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## reminders

**July 4** – Church Office Closed  
**July 14** – Elder Installation Service  
**July 21** – Blood Drive  
**July 28** - Annual Congregational Meeting

There is a familiar piece of advice regarding biblical interpretation about end times events: Read the newspaper in one hand while holding the Bible in the other. That approach — of reading newspapers through the lens of the Bible as a way to discern when the last days are upon us — often leads to stretching the evidence to fit a bias. Many times, people who do so are practicing dispensationalism, a system of interpretation that tends to focus on prophecies of the future end times.

Here are two recent examples of using events of the day to demonstrate proof that the return of Jesus is imminent:

- The United States Embassy in Israel was relocated from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Dispensationalists aren't exactly certain which end times' prophecies this action fulfills, but they sincerely accept it as proof.
- In June, the Iranian military downed a U.S. military drone over the Strait of Hormuz after claiming that the drone had entered Iranian airspace. Well-meaning prognosticators have their Bible verses all lined up to show that the unmanned drone that fell into the sea points to the rising of the first Beast of Revelation from the sea. Surely this recent incident must have something to do with the countdown to Armageddon. Or maybe not.

My standard response to this type of biblical interpretation is that I don't know when Jesus will return for His church. So, let me apologize in advance for having zero insider information on the subject. By the way, I think I'm in good company:

"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come." Mark 13:32-33 NIV.

Identifying the end times with anything resembling accuracy escapes me. It's not that I have no interest in the subject. Eschatology (study of last things) is important. The Bible devotes a great deal of ink to the matter. But attempting to pick a date for the "rapture" is not something that keeps me awake at night; what I *do* or *fail to do* claims that position. Knowing how short I fall from what God intends for me is what brings me up short. This passage from *Velvet Elvis* by Rob Bell is very instructive:

"Your job is the relentless pursuit of who God has made you to be. And anything else you do is sin and you need to repent of it."

Short. Simple. Sin drives the need for repentance. The truly Good News is that sin has an answer: Jesus. This is the same Jesus who will someday come back to usher in a New Heaven and New Earth (Revelation 21:1). I don't know when that will be. I only know that it *will* be. In the meantime, it's time for repentance and with it, a better night's sleep. Blessings, *Pastor Rick*

## Upcoming Events

### Sunday Sermons, Scriptures and Events

July 7 – “Owning the Night”  
Psalm 30:1-12; Luke 10:1-11, 16-20  
Celebration of the Lord’s Supper

July 14 – “Safe Assumption”  
Colossians 1:1-14; Luke 10:25-37

July 21 – “Sister Act”  
Colossians 1:15-29; Luke 10:38-42

July 28 – “Midnight Special”  
Psalm 85:1-13; Luke 11:1-13



### Annual Congregational Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held July 28<sup>th</sup> immediately after the worship service.



During that meeting, we will approve Reverend Brooks’ Terms of Call, elect 3 members of the congregation to serve on the Nominating Committee, and receive Annual Reports from each committee. Please plan to attend this important meeting.

### God Bless You on Your Birthday

#### July 8

Ella Arthur

#### July 12

Lacey Stephen Zuretti

#### July 15

Willetta Jones

#### July 18

Linda Youmans

#### July 19

Allison Curry

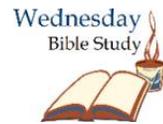
#### July 31

Trevor Crawley



### Wednesday Bible Study

There will be no Wednesday Bible Study in July.



You are invited to join Pastor Rick in August for more current topic study and conversation using the Wired Word.

### Welcome New Elders and Trustee

Newly elected elders Pelham Swift, Tricia Johnson, Daniel Robinson and Lorraine Stephen will be installed on Sunday, July 14<sup>th</sup>. Jacie Minick will be installed as trustee on that Sunday as well.

Thank you for your service

Class of 2019: Elders Teri Brooks, Tricia Johnson, Pelham Swift, Leigh Taylor and Trustee Sheila Wahl.



