

JUBILEE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

December 2024

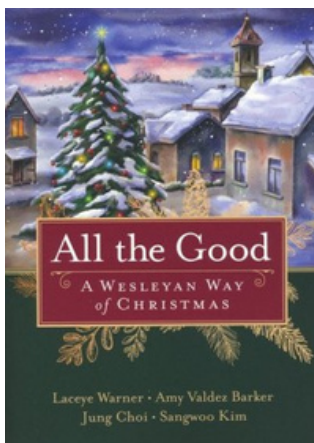


ST. MARK'S
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

4780 E. 126th St., Carmel, IN 46033
317.846.4912 stmarkscarmel.org

ALL THE GOOD

A Wesleyan Way of Christmas



Churchwide Advent Study

Both The Current and the traditional worship services will be preparing us for Jesus's birth with the Advent series *All the Good: A Wesleyan Way of Christmas*. This 4-week study will dig into an Advent journey guided by the practices in John Wesley's means of grace.

SEE PAGE 13 FOR DETAILS

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

December 24

- **Family Christmas Service | 5 PM**
 - All are invited to join this interactive, family-friendly service that is almost entirely student-led. This service will not be live-streamed.
- **Candlelight (contemporary band) | 7 PM**
 - Celebrate a lessons and carols service with music provided by The Current worship band. This service will be live-streamed.
- **Candlelight (traditional) | 9 PM**
 - Join us for a traditional service of lessons, carols, and candle lighting on Christmas Eve. This service will be live-streamed.
- **Candlelight & Communion (traditional) | 11 PM**
 - Join us for a traditional service of lessons, carols, candle lighting and communion on Christmas Eve. This service will not be live-streamed.

December 29 | 10 AM

- One combined worship service at 10 AM. There will not be Kidz Church classes or nursery care.

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES & WAYS TO SERVE

Learn more about all opportunities at stmarkscarmel.org/advent



Angel Tree

Help provide Christmas gifts for the children at E. 10th United Methodist Children & Youth Center



Tree of Lights

Honor someone special and support Mission Guatemala



Adopt a Family

Provide Christmas gifts for a family through Good Samaritan Network of Hamilton County



Worship Readers & Speakers

Volunteer to serve in worship during Sundays in Advent and on Christmas Eve

Upcoming Events

Take a look ahead at St. Mark's upcoming events. Please visit stmarkscarmel.org/events for all event details.



ADVENT DEVOTIONALS

For the Advent season of waiting and preparation, pick up devotional booklets for children and adults from the church entrance (Door #2) or from the table next to the Café. Additionally, we will offer daily devotionals on our social media channels.

[LEARN MORE](#)

COMING SOON



- **Cantata Sunday** - Dec. 8
- **Children's Advent Musical** - Dec. 8
- **UWF Gatherings** - Dec. 10
- **Dine to Donate** - Dec. 12
- **Kids' Night Out (Parents' Night Off)** - Dec. 13
- **UMM Breakfast** - Dec. 14
- **Youth Christmas Party** - Dec. 15
- **Blue Christmas** - Dec. 22
- **Christmas Eve Services** - Dec. 24
- **All-Church Combined Service** - Dec. 29



- **Parent Connection Brunch** - Jan. 12
- **Club 56: Adrenaline Park** - Jan. 19
- **Junior High Bowling and Laser Tag** - Jan. 25
- **QPR Suicide Prevention Training** - Jan. 26

Pastor's Place

Dear Co-workers in Christ,

One of my favorite activities in life is Christmas caroling. When I was in college I would organize a group of fellow students and we would serenade the music faculty homes during the Christmas season. By the time I was a senior this caroling tradition had taken hold and many of our faculty friends would have food waiting for us. It took us much longer to make the circuit then but by the end of the evening we were well fed! I remember arriving at the choral director's home and having him say, "White, how did all these voice majors convince a horn player to come along with them?" The reality is that it was the other way around - I had recruited my vocal friends to join in. It was actually a pretty fun and musically satisfying group!



Rev. Dr. Brian K. White
Lead Pastor

I have noticed that many people who normally do not sing and who are really not that interested in music suddenly become enamored with music during the Christmas season. Almost everyone I have ever met can name their favorite Christmas carol or song. When we begin singing Christmas songs in worship I can see people join in who often stand quietly during the congregational singing. The choir cantata Sunday is always a highlight in the celebration of the season.

As we begin to prepare for the birth of our Savior this Advent season we are going to be focusing on the song of God's redemption which entered our world on that first Christmas morning. We will be talking about the ways that our songs of sadness are transformed into songs of joy. We will be remembering the song of Mary as she wrestled with God's plan for her life. We will rejoice with the angels as they announced the birth of the Christ-child. In all these ways we will be asking God to turn up the volume on God's song in our hearts and in our lives!

One of the books that impacted my early life of faith was "The Singer" by Calvin Miller. In this poetic retelling of the Gospel story Miller says, "I knew a blind man whom a surgeon helped to see. The doctor never had a lover such as he. It is in such a way that singers love composers."

As we try to sing the song of God's redemption it is a way to fall in love with the composer of our universe and our salvation. Let's sing the songs of Christmas this year not as meaningless repetitions but as love songs to a God who loves us and wants the best for us!

