

# ST. MARK CONNECTION

Volume 71, Issue 4  
April 2024



## Pastor's Corner

Dear St. Mark members and friends,

April showers bring May flowers. As I write this, I hear a lovely shower outside my window and the gentle swishing of cars on the street. I know my wife is happy because she has been busy preparing her garden and planting seeds. You can do all the prep work, but without water it won't matter. Of course, we use our sprinklers to water, but it's pretty expensive. Rain is a free gift of God's grace!

As I mentioned in last month's newsletter, March is a time for planting seeds. We engage people and invite them to events at the church, especially Easter Sunday. You may have noticed that we are starting to have some new plants springing up (new people-in case you aren't following me!). These new people did not come from nowhere. Seeds were planted. They were invited by someone in the congregation. But planting seeds is not where the work of a gardener ends.

Now we water. We nourish the new seedlings with lots of love. Perhaps it seems like an awful lot of work to grow a church, but we are not alone in it. From time to time, God gives us rain. Ultimately, it's his garden. He just put us in it to tend it. But God is in charge of the rain and the sunshine, which is what plants need to grow. Part of our job is to trust that God is doing things with people that having nothing to do with our effort. God is pouring out grace into people all the time whether we know it or not.

We have our part to play. We tend the soil, plant seeds, weed, prune, water during dry times. April is a time for watering and trusting that if we are faithful in our task, God will always be faithful in bringing fruit. We hope that many new people will have attended services and events at the church in March, and now we water. What does that mean?

We don't just say, "We hope to see you again next Easter!" We begin relationships with people. We listen to the stories of their lives. We pray for them. We help them with whatever they are dealing with if we can. We become sources of encouragement and acceptance for them.

Two things that nobody gets enough of in this hard soiled world are good listening and encouragement. Listening is a way of watering people. Being heard is a rare and wonderful gift. It helps people to know that they matter. And when you listen to people don't just say, "Well good luck with all that." Encourage them. People get all the discouragement they can handle from people and circumstances, but they rarely get encouragement. Encouragement is like a rain shower in April. By listening and encouraging you will see withered, wilting people begin to bloom. Through them and by God's grace we will see our church bloom.

Ah what a beautiful world it will be in May, if we shower our neighbors with the love of Christ in April!

Yours with love,

Pastor Paul

## April Worship Services

April 7 – 2nd Sunday of Easter  
 Communion Sunday  
 "Believing Jesus"  
 Acts 4:31-35; John 20:19-31

April 14 – 3rd Sunday of Easter  
 "Recognizing Jesus"  
 1 John 3:1-7; Luke 24:36b-48

April 21 – 4th Sunday of Easter  
 "Hearing Jesus"  
 Psalm 23; John 10:11-18

April 28 – 5th Sunday of Easter  
 Guest Preacher



*Average Weekly Attendance*

January – 33  
 February – 58

### WELCOME NEW MEMBER

Welcome to our newest member, Elaine Keefer! Elaine met with the Session on March 10th and was accepted into the full faith and fellowship of St. Mark Presbyterian Church by Reaffirmation of Faith. Elaine's formal introduction and profession of faith will be scheduled during a future worship service.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**APRIL 7**  
 Communion Sunday

**APRIL 13**  
 Mini Workday – 9:00 a.m.

**APRIL 20**  
 Community Barbeque  
 Start time: to be determined.  
 End time: until the food runs out or 3:00 p.m.

**Blood Drive**  
 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

### SOUPER BOWL OF CARING



Our Souper Bowl of Caring Sunday was a BIG success! The youth at St. Mark collected \$200.00 and 160 items of canned and packaged food.

All donations were delivered to White Rock Center of Hope.

**AN OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE**



St. Mark needs volunteers to serve as liturgist. We are all blessed with certain gifts, and if you are able to speak loudly and clearly to a medium-sized group of people, this may be an

opportunity for you. Liturgists have an outline to follow and are given the prayers of adoration and illumination to read. If you are nervous, remember that you will be speaking before a loving and forgiving congregation. Mistakes happen to everyone, and at St. Mark they are treated with grace, compassion, and understanding. For more information, please contact Leigh Taylor.




Jo Schindler passed away on March 7, 2024, after being in hospice care for several months. She had been living with Mike and JoAnn Parsley. Jo is survived by two sons, Robert Bradley and Garry Gillard, her daughter, JoAnn Parsley, seven grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandsons. Please keep JoAnn and Mike Parsley and everyone who loved Jo in your prayers.



- The Church Pantry needs bottled water, fruit cups, chips, small tubes of toothpaste, soap, deodorant, and shampoo.
- White Rock Center of Hope needs canned meat (chili, tuna, chicken, Vienna sausage), and packages of NEW underwear and socks.

