

# ST. MARK CONNECTION

Volume 71, Issue 5  
May 2024



## Pastor's Corner

Dear St. Mark Members and Friends,

Over the last few newsletters, I have talked about gardening as a metaphor for what we do as a church. We have prepared, planted, and watered our gardens. Now we will talk about harvesting the fruit that is ripening.

May 19<sup>th</sup> is Pentecost Sunday, a celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit and the birthday of the Church. The word Pentecost is a Greek word for 50. Before Pentecost became a Christian celebration, it was a Jewish feast in Hebrew Shavuot. Shavuot was 50 days after Passover and celebrated the wheat harvest.

Christian Pentecost celebrates the harvest of spiritual fruit. It happens 50 days from Easter, the day we celebrate Jesus' resurrection. Jesus had been preparing soil, planting seeds, and watering the souls of his disciples. All that was needed was the Holy Spirit for the spiritual fruits to begin to emerge. On the Day of Pentecost, the Spirit began to blow like a rushing wind. The Apostles began preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ like they never thought they could. 3000 listeners believed it and were then baptized. A huge harvest! The Church was born.

I am seeing spiritual fruits emerging in the members of the church. I am also seeing members engaging with people outside the church. You are doing your own gardening with the Holy Spirit. You are becoming Jesus for others just like the Apostles did when they received the Holy Spirit. And the Spirit is blowing.

When I was little, I used to love to blow dandelion blowballs in the spring before the flowers emerged. The wind carried the seeds to a new destination and dandelions spread. There are wildflowers all over our neighborhood. Like the Spirit when we blow on the wildflowers the gospel spreads. All we must do is meet people where they are and be willing to listen to them, pray for their needs, and share the Gospel as the Spirit moves us to. It will spread and eventually there will be a harvest.

Consider memorizing a handful of short scriptures that you can use to gently blow on your neighbors. Pick scriptures that have encouraged you over the years. And add a word of interpretation and application (preaching!). One of my favorites is Psalm 23. It has a verse for about everything you would need. If someone is afraid you might say, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for you are with me...God will lead you through this, my friend." Or if they are worried about feeding their family you might say, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want...God is taking care of you and your family." Or if they are concerned about enemies, "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies...Even though you are feeling under attack right now, God is protecting you and feeding you." Perhaps there are other scriptures that come to mind. It will help greatly to have a daily devotional book that you start your day with.

As Jesus said to his disciples before he sent them out on their mission, "The harvest is great, but the laborers are few." The world is bursting with fruit. The heads of grain are on the stems. Go out and bring in the harvest for our God with all the love of God! Don't let all that good fruit out there go to waste.

Pastor Paul

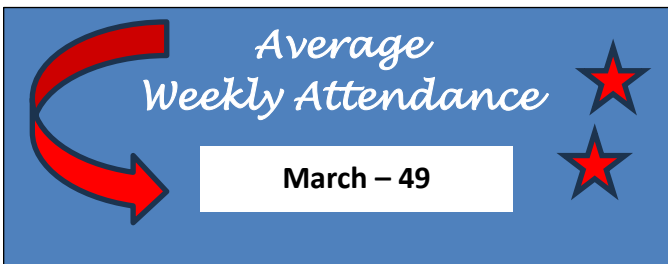
## May Worship Services

May 5 – 6th Sunday of Easter  
 Communion Sunday  
 "Love is the Law"  
 Acts 10:44-48; John 15:9-17

May 12 – 7th Sunday of Easter  
 "Believing is Belonging"  
 1 John 5:9-13; John 17:6-19

May 19 – Day of Pentecost  
 "The Bone Rattling Spirit"  
 Acts 2:1-21; Ezekiel 37:1-14

May 26 – Trinity Sunday  
 "The Holy Parents"  
 Romans 8:12-17; John 3:1-17



### Easter Offering Update

We are grateful for the generous contributions made towards our Easter Offering. We have come very close to our \$4,000 goal with a total of \$3,909 donated so far. If you haven't had a chance to contribute this Easter season, the deadline to give is May 7<sup>th</sup>.

This year, St. Mark will be contributing half of our Easter Offering to the One Great Hour of Sharing which supports many of the works of the Presbyterian Church, a fourth to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund, and a fourth to support Sandwich Sunday expenses.

Thank you for your generous support!



Ann and Gary O'Neal's only nephew, Dave Holsinger, was promoted to Glory on April 10, 2024, after an 11-year battle with cancer. Please keep Ann's sister, Linda, Dave's wife, Janet, and their two sons, Gabe, 18, and Ben, 14, Ann and Gary, and all who loved Dave, in your prayers. A memorial service will be planned for a later date in Norfolk, VA.