**Blood Drive July 21<sup>st</sup>**  
9:00 – 12:00



There is no more important gift one can give than a pint of blood. The lives that can be touched, saved, are countless. Mark your calendars now! Look for the bus in the front parking lot on July 21<sup>st</sup>. Contact Sue Duncan for more information. Thank you.

### Good to Know

The narthex doors are locked at 10:30 on Sunday mornings. If you arrive late, please ring the doorbell to alert the ushers. This is a silent doorbell and will not disrupt the worship service.

St. Mark Presbyterian Church exists to know Jesus and to make Him known.

# St Mark Presbyterian Church, Dallas Texas

July 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>30</b></p> <p>9:15a Sunday School  <b>10:30a Worship Service</b>                      12:00p AA Group                      5:00p Sandwich Sunday at Austin Street Center                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>1</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group                      CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED</p> 	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>
<p><b>7</b></p> <p>9:15a Sunday School  <b>10:30a Worship Service</b>                      12:00p AA Group                      12:00p Membership &amp; Evangelism Com.                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>8</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      6:15p Pilates/Barre Class                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>9</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      6:30p CE Com.                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>10</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      6:00p Stewardship &amp; Finance Com.                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>11</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      6:00p GriefShare Support Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p>8:30a Called Session Meeting                      12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>
<p><b>14</b></p> <p>9:15a Sunday School  <b>10:30a Worship Service and Officer Installation</b>                      12:00p AA Group                      12:00p Mission &amp; Outreach Com.                      7:30p AA Group</p> 	<p><b>15</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      6:15p Pilates/Barre Class                      6:30p Session Meeting                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>16</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      6:30p Emmaus I                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      6:30p Property Com.                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>18</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>19</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p>8:00a Men's Breakfast                      9:00a Mini Workday                      12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>
<p><b>21</b></p> <p>9:00a Blood Drive                      9:15a Sunday School  <b>10:30a Worship Service</b>                      12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>22</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      6:15p Pilates/Barre Class                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>23</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>24</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>25</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      6:00p GriefShare Support Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>26</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>27</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>
<p><b>28</b></p> <p>9:15a Sunday School  <b>10:30a Worship Service</b>                      11:45a Annual Congregational Meeting                      12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p> 	<p><b>29</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      6:15p Pilates/Barre Class                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>30</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>31</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      12:00p Cluster Steering Committee Meeting at Eastminster PC                      6:15p Yoga                      7:30p AA Group                      7:30p Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>1</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      5:00p Volunteers to The Bridge                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>12:00p AA Group                      7:30p AA Group</p>



What a month June was weather wise. Wave after wave of storms. Like many folks we lost power and some big tree limbs in the big storm on June 9. Unlike many people our power was back on within 36 hours and the limbs fell without damaging anything. In one of the storms that came through a week later a home down the street from us lost a huge pecan tree that was well over 100 years old. It just toppled over at the roots. Imagine that. A tree that was so old that it predated the neighborhood (the house was built in the 1920's) is now gone.

Thinking about the disruption caused by the falling of that tree and the rest of the storms brought the first couple of verses of Psalm 46 to mind. A familiar Psalm we often use at funerals and other challenging times:

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

Sometimes we find it helpful to be reminded that God is with us even in challenging times. I'll assume that the composer of the Psalm had gone through some rough times yet was still able to speak of God's presence and help.

Now my mind sometimes works in an odd way. As I pondered this Psalm I began to think of a saying of Jesus. Once Jesus made this promise to his disciples, "remember, I am with you always, until the end of the age." That promise was made at the end of what we have come to call the Great Commission where the risen Jesus sent his disciples out into the world with some specific tasks. He told them to "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."

It seems that we live in challenging times. Some folks are recovering from the physical damage of recent storms. They have to figure what and how to repair and rebuild.

Congregations like St Mark also face challenges. We are not alone. Congregations all across the country are trying to figure out how to fulfill the Great Commission in their neighborhood. It seems like nothing is as easy as it used to be. Meeting the challenge requires creative thinking and asking and answering tough questions. But one thing we know that we are not alone. The Psalmist knew that. And Jesus has promised to be with us.

