



Issue: October 2023

A Monthly Insight into St. Mark Presbyterian Church

The Messenger

Good to Be Home

We are still over a month away from Thanksgiving, but I wanted to start this message with a word of appreciation for each and every one of you. I am so grateful for you all allowing me the opportunity to take a sabbatical over the summer months. This time away from St. Mark gave me time to spend with my family, travel across the country, and worship in many other settings. It also gave me a time to relax, recharge, and refocus on my ministry here at the church. There will be opportunities to talk about specific experiences like tours of several Civil War battlefields, a family trip to Princeton, New Jersey, and a solo excursion to see friends in the Carolina mountains. For now, I just want to say thanks!

The time away was refreshing, but there was something special that began to build in my heart in early August. I started to feel my spirit yearn for a return to St. Mark. I had an opportunity to worship at many other

churches over the summer, but I always felt like a guest in someone else's house. I recognized that the tug at my soul was a longing for home and a return to being with all of you. Liturgy is not just something we follow for an hour on Sunday mornings. Our days, weeks, months, and years are made up of routines, practices, and celebrations that give our lives meaning. I believe that church, at its best, is a place where we can journey together through all of the ups and downs of our earthly walk. We join together in the joys of new births, graduations, marriages, and various accomplishments. We rally together in the pains of breakups, job losses, illness, and death.

I had several clergy friends who wondered why I still went to church services most Sundays when I had the opportunity to sleep in, grab brunch, or take a hike. I went because I needed to hear God's Word. Moreover, I longed to return to

St. Mark because it is home. I hope and pray you feel the same way about our community of faith here in the heart of Claymont. With the end of summer and the arrival of autumn, we are entering one of the most special seasons of the year. In the coming weeks, we will celebrate World Communion Sunday, Stewardship Season, Reformation Sunday, All Saint's Day, and Christ the King Sunday. Together, we will enjoy potlucks, the Fall Festival, the Giving Thanks Meal, and plenty of other special events. The Lord writes the liturgy of love for all of us. I encourage you to take some time in quiet reflection this month and count the many blessings given to you. It's easy to miss these in our hectic world, but, if we are still, we will hear God calling us home. I'm excited about this next chapter with you at St. Mark!

In Hope and Confidence,
Pastor Dave

SESSION SNIPPETS

September 18 Meeting of Session:

The following actions were taken by Session:

- Approval of Endowment Funds to renovate the Children's Ministry Office (this expenditure, along with funding for the playground for the younger kids and the building security system completes use of the available 2023 Endowment funds).
- The portion of the Peace and Global Witness offering that St. Mark distributes locally will go to the St. John Episcopal Church's Peace Meal.
- Some various upcoming Fall events were noted: October 15 Fall Festival, October 18 Wednesday Potluck (with Jed Koval speaking), October 22 Blood Drive, November 7-8 Christmas Boutique. And that just gets us to the first week in November! Pay attention so you don't miss anything!

SEPTEMBER WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

	Saturday	Sunday	Sunday	Total Attendance
		In Person	Online	
Sept. 2 & 3	16	100	89	205
Sept. 10	--	187	99	286
Sept. 16 & 17	14	126	105	245
Sept. 23-24	11	137	81	229

GIVING TO ST. MARK

Periodically topics are included in The Messenger that provide ideas of ways to benefit you as well as the missions of your church through charitable giving. One easy way is to make outright gifts of appreciated securities such as stocks, mutual funds, or other investments to St. Mark. As many investments have continued to appreciate during 2023, this method may also be a suitable way for you to make gifts of investments outside of your retirement plans. This may create an immediate income tax benefit. Our church office can assist you with the transfer and credit to your pledge or gifting plans.

Always consult your financial planner, estate planning attorney, or tax professional to review the benefits to you and your family for using this strategy for giving.

