Sunday morning December 17, the choir will present the cantata "All Is Well." With all of the chaos and uncertainty in the world we know all is well with the birth of Jesus. We now have a source for true and lasting hope, joy, and peace. This cantata is filled with familiar carols as well songs of celebration for the season.

For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies. For the live which from our birth, over and around us lies. Christ our Lord to thee we raise, this our hymn of grateful praise.



In closing we can't forget Christmas Eve. There will be joyful music throughout Christmas Eve morning at the 9:30AM service (Christmas Eve is on a Sunday this year!) and then at the 11:00PM service we will once again have an awesome service filled to the brim with music, a perfect way to take us into Christmas morning.

I look forward to seeing you at these exciting events as "We Gather Together" in this holiday season to celebrate The Most Wonderful Time of the Year!

FINANCIAL UPDATE

GALE GOODMAN, FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR BILL AND LYNNE SCHUMACKER, CO-TREASURERS



Dear St. Mark's Family,

With cooler fall days upon us, year-end is quickly approaching. So, I thought I would take this time to discuss some current issues and go over some year-end information with you.

As has been noted in the recent newsletters, this year has been a challenge. Just like in your immediate families, we have and are facing these challenges together. Bill Schumacher has come up with an aggressive plan to address our apportionments that are still outstanding. He has recently sent a \$3000 payment to Conference to go towards our apportionments. He plans on doing this in November and December. If we, as a Church, can do this; we will still owe \$10,000 for 2023. After talking with Pastor Mark and Bill, we have come up with the following proposal and challenge to you. There are nine Sundays remaining for November and December. If everyone can give an extra \$10 per week for nine weeks, we will have enough to cover our weekly expenses as well as finish paying the outstanding balance of \$10K for our apportionments. For the past several years, St Mark's has been able to pay 100% of our apportionments. We are hoping to have that trend continue with your help.

We ended September with \$25,154 in the Checking Account. Please note, that this is a decrease from \$41,179 earlier this year. There is now \$70,575 in the Savings Account which is down from \$89,660 earlier this year. The reasons are simple for the decline in both accounts. We have had increased expenditures and the costs for daily operations of the Church has increased. We have also experienced a decrease in giving from the Congregation. Please keep in mind that we can only use \$25,000 in the Savings Account for operating the Church. The remaining balance of the savings account can only be used for capital improvements to the St Mark's campus. Our loan at Park National Bank is now down to \$31,631.

It is important to point out that all payments have been made on time and the loan is current. Bill has been able to keep all the operating expenses paid.

Now that November is here, we have started to turn our attention to the new year and the budget for next year. We are asking all the committees and departments here at the Church to take a good look at what was spent this year, and try to reduce spending on their budget requests for 2024. We are hopeful with everyone reducing the amount that is being requested, we will be in a better position next year where apportionments and expenses can easily be paid without an extra plea to the Congregation.

Since year-end is just around the corner, I wanted to make sure everyone understands how year-end giving needs to be received and recorded. We, in the finance area of St Mark's, had some issues last year-end with giving at the end of December. So together, we have decided on the following to mirror what is required by IRS regulations. All year-end electronic gifts must be received by the St Mark's bank by Friday, December 29, 2023. The last date to give a gift to St Mark's in person will be Sunday, December 31, 2023, by the end of worship. If you plan on mailing a year-end gift to the Church, please mail in time to be received by St Mark's on Saturday, December 30, 2023. Any gifts received after the end of worship on 12/31/2023, will be received and recorded as 2024 giving. We are hopeful that by having a definitive plan for year-end, things will be easier for everyone.

I appreciate your taking time to read this rather lengthy, fact-filled message. We are hopeful that with your help, we will be able to end the year successfully. Therefore, sending us into 2024 with a good foothold for a great beginning. As always, if you have any questions regarding the finances of St Mark's, please ask. Bill and I will be happy to provide the answers to your questions.

In the Service of St Mark's.



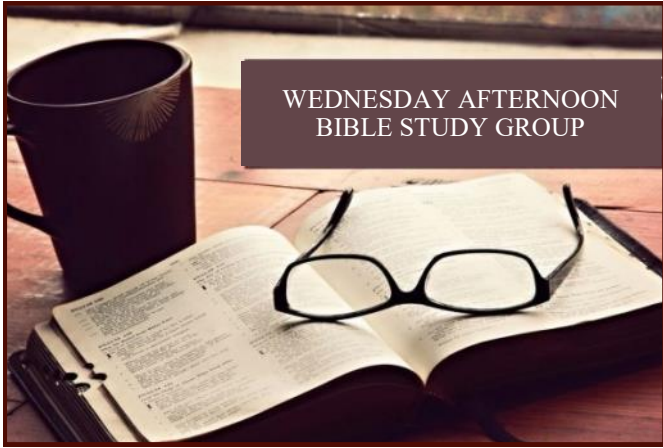
WEEKLY STUDY GROUP GATHERINGS

WEDNESDAY GROUP BIBLE STUDY WEDNESDAYS 2-3PM (FELLOWSHIP HALL)

Join us every Wednesday for Group Bible study in Fellowship Hall from 2-3pm. Come when you can and learn about the Bible through group conversation, history, and using Bible scriptures.