In Christ's service,

Brian

Pastor's Place

Dear St. Mark's family,

Advent is here! This special season invites us to pause in the hustle and bustle, light a candle, and reflect on the incredible hope, peace, joy, and love that Christ brings into our lives. It's a season of anticipation and preparation—a time to make space in our hearts for the good news of God's amazing gift.

This year, we're exploring *All the Good: A Wesleyan Way of Christmas* in our Advent studies. It's an opportunity to dive deeper into the beauty of this season through the lens of John Wesley's teachings, reminding us how our faith can inspire us to live out love and grace every day.

Whether you're new to Bible studies or a seasoned participant, this is a great time to connect, grow, and prepare for Christmas with purpose. I encourage you to join us—you'll leave with more than just insights. You'll leave with hope for the journey.

Our Education & Discipleship team is also turning to social media to help us all take in the beauty and meaning each day of this season - a Morning Moment and an Evening Meditation. Then, each Friday, we'll be offering a brief devotional to lead us into a new Advent Sunday. Please find us on Facebook or Instagram to read, reflect, and share inspiration!

Another meaningful way to celebrate Advent is through the lighting of the candles during worship. Each Sunday morning, we'll watch as the Advent wreath grows brighter, reminding us that the light of Christ is coming into the world. And, of course, our Christmas Eve services will culminate in the glow of candlelight, shared together as we sing "Silent Night." If you've never been to one of our Christmas Eve services, this is the year to experience the beauty of it all.

I hope you'll make time this Advent to participate in these meaningful moments. Let's journey together, savoring the blessings of this season and remembering the reason behind it all—the coming of Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us.

May your December be filled with unexpected joy, deep peace, and holy moments as we prepare for the celebration of Christ's birth.

Blessings & Peace,

Pastor Karla



Rev. Karla Elliott
Executive Pastor



Dec. Mission Focus

Did you Know?

- Mission Guatemala is a United Methodist related organization with a mission to help meet the basic needs and improve the quality of life of under-served Guatemalan people through health, education, and nutrition initiatives and meaningful missionary service.
- Mission Guatemala Inc. was founded in early 2009 by Tom Heaton, a United Methodist pastor. In the spring of 2010, Mission Guatemala located a mission site in the community of San Andrés Semetebaj.
- Guatemala has one of the highest rates in the world for chronic childhood malnutrition. Mission Guatemala's nutritional initiatives have included full-time school nutrition programs, and weekly lunches served in several community public elementary schools. Additional projects continue: a medical clinic and pharmacy, dental clinic, eye clinic, feeding centers for chronically malnourished children, community development projects, vocational training programs, water filters for schools and families, and fuel-efficient wood-burning stoves.
- For more information visit www.missionguatemala.com.

How Can I Help?

- Make a financial donation by using the offering envelope in the blue attendance pads or online at www.stmarkscarmel.org/give.
- Honor someone special with St. Mark's annual Tree of Lights campaign. 100% of donations go to Mission Guatemala.
- Join the team and travel to Mission Guatemala for a week of service this summer, 7/12-7/19, 2025. Contact Amy Adams to sign up or for more details.

Dec. In-Kind Donations

Angel Tree for E10

This holiday season please help us provide Christmas gifts for the children at E. 10th United Methodist Children & Youth Center. Look for the Christmas tree in our narthex, late November, which will be decorated with Angels. Each Angel hung on the tree will be labeled with names and ages of the children at the Center. You will select an angel and purchase a toy in the \$25-\$30 range suitable for that designated child. Wrapped & labeled gifts can then be placed underneath the Angel Tree no later than Sunday, December 15.

Volunteers from St. Mark's will be taking these gifts to the Center during the week of Dec. 15th and putting on a Christmas party for the kids. If you would like to help at the E. 10th Christmas party, please contact Amy Adams at aadams@stmarkscarmel.org.

Help Host the Christmas Party

Again this year, St. Mark's will host a Christmas party for the kids at East 10th United Methodist Children & Youth Center on December 20! Set up will begin at East 10th at 2pm with the party following. Donations of Christmas cookies (store bought) will be accepted beginning on December 13. Please contact Amy Adams if you are interested in joining us at the party: aadams@stmarkscarmel.org.



Mission Guatemala Trip

July 12 - July 19, 2025

FINAL CALL to join the team on a mission trip to Mission Guatemala in San Andrés Semetebaj to “do all the good we can” for the people of this community through love and service. The trip cost is \$675 plus airfare and includes all transportation, meals, and

lodging. The team will meet in January to begin organizing. To sign up for the trip, visit stmarkscarmel.org/signups or contact Amy Adams at aadams@stmarkscarmel.org.

Adopt a Family for Christmas 2024



Would you or your small group like to sponsor a family in need this holiday season? This year, St. Mark’s is excited to once again be partnering with Good Samaritan Network of Hamilton County to “Adopt a Family” for Christmas. Your family/group will need to provide children’s toys & clothing items, along with non-perishable food or a gift card for food, then deliver the gifts to the family the week of December 8. If interested, please contact Amy Adams at aadams@stmarkscarmel.org.

St. Mark’s Tree of Lights

Honor someone special with a mission offering gift in St. Mark’s annual Tree of Lights campaign! Honorees will receive a card acknowledging your gift and extending Christmas greetings.



