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Issue: July 2023

A Monthly Insight into St. Mark Presbyterian Church

The Messenger

“July already?”, is a question I have heard repeated by many folks over the last week or so. I find myself pondering the same. As I think about it, I am harkened back to my school days. I remember my parents often telling me that I should cherish my summer breaks from classes and enjoy all the free time it afforded me. Because, when I got older, time would seem to fly by and summer breaks, for most people, would become a thing of fading childhood memory and fanciful adult desire. “Time flies, when you are having fun.” Time seems to have slipped by without notice.” “Oh my, where has all the time gone?” “Boy oh boy how time is dragging along.” These commonly used phrases all seem to speak about time as if time changes depending on our circumstances; that somehow time has the ability to move more quickly or more slowly depending on our individual perception of it. Except when we change our clocks for daylight savings adjustments, time never changes. At least in the way that I am

describing here. Time is constant. And it is this consistency that we count on. Imagine setting your alarm, going to sleep awaking at the scheduled alarm only to discover that time had sped up so much that you were now two days behind. And the next day you do the same thing but awake only to repeat the day before. Life seems like this sometimes. Life throws us into chaos leaving us adrift like waves in the ocean and time out of sync. We reach for something to hold on to but there is nothing there for us to grab. Like time, however, we do have one other thing that never changes, never slips away, never speeds past us, and never seeks to drag us to a halt. God. God is constant. God is that which never changes. God is who we can reach out to and hold on to knowing that we are held already by the hands that created the universe.

Peace and blessings,

Pastor MP

SESSION SNIPPETS

Notes from the June 19, 2023 Session Meeting:

Rev. MP Panco moderated the meeting, which began at 6:00 pm, the new starting time for Session meetings moving forward. Rev. Carol DeVaughn attended and brought brownies—an appetizer or a dessert. It was a welcome surprise!

Items discussed include the need to purchase a special insurance policy (TULIP) for every event where alcohol might be consumed on St. Mark property; the identified building needs that are being researched and planned; and additional changes in the process of serving communion. It's all about change: identifying it, planning for it, and making it happen.

Summer is a busy time for St. Mark with many opportunities to participate or volunteer: The Rise Against Hunger meal packing event, the Independence Day Neighborhood Bike Parade (11 am), Vacation Bible School, the ABC Sale, Food Truck Friday (August 11), and the ongoing summer book study led by Bill Tucker. There are also opportunities to continue St. Mark's support of Fair Trade & Equal Exchange, Circle of Concern, Isaiah 58 Ministries, and Newborns in Need. Watch the Sunday bulletin, the website and newsletter for more details. The next Session meeting will be August 21. Enjoy the summer!

JUNE WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

	Saturday	Sunday	Sunday	Total Attendance
		In Person	Online	
June 4	--	121	87	208
June 10 & 11	15	89	77	181
June 17 & 18	21	94	88	203
June 24 & 25	11	101	89	201

JULY 4TH HOLIDAY

The church office will be closed on Tuesday, July 4, in observance of Independence Day.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

The Membership Committee is pleased to introduce to you the new members of St. Mark:

Lori and Brad Kelling are the parents of three adult sons, Alec, Garrett, and Logan. Lori is the President of the West County Chamber of Commerce and Brad works in law enforcement in St. Louis County.

Donna Kniep is a retired elementary education teacher with two adult children. She jumped right into church activities and is a member of the Friday Bible Study with Pastor MP.

Joe Miller is self-employed. He has been attending St. Mark for some time and decided he wanted to become a member. We are pleased with his decision.

Mearl Plunkett is retired and has an adult son, Mark, living in Kansas City. For the past 15 years he has served as the repair person of his previous church. Rumor has it that the Property Committee is already recruiting him to join them. Connie Valva is also attending St. Mark and is a member of the Friday Bible Study.

Mindy and Chris Shaffer discovered St. Mark when one of their daughters was attending our preschool. They are the parents of Matthew, Celia and Caroline. Mindy stays busy with the children and Chris is self-employed.

