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A Monthly Insight into St. Mark Presbyterian Church

# The Messenger

Dear Friends,

We pray this message finds all of you doing well as we move into the first hot and muggy days of summer. It is a joy to worship with so many of you in-person and online on Sunday mornings. We opened up the sanctuary a little over a month ago with many restrictions (i.e., masks, social distancing, no singing, etc.), and we promised to continue to monitor the situation and to adjust as appropriate. We made small changes like inviting the young ones to come forward for our time with children and inviting spoken prayer requests from the pews. The question on many minds is when can we get back to normal.

The St. Mark Session met on Monday evening to discuss next steps in reopening, and we approved a resolution to allow for more freedom in worship beginning the **first weekend in July**.

- Mask wearing inside the building is not required for those who are vaccinated. We strongly recommend unvaccinated members and guests to continue to wear masks for their safety and that of others. Following guidance from Parkway Schools, we encourage children under 12 to continue to wear their masks.
- We are removing the taped off areas from most of the sanctuary pews, and worshippers are free to sit where they would like.
- Two sections on the far right (pulpit side) of the sanctuary will remain taped off for those who prefer to keep socially distant.

- We are returning the hymnals, Bibles, and friendship pads to the pews, and the singing of hymns is now allowed.
- The narthex is open for coffee and fellowship for those who are comfortable congregating before and after the service.
- We will continue to celebrate communion with the prepackaged elements from our individual pews.
- We will not pass the plates during the offering, but there will be a plate in the back of the sanctuary to drop off gifts.
- In-person church related meetings are allowed, but we ask everyone to please contact the office to schedule the time and space.

When we discussed reopening, we knew the way forward would involve a hybrid model for our worship, education, and meetings. The session believes this plan allows all of our members and guests a chance to worship in a way they are most comfortable through our general seating area, our socially distant section, and our livestream service on YouTube. We understand there is not a plan that will satisfy everyone, but we hope this model will help us expand our ministries through the summer and beyond. Please feel free to contact the pastors if you have any questions or concerns.

In Hope and Confidence,  
Pastor Dave and Pastor MP

## Session Snippets

### June 21, 2021

At the June 21 meeting Session approved major changes in our response to the pandemic. Effective July 3, with the resumption of Saturday Evening Worship, wearing a mask is optional in worship at all services as is distance seating. Two sections of pews will retain the tape for social distancing, and Live Streaming continues to be available. See Pastor Dave's letter for the details.

St. Mark is getting a new sign! The current sign was installed in 1982, so it's definitely time for an update. It will be mid-August (if all goes well) before the sign is installed-- watch for it!

Parking Lot Concerts are scheduled: July 11 for Brass, August 28 for Jazz, and October 23 for Good Turn Daily. Bring your chair and enjoy!

More information will follow.

#### May 2021 Financial Update

|                             | May        | Year to date |
|-----------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Revenue                     | \$62,920   | \$434,100    |
| Expenses                    | \$68,718   | \$360,865    |
| <b>Revenue vs. Expenses</b> |            |              |
| Surplus(Deficit)            | \$ (5,798) | \$73,235     |

#### August Messenger Newsletter

Will be published on July 30  
(The last Friday of every month)

**Deadline for articles**  
**Thursday, July 22**

**Newsletter@discoverstmark.org**

## Giving to St. Mark

The Finance Committee wants to continue to provide you insights, as we have done since the December 2020 newsletter, on ways to provide financial support to St. Mark and the various missions of your church.

Earlier this year we provided information on **using your IRAs** (excluding active SEP-IRAs and SIMPLE-IRAs) as a charitable gift. Although you may have already withdrawn earlier this year some or all of your "Required Minimum Distribution" (RMD), this does not prohibit you from using your IRA for gifting to St. Mark. The required age for RMDs changed recently to the year you turn age 72; the previous rule of age 70½ at the time of the gift still applies for Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD's).

Each individual can exclude up to \$100,000 of QCDs from your Gross Income each year and avoid taxation on those amounts. This exclusion from gross income may be a tax efficient way for taxpayers who would not itemize deductions. Be sure to have your IRA custodian make the distribution **directly** from your IRA to a qualified charity (i.e.: St. Mark), and the distribution must be one that would otherwise be taxable to you.

Always consult your financial planner, estate planning attorney, or tax professional to review the benefits to you and your family for using this strategy for giving.

Stay tuned in August for our next topic.

For help, contact the St. Mark Finance Committee: G. Knopf, chair; B. Sprague, S. Collier, C. Tenpas, M. Caplinger, H. Smith, C. Noble, B. Snyder, and J. Blackwell.

## St. Mark's Emergency Operations Plan Now Being Implemented

An Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) has been designed specifically for St. Mark Presbyterian Church in Claymont subdivision, Ballwin. The goal is to provide a plan of action to deal with emergency situations and reduce the risk of personal injury and property damage.

The EOP will be managed by the Emergency Operations Team (EOT), consisting of members from Property, Medical and Security Teams which shall report to the head pastor of St. Mark. Training of various members participating in the EOP will be scheduled, and a training roster will be maintained by the Director. Training will be specific to the duties performed by each team. Training will include programs offered by Ballwin Police Department and West County Fire Department.

## KNIGHTS OF THE NORTH CASTLE FRIDAY, JULY 23, 9 AM – 4 PM



Join us on Friday, July 23 from 9 am – 4 pm, in helping kids learn to be strong by remaining with God and sharing God's love in a world that needs it more than ever. St. Mark Presbyterian Church invites all children ages 3 years old thru outgoing 5th graders to explore how to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of God's power by exploring how we put on the armor of God with the "Knights of North Castle".

