



Issue: September 2025



A Monthly Insight into St. Mark Presbyterian Church

The Messenger

Good for the Soul

There's an old Scottish proverb claiming, "Confession is good for the soul." Admitting our sins to God and to one another can relieve inner turmoil, strengthen relationships, and provide a renewed spiritual well-being. This is why our liturgy allows for the prayer of confession early in the service. We want a clean slate as soon as possible so we can hear and respond to God's Word without any impediment. Of course, this prayer isn't the only confession we make together in worship. Immediately following the sermon, we join our voices in the affirmation of faith. Put another way, this is a time where we collectively confess our faith.

I did not grow up in a church that had an affirmation of faith, and this was very foreign to me when I attended other congregations. I had a lot of questions about the words they asked me to say. I imagine I am not alone. What does it mean when we say, "He descended into hell" in the Apostles' Creed? How do we "glorify God and enjoy God forever" from the Westminster Confession of Faith Shorter Catechism? Why do we have so many confessions of faith in the first place? All of these are good questions, and there are certainly many more.

We will complete our five-week "Back to the Basics" class on August 31, and I believe there is a need to build on this material and explore our faith a little deeper.

A new class called, "**Confessing Our Faith**" will get underway on **Sunday, September 21 at 8:50 in Room 102**. This hybrid offering will take a deeper look at the nine documents in the Presbyterian Book of Confessions. This is the natural next step in reclaiming and proclaiming our faith and an excellent chance to dive deeper in our quest of "faith seeking understanding." This class is open to everyone, and we are planning on putting everything online in case anyone misses a class. Please feel free to contact me with any questions, and I will be happy to answer them. Confession may be good for the soul, but understanding, affirming, and sharing our faith is even better.

In Hope and Confidence,

Pastor Dave

SESSION SNIPPETS

August 18 Session Meeting:

Rev. Dr. Chris Keating, Pastor at Woodlawn and head of the Committee on Ministry at the Presbytery, joined the Session meeting to give us an overview of the process ahead to select an Associate Pastor, and asked for our feedback on Rev. MP Panco's ministry at St. Mark.

The Nominating Committee has selected a slate to be on the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee, to be approved at the 24 August Congregational Meeting.

Wednesday Pot Luck Dinners resume on September 17. The Mission Committee will host the pot luck, and the program will include a chocolate tasting from the Free Trade selection. Session approved funds to repair the roof areas funded by the Capital Campaign. The contract was for \$120,827, but was reduced by \$8000 since it was scheduled to coincide with work already started and funded by the Endowment. This is the first Capital Campaign work approved by Session.

PEACE AND GLOBAL WITNESS OFFERING

"A Season of Peace" begins September 7 and concludes October 5, World Communion Sunday. The Peace and Global Witness Offering (previously the Peacemaking Offering) will be collected during that time.

Whenever the church gathers for worship, we are assured of Christ's peace. We celebrate that we are connected, we are loved, and we are not alone. Through participation in the Peace and Global Witness Offering, our congregation is extending Christ's peace throughout our community and our world. Peace begins with each of us.

Our participation in the Peace and Global Witness Offering provides funds for peacemaking programs locally and in the wider world. Those programs range from working to eliminate all forms of human trafficking to supporting the work of a mission co-worker.

Twenty-five percent of the total St. Mark collects is retained for local use, which goes to the Presbyterian Children's Home & Services and St. John's Episcopal Church Peace Meal, served to all who come for Saturday dinner. Use the special envelope in your September packet or simply mark your check for the Peace and Global Witness Offering. Thank you for your generosity.

AUGUST WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

	Sunday In Person	Sunday Online	Total Attendance
August 3	141	103	244
August 10	118	53	171
August 17	171	77	248
August 24	164	98	262
August 31	--	--	--

DEACONS IN ACTION AT ST. MARK

The Worship Committee consists of 4 groups of helpers to organize the sign up sheets and to help St. Mark run smoothly.

The Communion Group sets up Communion trays with the elements and passes the trays in the pews during the service. Gluten free elements are used for Communion. St. Mark celebrates Communion on the first Sunday of each month.

The Greeter Group organizes the sign up sheet for volunteers who stand at the Narthex doors greeting people and making them feel welcome.

The Sanctuary Group decorates the Sanctuary for Easter and Christmas. They also refill the pages in the Friendship pads in the pews.

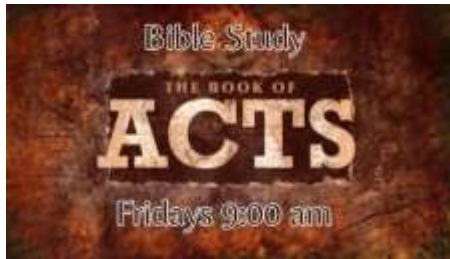
The Ushers Group hands out bulletins and welcomes us before the worship service begins. They work in teams. There is a need for more usher volunteers. Please contact Roy McBee if you would like to join an usher team.