**WHITE ROCK CENTER OF HOPE**

*Hopescope Winter 2024*

<p><b>FEATURED FOOD PANTRY NEEDS</b></p> <p><i>March</i>  <b>CANNED MEAT</b>  <small>(chicken, chili, pork, tuna, salmon, vienna sausages, etc.)</small></p> <p><i>April</i>  <b>JELLY</b>  <small>(jelly, jam, &amp; preserves)</small></p> <p><i>May</i>  <b>BABY ITEMS</b>  <small>(formula, wipes, &amp; diapers)</small></p>	<p><b>VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION &amp; TOUR</b></p> <p>Volunteer Orientation every Tuesday at 10:00AM. Can't make it on Tuesday? Call Sandy at 469-250-7112 to schedule a one-on-one. Scan the QR code or visit our website to complete an application.</p> <div style="text-align: right;">   <span style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 2px 5px;">SCAN HERE</span> </div>
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**new** **THRIFT STORE HOURS** : MONDAY-SATURDAY 9 AM - 5 PM

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS GIVING!**



**SATURDAY – APRIL 20, 2024**

**Community Barbeque**  
**Food, fun, and fellowship!**

Start time: to be determined.  
 End time: until the food runs out or 3:00 p.m.

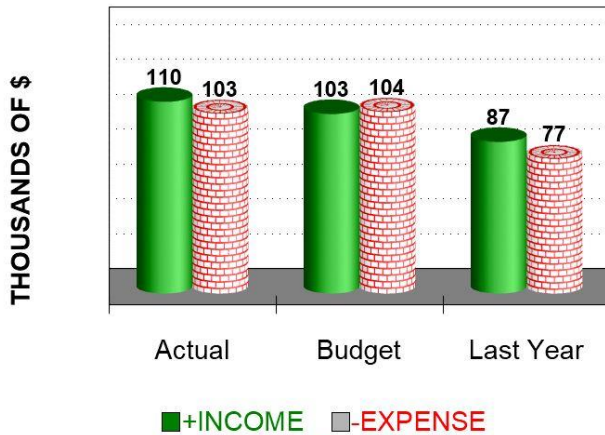
**Carter BloodCare Blood Drive**  
**Save your blood and give to save countless lives!**

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

**PLEASE STAY TUNED FOR FURTHER DETAILS!**

## TREASURER'S REPORT

OPERATING FUND  
8 Mos 7/2023 - 2/2024



Operating Fund – YTD unrestricted contributions are \$8,600 better than budget, and \$5,400 ahead of last year. YTD expenses are \$1,000 below budget, and \$26,300 above last year. Bottom line, we are approximately \$7,400 positive YTD, which is \$8,800 better than budgeted.



It's April. This may be my favorite time of year. Spring is here, winter is over, and the long hot summer is still several weeks away.

The heat is often off. The air conditioning is not yet on. Windows are open. Things are in bloom all over. It's usually a time when I feel like a celebration.

Most years the celebration of Easter is part of our April activities. But we had an "earlyish" Easter this year. Twenty years ago, we also had a March Easter. What follows is an adaptation of what I shared back in 2004.

By the time you are reading this a few days have likely passed since all of the festivities of Easter Sunday. For some of us Easter day may already seem almost like ancient history. However, I'd like you to consider prolonging your Easter celebration this year. Here's a question I'd like to toss out: What if every day we attempted to intentionally live our lives as acts of celebration?

What might that look like? Well, it's not about chocolate and egg hunts every day.

The events of Passion Week reminded us of how much God loves each one of us and how powerful God's grace is. That love is something that calls for a long-term celebration. So how might we do that? There are a couple of questions and answers in one of the newer Presbyterian catechisms that remind us of how we can gracefully respond to that love:

### How do you thank God for this gift of love?

I promise to love and trust God with all my heart.

### How do you love God?

By worshiping God, by loving others, and by respecting what God has created.

Don't forget that those are not things that we do to earn God's love. They are the things we are called to do in response to the gift of God's love. Worshiping God, loving others, and respecting what God has created are ways that we can live our lives in ways that celebrate the joy of Easter.

Let me encourage you to think about and take advantage of opportunities that you may have in the coming days to do those things that may show our love for God. And when the opportunities present themselves, I hope that you will do them not just out of a sense of obligation but also with a spirit of Easter celebration.



