



Issue: October 2026



A Monthly Insight into St. Mark Presbyterian Church

The Messenger

A Season of Letting Go

“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.” — Ecclesiastes 3:1

It seems like we've been waiting a little longer for Fall to arrive this year. Even though many of us are sensitive and reluctant to change; the season of Fall is all about changing! As the leaves change from green to gold, orange, and red, we are reminded that change is not always something to fear. Seasonal changes are beautiful reminders that God asks us to accept and make changes along the way too.

Sometimes God asks us to do the same. We need to be more “tree-like”. Trees do not cling desperately to every old leaf. In the proper season, trees let go of their leaves—and in doing so, they prepare for what comes next.

There may be habits, disappointments, expectations, relationships, or plans that we have held onto long after their season has passed. Letting go can be difficult because we cannot always see what God is preparing to do. Yet faith means trusting the One who sees beyond the present moment.

The falling leaves remind us that release can be an act of trust.

God is not finished simply because one season is ending. Winter will come, but spring will follow. What appears dormant may be preparing for new life. In the same way, God can use quiet seasons to deepen our faith, strengthen our character, and prepare us for something we cannot yet see.

This fall, take time to notice the beauty around you. Thank God for what this past season has taught you. Then place the things you cannot control into God's hands.

You don't have to know what tomorrow holds. You only need to trust the One who holds tomorrow.

Remember to thank God for the changing seasons and for the reminder that God is always at work. God is asking us to release, and then gives us the courage to let go without fear. Let us trust God's timing when we cannot see what lies ahead. Embrace this season with gratitude, faith, and peace, knowing that God is with us in every season of life.

May it be so.

Donna Schiro
Transitional Associate Parish Visitor

SESSION SNIPPETS

September 21 Session Meeting:

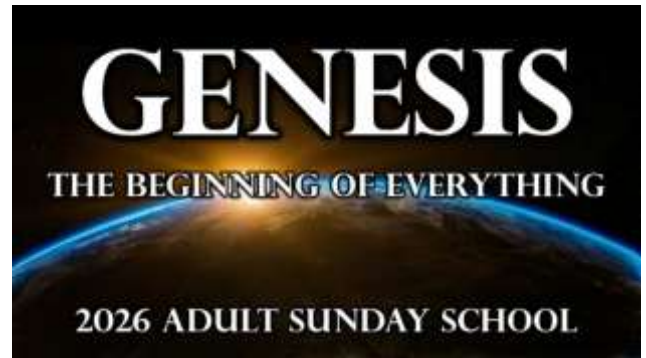
- The Capital Campaign reported that the Phase 3 projects – Coffee Bar and ADA Restroom – are very near completion. Some flooring work initially planned for Phase 3 will be postponed until 2027 as the issues associated with sewer lines are investigated and repaired.
- The Property Committee has been working to better understand causes of roof leaks in the sanctuary so that repairs can be scheduled.
- Fall Festival is coming up October 18, and volunteers are encouraged to help with set up and clean-up.
- The Finance Committee reported that the financials have remained strong in 2026, and that Committees will be asked to submit budget requests for 2027 before the end of November.

SEPTEMBER WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

	Sunday In Person	Sunday Online	Total Attendance
Sept. 6	109	96	205
Sept. 13	131	106	237
Sept. 20	136	180	316
Sept. 27	136	183	319

Thank you to everyone who kept me in their thoughts and prayers during this difficult time when I needed kidney surgery. Thanks to all those who brought meals for Roger and I during my recovery, they were very much enjoyed and appreciated. Prayers work wonders because I surely felt them all around me when it came time to head into surgery. We are so blessed to be surrounded by such a caring church family. God is Good! All the time!
Mickey McKnight

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AT ST. MARK



FRIDAY BIBLE STUDY

The Friday Bible Study group led by Donna Schiro, Parish Associate, is using a study by David Helm called "Daniel - Staying Strong in a Hostile World". The Bible study is back in room 102, or via Zoom. This seven-week study will teach us that how Daniel lived and what Daniel saw speaks to us still today. How much can we expect from this life? How can we have the courage to remain faithful in our world today? Come hear the answers to these questions and more!

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

We have a New Year and a New Book coming for Men's Tuesday Bible Study. We will use NT Wright's, Mark for Everyone. It uses the Gospel of Mark as a source of God's active presence in our lives. We will start our study beginning September 15th at 7:30am. All men are welcome! You can purchase the book on Amazon. If you have questions call or email Bruce Cranston.

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUTH

YOUTH ACTIVITIES HAVE A NEW DAY AND TIME!

We will meet on Sundays right after church, 11:30 am-1 pm. Lunch will be provided. Come enjoy the fellowship, fun, expand your knowledge, and whatever else we decided to explore.

