



Issue: February 2026



A Monthly Insight into St. Mark Presbyterian Church

# *The Messenger*

## **“The Heart of God” by Donna Schiro, Parish Associate**

Have you ever considered mission work to be a reflection of the heart of God? Throughout scripture we see a God who reaches out, who seeks the lost. When the church engages in missions—whether across the world or across the street—it is joining in God’s work.

**Mission work keeps the church outward-focused.** It is easy for any congregation to become inward-looking, concentrating only on internal needs and preferences.

**Missions lift our eyes beyond our own walls and comfort zones.** This work challenges us to see the needs of others: the spiritually lost, the materially poor, the lonely, the displaced, and the hurting. In serving them, the church lives out Jesus’ command to love our neighbors as ourselves.

**Mission work strengthens the faith of the church.** When believers step out to serve, pray, give, and go, they depend on God in fresh ways.

Changed lives, prayers answered, and doors opened build confidence in God’s power and faithfulness. Even those who never travel far can participate through prayer, generosity, and encouragement, and they too are blessed as they witness what God is doing.

**Missions change not only those who are served, but those who serve.** Hearts are softened, perspectives are broadened, and priorities are reordered. Encountering different cultures and struggles helps believers appreciate the global family of God and recognize how much they themselves have received. **Mission work grows humility, gratitude, and compassion.**

**Mission work matters because people matter to God.**

**Please be with us on Sunday, February 15, as we greet, meet, and learn from our Mission partners during worship and the time of fellowship that follows. You won’t want to miss this very special Sunday service!**

## SESSION SNIPPETS

January 26 Session Meeting:

The Session and Deacons held their annual joint Meeting on January 26. The Property Committee reported on their progress getting qualified bids for the Sanctuary and Narthex lighting upgrades funded by the Capital Campaign. Session approved funding and authorized the Property Committee to award the contract to the most favorable bidder.

- Session approved a request from the Youth Committee to allow adult trivia contest participants to bring alcoholic beverages to be consumed at the event on February 28. Committees and individuals were encouraged to donate gift baskets for the silent auction.
- Session approved a request from the Property Committee to use Endowment funds to replace the HVAC system over the office and Pastors' hallway. The current system is increasingly difficult and expensive to maintain.
- The Deacons volunteered to host a Pot Luck Dinner on March 18, and Communications will host April 15. There will not be a Pot Luck in February.
- A part-time transitional pre-school leader is now in place, and the Pre-School committee and staff are working well together to plan a path forward to permanently fill leadership roles.

## JANUARY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

	Sunday In Person	Sunday Online	Total Attendance
January 4	168	101	269
January 11	144	99	243
January 18	115	160	275
January 25	---	289	289



## DEACONS IN ACTION AT ST. MARK

It is not hard to find a Deacon in action. At any even you will see helpers and many of the helpers are Deacons. From the ABC Sale to the Fall Festival to Breakfast with Santa and many more. Deacons help support and help keep these programs going. Thank you to all the helpers at St. Mark!

### Grief Support

The goal of the Grief Support is to support the congregation and the community through their grief journey. We offer GriefShare, a thirteen-week program to help people navigate the emotional journey of grief after losing a loved one. In addition, we offer the annual program, Surviving the Holidays. Grief Support also assists in the Blue Christmas event. Grief booklets and prayer shawls are sent to those in need. The Grief booklets are a set of 4 booklets sent throughout the next year. The prayer shawls are to remind the recipient that they are always wrapped in the loving arms of Christ.

### Red Cross Blood Drives

The Red Cross will no longer hold blood drives at St. Mark. A minimum of 40 units of blood must be collected at weekend drives and we have recently fallen short of that minimum. We would like to thank the people that have donated blood in the past and encourage those who wish to continue to donate, to visit the Red Cross website for future blood drive locations. Thank you to Phil Rahn and Michele Noark for their hard work organizing past blood drives here at St. Mark.

## ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AT ST. MARK



**SUNDAYS AT 8:50 AM**

## FRIDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY



The Friday Bible study group will start a new book by Adam Hamilton called "Why Did Jesus Have to Die? The Meaning of the Crucifixion" on Friday, January 16 at 9:30 AM in Room 102 or via Zoom. If you have questions or want to receive the weekly Zoom link, please see Donna Schiro. Join us, won't you? *"The author introduces readers to several theories about how Jesus' death brings us into a right relationship with God - in Christian doctrine this is called 'atonement'. Hamilton shows us how each of these theories can complement each other and work together to give us a fuller and deeper understanding of why Jesus died and what his death means for us."*

## MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Men's Bible Study will begin a new study exploring the Holy Spirit. We will be using The Promise of The Holy Spirit by Paul Balis. We meet in rm 102 every Tuesday at 7:30. All are welcome!

## WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUTH



Youth 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> 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 – 5<sup>th</sup> 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.

