



St. Mark Connection

9999 Ferguson Road

Dallas, TX 75228

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saintmarkchurch.org

March 2014

St. Patrick's Day Potluck Lunch

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day on Sunday March 16th with a potluck lunch after church. Bring your favorite Irish food or green food.



How about some Corned Beef & Cabbage or Cabbage Rolls? Ever heard of Colcannon? Maybe some Irish Soda Bread or Irish Potatoes.



And of course green food, like Spinach, Broccoli, or Green Salad.

Please plan to stay for lunch. St. Mark has some of the best cooks in town!!

Ash Wednesday Service

March 5th at 7:15 p.m.

Sandwich Sunday - March 30th

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 on that Sunday.



Cookies and snack cakes are also welcome.

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

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

St. Mark Blood Drive Results

We collected 20 units of blood, potentially saving 60 lives. This was the best blood drive we have had in a long time. Thanks to everyone who donated.

There will be no Movie Night in March, but it will return on April 19th.



Second Sunday at Six Service

A Service of Wholeness

March 9th at 6:00

(please note new location)



Join us for a time of prayer, scripture meditation, anointing of oil and the Celebration of the Lord's Supper.

The Service is now taking place in the private dining room at Emeritus at Vickery Towers. 5619 Belmont Ave., Dallas.

Inquirer's Class

Wednesday, March 12th - 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.

Souper Bowl of Caring

Thanks to the generosity of the St. Mark congregation, the White Rock Center of Hope received \$438.17 in cash donations and 200 items of food. Thanks to all who donated to this nation wide collection of giving and serving others in need.

The Million Penny Fund

A goal of 1,000,000 pennies was set and to date we have received 674,170. All donations benefit the Camps and Conferences Fund and the Landscape Fund. A jar for the pennies is located on Pat's desk. Or, you can put your pennies (or any change) in a bag marked Penny Fund in the offering plate on Sundays.





I've mentioned from the pulpit that people visiting St. Mark, especially those not coming from a Presbyterian background, tend to comment on the

amount of time devoted to prayer during worship. Presbyterian liturgy has a rich tradition of prayer and Word as being central to our gathering on The Lord's Day. Visitors obviously notice.

In a previous "Pastor's Corner," I've written about American Lutheran theologian Reinhold Niebuhr's famous "Serenity Prayer" and how it has been adapted for use as a meeting opener by various 12 step recovery groups. Most of these recovery groups also use "The Lord's Prayer" to close their meetings, something that often surprises visitors. This prayer has deep roots. Depending on traditions, may be known as "The Our Father," "The Disciple's Prayer," or "The Model Prayer."

I've observed when visiting people who appear non-verbal and unresponsive that they often open their eyes and move their lips as I hold their hands and begin to pray "The Lord's Prayer." Deep roots, indeed.

So how do I respond to comments like, "This church sure prays a lot"? My replies are informed by the question and answer section on "The Lord's Prayer" in *The Study Catechism: Full Version*, published by Geneva Press in 1998.

For example, Question 120—"What is prayer? Prayer means calling upon God whose Spirit is always present with us. In prayer we approach God with reverence, confidence, and humility. Prayer involves both addressing God in praise, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication, and listening for God's word in our hearts... ."

Or Question 121—"What is the purpose of prayer? Prayer brings us into communion with God. The more our lives are rooted in prayer, the more we sense how wonderful God is in grace, purity, majesty, and love... ."

Obviously "The Lord's Prayer" holds a position of importance in both our private and corporate lives. So, in March, the series of Lenten sermons will challenge us to examine more closely the power of this prayer.

Blessings, *Pastor Rick*

Sunday Sermons, Scriptures and Events

March 2

"Mountains"
Exodus 24:12-18; Matthew 17:1-9
Rev. Dr. Randall McGee
Celebration of The Lord's Supper



March 5

Ash Wednesday 7:15pm
Imposition of Ashes
Celebration of The Lord's Supper

March 9

"God Our Father"
Psalm 33:13-15; Matthew 6:5-9

March 16

"God's Holiness"
Ezekiel 36:21-23; Matthew 6:9

March 23

"God's Kingdom, Our Bread"
Psalm 119:34-36; Matthew 6:10-11

March 30

"Our Sins and Evil"
1 Chronicles 29:10-13; Matthew 6:12-13
Sandwich Sunday



St. Mark Community Garden

We have begun work on the first community garden for St. Mark, in the area between the Family Center and the Scout Building. The goal of this community garden is to provide the members of the congregation an opportunity to grow fresh, sustainable vegetables that we will be able to share with the community through our affiliation with the White Rock Center of Hope.

Current plans are to start small and plant tomatoes, bell peppers and green beans in the main portion of the garden, and herbs in the open areas of the cinder blocks that make up the walls of the garden. We would love to have any help from the congregation.