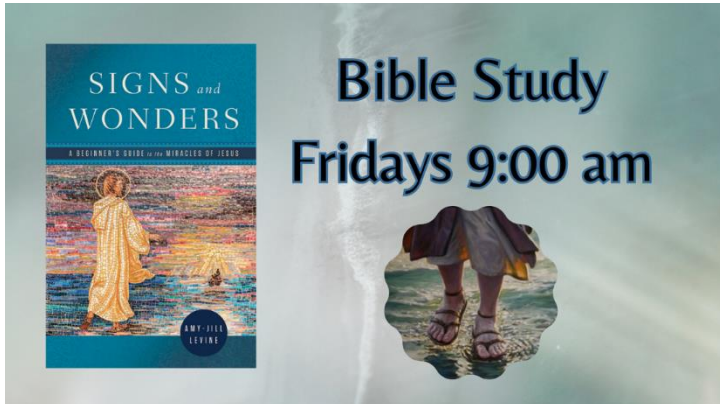
For further information or questions on church finances or giving, please contact a member of the St. Mark Finance Committee: Joyce Blackwell, Barry Boeker, Scott Collier, Glenn Knopf, Cay Noble, Hugh Smith, Brian Sprague, Carl Tenpas.

DEACONS IN ACTION

The St. Mark Caregiving Committee is a busy group that regularly reaches out to our homebound members, members in senior care facilities, and those experiencing a need due to family illness or death. We make and deliver "We Care" meals twice a year, deliver seasonal flowers and candy for Valentine's Day and 4th of July, and deliver Advent Bags containing daily gifts and treats during the Advent season. Thanks to Sara Levins for sewing these beautiful bags! In addition, the committee sends care packages every September to our college students and Becky Pierce is responsible for sending out cards to many of our members throughout the year. The committee works to ensure there are individual meals made and placed in the church freezer that can be delivered as the need arises. Finally, committee members also assist with funerals here at St. Mark. We are always looking for nurturing people to join us in providing care and support to our congregation. Please contact Laurie Dolson, Caregiving Committee Chairperson, if you are interested in participating.



ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AT ST. MARK



Friday Bible Study

Join us Friday mornings, October 6th, 13th, 20th, and 27th as we continue taking a closer look at some of Jesus' miracles. We will be using the book and accompanying videos to Amy-Jill Levine's study "Signs and Wonders". You can buy the book if you desire but it is not necessary though we will be drawing from the reading for parts of the discussion. If you have any questions, contact pastor MP or mpanco@discoverstmark.org or call the church office.

ST. MARK MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

The men's bible study meets in room 102 every Tuesday at 7:30 am. We are currently studying the Lord's Prayer using Adam Hamilton's book, "The Lord's Prayer, The Meaning and Prayer Jesus Taught". All men are welcome! You may contact Bruce Cranston for more information.

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.

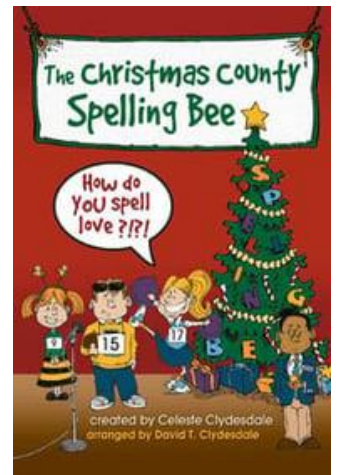
SUNDAY SCHOOL SIGN IN!

Please be sure to sign in your student(s) for Sunday School! Parents will receive a card after Time With Children with a QR code for access to the sign in. We ask that you have your student(s) registered so that we can contact you via text in the event that you are needed.

WEDNESDAY CHILDREN'S CHOIR!

Join us for Pre-K choir (5:00 -5:25 pm) and Elementary choir (5:30-6:30 pm)!

Every week is filled with curriculum-based, music, drama, lessons, choreography, games and snack time! Our Musical this year is called "Christmas County Spelling Bee" and will be presented on December 3 @ 4 pm. For more information, contact lgilliland@discoverstmark.org.



WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUTH



Youth 6th grade and up meet Wednesdays from 6:00 – 7:00 pm for food, fun, fellowship, and faith! If you have any questions, contact pastor MP mpanco@discoverstmark.org or call the church office.

CONFIRMATION

October Classes 1st, 22nd, 29th
 contact pastor M.P.
 mpanco@discoverstmark.org

If you have a youth 7th grade or older who would like to explore more about what it means to be a Christian, this is the place! Students will meet weekly along with their mentors and talk about their faith and what they believe about Jesus, religion, the church, and more! Never too late to join in!

ALL YOUTH • CHILDREN • FAMILIES ARE INVITED TO ECKERT'S FUN FARM IN MILLSTADT!



The Youth and Children's Ministries Committees are teaming up for an afternoon of fun at Eckert's – including apple picking! Lunch will be provided at the church before we leave. We will leave from the church and return to the church. Youth - bring money for anything you want to buy. RSVP to Pastor MP or Latisha Gilliland.

St. Mark Youth Music Ensemble

Upcoming Schedule

Oct. 1st	Rehearsal 11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
Oct. 8th	Rehearsal 11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
Oct. 22nd	Rehearsal 11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
Nov. 5th	Rehearsal 11:15am - 12:15pm
Nov. 12th	Rehearsal 11:15am - 12:15pm
Nov. 19th	Rehearsal 11:15am - 12:15pm
Dec. 3rd	Rehearsal 11:15am - 12:15pm
Dec. 10th	Rehearsal 11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

We will be rehearsing for fall and winter holidays. Think turkey and stuffing!

**MISSION AT ST. MARK
 OCTOBER FOOD PANTRY MOST WANTED**



- Dinner "Helpers"
- Fruit
- Baking Mixes
- Baking Items – Sugar, Flour, Oil, Shortening
- Women's Incontinence Products *

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

EQUAL EXCHANGE IN THE NARTHEX



Check out the products available for purchase on Sunday October 15th. Let us know if there are any items that you would like to see more of or less of in our offerings.

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



Presbyterian Children's Homes and ServicesSM

The Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services annual fundraising luncheon is Thursday October 26th at Noon at Piazza Messina in Cottleville. Please contact Pam Ladley if you would like to join other St. Mark members at the "Hope Grows Here" event for this longstanding mission partner.



New and gently used clean winter coats and clothing are needed for men, women, and kids, all sizes, and styles. Many people in our region lack enough warm clothing to stay

protected throughout winter. Our mission partners will ensure someone in need receives your gift of warmth winter. Our mission partners will ensure someone in need receives your gift of warmth!

POTLUCK DINNER & PROGRAM, OCTOBER 18

Featuring Jed Koball, PCUSA Mission Co-Worker,

Rev. Jed Koball assists the Peru Joining Hands Network (Red Uniendo Manos Peru), which is focused on environmental contamination from the mining industry, the growing water crisis due to global warming, and trade policies that disadvantage many Peruvians.



To learn more, go to [Presbyterian Mission Agency A Letter from Jed and Jenny Koball, serving in Peru Fall 2023 | Presbyterian Mission Agency](#). St. Mark supports several PCUSA mission co-workers in Peru through Christmas Alternatives. (Jed & Jenny Koball, and Chenoa Stock).

Go Getters Luncheon
October 10 @ 12 pm
 THE LUNCHEON WILL BE HELD AT EL SALTO MEXICAN RESTAURANT, 955 CHESTERFIELD CENTER (NEAR THE CHESTERFIELD MALL).
 PLEASE INVITE A FRIEND AND PLAN TO JOIN US!
 LET JAN GRAVES OR JUDY RICHARDSON KNOW OF YOUR PLANS TO ATTEND.

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Hang Out with PW
 St. Mark Presbyterian Women's Brunch
 September 9, 2023

*Slow down. Take a deep breath. What's the hurry?
 Why wear yourself out?
 Just what are you after anyway?
 Jeremiah 2:25 MSG*

On the Road with PW...