This year, our Tree of Lights campaign will benefit Mission Guatemala.

Visit stmarkscarmel.org/lights to complete the Tree of Lights form online, with a minimum donation of \$5.00 per card. 100% of your donations will be given directly to Mission Guatemala.

Brightwood Community Center Food Pantry

BCC Food Pantry is currently offering a “Client Choice” food pantry TWICE per month, on the 2nd & 4th weeks of each month. Volunteers help with shelving food on racks and assisting clients with shopping. Clients select foods that best meet their needs.

- 2nd & 4th Tuesdays: 12:00 - 2:30 | receiving food and shelving
- 2nd & 4th Wednesdays: 1:30 - 4:00 | help patrons shop/restock shelves

If you are ready to be the difference in a community’s life, contact Diane Newton at joediane244@att.net.

Kidz Church Sunday Programming

stmarkscarmel.org/kidzprogramming

The check-in station and Kidz Church classes are located in the Children's Wing. Check-in for each hour begins 10 minutes prior to the start of class or service time. For 9 and 11 AM worship hours, children will proceed to the sanctuary with their families after check-in and be released to Kidz Church after the Kidz Chat. For the 10 AM education hour, children will proceed directly to class after check-in. A list of available classes and times can be found in the bulletin each Sunday or online at stmarkscarmel.org/kidzprogramming.

The Mom Community (MomCo)



THE MOMCO
BY MOPS INTERNATIONAL

MomCo is a non-profit organization that encourages and equips moms of young children to realize their potential as mothers, women, and leaders in relationship with Jesus and in partnership with the local church. The MomCo at St. Mark's meets two Thursdays a month (9:30-11:15am). New moms are welcome! For details about membership and childcare, email us at momco.at.stmarks@gmail.com.

Kidz Monthly Mission



Each month, Children's Ministries invites kids to get involved in giving to the church's In-Kind Donations. During December, please help us provide Christmas gifts for the children at E. 10th United Methodist Children & Youth Center. For more information about how to give or to participate in the E. 10th Christmas party, see page 6 or visit stmarkscarmel.org/missions.

Kidz Music & Praise



Kidz Music & Praise Advent Musical Sunday, December 8 | 1:30 PM

Come experience the joy of the Christmas season as the children of the church present, "A Very Mixed-Up Christmas Pageant!" In this creative retelling of the Christmas story, the children use improvised costumes and discover that the joy of Christmas is for all people, no matter who we are!



Kids' Night Out (Parents' Night Off!)

Friday, December 13, 6:00-8:30 PM

Parents! It's a special night for you to enjoy some last-minute Christmas shopping, have a date night, or just some quiet time! Drop off your kids (ages 4-10) in Wesley Hall for a fun-filled night of games, activities, videos, and snacks with our fun student counselors (adult directors on-site).

Contributions of \$15/child (\$30/family) will serve as a fundraiser for the Youth Group. Register kids and student counselors by 12/9 at stmarkscarmel.org/signups. For questions pertaining to children, contact Jackie & Jen at kidzchurch@stmarkscarmel.org. For questions about student counselors, contact Scott & Jenny at youth@stmarkscarmel.org.

Christmas Eve Family Worship Service

Sunday, December 24, 5 PM

The 5 PM Family Christmas Eve service is an interactive worship service that is almost entirely student led! Children ages 4 - grade 6 are invited to choose from the many ways to serve. Participating in worship on Christmas Eve is such a meaningful way for students to experience the story of Christ's birth. Sign up your child(ren) at stmarkscarmel.org/signups. Please Note: There is a short dress rehearsal for this service on 12/22 at 12:15 PM in the sanctuary. Please do your best to have your children attend if you sign them up for a role in the service. In addition to Christmas Eve, consider choosing from the several Sunday mornings in advent when your family can lead the lighting of the Advent Wreath (use the sign-up link above).

One 10 AM Worship Service on Sunday, December 29

There will ONE worship

service on the Sunday morning after Christmas and all ages are welcome! Come as you are (jammies encouraged!) to this all-church family Sunday. There



will not be Kidz Church classes or nursery care, but there will be plenty of Kidz worship bags and activities available to keep little hands busy!

Dine to Donate for St. Mark's Preschool

Thursday, December 12 | 4:00-10:00 PM | Noble Roman's Craft Pizza & Pub



Eat great pizza and support St. Mark's Preschool! Present the flyer or tell the cashier you are with St. Mark's Preschool when you order. Up to 15% of all proceeds will go to the preschool up to \$500, and 20% of all proceeds exceeding \$500.

Visit Noble Roman's Craft Pizza and Pub at 1438 W. Main St. in Carmel on December 12 from 4 to 10 PM! Find the flyer and details at stmarkscarmel.org/events.

Coming in January - Save the Dates!

PARENT CONNECTION BRUNCH



**Sunday, January 12
10-11 AM**

Cornerstone Commons

Has everyone in your family found a place to connect during the 10 AM Education Hour? This hour in between services is for all, and St. Mark's wants to help you find your place! In Kidz Church at 10 AM, we offer grade-specific classes that introduce age-appropriate faith milestones. Caring Kidz Church leaders are excited to guide your children through their spiritual development and to share the love of Jesus with them! We hope everyone's children will be able to attend this important hour of learning and growing. Where will you settle during this hour and what are your options? Come to brunch, connect with other parents, make new friends, and hear about all the new activities and groups available. There will also be time for leaders to hear YOUR feedback about all the ideas offered. See page 12 for more information about this exciting event!

