



St. Mark Connection

9999 Ferguson Road

Dallas, TX 75228

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saintmarkchurch.org

February 2015



Sunday, February 1st

The Souper Bowl of Caring began with a simple prayer from a single youth group:

"Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those without a bowl of soup to eat."

Since that day, more than \$100 million has been raised for local charities across the country through Souper Bowl of Caring.

On Sunday, February 1st St. Mark youth will collect money in soup pots following worship as you exit the sanctuary. Please place any non-perishable food items on the chancel area before the service begins. Our young people are developing hearts for giving that can last a lifetime. Please support their efforts. All donations will go to support the White Rock Center of Hope.

Ash Wednesday Service

February 18th at 7:15 p.m.

Soup Luncheon, February 22nd



The Women's Group has been raising money to redo the Ladies Room in the Family Center. The work began at the end of December and construction, painting, etc. is finished. All that is needed are the final touches.

The women will prepare different soups, breads, and desserts for a Soup Lunch after church on Sunday, February 22nd. A free-will-offering will allow us funds to complete the decoration of the Ladies Room in the Family Center.

In December, the St. Mark Women's Group put together bags filled with items such as a pen & pad, magnifying glass, small flashlight, puzzle book, lotion, socks, and lap blanket. We delivered the gift bags to 14 of our shut-ins before Christmas. The recipients were very grateful.

St. Mark Blood Drive

Sunday, February 22nd

9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Please consider giving. Your blood donation has the potential to save 3 lives and keep our St. Mark blood bank supplied.

Contact Sue Duncan for more information.

Church Beautification Day

Saturday, February 14th

9:00 a.m. — Noon

The Holy Spirit in Hindsight

The Membership and Evangelism Committee would like to start posting your personal stories of how God, through the Holy Spirit, has touched your life. We as Christians are a work in progress. With all our interactions in life, we have to purposefully work at our relationship with God. I like to think of it as "spiritual tuning". The Holy Spirit is everywhere all the time. It is up to us to stay tuned.

We often miss or fail to recognize when God has blessed us or acted in our lives until after the fact. I have adopted the phrase "Holy Spirit in hindsight" or "Thank you, Jesus!"

I believe we all have our stories to tell, sometimes miraculous, quite often a quiet blessing. What a better way to spread the Good News than to share these personal stories within our church and with our visitors. I will start it off next month.

Jeff Taylor

Thank You

Thanks to all the thoughtful women of St. Mark who left a bag of useful Christmas gifts on my front porch. It is appreciated very much.

Kathy Moore



What are you giving up for Lent? That phrase is almost as redundant as the inevitable New Year's resolution. But what

if this year, we didn't simply "give up" something as the one thing we bring to God's table? A better understanding of Lent might help.

February this year brings the Lenten season into the Church's calendar. The days will begin to lengthen as we gradually enter Spring. In fact, "Lent" is derived from the Old English word "lencten" which means lengthen. It's the season when the Church is called to repentance, reflection in self-evaluation, and fasting as special acts of devotion. The Church has been observing the Lenten season since the fourth century, originally as a time of preparation for inquirer's seeking church membership through baptism but now practiced by the whole body as a way of walking with the new initiates during this special season. Lent is observed for forty days (not including the Lord's Day) beginning with Ash Wednesday.

The day before Ash Wednesday is often known as "Fat Tuesday" for those who will be fasting during Lent,

usually by giving up meat. February 17th will be the Carnival (removal of meat) of Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) with parades, gifts, and costumes. When Ash Wednesday arrives, we are invited to push away the things of the world that tend to lead us away from loving God and those about us. In other words, Lent is a time of sacrifice. That's why Christians often "give up" something for Lent that we normally enjoy and focus on our relationships with God and others. Many also use this time to mindfully practice acts of kindness and service. In doing so, it is a reminder that we are being formed into actions of selflessness. In doing so we are usually led by the Holy Spirit to repentance.

Repentance is an exercise of turning away 180 degrees from sin beginning with our thoughts. Biblical Greek translates the word for repentance (metanoia) as a change of mind, having our thoughts redirected in the opposing direction with our speech and actions following. In this way, Lent provides Christians a new lens with which to view God's world and will. I pray this Lenten season we'll repent from simply not eating (fill in the blank) for six weeks but will reach out to those needing to experience God's amazing grace in Jesus, bringing glory to God in the process.

Blessings, Pastor Rick

Inquirer's Class

Wednesday, February 11th - 6:30 p.m.

If you have been worshipping with us at St. Mark Presbyterian Church for a while and want a better understanding of what we're all about, you may have some questions.

- *Who are the Presbyterians?*
- *What do they believe?*
- *What do they do?*
- *What is their history?*
- *What has their influence been?*



Bring your questions about being Presbyterian to Pastor Rick's Inquirer's Class.

Socks a Success!

Thank you to all those who gave the gift of warm socks this holiday season (150 pairs of socks)! You've warmed the hearts of many and spread the love of St. Mark to those less fortunate. A very special thank you from your Mission and Outreach Committee.