We are studying the Gospel of John

Come fellowship, learn something new, or maybe you have knowledge to share with the group! We are open to everyone for discussion. For more details, contact Sue McDaniel.



MEN'S PRAYER GROUP WEDNESDAYS AT 7:30AM (PRAYER ROOM)

Join the men in the prayer room/zoom each Wednesday at 7:30am. Followed by Breakfast. For more details, contact Jeff Gering.



LADIES CRAFTING GROUP MONDAYS AT 10:00AM (CRAFT ROOM)

BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR HANDMADE HOLIDAY CRAFTS FOR SALE SOON!



LADIES MONDAY NIGHT GROUP STUDY NOVEMBER 6 at 6:30PM (FELLOWSHIP HALL)

IN-PERSON THIS DAY

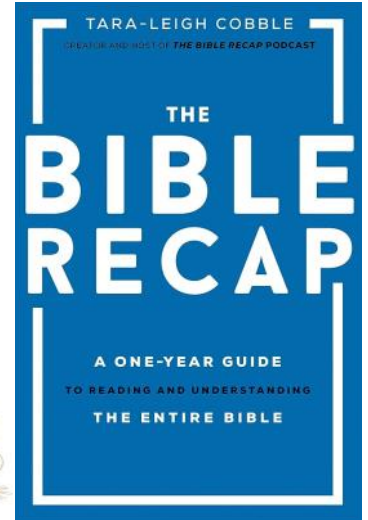
The Ladies will meet *in person* on NOVEMBER, Monday, at St. Mark's Church in Fellowship Hall, 6:30pm.

We continue with our year long study guide:

The Bible Recap
by
Tara-Leigh Cobble.

*It is never to late to join us in this Bible study and discussion.

For more information, contact Kym Nguyen.



HANDBELL CHOIR WEDNESDAYS AT 6:30PM

Every Wednesday, make a little "RING" at 6:30pm with the Handbell Choir.

This is such a fun group to be a part of! NO prior experience and ok if you can't read sheet music, you can still ring.

Contact Sue Combs for details.



CHANCEL CHOIR WEDNESDAYS AT 7:30PM

Following Handbell rehearsal, the Chancel Choir will practice each Wednesday at 7:30pm.

We continue to hope to see new faces joining us, it's never too late!

Choir is also a fun group to be a part of; NO experience, NO reading sheet music, NO problem, just be prepared to make a joyful noise!

Contact Chris Beiser for details.



CHILDREN and FAMILY MINISTRY

Dates to Mark!

December 3, Advent Celebration, 5:00-6:30PM

Join our church family as we begin the season of Advent. Main dish and drinks are provided.

We ask that you bring a dish to share.

Program and dedication at the crèche to follow dinner.

December 10, Follow the Christmas Star, 7PM

This is a free indoor/outdoor event. Children will hunt for ***Glow in the dark stars***. Hear the story of the Christmas Star and enjoy cookies and hot chocolate.

*Stars will be traded for small gifts and candy!

Come enjoy the fun.

St. Mark's Fall Fest/Trunk or Treat with Petting Zoo Pictures.

Thank you to everyone that participated in another successful event.



BIRTHDAYS and ANNIVERSARIES

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

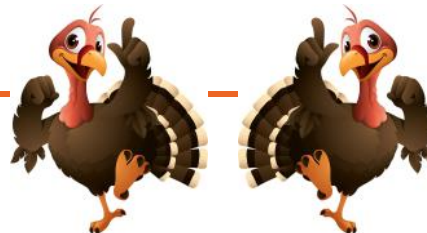
NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

11/01 Bill Knau	
11/01 Gunnar Marshall	*16
11/02 Peggy Smith	
11/03 Virginia Shaw	91
11/06 Mary Begley	67
11/06 Mary Lou Knau	
11/08 Mallory Creager	*11
11/08 Gail Hartwig	
11/10 Katie Meyer	
11/11 Don Moser	
11/12 Pam Brockfield	
11/13 Darlene Kuertz	
11/14 Kathy O'Connell	
11/17 Cliff Klug	
11/18 Evan McDaniel	*14
11/21 Sue Combs	
11/22 Steve Nguyen	
11/23 John Prohaska	
11/25 Sharon Hamp	
11/25 Maria Mullen	
11/25 Molly Robinson	*9
11/26 Brenda Smoot	
11/28 Greg Kuertz	
11/28 Elaine Shreve	
11/29 Lynne Schumacker	



NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

11/06	Doug & Beth Ewald	47
11/10	Dale & Joy Addis	61
11/10	Ted & Heather McDaniel	16
11/12	Don & Gretchen Menke	35
11/14	Bill & May Lou Knau	64
11/21	Jerry & Betty Jones	34



IMPORTANT!

