



**Worship Bulletin
December 21, 2025**

QR Code for Volunteer
Accelerator Survey



ORDER OF WORSHIP

CENTERING PRAYER

Eternal God of power and grace, who comes to us in surprising ways— in angel appearances, in defeat of enemies, and in resurrection from the dead— show us the face of Immanuel in our time. Bring us from fear to awe, we pray; in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

PRELUDE

Good Christian Men, Rejoice with I Saw Three Ships

Craig Curry

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY

We light these candles as a sign of the coming light of Christ, as we await the blessed hope and manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior.

Now is the moment to wake from sleep, for salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.

May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant us to live in harmony with one another, welcoming one another, just as Christ welcomed us, for the glory of God.

Be patient and strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.

We are called to be saints of God bearing witness to the light of Jesus Christ.

The night is far gone; the day is near.

† HYMN

“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

Hymnal #132

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Shepherd of Israel, God of hosts, we turn away from you, neglecting the welfare of your creation, ignoring the plight of your people, trampling on the creatures and the plants you made, taking from Earth what we cannot give back. We do not help our neighbors in need, keep peace within our families, or tend the vine you plant in our own lives. Forgive us and lead us to a more gracious life. In your compassion, turn us to your way. Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved. (Silent Confession)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

† SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

† GLORIA PATRI

**Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.
Amen, amen.**

Hymnal #581

TIME WITH CHILDREN (Children’s Sunday School will meet in Fellowship Hall)

† HYMN

“What Child Is This”

Hymnal #145

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 1:18-25

SERMON

“Doing the Right Thing”

Rev. Dr. Dave Burgess

† **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

Confession of Belhar (3)

We believe that God has entrusted the church with the message of reconciliation in and through Jesus Christ; that the church is called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, that the church is called blessed because it is a peacemaker, that the church is witness both by word and by deed to the new heaven and the new earth in which righteousness dwells. We believe that God’s lifegiving Word and Spirit has conquered the powers of sin and death, and therefore also of irreconciliation and hatred, bitterness and enmity, that God’s lifegiving Word and Spirit will enable the church to live in a new obedience which can open new possibilities of life for society and the world.

OFFERTORY

Carol of the Bells
Chancel Bells

arr. Douglas Wagner

† **THE DOXOLOGY**

Hymnal #609

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all creatures high and low.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Praise God, in Jesus fully known:
Creator, Word, and Spirit one.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

† **HYMN**

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

Hymnal #113

† **CHARGE AND BLESSING**

† **BENEDICTION
RESPONSE**

“Peace on Earth”

Sussex Carol

**Peace on the earth, Good will to all,
the angels sang from Heav’n above.
Peace on the earth, Good will to all,
we go to share God’s peace and love.**

POSTLUDE

Sussex Carol

Alfred V. Fedak

† In body or spirit, please rise.

UPCOMING EVENTS

December

- 21** Adult Bible Study, 8:50 am
- 22** Prayer Circle, 9:30 am
- 23** Men’s Bible Study, 7:30 am
- 24** Christmas Eve Worship, 4 & 7 pm
- 25 & 26** The Church office is closed for the holiday
- 28** Pajama Worship, 10 am

January

- 1** The Church office is closed for the holiday
- 25** Congregational Meeting, following worship

WELCOME TO ST. MARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH!

We are pleased to have you join us this morning. Your presence enriches both us and this experience of worship together. It is our prayer this will be a time of challenge and encouragement. Wherever you may be on your faith journey, there is a place for you to participate in our life together here at St. Mark.

TO OUR GUESTS: We hope you enjoy your visit today. Whether this is your first visit, or you have been coming to St. Mark and are considering joining the church and you would like to know more about St. Mark, we would be happy to talk with you. For more information, please contact the church office, 636-394-2233.

TO ALL: Listening devices are available from a sound technician in the booth at the back of the sanctuary. Large print bulletins and hymnals are also available upon request from an usher.

Devotional Booklets, *These Days* are available in the lobby at the main entrance.

Please be aware that, as St. Mark works to increase safety and security, all doors to the building are locked Sunday morning once worship has begun. Those who arrive late should approach the door at the office entrance and will be admitted by a member of the Security Team.

TO MEMBERS: Please wear your NAMETAG at church. Don't have one? Stop by the church office where you will find a form to fill out in the "Name Badge" mailbox.

WAYS TO GIVE: There are several convenient and easy ways to contribute to St. Mark:

In-person: During Sunday Worship Service

Mail: Please make check out to St. Mark Presbyterian Church and send to St. Mark Presbyterian Church, 601 Claymont Drive, Ballwin, MO 63011

Online: To donate, use the **QR Code** here to be directed to our giving page on discoverstmark.org.



CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING



The Assistance Program of the PCUSA Board of Pensions is supported by the Christmas Joy Offering and is used in many ways.

Following Hurricane Helene in 2024, Rev. Lynn Bledsoe and her husband, whose home was in the Blue Ridge Mountains, found themselves with a mudslide from beneath that home, leaving a huge and expensive repair. Insurance does not cover flood—or mudslides! All this on top of the devastation and trauma within the community. The Assistance Program of the Board of Pension provided an assistance grant to lessen some of the burden of putting the home back together.

