



Issue: August 2025



A Monthly Insight into St. Mark Presbyterian Church

The Messenger

Turning Up the Heat

As July moves into August, I am thankful for air conditioning, swimming pools, and unexpected cool breezes. When I was in seminary, there were a lot of students who made the drive to New Jersey from the Western United States. Every single one of them mentioned how Missouri was the most miserable part of their drive east, and they questioned how I could stand to live there during the summer. I smiled warmly and answered, “You have to bloom where you are planted.” I’ve never been as hot as I was in Alabama or as cold as I was in Wisconsin. You have to find the joy in each season, in each day, and in each interaction.

August has always been the month where students and teachers went back to school. It used to be the month where church pews swelled with returning families and others coming back from trips. That’s been on the decline over the past two decades as more activities compete for our attention. Too often, we slip into spiritual autopilot: prayers become routine, worship becomes optional, and our spirituality becomes lukewarm. We’ve all experienced this, to some degree or another, and the question remains: how do we do better?

St. Mark is offering a five-week study on getting “Back to the Basics” of our faith every Sunday morning before worship in August. We’ve promoted this for some time, but it’s worth another invitation. Oftentimes, when we feel the most lost, it’s important to start over on “Go”. We will find ourselves when we commit to searching in the right places. The first class, on August 3, will cover the foundations of our faith found in the Bible. We will discuss the history and style of these various books, but we will also explore where we find our hope and purpose within. Subsequent weeks will study the impact of church history on modern belief, the Reformed Tradition and the Presbyterian Church, and encouragements to find ways to love our neighbors as ourselves. This all-church study is open to everyone, and we hope you will attend (and consider bringing a guest.)

Vacation Bible School is in our rearview mirror and the ABC Sale will be over soon. It’s time to turn the page from the summer and turn up the heat on our faith. Come on in, the water is fine!

In Hope and Confidence,

Pastor Dave

SESSION SNIPPETS

Session did not meet in July.

JULY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

	Sunday In Person	Sunday Online	Total Attendance
July 6	131	62	193
July 13	138	87	225
July 20	132	78	210
July 27	165	94	259

USHERS NEEDED!

Volunteers are needed to serve on teams of 6-8 as ushers. Teams serve one month at a time. Men, especially, are needed as a number of women have already volunteered. Please contact Roy McBee if you are interested.

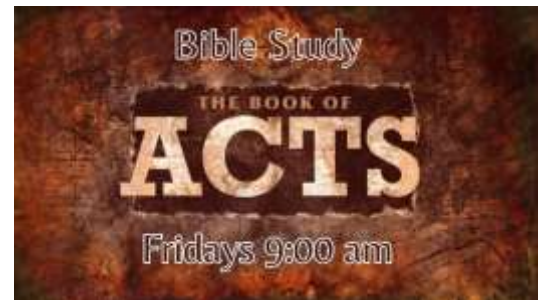
ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AT ST. MARK



Everyone is invited to join us for this All-Church education opportunity. You might be new to the faith, or you might have attended for years and still have questions. Pastor Dave will lead a five-week study of the essentials of the Christian faith, the Reformed Tradition, and the Presbyterian Church. This is an excellent opportunity to build and strengthen faith. Everyone is welcome and childcare will be provided. Please contact Pastor Dave with any questions.

INTERESTED IN MEMBERSHIP?

If you are interested in joining St. Mark, Pastor Dave encourages you to attend the "Back to Basics" class in August. This is a great way to learn about the church and discover new ways to participate. At the conclusion of the course, there will be an opportunity to meet with the church session about membership. Please contact Pastor Dave with any questions.



THE BOOK OF ACTS

Bible Study continues through the summer months under the leadership of Donna Schiro. We meet on Friday mornings at 9 am in Room 102. Come and be a part of the fun and fellowship, in person or via Zoom, as we study God's Word.



WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUTH



Keep an eye out for youth and family activities throughout the summer. Youth Wednesdays will resume in September.

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.



Children's Ministries wants to extend a huge "THANK YOU!" to all those who volunteered, prepared, and supported our "Road Trip" VBS 2025! We are Blessed!!!



Join us on Sunday, August 17th during the 10 a.m. Worship service for "Blessing of the Backpacks." We will be praying a blessing over students, teachers, administrators, homeschoolers and parents! A special tag will be given to each student so don't forget to bring your backpack that morning!

Bible Sunday

Bibles will be given to our third grade and upper elementary students who have not received a Bible from St. Mark Children's Ministries.



See Mrs. Latisha in the Narthex after service.



MISSION AT ST. MARK

AUGUST FOOD PANTRY CRITICAL NEEDS

- Snacks (8-12 servings)
- Boxed potatoes and rice
- Baking items
- Baby Wipes & Adult Wipes *



We collect food and hygiene items for Circle of Concern and Isaiah 58 Ministries. Please place your donations on the mission table outside the church office.

