



St. Mark Connection

9999 Ferguson Road Dallas, TX 75228 214-321-6437

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saintmarkchurch.org



January 2016



Commitment Sunday - January 17th

The Session of St. Mark invites you to participate in our annual stewardship program. Our theme this year is "**Stewardship Is Heart Work**". On January 17th, Commitment Sunday, we will dedicate our Faith Promises to the Operating Fund, the Capital and Facilities Fund and the Mission and Outreach Fund as well as volunteer for various church responsibilities and activities.

The Operating Fund is the recipient of our tithes and provides funding for all activities, worship, utilities and salaries at St. Mark, as well as our support for all PC(USA) and other mission and outreach ministries, including the White Rock Center of Hope, Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services, Grace Presbyterian Village and the Ministry of Hope in Malawi, Africa.

The Capital and Facilities Fund provides funding for all improvements and maintenance of the church property. This fund is of increasing importance as our facilities become older and your Faith Promises will help in this effort. Several remodeling and updating projects and planned for the coming year.

The Mission and Outreach Fund helps provide support for the agencies that we assist through the Operating Fund, as listed above. If you wish to provide additional assistance to the area of our congregation's ministry, please consider a Faith Promise to this Fund.

Look for more information and a Faith Promise card coming in the mail soon and please join us on Sunday, January 17th as we join together once more to commit to the future of St. Mark.

Sandwich Sunday - January 31st



Each 5th Sunday we prepare and serve sandwiches at the **Austin Street Center**. Volunteers are asked to prepare **two or three dozen** sandwiches, **individually bagged** with the sack labeled as to the contents, and bring them to the church that Sunday.

Cookies and snack cakes are also welcome.

Sign-up sheets are on the glass table in the narthex.

Volunteers are also needed to help serve the sandwiches at the Center on that Sunday evening.



Dedication of New Bibles Sunday, January 17th

Please join us in worship on Sunday, January 17th, as we dedicate our new Lectern and Pew Bibles. These Bibles are the English Standard Version (ESV), and are highly praised as a faithful, beautiful and very readable translation of the Word of God. Although the Bibles have already been purchased with available funds, donations of any amount are still being accepted to support this project.

Tornado Relief Efforts

Everyone is aware of the devastating tornadoes that struck Garland and Rowlett on December 26th. The Session has responded to a request for temporary housing of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) teams by offering our Family Center for this purpose. We will know soon if this offer will be accepted, and if it is, we will need to come together to make the Family Center as comfortable as possible for this purpose. Look for more information in the coming days. Please note: this housing would be for volunteer teams, not residents affected by the storms.



In addition, we are accepting monetary donations for tornado relief. These funds will be forwarded to the agencies best able to put them to use quickly, based on a review by the Mission Committee. If you wish to donate to this effort, please write "Tornado Relief" in the memo section of your check.

Mini Work Day
Saturday, January 9th
9:00 a.m. — 12:00



The start of a new year offers a clean slate with lots of possibilities. So, it may seem strange that I will use this space to talk to you about fear.

In particular, the fear of the unknown, which can be debilitating. It can lead to getting stuck in the past, creating an inability to move into a future where the outcome is uncertain. What will we do with God's gift of 2016? Will we get stuck or move forward? I appreciate this quote from CS Lewis:

"We fear failure more than we love life, so we refuse the great adventures. We are careful to do only what we have always done and know how to do well, so we never break the dull repetition of the old routine for the new creation of God."

The fear of the unknown is at least partially about risk. The origins of the English word "risk" date back thousands of years. The ancient Greeks used "rhizikon" as a seafaring term to describe a rock or other danger to be avoided. There is a similar Latin word - "riscus" - with the same meaning. By some accounts, this word passed into Arabic as "rizk" with a meaning similar to "fate" or the uncertain outcome of work and toil. From there it hopped the Mediterranean again to Europe in the 1500s, as "rysigo" (German), "risco" (Italian) and "risquer" (French). In all cases it essentially meant "danger".

Fear of the unknown is also about a lack of trust in God's Sovereign Plan, though I'm loathe to admit this personally. But when I do fall into that fear, it is because I like to be comfortable and if challenged, would probably express it as "Please don't make me change." In fact, I enjoy a rut so much that I practically move in and decorate the place!

I understand theologically that God is fully trustworthy. I know that He challenges me to move out of my happy, comfortable place. In fact, He insists that I get "unstuck" so I can move into "the new creation of God" as Lewis stated it. God - who really is in charge - loves me too much to leave me stuck.

I believe God loves Saint Mark in exactly the same way and that He's calling us to climb out of fear into His new reality. Will you trust God by risking the dangerous 2016 with me?