## HIGHLIGHTS from the STATED SESSION MEETING



At the March 19, 2024, Stated Meeting, the Session:

- Heard a report from Bill Grayson and Bill Oney on the February 22, 2024, Stated Meeting of Grace Presbytery, held at First Presbyterian Church, Fort Worth.
- Received the Treasurer's Financial Report for the first eight months of the year.
- Authorize the baptism of Atticus Atreyu Burkett on Sunday, April 14, 2024.
- Appointed Charlene Taylor and Leigh Taylor as commissioners to attend the Stated Meeting of Grace Presbytery on Saturday, May 4, 2024, at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Denton.

*(The following article, written by Tom Pappas at Eastminster Presbyterian Church, provides information regarding the covenant between St. Mark and Eastminster. (Portions of the article have been paraphrased.)*

### Covenant Committee Report

The St. Mark/Eastminster Covenant Committee met on January 25, 2024. For those of you who are unsure what the Covenant Committee is, please continue reading!

We share Pastor Paul with Eastminster Presbyterian Church. The close proximity of the two churches, as well as the size of each church, and the experienced congregations seemed to suggest that "pastor sharing" just might work. It has been a huge success and may serve as a model for other churches in the Presbytery.

St. Mark's Covenant Committee representatives are Bill Grayson, Gary O'Neal, and Susie Miller. Representatives from Eastminster include four of their veteran members and Pastor Paul chairs the committee. The goal is for our two churches to work together to reinforce each church's successful autonomy and share some programming and ideas when possible. So far, Eastminster has invited St. Mark to visit its Saturday Morning Breakfast and shared information regarding its Pleasant Grove Food Pantry. St. Mark shared its food pantry and Sandwich Sunday successes.

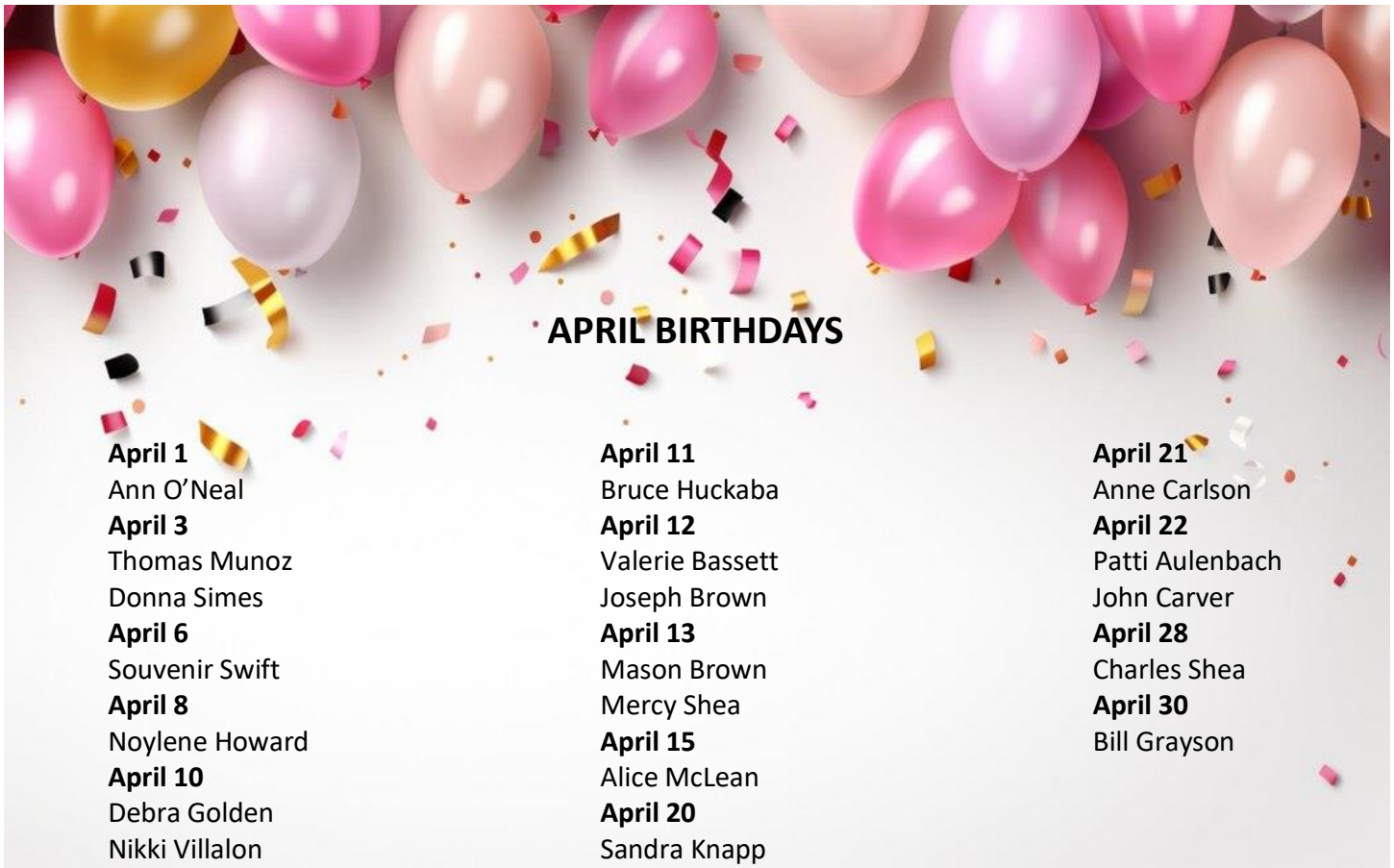
Our two churches celebrated Shrove Tuesday at Eastminster (very successfully with over 60 people in attendance). Eastminster, El Divino, and Journey gathered at St. Mark to participate in our Ash Wednesday service. Over 70 people were in attendance.