THE FOOD FLORIST TRUCK



Sunday, January 19

An exciting new fundraiser for our church preschool is coming this winter! The Food Florist of Fishers features made-from-scratch meals using local, organic, and all-natural ingredients. One pan from freezer to oven and dinner is done! The Food Florist food truck will be parked at St. Mark's on this ONE special Sunday for all to purchase frozen meals to take home as you leave church. Proceeds from this event will be used to purchase new furniture for the church and preschool toddler room. Details to come!



CLUB 56: FEEL THE RUSH!



Adrenaline Family Adventure Park

**Sunday, January 19
12-3:30 PM**

If your 5th and 6th graders have the winter blues, don't let them climb the walls at home when they can do it at Adrenaline Family Adventure Park! Let them climb, jump, dunk, and be a ninja warrior! Club 56ers will spend the day together attending Kidz Church at 10 AM, The Current at 11 AM, and carpooling to Adrenaline in Fishers at noon. Phew! Save the date and look find details at stmarkscarmel.org/events.



Sunday Mornings

10 AM: 7th - 12th grade, join Scott Melvin and Jenny Miller in Cornerstone Commons for a quick get-together.
10:15 AM: Junior and Senior high students break out for Bible study time. 7th & 8th graders meet with Aaron Koenig and Pete Elliott in the Middle School room while the 9-12 graders meet with Jenny Miller in the Senior High room.

New Youth Group Schedule

Having fun at our monthly youth group events but wish they happened more often? Starting on **January 12th** we will have Youth Group Sunday evenings from **5:30-7:00 on the 2nd and 4th Sundays** of the month! We will share a meal together, have a couple fun activities, worship and have devotion time! Be on the lookout for more information to come!

Upcoming Events

Christmas Party

Sunday, December 15 | 12-2 PM | All middle & high school students welcome!
It's the most wonderful time of year! Scott and Jenny would love to spend some time with you before Christmas! For all 7th - 12th graders join us on Dec 15th after The Current Service for our Christmas party. Further details to follow, be on the look out for emails.



Family Christmas Sponsorship

St. Mark's Student Ministries is sponsoring a family for Christmas through Good Samaritan Network. We are collecting cash to purchase toys, clothes and groceries for a family of 6. Contact the youth department for need and sizing. Deadline for donations is December 8th. Learn more and sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080B44AEAB23A0FB6-53533426-student?useFullSite=true#/>.



Kids' Night Out (Parents' Night Off) - Calling All 9th-12th Graders

Friday, December 13 | 6:00-8:30 PM

If you loved serving kids at VBS, then you'll love this event too! Come play some games, eat snacks, and watch some movies with our St. Mark's kids. We are looking for counselors for the Kids' Night Out (Parents' Night off) event Dec. 13th from 6:00 - 8:30pm. Be a part of a great annual Christmas Fundraiser for the youth. Sign up to serve at stmarkscarmel.org/signups.



Kids' Night Out
(Parents' Night Off!)

Parent Connection Brunch

Save the date for the Parent Connection Brunch, Sunday, January 12, 10-11am! We'll talk about what St. Mark's has to offer kids, youth, and parents and get your feedback on new ideas for the Sunday 10AM hour. Afterwards, head to the Current or feel free to stay and chat. Learn more on page 12.



Parent Connection Brunch



Save the date for Sunday, January 12, 10am! Connect with other parents over brunch and maybe even make a new friend. We'll talk about what is offered for families – children, youth, and adults – during the 10AM Sunday hour and get your feedback on ideas for new activities, low-stress gatherings, and small groups for that hour. If you've ever thought about joining a small group or felt a sense of loneliness even while being surrounded by people in worship, the 10AM hour is a great chance to connect with others while your kids and youth are engaging in their own community! Watch for more details at stmarkscarmel.org/events and in your email.

Need a Group?

You might have heard them called Life Groups, Circles, Community Groups, Home Groups in other churches...Here at St. Mark's, we have Grow Groups and Encouragement Groups that connect people in shared life stages to encourage one another and grow in their faith as they do life together. January 2025 will be a new season of these groups and more may form, with enough interest. We are especially looking at forming a new group for parents of young children to meet once a month on Sunday evenings at the church. To express your interest in any of our groups—including for folks dealing with the care of aging relatives, for those who have been widowed, for empty nesters, or for just general connection with others, sign up at stmarkscarmel.org/growgroups.

Website Directory for Adult Discipleship groups, signups, and resources

Sunday 10AM – Current Classes and New Groups Forming: See

<https://stmarkscarmel.org/studygroups/#sundayam> for full descriptions about Sunday classes and to express your interest in new 10AM hour options.

Study Groups and Short-Term Events: All descriptions and signups are at stmarkscarmel.org/studygroups.

Grow Groups, Encouragement Groups, and Support Groups: Visit stmarkscarmel.org/grow-groups to find ways to connect with others in our groups that support one another through shared seasons and challenges in life.