CHANCEL CHOIR AND BELL PRACTICE RESUMES!

Practices will resume on Wednesday, September 3 - 6 pm for Bells and 7 pm for Choir.

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AT ST. MARK



THE BOOK OF ACTS

Bible Study
continues
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.



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

We have a new year and a new book coming for Men's Tuesday Bible Study. We will use Max Lucado's book, *You Are Never Alone*. It uses the Gospel of John as a source of God's active presence in our lives. We will start our study beginning September 9th at 7:30am. All men are welcome! You can purchase the book on Amazon. If you have questions call or email Bruce Cranston.



Discover Sunday



September 14th

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUTH



Youth 6th– 12th grade. Join us for food, fun, faith, and fellowship! If you have any questions, call the church office.



WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

CHILDREN'S SUNDAYSCHOOL

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.



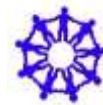
RENEWAL TEACHER TRAINING LUNCHEON

There will be a one-time training for all teachers and also those who would like to be a part of our Team immediately following worship on September 28 from 11:15 am – 12:15 pm.

MISSION AT ST. MARK

SEPTEMBER FOOD PANTRY CRITICAL NEEDS

- Sardines & Chili
- Cooking Oil
- Shampoo*
- Razors & Shaving Cream*
- Laundry Detergent*



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.



EQUAL EXCHANGE

In the Narthex on September 14

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.

SEPTEMBER POTLUCK AND PROGRAM

The mission committee is sponsoring the September 17th potluck. The educational program will be presented by Kirsten King of Equal Exchange via zoom. Join us to learn about the Equal Exchange organization and regenerative cocoa farming and chocolate production. Then enjoy an Equal Exchange chocolate tasting!



SEPTEMBER GO GETTER LUNCHEON

Go Getters will meet on Tuesday, September 9
at Charro's Restaurant at noon.

We hope you can join us for lunch and
good times together!

The address is 14839 Clayton Rd, Chesterfield.

Please let Judy Richardson know if
you plan to attend.



WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



PW is collecting
for Newborns in
Need during the
month of
September.

Newborns In Need is a charity that specializes in
the needs of babies facing health or economic crisis
in St. Louis. It is a local and national nonprofit
organization.

New and gently used baby items such as bibs,
booties, burp cloths, hats, onesies, socks, sweaters,
and undershirts, sleepers, blankets, baby wash,
wipes and diapers are accepted and may be placed
in the playpen by the PW table.

Monetary donations are greatly appreciated. Make
checks out to Newborns In Need and ask for a tax
receipt. Mail to: Newborns In Need c/o Judy
Giovanoni, 310 Oxford Ridge Ct., Ellisville, MO
63021. For more information, call Shirley Boeker.



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 Geese

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.



2025 ABC SALE RECAP

Thank you for your treasures, prayers, and talents! 120+ volunteers – St. Mark members, families, friends, and Scout Troop – made the sale a HUGE success!

\$18,000+ raised during 2025's ABC Sale – a new record!

100% of the net sale proceeds are given to the following organizations in the form of cash grants to be used for their most critical needs.

- Circle of Concern -- food pantry - St. Louis County
- Isaiah 58 -- food pantry - St. Louis City
- Lafayette Industries -- sheltered workshop -- Manchester, MO
- Mound Ridge -- children's outdoor camp -- Steelville, MO
- Rise Against Hunger – hunger relief for developing nations
- Peace Meal -- community meal - St. Louis City
- Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services -- wrap around services for youth -- St. Louis and outstate Missouri

Where unsold items are donated – we try hard not to send much to the landfill!

- Assistance League - Fantastic Finds -- select clothing, collectibles
- Habitat ReStore – furniture, home repair and renovation supplies
- 1/2 Price Books and Little Libraries – books
- Helping Hand Me Downs – children's clothing, books, and toys
- Home Sweet Home – household goods, furniture
- Isaiah 58 -- clothing
- Newborns in Need – select infant and toddler clothing, layette items
- Thrift Stores: Goodwill, St. Vincent de Paul, Salvation Army, and Savers -- household goods, sporting goods, toys, games, puzzles, small furniture
- Animal Shelters – textiles not appropriate for resale or donation elsewhere
- Remains -- textiles for recycling
- Earthbound Recycling – cardboard and select items not appropriate for resale or donation elsewhere

Mark your calendar for next Year's ABC Sale!

- Sale days: July 31 & August 1
- Work days: July 26-30

With great gratitude,

2025 ABC Sale Co-Chairs, Joyce Blackwell & Pam Ladley

2026 ABC Sale Co-Chairs, Joyce Blackwell, Eleni Lieven, & John Northrip

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.