Wednesday,

October 25, 2023

Our Destination:



PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN



ST. LOUIS
**KAPLAN FELDMAN
HOLOCAUST MUSEUM**
In honor of the survivors and the memory of the victims



Since 1995, the St. Louis Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum has been dedicated to fulfilling its mission:

Through the lessons of the Holocaust, we inspire all people to confront hatred, promote human dignity and prevent genocide.

Meet at St. Mark at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, October 25, to carpool to lunch and then to the museum for our 1:30 tour followed by a survivor sharing the story of her experience. The cost for the museum tour/speaker is \$10.00. Lunch plans TBA. **To reserve your place for the tour, please sign up at the PW Table in the Narthex.** You may meet the group at the Museum at 1:15 if lunch doesn't fit in your schedule on the 25th.

CALLING ALL ANGELS!



It's that time again! The Christmas Boutique and Angel Street Café are just around the corner, November 7 & 8. Presbyterian Women ask for your help and there are so many ways to help!! You can make chicken salad, bean or broccoli soup,

bake specialty desserts, pies, cakes, or brownies. We also need help with set up and clean up. Of course, you should come by to shop til you drop, bring a friend to lunch, and then come back for supper! Sign-up sheets are on the PW table in the Narthex. We appreciate your willingness to be an angel!!

ST. MARK BLOOD DRIVE

The American Red Cross is experiencing a national blood shortage.

Back-to-school season, summer travel & an already active hurricane season have hindered blood donations, resulting in a shortfall of about 30,000 blood donations in August alone. Right now, blood product distributions to hospitals are outpacing the number of blood donations coming in. The Red Cross is working with hospitals around the clock to meet the blood needs of patients – but can't do it alone. **We need your help!**

Blood shortages can affect people with all needs for blood. September was Sickle Cell Awareness and Pediatric Cancer Awareness Month, both of which required significant support from blood donors to ensure the blood products needed are readily available.

The blood collected at our blood drive, is already earmarked to help someone in need. Please help us fill our schedules to help ensure all those suffering receive critical medical care.

Please come out to support our drive on **October 22, 2023 from 8:30 am to 1:30 pm in Gleason Hall. St Mark Blood Drive volunteers look forward to welcoming you as a first-time donor and welcoming back past donors.** We look forward to your participation and seeing you there.

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH CLAYMONT PRESCHOOL



Our teachers and students have had a wonderful first month of school at Claymont Preschool! We've been making wonderful friendships and learning our school routines.

Our day always includes: group meeting times, art centers, free play, music class, snack time, and gross motor play!



This summer, our hallways got a makeover! If you haven't been down to the preschool side of the building recently, we invite



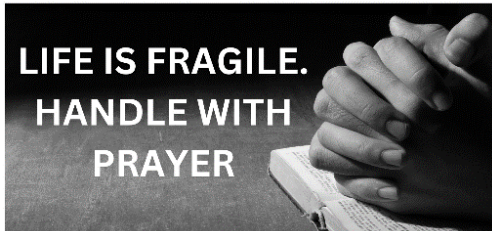
you to come check it out next time you're at St. Mark!

St. Mark Prayer Circle

Mondays at 9:30 am, Room 104

Everyone is Welcome

**If you can't join us, please pick up a Prayer List
at the Welcome Center on Sunday or the
Prayer Circle mailbox in the church office**



**We pray for our congregants, their family &
friends, the community, our nation, and the
world.**

Dear Members of St. Mark,

On behalf of our entire family, we want to thank you all so much for the prayers, cards and kind words you have expressed regarding the passing of our mother, mother-in-law and grandmother, Jeanne Brown. Yes, her loss has been deeply felt by us all, but your wonderful love and support have meant so much and appreciated more than mere words can express.

We thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

In Christ's Love,

Lisa and Dick Marsh