Discipleship Pathway and Personal Growth resources: Find resources for prayer, meditation, spiritual practices, rest, reflection, and growth at stmarkscarmel.org/discipleship.

Workshops: Register for special events like our upcoming 2025 QPR Suicide Prevention training at stmarkscarmel.org/workshops.

Breakthrough Prayer: We share our breakthrough prayer in worship and in many of our small groups and meetings, but this is also a valuable personal and family prayer practice in your busy schedule. Set a timer for 8:00pm to pray the prayer you can find at stmarkscarmel.org/breakthrough.

How to Pay for Books

Pick up your study books from the church entrance (door #2) shelves or from the connection tables in the Gathering Area. The book cost is listed on stmarkscarmel.org/studygroups and on the paper syllabus included with each book. Make checks to St. Mark's UMC with "study books" in the memo line. To pay online, go to stmarkscarmel.org/give and on the top question asking "How would you like to allocate your donation," select Study Books from the dropdown menu.

Advent 2024 & 2025 Preview

Sign up at stmarkscarmel.org/studygroups. Books and paper signups are on the connection tables in the Gathering Area.

Advent Devotionals: Paper and Online

For the Advent season of waiting and preparation, pick up devotionals for children and adults from the church entrance (Door #2) or from the table next to the Café. The adult devotional is a collection of reflections on Henri Nouwen's writings in a booklet called "A Little Child Shall Lead Them."

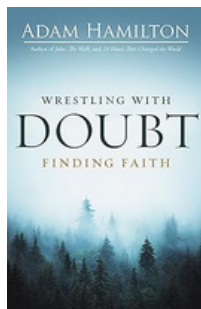


Additionally, we will offer daily devotionals on our social media channels. Beginning Dec. 1, there will be a daily "morning moment" with a short verse for the day, plus an evening meditation with seasonal music. On Fridays (11/29 before Advent, plus 12/6, 12/13, 12/20) and Christmas Eve, our Facebook and YouTube pages will have an Advent video reflection from our pastors and Children's Ministries, Youth, and/or Adult Discipleship staff members. Follow the daily devotionals and videos at facebook.com/stmarkscarmel. Our YouTube page is youtube.com/stmarkscarmel.

Wrestling with Doubt, Finding Faith

Wednesdays, 1/8-2/12 | 9:30-11AM
Led by Lydia Fourman |
Cornerstone Commons or Room J/K in various weeks | Books \$12

Does your faith make room for questions? Everyone has doubts. Where is God when bad things happen? Does God hear our prayers? Is there a heaven? How can we know? We might treat such questions as the enemy of faith, but uncertainty doesn't mean our belief is lacking. Doubt can be a path to a deeper, richer encounter with God. In this book, pastor and best-selling author Adam Hamilton explores key questions of doubt with honesty and insight, drawing on the rich wisdom of the Bible, Christian tradition, and his experience walking with thousands of people on their spiritual journey. Whether you're a longtime Christian or someone brand new to faith, this book will lead you to a trust in God that is unafraid of hard questions. Wrestle with doubt and find faith—belief and trust, not certainty; mystery rather than simple answers.



Advent Study: All The Good

Both The Current and the traditional worship services are preparing us for Jesus's birth with the Advent series *All the Good: A Wesleyan Way of Christmas*. This study digs into an Advent journey guided by the practices in John Wesley's means of grace. The book's biblical passages, illustrations, and stories look at preparing the way for God, the impact and significance of prayer, the substance of good works and caring for others, and sharing God's mission to the world.

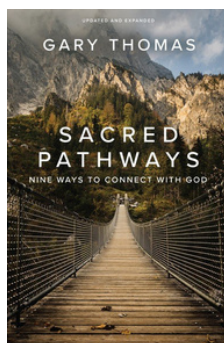


Books are \$9, available at St. Mark's (connection tables and door #2) for group or individual study. Some groups have already begun, so join in at your convenience for the chapters you need:

- **Sundays, December 1-22 | 10-11am** with Foundations & Friendships class in Room J-K (no sign up needed, just drop in). Reading the full book in December, beginning Dec. 1 with the Introduction and first chapter.
- **Wednesday mornings, December 4-11 | 9:30-11am | Room J/K** for final 2 chapters.
- **Wednesday evenings, December 4-18 | 6:00-7:15pm | Room B/C** for final 3 chapters.
- **Thursdays, December 5-19 | 10-11am | Room B/C** for an abbreviated run through the entire book in 3 sessions in December.
- **Fridays, December 6-13 | 9:30-11am | Room B/C** for the final 2 chapters.

Sacred Pathways

Fridays, 1/10-2/7 | 9:30-11AM
Led by Jennifer Cloud-Buckner
and Annessa Miller
Room B-C and Zoom
Book cost TBD



Ever notice that several different routes take you to the same destination? That's also true in spirituality. In his updated and expanded book, *Sacred Pathways: Nine Ways to Connect with God*, Thomas discusses nine temperaments—each with its own strengths, pitfalls, and particular traits---and the ways they naturally relate to God. In this 5-session study, you'll discover your own combinations of strengths and traits that best describe your personality's approach to God and spirituality. Sign up for Childcare at least 48 hours ahead at stmarkscarmel.org/signups.