Longtime and devoted St. Mark member, Pauline Millender, passed peacefully on April 25, 2024. In accordance with her wishes, Pauline will be cremated, and her ashes will join those of her beloved husband. Please keep Pauline's family, as well as all those who held her dear, in your thoughts and prayers. There are no plans for a service at this time.



- May 1** Edna Woods
- May 2** Mike Parsley
- May 10** Tricia Johnson
- May 12** Drew Taylor
- May 14** Harry Roberts
- May 22** Travis Moore
- May 23** Darlene Wright
- May 24** Megan Knapp
- May 25** George Schingle

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

**OPERATING FUND**  
9 Mos 7/2023 - 3/2024



Operating Fund – YTD unrestricted contributions are \$7,800 better than budget, and \$6,400 ahead of last year. YTD expenses are \$800 below budget, and \$31,400 above last year. Bottom line, we are approximately \$5,800 positive YTD, which is \$7,300 better than budgeted.



To view all events scheduled on the church calendar, visit the church website ([www.saintmarkchurch.org](http://www.saintmarkchurch.org)) or scan the QR Code below. Go to the "About" page and select "Calendar."



**MAY 5**  
Communion Sunday

**MAY 8**  
Way Out Wednesday  
Meet & Greet – 6:00 p.m.

**MAY 11**  
Mini Workday – 9:00 a.m.

**MAY 12**  
Mother's Day

**MAY 14**  
Casa View Haven  
Neighborhood Association – 6:30 p.m.

**MAY 19**  
Pentecost Service  
Journey Community Church – 6:00 p.m.

## *Reflections on Holy Week*



The special events and series of services throughout Holy Week were not only well organized but also deeply moving and spiritually enriching.

We began the week by observing Palm Sunday during our March 24th worship service with palm branches and music by our sanctuary choir.

On Maundy Thursday, St. Mark hosted a Soup Supper, followed by a celebration of communion in our sanctuary with Eastminster Presbyterian Church. This was a Covenant event that also included Journey Community Church and El Divino Salvador Presbyterian Church. A musician from Journey led the congregation in singing "Open the Eyes of My Heart" and a combined St. Mark and Eastminster choir, along with our handbell choir provided beautiful music.

On Good Friday, we participated in a Covenant service at Eastminster. This service, "The Stations of the Cross," also included special music provided by a combined St. Mark and Eastminster choir.

Easter Sunday began with a continental breakfast hosted by the Fellowship Committee, followed by the Easter Sunday worship service in the sanctuary. The altar was adorned with an array of vibrant, colorful flowers, which added an extra touch of beauty to the service. Special music performed by the handbells and sanctuary choir, together with thoughtful liturgy, created a sanctuary of peace and contemplation.

The beauty of the flowers, musical performances by the handbells and sanctuary choirs, and Pastor Paul's inspiring sermons throughout the week brought the passion and resurrection narrative to life, providing comfort and hope to all who attended. It was a profound experience that reminded us of the power of faith and the enduring message of love and redemption.

As we reflect on the solemnity and significance of Holy Week, we give our sincere thanks to everyone involved in the planning and execution of the Holy Week events. Your dedication and collective efforts made a lasting impact on our community and its spiritual journey.



*Mothers, we thank you for your unconditional love, your guidance, and your unwavering support. We honor you for your strength, your patience, and your devotion to your families. We pray that God will richly bless you this year and in the years ahead.*

*Happy Mother's Day!*

**Proverbs 31:31**

***Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates.***



I was just thinking about the eclipse last month. I had never seen anything like it. Oh, I had seen video of total eclipses before but that was nothing like the real thing.

What was the eclipse like for you? Did you get to see it? I know the weather cleared off in Dallas just in time for totality. We were up at Ferncliff near Little Rock for a long eclipse weekend. (Hooray for Presbyterian camp and conference centers!!). The weather was clear and perfect all day. The eclipse was amazing (and yes, we had our special glasses). It was probably a once in a lifetime event.

While I was remembering our wonderful trip to Ferncliff I thought of several passages from the Bible. Bits and pieces of the Psalms came to mind. And then I went looking for Psalm 8. It's a celebration of God's creation and a celebration of our place in that amazing creation. I thought I would share it with you this month. What comes to mind as you read these words?

"O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded a bulwark because of your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger. When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them? Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor. You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!"



We are excited to invite parents and children to a meeting to talk about starting a Wednesday evening youth program called "Way Out Wednesday." We want to hear what you think about the idea!