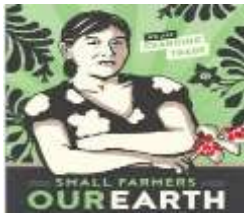
*Non-food products cannot be purchased with food stamps.



MOVING TOWARDS COMPLETION! PLASTIC CAP & LID RECYCLING PROJECT

Our recycling project is coming to a close. If you saved any plastic caps or lids, please deposit them in the bin near the Youth table in the Narthex by the end of August.

Thank you for your support - after August please continue to be a good earth steward by recycling those caps and lids in your single stream recycling bins!



EQUAL EXCHANGE

In the Narthex on August 10

Many Equal Exchange products are grown in remote tropical forests that provide habitat to endangered species. Partnering

farmers who use regenerative and organic practices helps preserve these important ecosystems that the farmers also call home.

Every time we serve Equal Exchange coffee at St Mark or sell Equal Exchange products we are making a strong statement about our values. We are proclaiming that our congregation believes that it's vital to keep small farmers on the land providing food for their families and having some economic control over their lives; that it's important to work with indigenous producers and women; that sustainable agricultural methods are a vital way to address climate change.

Cash, Credit, Debit, Digital Wallet Payments Accepted.



THANK YOU ST. MARK!

Wow! What an incredible week of "being the church" for each other, for our shoppers, for the environment, and for our mission partners! Sales and expenses are still being tallied and will be announced August 10th. With great gratitude for your time, talent, and treasures!

ABC Sale volunteer potluck celebration will be Sunday, August 24th following worship.

Joyce Blackwell & Pam Ladley Co-Chairs

DO YOU NEED A NAME TAG?

If you need a new nametag, an order will be placed soon. The cost is \$10. Please complete a name tag form, found in the church mailbox marked Name Tags and give a check to office staff or place in the drop box in the Pastors' Hallway by **September 1**.

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



**Presbyterian Women's
2025 Fall Brunch**
Saturday, September 6
10:00 a.m.

The PW Board invites you to gather with us for fellowship, fun, delicious food, and reflection. As we open the door to a new year of service and study, this is a time to catch up with friends and make new ones. We guarantee smiles and a few laughs along the way.

For your enjoyment, we welcome...
The Silly Goose
and to ponder...
Life is not a fairy tale.
It's better!

PW Callers will be reaching out to take your reservation later in August. You can sign up at the PW Table in the Narthex.

ST. MARK BLOOD DRIVE



Please come out and support our blood drive on Sunday **August 17** 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. Just one blood donation can help save up to three lives! Make an appointment for Aug. 17th at <http://www.redcrossblood.org/Donate/Blood> and enter: Saintmarkpres

Give Aug 1 to 28 for \$15 e gift card & successful donations get A1C testing. Terms: rcblood.org/Test



Scan to schedule an appointment.

Discover Sunday



September 14th

A SPECIAL SUMMER TREAT!

On Friday, August 8, pack a picnic along with your

favorite beverages and comfy lawn chairs, and come prepared to be thoroughly entertained by Mark Reynoso and his Jazz Quartet from 6:00-8:00 p.m on St. Mark's upper parking lot. The weather may be hot, but the music is guaranteed to be "COOL"...mark your calendars now for what is sure to be a great night!



TROOP 631

FALL MUM SALE

Use the QR Code to order 9.5" potted monster mums for \$15 each.

A variety of colors are available.



Pick up on Saturday, Sept. 13,
10 AM - 1 PM, St. Mark Presbyterian Church
Parking Lot.

LOOK FOR THE REGISTRATION FORM ON THE PW TABLE IN THE NARTHEX! REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 11!



**PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN
OF GIDDINGS-LOVEJOY PRESBYTERY**



*PRESBYTERY-WIDE
PW FALL GATHERING
AT ST. MARK, BALLWIN*

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2025

Pass It On...The Fire of Our Foremothers



Reverend MP Panco
Keynote Speaker

St. Mark PW is happy to welcome Pastor MP back for a visit to St. Louis. After five years as Associate Pastor here, the native of Northeast Ohio has returned to the area with joy, grateful to be near family and to continue her call to ministry. She is Pastor of Burton UCC in Burton, Ohio.

Who passed the spark of PW to light the fire in you?

What is the legacy of PW in your church?

How do you share PW's heritage with your congregation?

Why does it matter what PW has done in the past?

Who really cares what the Birthday Offering funded in 2005?

How do we keep the flame burning in our heart?

We hope you will join Presbyterian Women from across the Presbytery as we celebrate the women and events that make us *keepers of history and sharers of the faith.*

Start the day with something new!

Chair Exercise at 8:00 a.m.

Continental Breakfast available at 9 a.m. in the Narthex

Share your story... PW in the Presbytery Displays

Program and Worship at 10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Lunch at 12:30 p.m.