LIFT Widows Encouragement Group

Contact grow@stmarkscarmel.org or see Mary Etta Yoho to connect with the group. Members of the group are taking turns with selecting, hosting, and/or planning a upcoming events:

Thurs., Dec. 5, 12:00pm, offsite: Carry-in Christmas lunch and gift exchange at home of Pat Weeks. Pat Weeks and Jean Willenberg are hosting.

Thurs., Jan. 30, 12:00pm, offsite: Lunch and games at the home of Hallie Meyer.

Thurs., Feb. 27, 9:15am Carpool from church for **10:00am** Tour of President Benjamin Harrison Home, 1230 N. Delaware St., Indianapolis, followed by lunch at Aristocrat Pub, 5212 N. College Ave, Indianapolis.

March: Brunch out, date TBD.

Sun. April 6, 1:00pm, Westfield Playhouse followed by dinner at Grindstone on the Monon, Westfield.

QPR Suicide Prevention Training


Sunday, January 26
3:00-5:00pm
Cornerstone Commons



Do you struggle with how to respond to a friend, colleague, or loved one who feels depressed, hopeless or overwhelmed and could be considering suicide? Save the date for our upcoming QPR training.

QPR is an evidence-based program teaching how to recognize and respond to warning signs, clues and communications of suicidal people and how to get help for the person who has suicidal thoughts. It is not a form of counseling, but rather a way to act vigorously - to Question, Persuade, and Refer—to prevent a possible tragedy. QPR is for adults of all ages, regardless of life stage. Students in grade 9-12 are welcome to attend with an accompanying parent. Learn more and register at stmarkscarmel.org/workshops.

Dream Day & Breakthrough Prayer



God, open doors to reveal new hopes and dreams for St. Mark's and in our own lives. Give us the courage to follow where You lead. Amen.

Dream Day was a congregation-wide event on September 15 with guided brainstorming sessions to gather ideas for the future of St. Mark's. This was a continuation of our spirit of openness for God to reveal new hopes and dreams for St. Mark's through the last 18 months of the breakthrough prayer initiative.

The attendees consisted of 60 people (6 kids and youth, 17 in 40-60s age group, and the remainder age 60+) with many long-time

members and 11 people new to St. Mark's within the last 5 years. The 2-hour event included two brainstorming sessions in groups of 8-11 people and a closing event with each person putting a favorite idea on the rolling bulletin board (see photo).

Participants were given 17 brainstorming questions and a few minutes to record their answers. Topics looked both inside and outside the walls of St. Mark's — the ways we welcome, grow, and serve; new ideas for God's call for our church; areas needing improvement or activities that are no longer needed. Scribes in each group recorded answers that were discussed verbally, and all participants were invited to turn in their individual notes on every question.

What are some of the hopes and dreams that people brought forward for St. Mark's? Our Dream Day task force is still compiling the results from individual responses, but here are some highlights from the group-level notes from scribes.

Big-Picture Themes

- Desire for intergenerational gathering opportunities
- Wanting to get youth involved in worship services regularly
- Providing opportunities to engage with the community (e.g., having outside speakers and/or fun gatherings)

Most Popular Topics related to:

- Specific ideas for partnerships with existing community organizations
- New outreach and service opportunities, including options for busy families
- Ideas for connecting in our own community and for reaching disconnected people, including ideas for the 10AM Education & Small Groups hour on Sundays
- Stewardship of time and finances, including more transparency
- Ideas for different ways to use or improve our church's physical spaces
- Ideas for spiritual growth and congregational care

If you missed Dream Day and would like to offer your thoughts on the 17 questions, visit stmarkscarmel.org/dream. As we continue analyzing the responses, we are excited to see how God's spirit moves St. Mark's into the future. Please continue to pray the breakthrough prayer your church gatherings and daily at 8 p.m. wherever you are. Learn more about incorporating this into your meetings at stmarkscarmel.org/breakthrough.

The Dream Day task force will finish compiling individual responses before the next Church Council meeting on December 3 and will give a report to Council, committees, ministry teams, and churchwide after that. Watch this space in the Jubilee for more info!



Open Groups

UNITED METHODIST MEN

UMM provides a supportive fellowship of men who seek to know Jesus Christ, to grow spiritually, and to seek daily God's will. UMM has donated to many Missions. Some of the groups we donate to are: Family Promise, East 10th Methodist Youth Center, Fletcher Place, Habitat for Humanity, Wheeler Mission, Second Helpings and SAW.



All United Methodist Men are invited to attend the breakfast on December 14 at 7:30 am.

Find out more at <https://stmarkscarmel.org/umm/>.

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

Next Meeting is December 10 | Evening Meeting Only | 6 PM

"All is Calm, All is Bright" is the theme of the annual United Women in Faith Christmas Gathering on Tuesday evening, Dec. 10. It will be an evening filled with wonderful fellowship, a delicious carry-in meal, singing of carols, plus lots of Christmas Spirit!

A musical program, "Songs for the Savior," presented by some of our talented St. Mark's musicians, will delight us with Christmas joy. All women of the church are invited to come and bring a friend at 6 pm for hot spiced cider and fellowship with dinner promptly beginning at 6:30 pm Bring your favorite carry-in dish (appetizer, salad, main dish, dessert) to share as we celebrate the birth of Jesus. Christmas Blessings!!