Here's what we'll be doing:

- Saying "Hi" and getting to know each other.
- Talking about the vision for "Way Out Wednesday."
- Sharing our ideas and opinions.
- Deciding what to do next.

If you are interested, please come and join us. We need your input to make this project a success!

When: Wednesday, May 8, 2024, from 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.

Place: St. Mark Presbyterian Church (Princeton Hall – last classroom on the right)

RSVP: Please call Sabrina King (972.674.7207) by Monday, May 6th, and let us know if you plan to attend so we can make sure we have enough seats, pizzas, and drinks.

Thank you, and we'll see you soon!

Bob and Sabrina King

## OUR COMMUNITY BARBECUE AND BLOOD DRIVE: A RAINY TRIUMPH!



Despite the uncooperative weather, our St. Mark Community joint **barbecue and blood drive** turned out to be a heartwarming success. The rain may have dampened our clothes, but it couldn't dampen our spirits!

### The Sizzle and the Sip

In the Family Center, our cooks and servers were undeterred by the rain and served up delicious brisket, hot dogs and all the fixins! The aroma of good food and the sounds of laughter enticed even the most reluctant rain-soaked souls.

### The Blood Drive

The blood drive was in full swing in the parking lot. The rain didn't scare away our dedicated donors. They arrived, umbrellas in hand, ready to give the gift of life. The Carter BloodCare Team worked efficiently, with smiling faces. At the end of the day, 9 pints of blood had been donated – each pint collected was a testament to our community's spirit of giving.

### Unexpected Bonds

As the rain continued throughout the day, something magical happened. At least 15 strangers became St. Mark friends. We shared stories about faith, visions, imagination, and potential for the community. The barbecue sauce and mustard stains on our faces and clothes became a badge of honor.

### The Aftermath

By the end of the day, our bellies were full, our hearts warmer than ever, and our blood drive a resounding success. The rain had transformed our event into an unforgettable adventure.

### Gratitude

To our volunteers, donors, and everyone who braved the weather, thank you. You proved that community spirit is waterproof. Thanks to your efforts, our barbecue and blood drive will surely go down in history as the day we defied the weather and celebrated life together. So, here's to rain-soaked memories and the joy of giving!

## HIGHLIGHTS from the STATED SESSION MEETING



At the April 16, 2024, Stated Meeting, the Session:

- Received the Treasurer's Financial Report for the first nine months of the fiscal year.
- Appointed Diane Llywelyn as an additional St. Mark representative to serve on the Covenant Committee.
- Voted to allow Bob and Sabrina King to collect signatures at the April 20th community event and to schedule a preliminary meeting with parents and children on May 8th to determine if there is enough interest to start an evening youth program at church.
- Voted to allow Casa View Haven Neighborhood Association to meet in the Sanctuary at 6:30 p.m. on May 14<sup>th</sup>.



# St Mark Presbyterian Church, Dallas Texas

May 2024



Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

9:45a Worship Service 1:00p St. Mark Community Unplugged Jam 5:00p Eastfield Early Brass Concert - Eastminster Presbyterian Church			6:00p Handbells Rehearsal 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	10:30a Bible Study 6:00p Zoom Yoga		9:00a Grace Presbytery Meeting - St. Andrew, Denton
9:45a Worship Service - Communion 1:00p St. Mark Community Unplugged Jam	6:00p Worship & Music Com Mtg	6:00p Fellowship Com Mtg	6:00p Handbells Rehearsal 6:00p Way Out Wednesday Meeting 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	10:30a Bible Study 6:00p Zoom Yoga 7:00p Covenant Com Mtg - Eastminster		8:00a Property Com Mtg 9:00a Mini Workday
9:45a Worship Service 1:00p St. Mark Community Unplugged Jam Mother's Day	6:00p Admin & Personnel Com Mtg	6:00p Stewardship & Finance Com Mtg 6:00p Christian Educ Com Mtg 6:30p Casa View Haven Neighborhood Association	6:00p Handbells Rehearsal 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	10:30a Bible Study 6:00p Zoom Yoga		
9:45a Worship Service 1:00p St. Mark Community Unplugged Jam 6:00p Journey Com. Church Pentecost Service (FC)		6:30p Session Meeting	6:00p Handbells Rehearsal 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	10:30a Bible Study 6:00p Zoom Yoga		
9:45a Worship Service 1:00p St. Mark Community Unplugged Jam	<b>Memorial Day - Office Closed</b>	6:00p Mission & Membership Com Mtg	6:00p Handbells Rehearsal 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	10:30a Bible Study 6:00p Zoom Yoga		