DEACONS IN ACTION

2023 CIRCLE OF CONCERN CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT RESULTS

May 22 arrived at Aberdeen Golf Club, Eureka, Missouri with a sold-out event of 144 golfers, 38 volunteers and ideal temperatures and lots of sunshine. The event raised approximately \$35,000 with all proceeds benefiting Circle of Concern, one of several local missions supported by Saint Mark Deacons. Saint Mark has served as the event sponsor for the past 17 years and has worked in concert with Circle staff and volunteers to create good will within the community for both entities as well as raise needed funding. The following demonstrates the direct impact Saint Mark had on this year's tournament:

- Members funded \$12,000 in Sponsorships and Auction Items
- 18 members served as volunteers on the day of event
- 12 members participated as golfers
- Members recruited 44 other golfers
- 3 members served on the Golf Committee

Thank you, Saint Mark members for sharing your time, talent and resources to make this event a success.

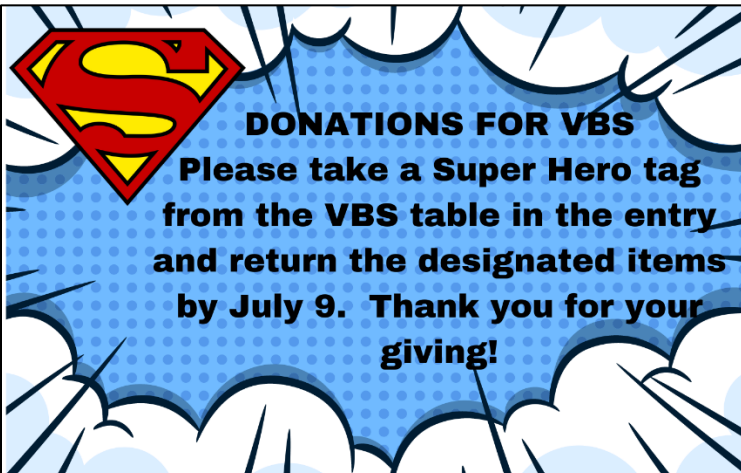
WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday school for children PreK – 5th grade takes place during Sunday worship, immediately following the Children's Message.

NURSERY

Nursery Care, for ages 0 - 2yrs, is available Sunday mornings from 8:30 – 11:00 am.



VBS AT ST. MARK

JULY 17-21

Join us for a **full week** of VBS fun as we are all called together to serve God at Hero Hotline!

Online Registration is now open for VBS!

Go to [discoverstmark.org](https://www.discoverstmark.org) or use the QR Code to register your family today!!



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES WITH CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES!

We are looking for volunteers for VBS preparation! We kick off with a VBS potluck and prep on July 7 at 5:30 pm. Please use this SignUpGenius link to sign up for the potluck and other VBS prep volunteer opportunities.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090E4DA4AD2FAAF94-vbsprep2>



Our "Super Hero" mission this year for VBS is two-fold. **First**, we will have a contest between boys and girls for our ongoing, church-wide cap collection to make a picnic table for our friends at Mound Ridge Retreat Center. The group that wins the challenge for the most caps collected will be the first to go through the 75 ft obstacle course with dual slides on Friday! Pictures of acceptable caps can be found at our donation table in the foyer and we ask that you bring cleaned caps please!

Second, another mission opportunity is to donate personal care items: bar soap, deodorant, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, dish soap, laundry detergent (64 oz or smaller) to be distributed between Isaiah 58 and Circle of Concern, and diapers for Newborns in Need.

There are three clearly labeled bins under the "Super Hero" VBS table in the foyer.

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUTH

Youth Music Ensemble

Rehearsals in progress!
Next Rehearsal July 12th 6-7pm
Contact Pastor MP
mpanco@discoverstmark.org

EQUAL EXCHANGE IN THE NARTHEX ON JULY 16!



Who grows your chocolate?

Oro Verdo co-op members in Peru!

The co-op was founded in 1999 with

56 members and has grown to 600. They have developed a disease resistant tree nursery, a reforestation project to move to a zero carbon footprint, and education scholarships for producer's children.

St. Mark supports this mission to build long-term trade partnerships that are economically just, environmentally sustainable, and foster mutually beneficial relationships between small farmers and consumers (that's us!).

Credit, Debit, (swipe or tap) accepted.



YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Picnic at Simpson Park
July 23rd 2-6pm
Contact Pastor MP
mpanco@discoverstmark.org

Youth and families are invited to join us for a picnic at Simpson Park. Youth Committee will provide the meat, buns, drink, plates, cups, etc. Please bring a side dish, snack, or dessert to share. The lake allows fishing, and has paddle boats, canoes, and kayaks available for individual rental. To R.S.V.P (so we know how much food to get) contact Pastor MP at mpanco@discoverstmark.org to sign up.

MISSION AT ST. MARK

JULY FOOD PANTRY MOST WANTED

- Pasta sauce (cans preferred)
- Canned greens/spinach
- Fruits (cans preferred)
- Jelly & peanut butter
- Shampoo, bar soap, deodorant*



All year long, we collect food and hygiene items for Circle of Concern and Isaiah 58 Ministries. Please place your donations on the table in the pastors' hallway. *Non-food products cannot be purchased with food stamps.



The Rise Against Hunger event was a big success all the way around! Thank you to all of those from the Claymont neighborhood, Boy Scout Troop 631, and the St. Mark congregation who participated! 80-plus people packaged 14000 meals in 90 minutes to feed people around the world. Money was also raised to support farmers and educate them about sustainable farming practices. St. Mark plans to make this an annual event so keep an eye out for more information.



IT'S ALMOST TIME – 2023 ABC SALE!

Workdays are July 30 – August 3
Sale days are August 4 and 5

This is our largest fundraiser of the year to support our local mission partners. As always, the sale is a great opportunity for fellowship and outreach to the community.

If you haven't already committed to volunteer – we need you! Contact one of the ABC Co-Chairs and we'll match up your interest and availability to a volunteer opening!

Donation Guidance

- **YES, please!**
 - items that would typically be sold at a thrift store
 - donation receipts available during donation drop-off hours
- **Sorry, NO thank you!**
 - large furniture, large appliances, TVs (if it doesn't fit in a compact SUV, it's a "NO")
 - encyclopedias or magazines
 - car seats, highchairs, or cribs
 - Christmas trees
 - hazardous waste (even if unopened): such as paint, chemicals, oil, household cleaners

In addition to your treasures, donations of cookies and quick breads to "fuel" our volunteers are also welcome. Deliver them to the kitchen Sunday July 30 through Wednesday, August 2nd. If you have napkins or paper plates leftover from a gathering, feel free to donate those to the kitchen as well!

ABC Sale Co-Chairs: Joyce Blackwell, Glenn Knopf, Pam Ladley

ANOTHER WAY TO HELP WITH THE ABC SALE!

ABC Sale would love to share your home baked cookies, brownies and quick breads with our amazing volunteers! We are also hoping to use up all of the odds and ends paper products in the kitchen and from your home! If you have paper plates, cups or napkins from a party that are leftover, we would love to use them up for you!! Please deliver baked goods and paper products to the kitchen clearly marked "ABC SALE" by Sunday, June 30.

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



PW Book Club will not meet in July.



FLOWERS NEEDED!

Donating flowers is a great way to celebrate or commemorate a person, milestone, event or to simply share some of God's gifts of beauty in the sanctuary. Thank you to those who have signed up to donate. We still have open dates throughout the summer and fall. The flower chart is located in the lobby of the main entrance. If you are interested in providing flowers for our worship service, please sign the flower chart, complete the form provided and place the form along with a check in the "Drop Box" in the Pastor's Hallway. Your flowers can either be taken home or donated to be delivered to a homebound church member.



PROPERTY COMMITTEE IS RECRUITING!

Are you looking for a way to contribute to keeping St. Mark in great shape? St Mark's Property Committee is actively seeking new members to help us with maintenance of the building, preschool and grounds! Prior experience is not necessary, as we have the experts who can teach you what you need to know, and you can apply what you learn to maintaining your own home. Whether you're interested in gardening, painting, electrical work or minor construction, we can use your time and talents to keep St Mark welcoming to our current and new members. Feel free to reach out to Keith Monteith, David Sutch, Mike Vroman, Jean Steward or any other Property Committee members to understand how you can help.