This year, we're asking that each knight have an adult stay with them throughout the day to provide hands-on assistance. Please limit to five kids per adult. Use this link to register: <https://2020.cokesburyvbs.com/discoverstmark>

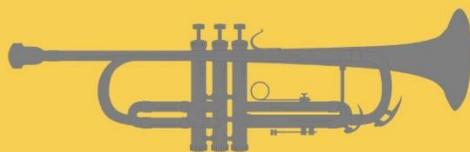
### VBS DONATION REQUEST

Children's Ministries is looking for donations of the following items for our VBS activities:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Washable markers                             | Sidewalk chalk                                      |
| Gallon resealable bags                       | Paper plates  |
| Large Plastic cups<br>(two different colors) | Dollar store flip flops<br>(4 pr, different colors) |
| Balloons (round)                             | 10 large moving<br>boxes (new)                      |

You may drop your donations off at church during regular office hours. Contact Latisha Gilliland with questions.

### St. Mark Presents Concerts in the Parking Lot



### An Evening of Brass Sunday, July 11 – 7:00 PM



Everyone is welcome to join us for St. Mark's next Parking Lot Concert on Sunday, July 11 at 7:00 PM. We will enjoy an evening of brass music at our campus. Bring a friend, a lawn chair, and a favorite beverage as we enjoy the horns. There is no cost for the concert, but we will accept donations.

## HELP OUR VBS KNIGHTS BUILD A "CASTLE OF CANS"



On or before July 23rd - we are asking our VBS Knights & St. Mark Congregation to help us with our VBS mission initiative by bringing canned food items. Just drop your cans off and place them by Sparky the Dragon in the Narthex. Between now and July 23, we will gather all of the cans and the kids will see how high we can build a "Castle of Cans!" All donations will be given to Isaiah 58 and Circle of Concern food pantries.

## Youth Pool Party July 25th 4-6pm

Come join us at the Burgess's house!



- Bring a snack to share.
- Beverages will be provided
- Bring your favorite floaties and water games!

Contact Julie Northrip or Pastor MP [mpanco@discoverstmark.org](mailto:mpanco@discoverstmark.org) to sign up or ask questions.



## Confirmation Classes Begin September

- Youth will work with the pastor, adult mentors, and each other, exploring their faith and digging deeper into what they believe.
- They will learn ways to express those beliefs in words, through spiritual practice, and with their actions.
- At the completion of the class, each youth has an opportunity and the choice to confirm their faith through a written faith statement and by public profession during a worship service.

Who: Youth 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade  
(who are not yet confirmed)

When: September 19, 2021 to May 2022  
Sunday at 9am (prior to worship)

Where: St. Mark Youth Room (downstairs)

Contact Pastor MP to ask questions and to get signed up [mpanco@discoverstmark.org](mailto:mpanco@discoverstmark.org)

*Note: We will have accommodations for those who are not ready to attend in person.*

## Volunteers Show Spunk with Trunk

The Deacons are grateful for the great collaboration of donors, volunteers, and the Boy Scouts for the **Trunk and Sidewalk Sale** last Saturday, June 19. We enjoyed great fellowship, smooth operations, good weather, and collected \$1500 for the Missions program. Thanks be to God!

# CLAYMONT PRESCHOOL AT ST. MARK FALL 2021 REGISTRATION



Registration continues for classes beginning in August. Please enroll preschoolers in your family and help spread the word to your friends and neighbors about our fabulous preschool. Half day classes are available for children who will be 2 years old before October 1, 2021, through pre-kindergarten. Classes meet 9:00 to 12:00 with extended day until 1:30 for older children most days. Claymont Preschool enjoys a wonderful reputation for excellent caring teachers and superb kindergarten readiness. For more information and to schedule a tour, please email Lynne Dauve.

## SCHEDULE YOUR COMMITTEE MEETINGS WITH THE CHURCH OFFICE!

If your group or committee plans to begin in-person activities, please contact the church office with the following information to reserve your date, time, and place on the church calendar:

- Date and/or frequency of the meeting
- Where the meeting will take place
- Anticipated number of people participating

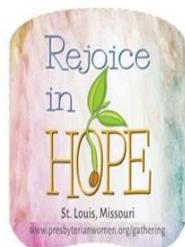
## LIBRARY CORNER

After 15+ years, the library staff is retiring this month. Many thanks to Joan Corlett and Pat Marshall for their diligent service during that time. They worked almost every Thursday processing new books, reviewing contributions, keeping the library in order, and selecting different books to display in both the Adult and Children's Libraries. They will be greatly missed.

This leaves an opportunity for someone else with an interest in the libraries to volunteer. That could be one person in charge of both libraries or two people each to take over one library. If you are interested, contact Dave or Latisha. Or call me, Diana Johanning, and I would be glad to give you an idea of the job.

Please note - the library cannot accept book donations at this time.

## PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN - SAVE THE DATE, AUGUST 5



*The next best thing to being there, is being at St. Mark with other women for the Worldwide Gathering's final worship service!*

Presbyterian Women's in-person 2021 Churchwide Gathering, which was to be held in St. Louis, was cancelled. However, Presbyterian Women are committed and connected, so will you join us online for a special event?

Following the conclusion of the Business Meeting on **August 5**, Presbyterian Women will hold an Online Churchwide Gathering Event—two hours of worship and plenary that you can stream from your home, office or church! Inspiring speakers and preachers—including Rev. Dr. Diane Moffett, president and executive director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency of the PC(USA)—will lead a time of rejoicing and renewal. Mark your calendars! More information coming soon!