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A Monthly Insight into St. Mark Presbyterian Church

# The Messenger

## Better Angels

Our country's summer season unofficially begins with Memorial Day Weekend, but this year will feel a little different as our world slowly wakes from its long pandemic hibernation. We found creative ways to continue much-loved activities over the past 14 months, but we now face the uncertainty of entering the new normal of fully reengaging with the outside world. This sparks cautious hope for some, foreboding fear for others, and unspoken anxiety for most. It does my heart well to see so many of you on Sunday morning for in-person worship and our new YouTube livestream. I am also encouraged to know many of you read the bulletin and printed sermons in your homes. We've come so far together, and my encouragement today is to keep the faith and not to lose hope; we're not where we need to be yet. In his first inaugural speech, Abraham Lincoln spoke to the nation's fears as the threat of Civil War would soon become a reality. I believe these timeless words are as true this Memorial Day as they

were 160 years ago.

*"I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."*

There are members of our congregation who received vaccination shots many months ago, and there are others who are still waiting. Several are eager to get back to singing in church, hugs in the narthex, and meals in Gleason Hall. Others cannot risk infection and can only connect with the church remotely. St. Mark has nearly 600 members, and that means we have hundreds of different opinions on everything. Some might argue this is a weakness, but I believe our diversity is our greatest strength. We model

the unifying love of Jesus Christ every time we exhibit patience, kindness, forgiveness, and mutual forbearance with one another. The world is especially divisive right now, but it should never be that way inside the church. God calls each of us to exhibit the "better angels of our nature" inside the church and out in our neighborhoods.

I believe the Apostle Paul's words are helpful here, "Are you so foolish? Having started with the Spirit, are you now ending with the flesh" (Galatians 3:3, NRSV.) Put another way, as we get closer to returning to a new normal, don't forget who you are; don't forget whose you are. The Session is working to open the church's doors to additional activities safely in the coming weeks. The pace might not be what everyone wants, and I ask that you have patience with us as well. As we enter the summer months, may we remember our "better angels" and exhibit Christ's love by our patience, kindness, and fidelity to one another.

In Hope and Confidence,  
Pastor Dave and Pastor MP

## Session Snippets

### May 19, 2021 meeting

It's official! We're back! The details of maintaining social distance, masking, use of the building for outside groups, etc., will evolve as time moves on and things change. Stay tuned and be ready for whatever comes along!

Following extensive discussion, Session approved that "beginning June 6, 2021, St. Mark will resume child-care in the nursery and Sunday School for all ages. Youth and children's activities will occur, as they see fit. All church events will resume June 20, 2021, following local guidelines and considering the welfare of everyone. Saturday night services will resume July 3, 2021. Sunday school teachers and those working with children are encouraged to be vaccinated and are required to wear a mask, following local guidelines."

Three parking lot concerts are being planned, (dates to be announced later) and there might even be a food truck or two—if we're lucky.

Additionally, four scholarships were approved for Third Presbyterian Church's Camp Flourish. This program is vital to the community. You will be hearing more...

It's going to be a great summer!

### Did You Know...

that there is a SimpleChurch app that can be downloaded to your phone or device? Download it for free from the App Store! If you do not have a SimpleChurch account, please email the church office at [smpoffice@discoverstmark.org](mailto:smpoffice@discoverstmark.org) to get started.

## Giving to St Mark

For the past 7 months we have provided ideas of charitable giving to St. Mark. Thanks for your feedback and questions on the various topics, and we plan to continue to provide ideas of ways to benefit you as well as the missions of your church.

One of the early topics discussed was making **outright gifts of appreciated securities** such as stocks, mutual funds, or other investments to St. Mark. As many investments have continued to appreciate in value during the first half of 2021, this method may also be a suitable way for you to make gifts of investments outside of your retirement plans. This may create an immediate income tax benefit, and our church office can assist you with the transfer and credit to your pledge or gifting plans.

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.

For further information or questions on church finances or giving, please contact a member of the St. Mark Finance Committee: Glenn Knopf, chair; Brian Sprague, Scott Collier, Carl Tenpas, Mark Caplinger, Hugh Smith, Cay Noble, Bob Snyder, Joyce Blackwell.

Stay tuned in July for our next topic.

### July Messenger Newsletter

Will be published on June 25  
(Always the last Friday of every month)  
**Deadline for articles – Thursday, June 17**  
[Newsletter@discoverstmark.org](mailto:Newsletter@discoverstmark.org)

### Prayer Requests

If you have a prayer request, please give a note to Pastor Dave or Pastor MP before worship service or send an email during the week. In addition, a prayer list is published monthly and is available in the Prayer Circle mailbox in the church office. If you would like to add someone to the prayer list or receive it by email, please contact Pat Marshall.