### 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.



Join us for Kids Praise Club and musical rehearsal weekly on Wednesdays, at 5:30pm!





Saints & Sibs Pizza and Mission: Children's Ministry invites all those who would like to participate in this month's Saints & Sib's February 22<sup>nd</sup> immediately after the morning worship service.

**Online registration will open March 1!**



## MISSION AT ST. MARK FEBRUARY FOOD PANTRY CRITICAL NEEDS

- Dinner helpers
- Pasta sauce & condiments
- Lotion
- Kid's pull-ups
- Tampons
- Mouthwash

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 / FAIRLY TRADED IN THE NARTHEX ON FEBRUARY 8

Through fair trade, small-scale farmers are better able to support their families and stay on their land with better income.



**Gift your chocolate lover this Valentine's Day!**

*Cash, Credit, Debit, Mobile Payments Accepted.*

## COLLECTION \*\*\*EXTENDED\*\*\* THROUGH END OF FEBRUARY



New and gently used clean winter coats AND cold weather clothing are still needed -- especially adults size XL and up. The larger sizes are helpful with layering. **Dog and Cat coats are accepted, too**, so our furry friends stay warm. Please place your donations in the foyer.





## WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

### BOOKCLUB

The Presbyterian Women's Book Club will meet February 24 to discuss the book, *The Mighty Red* by Louise Erdrich. There is a virtual option for meeting as well. Please contact Judy Richardson for more information.



Cleveland Rocks! Join us for a night of trivia and entertainment on Saturday, February 28th, 2026. Registration is now open through February 15th, 2026.

The cost is \$200 per table, 8 people per table—that's just \$25 per person! Tables paid in full at time of registration.

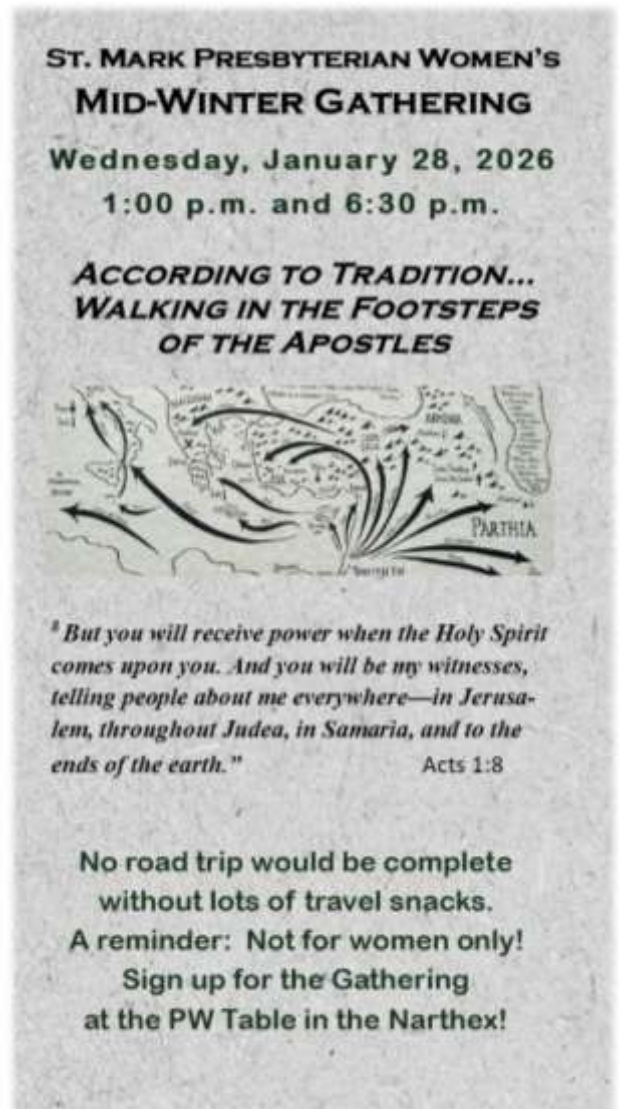
Doors open at 5 pm and trivia starts at 6 pm. There will also be a silent auction, games, and prizes.

Participants may bring their own beverage of choice—water and soda will be provided.

Look for the registration forms on the Youth Table in the Narthex and on the St. Mark website, [www.discoverstmark.org](http://www.discoverstmark.org).

All proceeds benefit the 2026 St. Mark Youth Group Summer Mission Trip to an economically challenged area that is rebuilding in Cleveland, Ohio.

Donations are also needed! We are currently seeking donations of gift cards, tickets to local sporting events, theater shows, or music venues for silent auction baskets. Donations of bottled water and cans of soda are also needed. Please contact Heather Neal for more information.





Tuesdays t 6 – 8 pm. For more information, contact Debbie Hames.



**REGISTRATION FOR  
CLAYMONT PRESCHOOL  
AT ST. MARK 2026-7  
SCHOOL YEAR IS OPEN!**