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## VBS Recap



Yee Haw! Children's Bible Camp had 10 kid participants this year, with the assistance of several adult helpers and 2 teen helpers.

The theme was a cowboy/farm theme. Our own Reverend Rick was Rawhide McSpur, a singing cowboy.

During the morning session the kids learned about Jesus' birth and in the afternoon they discovered about his death.

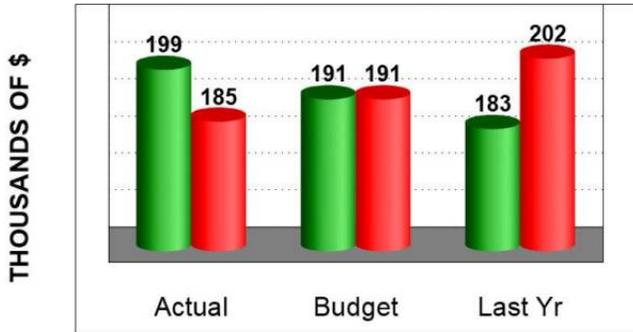
Our craft this year was Faith bracelets. They were made with pony beads in 6 different colors that have Biblical meanings.

The children also worked on a project, Gift of the Heart Hygiene kits. The kits were mailed to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to be used when there is a tragedy that requires personal support. Each kit includes a hand towel, wash cloth, bar of soap, comb, nail clippers, toothbrush, and band-aids.

I want to thank all of the volunteers, kids, and parents. If you wish to see pictures and a video of Rawhide, go to the St. Mark Facebook page.

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**Treasurer's Report**  
**Eleven Months Ending May 31, 2019**



**OPERATING FUND**

■ +INCOME ■ -EXPENSE

Operating Fund income YTD was \$7,500 above budget and expenses were \$5,900 below budget, for a net \$13,400 better than budgeted.

Fund Balances – Total fund balances are up \$3,100 from the previous month and up \$15,300 from the beginning of the fiscal year

**Going Green Embraces Our Faith**



The Fellowship Committee, with encouragement from the Session, is striving to make changes so that we can be better stewards of our environment (Psalm 24:1 – “The earth is the Lord’s, and all that is in it.”). We have placed a recycling bin in the Parlor Kitchen. You may have noticed that Styrofoam coffee cups and plates are no longer in use. They have been replaced with items that are either recyclable or biodegradable (compostable). By choosing eco-friendly alternatives wherever possible, we are responding to God’s call to act as earth’s caretakers. Thank you for helping us in this ongoing effort.

**The Giving Tree**

Giving Tree



The Session has established a new program whereby members can contribute to the purchase of a special item which is not included in the regular Operating Fund budget. All Session committees may submit recommendations for items to be funded through **The Giving Tree**, so if you have a suggestion for items for the Tree, please submit it to one of the committees.

The first item to be purchased will be an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). These devices, which are in many public spaces, were developed to save the lives of people experiencing sudden cardiac arrest. The Session believes that an AED is a much-needed item for St. Mark and could be a lifesaver for any age - not just our more mature members. Even untrained bystanders can use these devices in an emergency, but we have several members trained in using an AED, and we will be offering classes to members once the AED is acquired.

Beginning June 30, look for **The Giving Tree** banner in the hall across from the Parlor with leaves available in varying denominations from which to choose. If you want to contribute toward the purchase of an AED, just pick a leaf in the amount you wish to give, and include it with your contribution. Be sure to identify on the check or envelope that it is for **The Giving Tree**.

**Address Correction**

Martha Gracey  
 Contact the church office.

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## SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

### Approved Session Highlights

Stated Meeting of the Session, May 20, 2019.

Motion passed to set a Congregational Meeting for Sunday June 9, 2019 to elect officers for the Class of 2022.

Motion passed to set a Called Session Meeting for Saturday July 13, 2019 to continue long-range planning.

Motion passed that a Giving Tree program be established which will offer St. Mark members the opportunity to provide financial support for an item or project that is not included in the operating budget. The Giving Tree will only offer one item or project at a time, and these items will be approved by the session after a request from a standing committee.

A full set of Session minutes are available to read on the Session bulletin board.