Newsletter Deadline is February 15th

God Bless You On Your Birthday

February 1

Kathleen Hale
Linda Marshall

February 2

Rick Brooks

February 5

Hunter Swift
Preston Swift

February 8

Barb Tuinstra

February 12

Rose-Marie Stone

February 15

Annie Blair

February 16

Gary O'Neal
JoAnn Parsley

February 17

Makenna Arthur
Kenneth Brandenburg

February 18

Colin Boring

February 19

Gerald Jones

February 20

Dot Brooks

February 23

Cade Curry
Hannah Moore

February 24

Flo Philips

February 25

Joshua Brown
Lucy Roberts

February 27

Leonard Esler





Here's another month of odds and ends from Randall:

* Did you know that we now have worship bags for children at St Mark. These bags are brightly colored and are filled with things to help children fully participate in worship. They are located in a basket at the back of the sanctuary. Feel free to take a look at the bags and their contents. If you see a child in worship without a bag perhaps you might take one to them.

* Winter is not over yet but plans are already underway for VBS for children this year. It will be in the evenings on June 22-25th. Once again the family center will be turned into a setting from the Bible. Watch for more details. You might be thinking about any preschool or elementary age children you know who might find our VBS to be a meaningful experience.

* Once again the East Dallas Presbyterian Cluster will be sponsoring an Adult VBS. It will be in the mornings August 3-6th. Watch for more details about theme and location. This is always a great experience for all involved.

* Don't forget to check out my "Odds and Ends" bulletin board. I'll be putting something new up soon.

* Ash Wednesday is February 18th. Have you given any thought as to what you might do during Lent to prepare to celebrate Easter?

* I think I'll close with the commission and promise that Jesus gave to his disciples at the end of the Gospel of Matthew: *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."* How do you embrace this commission and promise?

Randall McGee, Director of Christian Education

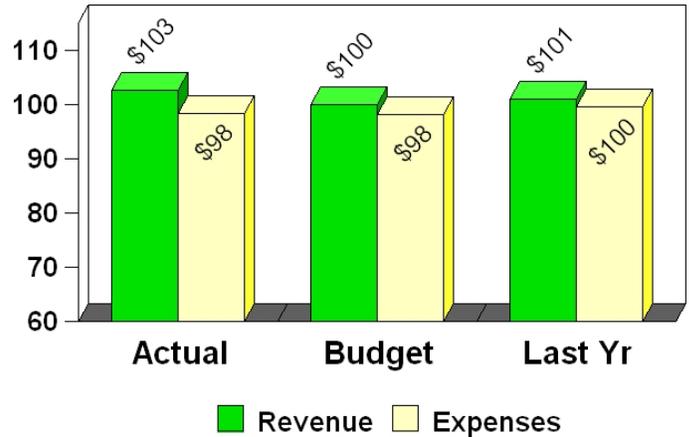
Newsletter Staff:

Pat Bilger office@saintmarkchurch.org

Cecilia Grayson

Articles and information for the newsletter can be e-mailed to these addresses.

Operating Fund 6 Months Through Dec 31, 2014



Treasurer's Report

for the six months ending 12/31/2014

- ⇒ Operating Fund income is \$2,700 above budget and expenses are \$200 above budget. Both are slightly better than last year after six months.
- ⇒ Capital and Facilities Fund income is \$500 above budget and expenses are \$2,000 below budget. The parking lot loan has now been paid off.
- ⇒ Our Current Fund Balance (all funds combined) is up \$9,600 from the beginning of the fiscal year, and up \$8,200 from the same month last year.

Detailed financial statements are available for any member to review. Please contact John Carver or Bill Grayson if you would like to see more information.

White Rock Center of Hope Sunday, February 8th

Bring your donations and place them in the baskets in the hallway.



Urgent needs

Winter coats, jackets in all sizes, pajamas for children and blankets

Food & Pantry Needs

Macaroni & Cheese, Canned Tomato Products, Canned Corn & Green Beans, Jelly, Hamburger Helper, Suddenly Salad, Potatoes, etc.

Personal Hygiene Items

Adult toothbrushes, Toothpaste, Deodorant, all sizes of Diapers & Feminine Hygiene products



The Bridge - Help for the Homeless

Each day The Bridge, a North Texas Homeless Recovery Center, sees about 1,200 adults experiencing homelessness. Each night The Bridge provides shelter for over 300 of them and outplacement assistance for over 800. Since opening a decade ago more than 1,000 guests have been placed in employment and a like number moved to housing. The Bridge is located in downtown Dallas at 1818 Corsicana, just a block or two from City Hall on Young Street.

When the Dallas City Council, in November 2004, approved a plan to end long-term homelessness and build the first shelter facility owned by the city, it laid the groundwork for a special place that would become more than anyone at the time could have imagined. Like most nonprofit endeavors, The Bridge has faced a lot of challenges along the way. However, with support from many volunteers and organizations, obstacles have been overcome and a model service for homeless recovery has been created according to the State of Texas.

How do we here at St. Mark help? On the first Thursday of every month those who wish to assist meet at a location in the Casa Linda Shopping Center at 5:00 PM and drive (usually car pool) to the Center where we sign in, get our assignments, and proceed to help feed the hundreds who come through the line. Meal service starts promptly at 6:00 PM and ends as promptly at 7:00 PM.

If you are interested in participating, please let Bar Tuinstra or Dick Waters know. The next visit will be Thursday, February 5. And, if an evening is not your desire, The Bridge also provides breakfast and lunch for the homeless.



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Non-Profit Organization