## **Trunk and Sidewalk Sale**

### **Attention all Donors, Volunteers, and Shoppers!**

You are invited to participate in the **St. Mark Trunk and Sidewalk Sale:**

Saturday, June 19, 9am - 2pm

#### **Donors**

You can help by bringing **Toys, Games, Puzzles, Tools, Lawn and Garden Implements, Sports and Camping Equipment** to the door by the kitchen on Thursday afternoon July 17 (1pm - 7pm) and Friday morning July 18 (9:15am - 12pm). Please let us know what you plan to donate ASAP by using the attached form  
[\[1621376587Fillable Trunk & Sidewalk Sale Donation Form\]](#)

#### **Volunteering Car Trunks**

We need your car's trunk as an overnight 'warehouse' by loading it with sale goods on Friday at the door by the kitchen between 1:30 and 6:30 pm. You can let us know about what time will work for you. You will take your car home and return on Saturday (June 19) for the selling of merchandise to the eager shoppers between 9am- 2pm.

#### **Volunteers – Day of Sale**

Volunteers will assist by helping with the sales and customer questions and with the final collection of (the very few) unsold items. In any case, please contact Pam Ladley or Sharon Cardwell soon to volunteer goods, services, or both at

[Deacons@discoverstmark.org](mailto:Deacons@discoverstmark.org).

#### **Shoppers**

Your job is simple: show up on June 19, cash in hand, and clean us out! Social distancing and masking will be required all day Saturday.

Thanks for pitching in! All proceeds go to the Deacons' mission partners.

### **DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR NAMETAG IS?**

With a return to in-person worship, everyone is encouraged to wear their nametags. How else will we know who's behind those masks?! If you have misplaced your nametag, you may order a replacement by completing the form found in the "Nametag" mailbox in the church office. The cost is \$10

## **Thank You From Isaiah 58 Ministries**

On behalf of the Isaiah 58 Ministries and its board, please accept our heartfelt thanks for the food, hygiene products and clothing donated by St. Mark Presbyterian Church during the first quarter of 2021. The food and hygiene products have been distributed to Isaiah 58 clients, who were extremely grateful to receive them. The clothing has been made available through the Thrift Store and the clients have enjoyed being able to shop. They are very grateful.

It is churches like yours that help the ministry serve those in need, especially during this difficult time.

Thank you!

Peg Cooper, Board Member

### **Donation Collection Extended Through June**

We continue to collect food and hygiene products that are specifically requested by **Circle of Concern** and **Isaiah 58**. The following items fill gaps in their current inventories



**Circle Of  
Concern**



**Isaiah 58**

Baking items Cereal Jelly Mixed beans Mixed vegetables (NO Corn and NO green bean beans please)	Baby wipes Laundry detergent Toilet paper (Note: SNAP/EBT/WIC/food stamps cannot be used to purchase hygiene items)
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These donations for may be placed in the bin in the foyer when the church office is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 AM – 2 PM. If you are attending in-person worship, look for a collection area in the Narthex. Cash donations may also be made via check to St. Mark Presbyterian Church with "Circle of Concern" and/or "Isaiah 58" on the memo line.

## Direct Delivery of Church Blog Ends in the next Month

We will still be writing the church blog in July. You will only need to take initiative to access it either through the church website

<https://www.discoverstmark.org/>

or by going directly to the blog:

<https://discoverstmark.blogspot.com/>

to bookmark it. We hope to have updates from time to time on our Facebook pages, as well. Sadly, receiving the blog automatically by e-mail will no longer be an option after July 2021. The "widget" that we used will no longer be working.

If you like our varied blog posts better some days than others, I'll let you in on my loose organization.

- Monday---missions and music program
- Tuesday---testimonials and inspiration from the congregation
- Wednesday---events mostly from PW or Children's Ministry
- Thursday---our pastors' writing
- Friday---"Daily Prayer" and lectionary for the day
- Saturday--scripture for Sunday's worship
- Sunday---order of worship

Sometimes Thursdays get inspiration from the congregation and music may be on Wednesday, but generally speaking, this is the schedule we use. So, if you really like the "Daily Prayer", be sure to go to the blog or website every Friday. We hope you will continue to follow us with a little more intentionality than before. We are sorry for the inconvenience.

Jaclyn Morgan, church blog manager

## Summer Youth Hangouts

Mark your calendars for upcoming summer hangout dates (times and activities yet to be determined) June 27, July 25, August 29

## Save The Date!



Join Us 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 to stay with them throughout the day and to provide hands-on assistance. Please limit to five kids per adult.

## Mark Your Calendars

June 6 – Nursery opens

June 20 – In-person church gatherings & events can resume.

July 3 – Saturday evening service resumes.