The next monthly United Women in Faith meeting in 2025 will be January 14 at 9:30 am and 7 pm. Interest groups will meet. Childcare is available for AM meetings. Please register by the Thursday prior to the meeting to allow time to obtain staffing. Register for childcare at stmarkscarmel.org/signups. Email uwf@stmarkscarmel.org for more information.

All women of St. Mark's UMC are invited to sign up for the closed facebook group. Search for the group UWF - St Marks Carmel on facebook and send a request to join.

Need a ride? Contact Mary Etta at (765) 215-7773 or email maryetta.yoho@gmail.com.



United
Women
in Faith

Fellowship Groups

Learn more at:
<https://stmarkscarmel.org/groups>

MARKSMEN

Select Thursdays at Starbucks at 116th and Keystone

The MarksMen is a community of career and family focused men seeking to develop authentic and intentional relationships while we unplug from the daily stress and craziness that life can bring. Email marksmen@stmarkscarmel.org for more info.

ROMEOS

Retired Old Men Eating Out Wednesdays | 11:00 AM

Le Peep | 86th & Keystone

All men are invited to meet weekly at LePeep's. Contact Don Mehl for more information at djmehl2004@aol.com.

PAGE TURNERS

Book Club

Third Tuesdays at 7 PM

No Meeting in

December. Join us on

January 21 for *The Racketeer* by John Grisham. Hope to see you there!

Meets in Room G/H.



CRAFT GROUP

Select Thursdays

No meeting in December

The Craft & Hobby group will resume in January. Please contact Kathy Bartel at 317-294-4908 or krbartel@gmail.com for more information.

JULIETS

Just Us Ladies Interested In Eating Together December 19, Cooper's Hawk (3815 E. 96th St., Indianapolis).

Please contact Linda Schenk with RSVP's by the Monday before the luncheon date at juliets@stmarkscarmel.org or 812-454-0661.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Tuesdays | 7:00 PM

Join us every Tuesday for Open Gym at 7 PM Basketball for ages 16 and above. Contact Mark Moore, mvm2920@aol.com for more information.



COFFEE 'N CAMERAS

Select Mondays

Coffee - yes,
Cameras - whatever you have. Our members use both types of cameras (traditional and phone). We would love to have you join us on **December 2 & 16 at 9 AM.** We encourage each other's creativity, demonstrate techniques, share our photos and help each other grow in our knowledge and skill of photography. Bring your camera, questions, and be ready to tackle a monthly assignment presented by rotating group leaders.



PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Select Fridays

Join us as we prayerfully knit and crochet prayer shawls that will be used to provide comfort and solace to people in need. Supplies are available. Men are welcome too! Contact Judy Bonnet, bonnetjm@icloud.com for more information.



PICKLEBALL

Thursdays | 7-9 PM

Looking for a fun weekday evening activity this fall and winter? Join us in Wesley Hall on Thursday evenings from 7-9 PM for some fun and fellowship as we play pickleball! Participants of all skill levels are invited and should be 16 years or older. Contact Janet Brown (jgrandeyb@gmail.com) or Doug Brown (dthbrown@gmail.com) for more information.



Committee News

SPRC Staff Spotlight:

Melissa Smith, Administrative Specialist & Volunteer Coordinator



When you come into the church office during the week, the first person you are likely to encounter is the smiling Melissa Smith. As Administrative Specialist and Volunteer Coordinator, she is right in front, warmly greeting everyone who walks in the door and steering them in the right direction. Her smile is not just reflective of her personality, it is an intentional commitment to making sure everyone has a positive experience coming into the office. Melissa has been with us since January this year.

“It was a God Moment,” when she saw the job posting at St. Mark’s, where she had been attending, involved, and bringing her children for years. Although she considers herself “an introvert,” she felt encouraged to accept the role because the church was already “home” to her—the church family had been with her through the “thick and thin” times in her life and she felt very loved here at St. Mark’s and this is a chance to return that love. We are blessed to have her in this role that allows her to maintain the ever-important work-life balance, contributing mightily to the church while maintaining time and focus on motherhood, which she says is her first and foremost responsibility. In addition to managing the volunteers for liturgist and communion servers, Melissa creates the bulletin every week and an amazing array of other responsibilities.

For example, one of her responsibilities is to keep the calendar of all the various rooms throughout the building, from weekday study groups and Prayer Shawl gatherings to Church Council Meetings, and community groups including Girl Scouts and AA groups. If you look at the church calendar online, you’ll see that there are activities every day of the week, and she makes sure no two groups are in the same room at the same time. She told me she wants everyone to feel at home here and know that this facility is for all of us to use and benefit from. “We don’t want an empty building!” and if community members feel comfortable here, when they are looking for a church, they will come here. It is scheduling, but it is also community outreach!

Melissa and her husband, Greg, live in Westfield with their five children: Gabe is 17, Evan is 14, and the quads, Leo, Henry and Charlotte are 10 ½. They refer to the youngest children as “the quads,” not triplets, to honor and remember the life of their son Max, who passed away when he was 2 days old. Melissa, Greg, and the kids plan to visit the beach in San Diego for spring break this coming year. I am excited for them already!