Blessings and Happy New Year, Pastor Rick

Newsletter Deadline is January 15th

Sunday Sermons, Scriptures and Events

January 3

"Powerless and Unmanageable"
Isaiah 38:12-14; Romans 7:14-25
Celebration of The Lord's Supper



January 10

"Resolved to be Restored"
Psalm 19:7-14; Mark 1:32-42

January 17

"Unconditional Surrender"
Isaiah 55:1-2; Philippians 2:12-16
Commitment Sunday
Dedication of ESV Lectern & Pew Bibles

January 24

"Breaking the Logjam"
Titus 3:3-7; James 3:13-18

January 31

"Unbinding Truth"
Psalm 32:1-5; James 5:13-16
Sandwich Sunday

Thank You

Thank you, St. Mark congregation for the beautiful Christmas card . . . and the St. Mark Care Core for the lovely gift bag delivered by Donna Simes. That made my day.
Warm regards,
Vickie Lall

God Bless You On Your Birthday

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|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| January 1
Bobby Husted | January 23
Jennifer Grayson |
| January 4
Vickie Lall | Pat Hamilton |
| January 5
Selina Cantu | January 24
Norma Murray |
| Sue Duncan | January 26
Clive Duncan |
| January 14
Susan Wood | January 27
Mary Crawley |
| January 15
Cody Robinson | January 30
Marie Chambers |
| Robert Skinner | January 31
Marilyn Jackson |
| Travis Stephen | |
| January 17
Paul Pennington | |



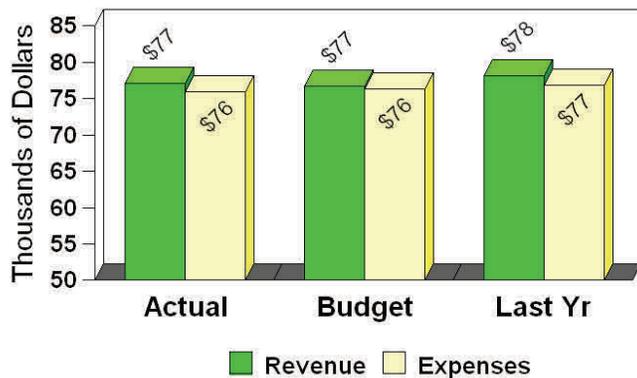
Our Sympathy to . . .



Jacie Minick and her family upon the death of her son-in-law Bill Miller.

Operating Fund

5 Months Through Nov 30, 2015



Treasurer's Report for the five months ending 11/30/2015

Operating Fund income was \$400 above budget and expenses were \$400 below budget.

Capital & Facilities Fund income was \$300 above budget and expenses were \$900 below budget.

Our Combined Fund Balance is up \$3,700 from the beginning of year.

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

ATTENTION LADIES OF ST. MARK!

You are INVITED

Women's Retreat

Hosted by
First Presbyterian Church
Garland

February 19-21, 2016
Camp Gilmont in Gilmer, Texas

Theme for the retreat is "Forgiveness"
Our speaker is the Reverend Nancy Willet.

Plan on a weekend filled with fun, fellowship,
great camp food, relaxation and spiritual renewal.

Scholarships are available.

Please see Kat in the church office
for registration information.

Special Christmas Offering Update

As of January 3rd we have received \$4,700 in contributions to the Special Christmas Offering.

Your generous contributions this year are going to the PC(USA) Joy Offering and to the Scholarship Program of the Ministry of Hope in Malawi, Africa.



I think I'll start 2016 out with a batch of odds and ends

* Last month I suggested that during Advent and Christmas you follow Mr. Rogers' advice and "look for the helpers." I hope you noticed several helpers during the season. And I hope you paused each day to give thanks for them.

* Don't forget that on The Christian Education bulletin board across from the parlor you can see what our elementary children are exploring each week in Sunday School. Take some time to look at the board and to review the stories and reflection activities.

* St. Mark is a congregation with a passion for Mission. Some of you may have used the PC(USA) Mission Yearbook for Prayer and Study before. Every day there is a story or information about some type of ministry connected with the PC(USA). In 2016 the Mission Yearbook will become a digital only publication. You can check it out at presbyterianmission.org/yearbook. You can also subscribe to get daily emails so you don't have to go look it up each day. It might be a great discipline to try in 2016. Read the Yearbook update each day and pray for the ministry that is featured.

* It's only the beginning of the year but we are already thinking about VBS this Summer. It looks like we are going to get to experience Egypt in that days when Joseph lived there. Watch for more details.

* You should ask Barb Tuinstra about exciting things happening at our new dog park.

And so we step into 2016. Who knows what they year will bring? What joys we may experience? What challenges we may face? But as we go into the year try and remember that no matter what we encounter "In life and in death we belong to God."

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Randall McGee, Director of Christian Education

Newsletter Staff:

Kat Hutchings office@saintmarkchurch.org
Cecilia Grayson

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

Flower Calendar for 2016



Thanks to Ellen Roberts for our new flower calendar. If you wish to donate flowers for the sanctuary on Sunday mornings, please sign up. The calendar is located on the wall outside of Kat's office.

Karen Oney's Cherry Dessert

Crust:

1 1/2 cups self rising flour
1 3/4 sticks of butter (or margarine) softened to room temperature
2 T sugar
1 cup chopped pecans

Melt butter and add dry ingredients. Pack firmly in a 9x13" baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes.

Filling:

8 oz. cream cheese, softened to room temperature
2 cups powdered sugar
1 Large carton Cool Whip

Topping:

2 cans cherry pie filling
Blend cheese and sugar well with mixer or by hand.
Fold in cool whip. Place in cooled crust. Add 2 cans cherry pie filling and chill until ready to serve.

Twelve Oils of Ancient Scriptures

Sunday, January 10th

12:00 — 2:00 p.m.

Hosted by Kathleen Hale

Learn how essential oils were used in Biblical times and today.

Oils identified will be shared during our program for you to experience yourself. The class will meet in the Session room of Princeton Hall.



White Rock Center of Hope

Sunday, January 10th

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



Food Needs

Macaroni & Cheese, Jelly



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9999 Ferguson Road
Dallas, TX 75228

Non-Profit Organization