During Holy Week, the Maundy Thursday service was held at St. Mark following a Soup Supper and the Good Friday service was held at Eastminster. Both churches celebrated Easter Sunday at their own locations.

Events planned for the Spring include a joint communion "Gospel Mass" and a joint choir/Eastfield Brass concert. And more plans are in the making!

So far, the Spirit has blessed our efforts individually and collectively to make it work. Special thanks to Pastor Paul for his energy, enthusiasm, and faith. It takes all of us to make this work!

Tom Pappas



## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

### April 1

Ann O'Neal

### April 3

Thomas Munoz

Donna Simes

### April 6

Souvenir Swift

### April 8

Noylene Howard

### April 10

Debra Golden

Nikki Villalon

### April 11

Bruce Huckaba

### April 12

Valerie Bassett

Joseph Brown

### April 13

Mason Brown

Mercy Shea

### April 15

Alice McLean

### April 20

Sandra Knapp

### April 21

Anne Carlson

### April 22

Patti Aulenbach

John Carver

### April 28

Charles Shea

### April 30

Bill Grayson



Two groups in our community recently held meetings at St. Mark. Both groups had an amazing turnout and overwhelming support!

**Casa View Haven Neighborhood Association:** Casa View Haven Neighborhood Association (CVHNA) exists to improve the quality of life, sense of community and pride in our neighborhood. Through the established committees, CVHNA is striving to attract neighborhood participation and pride. Opportunities abound for neighbors to meet one another and invest in Casa View Haven.

**Greater Casa View Alliance:** Greater Casa View Alliance (GCVA) is an association of like-minded neighborhood leaders from 11 of the 17 designated neighborhoods along north Ferguson Road from Oates to LBJ. It was formed in 2008 to represent the common overall interests of the entire GCVA area, to infuse vibrancy into the GCVA area, to serve as an advocate and a conduit to/from City Hall and to be a voice for forgotten "far east" Dallas.

The opportunity to support our community is a blessing for St. Mark – our doors, hearts and arms are open!



# St Mark Presbyterian Church, Dallas Texas

## April 2024



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>31</b> 8:45a Continental Breakfast 9:45a Worship Service - Easter 4:30p Sandwich Sunday at Austin Street Center	<b>1</b> 6:00p Fellowship Com Mtg	<b>2</b> 6:00p Handbells Rehearsal 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	<b>3</b> 6:00p Handbells Rehearsal 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	<b>4</b> 10:30a Bible Study 6:00p Zoom Yoga	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 9:45a Worship Service - Communion 1:00p St. Mark Community Unplugged Jam	<b>8</b> 6:00p Admin & Personnel Com Mtg 7:00p Worship & Music Com Mtg	<b>9</b> 6:00p Stewardship & Finance Com Mtg 6:00p Christian Educ Com Mtg	<b>10</b> 6:00p Handbells Rehearsal 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	<b>11</b> 10:30a Bible Study 6:00p Zoom Yoga	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 8:00a Property Com Mtg 9:00a Mini Workday
<b>14</b> 9:45a Worship Service 1:00p St. Mark Community Unplugged Jam	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> 6:30p Session Meeting	<b>17</b> 6:00p Handbells Rehearsal 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	<b>18</b> 10:30a Bible Study 6:00p Zoom Yoga	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 9:00a Blood Drive 9:00a Community Barbeque
<b>21</b> 9:45a Worship Service 1:00p St. Mark Community Unplugged Jam	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 6:00p Mission & Membership Com Mtg	<b>24</b> 6:00p Handbells Rehearsal 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	<b>25</b> 6:00p Zoom Yoga	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 9:45a Worship Service 1:00p St. Mark Community Unplugged Jam	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b> 6:00p Handbells Rehearsal 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	<b>2</b> 10:30a Bible Study 6:00p Zoom Yoga	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>