The Christmas Joy Offering has been in existence since the 1930's and splits its resources between the Assistance Program and the Interim Unified Agencies Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Lynn reminds us that the Christmas Joy Offering gives us a chance to be involved because "we all belong to each other and we belong to God."

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AT ST. MARK



SUNDAYS AT 8:50

FRIDAY BIBLE STUDY

Join us for a study of the books called "Angels" by Vinita Hampton Wright. Fridays at 9:30 am.

"What - or who - are angels? Where did they come from, and what is their purpose? What is their relationship to us as human beings? This study will explore numerous Bible passages that reveal the services these heavenly beings perform, the part they play in spirituality, and how they differ from other beings in God's created order."

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Men's Tuesday Bible Study is reading 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. All men are welcome to join us for Bible study every Tuesday morning at 7:30 am! If you have questions call or email Bruce Cranston.

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 – 2 years, is available Sunday mornings from 8:30 am – 11:00 am, except for the first Sunday of the month when the nursery is open but there is no attendant present.

WEDNESDAY EVENING ACTIVITIES

Midweek Praise Club, 5:30 – 6:30 pm

SUNDAY SCHOOL SIGN IN!

Use this QR code to sign in for Sunday School. Scan the code to access the attendance form and enter the required information. We ask that you have your student registered before Time With Children so that we can contact you via text in the event that you are needed.



A Merry Santa "thank you" from Children's Ministries to all who came out for Santa Breakfast this year and for all those who made it happen. You have been very good this year!

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.

MISSION AT ST. MARK

DECEMBER FOOD PANTRY CRITICAL NEEDS

- Baking basics and mixes
- Canned and dry beans
- Canned tomatoes (15 oz & larger)
- Dinner Helpers
- Personal Care Items



All year long, 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.

EQUAL EXCHANGE

In the Narthex on
December 7, 14, & 21

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

Cash, Credit, Debit, Digital Wallet Payments Accepted

Equal Exchange Small Farmers Fund lost its USAID funding, so are seeking funding alternatives that are reliable and consistent. 100% of your donation goes to co-op development projects that offer much needed help support to our farmer partners as they face unprecedented market and climate challenges. Tariffs are also having a significant impact on Equal Exchange. For more info, see <https://shop.equalexchange.coop/products/donate>



WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



HONORING FAMILY AND FRIENDS THROUGH ALTERNATIVE GIVING

Finding the perfect, meaningful gift for someone who has many wonderful possessions is a difficult task! With this in mind, the newly formed Mission Committee at St. Mark created "Christmas Alternatives" in 2001.



Purchasing a gift through Christmas Alternatives honors the recipient and will help lift a family out of poverty. That family will in turn help another community member. Every gift is another word in an ongoing story of hope that will help create a cycle of change for generations to come.

The "shopping list" will be available in December's Messenger and bulletins and on the welcome desk. Displays will be in the Narthex on December 7, 14, & 21st.

Many people in our region lack enough warm clothing to stay protected throughout winter. New and gently used clean winter coats and clothing are needed, **adult sizes for men and women in particular**. Our mission partners will ensure someone in need receives your gift of warmth. Dog and cat coats are appreciated too!





Grief is a journey we are never prepared to take. Have you lost a spouse, family member, or close friend? Are you finding it difficult to talk about your loss? Do you feel nobody understands? GriefShare is a place you can come with caring compassionate people to walk with you on your grief journey. Be with people who are experiencing similar feelings. Let us help you. GriefShare meets weekly for 13 weeks. It is very helpful, but not required to attend all the sessions. Our next session starts Tuesday January 13, 6:00 – 8:00 pm. For information, contact Debbie Hames

CHURCH-WIDE “PAJAMA SUNDAY” WORSHIP SERVICE SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, 10:00 AM

“The Heart that Grew Three Sizes-Finding Faith in the Story of the Grinch”



Rediscover the gift of Christmas that comes without packages, ribbons, and bows. Our worship experience will explore the faith themes found in the Christmas classic, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*.

If you would like to wear your pajamas, and bring your favorite stuffy or blankie to church on this “in-between” Christmas and New Year Sunday, please do so! This way we can get comfortable while we spend time taking a look at the familiar classic through the lens of faith and see how Christ speaks to us through this story today.

As in year’s past, this is also a great opportunity to bring your snack and cookie leftovers and plan to stay a bit after the service and enjoy a time of refreshments and fellowship activities in the Narthex. If you have any questions, please speak to Donna Schiro.

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Dave Burgess
Dir. of Children’s Ministry: Latisha Gilliland
Parish Associate: Donna Schiro



601 Claymont Drive
Ballwin, MO 63011
(636)394-2233

website: discoverstmark.org

Dir. of Music: Ethan Forte
Accompanist & Organist: JeeHye Lee
Special Music: Chancel Bells
Advent Liturgists: Barry & Shirley Boeker