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.

KID WEDNESDAYS AT ST MARK!

Wednesday night activities for grades K – 5th will meet once a month from 5:30 – 6:30 pm. Students will enjoy games and activities based on "Family Night Tool Chest – Christian Character Qualities" on the following dates: September 26, October 28, November 18, and December 2.



CHILDREN AND YOUTH CHRISTMAS PROGRAM-

"ANGEL ALERT"

Practice will be held every Sunday, 11:00 - 11:15 am,

after Sunday School in Fellowship Hall. PreK – 5th and 6th grade – 12 are welcome! A dress rehearsal will be held on Saturday, December 5, 10 am – 12 pm and the performance is Sunday, December 6 at 4 pm. A sign-up sheet will be available and a schedule of the remaining rehearsals until December 6th presentation.



Join us from 11:15 am – 1:30 pm for food, root beer garden, Good Turn Daily Band, bounce house, pumpkin decorating, balloon artists, and more!

MISSION AT ST. MARK

EQUAL EXCHANGE IN THE NARTHEX ON OCTOBER 11

Cash, Credit, Debit, Mobile Payments Accepted.

NEW! **Extreme Earl Gray**

Tea takes the bright citrus notes of bergamot to the next level for a more extreme take on our beloved Earl Grey. Add a lemon wedge to enhance your experience. Check out our wide selection of Equal Exchange Teas.



Please note that prices have increased due to impacts from tariffs, increased shipping costs, increased input costs (like fertilizers), and increased climate-related problems—like rains and droughts—during times that, for generations in these farming communities, have not been the norm. Thank you for your continued support.

OCTOBER FOOD PANTRY CRITICAL NEEDS

- Condiments
- Baking items
- Snacks
- Cereal
- Canned meat



All year we collect food and hygiene items for Circle of Concern & Isaiah 58 Ministries. Please place your donations on the mission table outside the church office. *Non-food products cannot be purchased with food stamps.



Thank you for your continued support for Equal Exchange. St. Mark was again recognized as a Top 100 Customer in the U.S.

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

BOOKCLUB

Presbyterian Women's Book Club will meet October 28. There is a virtual option for meeting as well. Please contact Judy Richardson for more information.



**St. Mark Christmas Boutique
& Angel Street Cafe**

*Unique holiday crafts & gifts, bake sale,
homemade soups, salads, and
heavenly desserts*

Tuesday, Nov. 10, 10:00 am - 6:00 pm
Wednesday, Nov. 11, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

St. Mark Presbyterian Church
601 Claymont Dr., Ballwin MO 63011

www.discoverstmark.org
Profits are distributed to our mission partners.
FREE ADMISSION



PCHAS ANNUAL LUNCHEON – October 22nd -- Please join us for this year's Annual Luncheon! This year's annual luncheon in support of Presbyterian Children's Home and Services will be held on Thursday, October 22nd from 12 – 1pm at the Sheraton Westport Chalet. If you'd like to attend with other St. Mark members, please contact Pam Ladley. We'd love to see you there!



**POTLUCK &
PROGRAM –
OCTOBER 21**



ST. MARK PET BLESSING

Thank you to all who came out to this year's Pet Blessing and to all who made it possible to gather for this blessed event!



ATTENTION HANDYMEN & DO-IT- YOURSELFERS!

The St. Mark Property Committee is actively seeking volunteers to fill various limited

roles on an "occasional & as needed" basis throughout the year. If you have some DIY skills, please contact a member of the Property Committee to learn more about what this involves and how you might share some of your time and talent with St. Mark.



EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY



On October 8-9, the Center for Excellence in Christian Education is offering the symposium, Intentional: Intergenerational Preaching, Teaching and Worship.

You are invited to participate in several sessions of this conference that will be live-streamed in room 102.

Day One –

Explore the foundations through Bible study and panel discussions with the UPSEM Faculty. Build understanding of the frameworks for integrating intergenerational approaches into ministry led by leaders in the field

Schedule

9:30 Opening & Welcome

Foundations

9:45 Bible Study

10:40 Intentionally Intergenerational:
Preaching, Teaching, & Worship

12:30 Leading Congregational Change Framework

1:30 Introductions of Framework

1:45 Intergenerational Preaching

3:20 Intergenerational Teaching

4:30 Intergenerational Worship

Day Two

Move from theory to practice as you focus in Preaching, Teaching or Worship/Liturgy with concentrated time to incorporate strategies and methods into these aspects of ministry and receive coaching from the focus leader.

9:00 A Deeper Dive: Exploring the theories and practices that strengthen intergenerational preaching/teaching/liturgy

Please contact Latisha Gilliland for more information or if you would like to attend one or all of these sessions.