Church Calendar and use of Church building:
If you have an upcoming event please contact Lyn in the church office to confirm dates, times and secure your event on the calendar. There will be lots of parties, events and celebrations throughout the rest of the year. Be sure to get your date in ASAP to avoid double bookings.
Thank you!



THE NURTURE & CARE COMMITTEE

The Nurture and Care Committee likes to send cards to those who may be lonely, need cheering up, sympathy, etc. It would be helpful if we could be contacted so that anyone that might like to receive a card from the church, can have one sent by us.

Please call Lois Hill at (513) 863-1034.

We would be thankful for it.



SAVE THE DATE: December 16, Annual Senior Party



TRUSTEES CORNER AND THANK YOU NOTES

LETTER FROM THE TRUSTEES CHAIR, JEANNIE MARSHALL

IT'S THE SEASON OF GIVING THANKS!

I'm thankful for St. Mark's and our faith family and am looking forward to the fall leaves and pumpkin pie!

Your St. Mark's Trustees are preparing for cooler weather! We've recently updated heating/air units and moved a unit around to ensure we have working units in the rooms and offices; heating/cooling. We continue to work with the vendor on updating the software for our building access and by the time you read this, the work will have started by repairing the Boy Scouts Garage.

We also continue to have All Church Workdays, "Helping Hands" into the fall to ensure our lawn and grounds are ready for colder weather. As part of our clean up, we've cleaned up the courtyard in hopes to have the space used more. If you have an idea on additional uses for our courtyard we welcome your suggestions, please see any trustee with your ideas!

Something to consider when at the church, is our thermostats. In the nursery, fellowship hall and our sanctuary, the thermostats are pre-programmed for heating and cooling. If they are changed from the programmed temperature, they should be set back to the original temperature after the area's use. Additionally, we ask for everyone's help in turning off the lights. If you turn on the lights for a meeting or room use, please turn them off at the end. Thank you.

For November, prayerfully consider spending a few hours with your Trustees on **Saturday November 4, 2023 at 9am** to work both inside and outside keeping our church beautiful! Trustee point of contact is **Tonya Leguina**.

What will we work on during these All Church workdays?

Is there an area that needs attention or items you've noticed? Helping Hands is an ongoing effort focused not only on identifying those who can spend time working on areas in and around the church with minor updates, clean ups or necessary tasks, but also to identify the areas needing attention. As we continue this year, please note on the back of the attendance paper if you can help OR note an area needing attention. A St. Mark's Trustee will contact you. We all can join in to help keep St. Marks beautiful!

Respectfully submitted,
In HIS Service



COLUMBARIUM

So what is a columbarium? A columbarium is a structure or niche to hold cremated ashes of the dead. A columbarium can be installed inside or outside a building. If outside, the columbarium can be fenced in. A single columbarium will hold 24 individual urns with names and dates inscribed on each unit, (see image example).

The United Methodist Church in Milford has a columbarium.



The units can be purchased at the time of a death or some choose to purchase a unit years before there is a need. The cost of a unit is significantly lower than a cemetery plot.

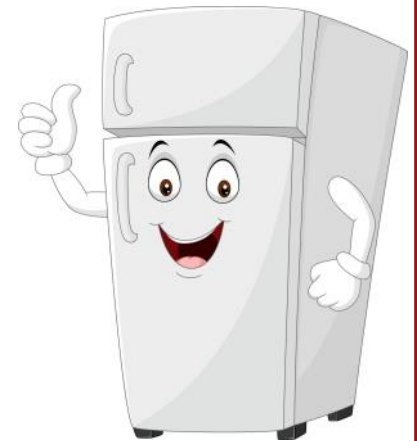
Before the Trustees pursue the structure, cost and location, we would like to gauge the level of interest of those at St. Mark's. Please provide comments to a Trustee or Lyn in the office. (513) 844-1818.



A HUGE Thank You

To the Monday Craft Ladies...

who bought the NEW RIDGERATOR IN THE KITCHEN!





4601 Fairfield Avenue
Fairfield, OH 45014

PRST MKTG
POSTAGE AND
FEES PAID
ST MARK'S UMC
FAIRFIELD, OH
PERMIT NO. 62

SPIRIT OF ST. MARK'S NOVEMBER 2023



Gratitude

Unlocks the fullness of life.
It turns what we have into enough and more!
— Melody Beattie

St. Mark's Staff :

Pastor Mark Gregory
Admin. Assistant, Lyn Bucalo
Director of Music, Chris Beiser
Pianist & Bells, Sue Combs
Director of Children & Family Ministries, Peggy Smith
Pastor Emeritus, Bob Klingel
*Access the church calendar on our website at
<https://www.fairfieldstmarks.com/calendar/>*

Church Office Hours :

Tuesday, Wednesday,
Thursday, Friday
9:30am - 3:00 pm
Monday - (Office Closed)
Phone (513) 844-1818
www.fairfieldstmarks.com

Worship Service:

Sundays 9:30 am
(In person & Livestream)