Allison Curry and Leigh Taylor

Newsletter Staff:

Pat Bilger office@saintmarkchurch.org

Cecilia Grayson

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



Randall's Pen



I was busy with a couple of things early last month and I thought I'd share a bit about those things with you.

First, I attended annual gathering of the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators. I don't get to go every year but when I do I always learn some new things and get to reconnect with old friends.

This year Brian McClaren, the keynote speaker, gave a definition of Christian Education. I paid attention because I collect definitions of Christian Education. I know it is an odd thing to collect. But I have been thinking about it ever since I had to write a definition in my first theory class in grad school. And when I teach Christian Education theory and practice courses each summer I make the students look at several definitions and write their own.

The newest definition in my collection is: *Helping people live in loving connection to God, and through God, to all of creation.* It is different from most definitions that I have worked with through the years. I am not sure what I think about it yet. What do you think about it? Does it mesh with St Mark's mission statement, *to know Jesus and make him known?*

The second thing I was busy with was leading a retreat for the members of the St Mark Session. We spent an evening and a morning exploring some of the changes that are occurring in our culture and how the church might be able to respond to that culture. We used a video featuring a fellow named Leonard Sweet. Sweet took a Starbucks cup and the 4 letters **E P I C** and explained the nature of the digital culture where St. Mark is called *to know Jesus and make him known.* I'll put some things about **E P I C** up on the "Odds and Ends" bulletin board later this month. But in the meantime ask a Session member about **E P I C** and see what they have to say.

Randall McGee, Director of Christian Education

Directory Update

Barb Tuinstra 214-xxx-xxxx (cell)



Daylight Saving Time begins

Sunday, March 9th

May God Bless You On Your Birthday

March 5

Jacie Minick

March 8

Jacob Curry

Shea Curry

March 16

Phyllis Danhoff Speck

March 19

Pauline Millender

March 25

Sabrina King

March 31

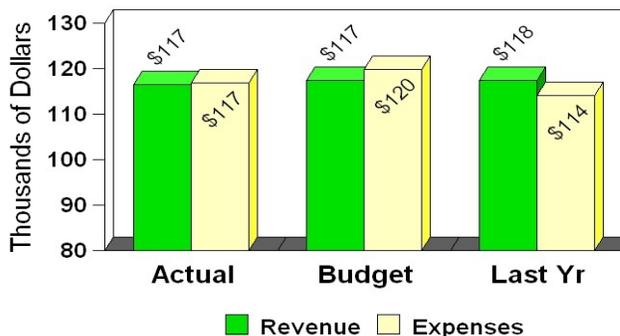
Bunty Taylor



St. Mark Easter Egg Hunt Saturday, April 19th

We are preparing for the annual Easter Egg Hunt. Any contributions of plastic eggs filled with candy or small toys will be greatly appreciated. Please bring them to the church office or place them on top of the washer or dryer in the hallway. Mark your calendars and bring your kids, grandkids, and friends' kids. More details to come!

Operating & Mission Funds 7 Months Through Jan 31, 2014



Treasurer's Report

for the seven months ending 1/31/14

- ⇒ Operating Fund income is on budget and \$1,000 less than last year. Expenses are \$3,000 below budget and \$3,000 above last year.
- ⇒ Capital and Facilities Fund income is \$900 above budget and expenditures are \$1,000 below budget.

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

Newsletter Deadline
is March 15th

Minute for Mission



The White Rock Center of Hope was founded in 1988 by a member of Central Lutheran Church in East Dallas, inspired by a Bible verse (John 21:17) in which Jesus orders Peter to "Feed my sheep." The Center was established with the help of 13 area churches. One of the founding concepts was that while churches receive requests for aid, many do not have facilities to give as they would like to give. Thus, it made good sense to chip in and support a central agency where the needy could go for emergency help.

Starting as a food pantry, services have expanded to include clothing, toys, school supplies, and rent and utility assistance. By the turn of the century, the Center was feeding over 12,000 needy neighbors a year — 8,000 of whom are children — with the support of over 50 churches and several civic organizations.

A volunteer Board of Directors, elected by representatives of member organizations, governs the Center. Alice McLean represents St. Mark on the Board and is our driving force.

St. Mark Block Party

Saturday, April 26th, 9:00am — 2:00pm

The Membership & Evangelism Committee is planning a Block Party for Saturday April 26th. The idea is to provide "booths" for community organizations. Those groups will be available to answer questions about what they do and have materials to give out to those interested.

Some of our prospective groups are the Boy Scouts, Bryan Adams Band, Bone Marrow Registry, Red Cross, AA/AlAnon, area Crime Watch, Ferguson Road Initiative, and White Rock Center of Hope. We also hope to have some animal adoption groups and Rick plans to perform pet blessings.

Additional information in next month's newsletter.

White Rock Center of Hope

Sunday March 9th

Food Needs

Tuna, Macaroni & Cheese, Hamburger Helper, Tuna Helper, Chicken Helper, Canned Meats & Fruits, Canned Vegetables & Soups,



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Non-Profit Organization