WHAT COMMITTEE MEMBERS NEED TO KNOW

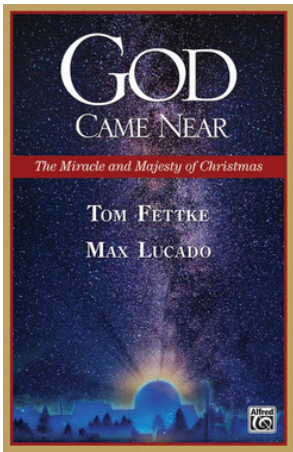
Need a room? Have an event you want publicized? Check out “What Committee Members Need to Know.” Download your toolkit for getting things done - It’s **Committee Member 101** - check out this document for an overview of How To:

- Schedule a room at St. Mark’s
- Request A/V support for an event
- Request publicity in any church publication or communication method
- Use the connection tables, kitchen, or office equipment
- Request office supplies, announcements, event childcare

Do you have a question not covered in this document or need more details? Contact your committee chair or the church office at 317-846-4912. Check out <https://stmarkscarmel.org/committeefinfo/> for more information on Committees at St. Mark’s.

Community Outreach & Upcoming Events

Christmas Cantata | Dec. 8 | 9 & 11 AM



Travel back in time when Christ, the Son of God, became man. Based on the iconic Christmas writings by best-selling author Max Lucado, this musical from veteran composer/arranger Tom Fettke features a blend of songs, classic texts, and beloved carols with optional congregational participation. The result is a magnificent and unforgettable celebration of the Incarnation. It all happened in a moment - a most remarkable moment - when God came near.

News from the Library

The library is open Monday-Thursday 9 AM - 3 PM / Friday 9 AM - 12 PM / Sunday 8 AM - 12 PM

Check out these latest arrivals!



The Redhead of Auschwitz by Nechama Birnbaum
Carnegie's Maid by Marie Benedict
Freeing Jesus by Diana Butler Bass
What Happens When Women Walk in Faith by Lysa Terkeurst
This Marks the Spot Where My Past Returns by Jean Marks Bail
Winter Garden by Kristen Hannah
The Ride of Her Life by Elizabeth Letts
The Next Ship Home by Heather Webb
Love in a Time of Hate by Hanna Schott
Seek Me With All Your Heart by Beth Wiseman
The Women by Kristin Hannah
America, a redemption story: choosing hope, creating unity by Tim Scott
The Winemaker's Wife by Kristin Harmel
Soundtrack of Silence: Love, Loss, and a Playlist for Life by Matt Hay (son-in-law of Sarah Lasbury)
Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God by Timothy Keller
The Grieving Brain: The Surprising Science of How We Learn from Love and Loss by Mary-Frances O'Connor

Help Honor First Responders

Bakers Needed: Each month a St. Mark's volunteer delivers baked goods to the police officers at their headquarters and to fire fighters at Station #44. The volunteer can choose the month that works best for them and can deliver them any time during that month. If you are interested, please contact Jan Walsh at jow3441@sbcglobal.net or at 317-908-9935.

Sponsor Christmas Poinsettias

Now through December 15



Help decorate St. Mark's for the holidays by sponsoring a poinsettia. All are invited to sponsor poinsettias In Honor Of, In Celebration Of, or In Memory Of special persons or groups in your life. A donation of \$12.00 is requested to cover the cost of the poinsettia and other greenery that make the Advent season so special at St. Mark's.

If you'd like to be part of this St. Mark's tradition, please fill out the form at the link below. You will have an opportunity to pay for your poinsettias online once you submit your order. Please place orders no later than December 15 for names to be listed in the bulletin on December 22. Go to stmarkscarmel.org/poinsettias.

Congregational Care & Connections

Photo Directory

The new St. Mark's photo directory is available online with the most up-to-date information. To access the online directory you can visit stmarkscarmel.org/directory. You will need the password, which can be obtained by calling the church office or picking up a business card on a connection table on Sunday morning. If you need a printed copy, it can be requested via a clipboard on the connection table in the gathering area. If you have questions, email Missi Koenig at mkoenig@stmarkscarmel.org.

Tithe Time

Welcome to Tithe Time, a new monthly focus article about participation in the life of St. Mark's. The Tithe Time goes beyond monetary offerings and reaches toward the service component of the body of Christ.



“For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.”
Romans 12:4-5

So, when we are All In, our service and our presence create a prosperous, thriving community. This month's TITHE TIME continues to focus on our need for Communion Stewards and servers. The Stewards/Servers play a vital role in the preparation for the Lord's supper. The time requirements are minimal and can be fulfilled in a single ½ hour before or after the service you normally attend. All elements (bread and juice) are provided.

Facilitating this need, even just one Sunday a year, a season, or a month, provides a foundational element to our worship services. For more information or to sign up, go to stmarkscarmel.org/signups.

Thank you for considering how to tithe your time.
All-In!

Sympathies

We extend our heartfelt sympathies to Stephanie Hufford for the loss of her husband, Jack; to the family of Kathleen Wetzel; to the family of Bonnie Wilson; and to Sally Hubbard for the loss of her husband, Jim. Our thoughts are with them during this time of sorrow.

Circle of Care

The Circle of Care list includes St. Mark's members and friends who are homebound or in a care facility. Your prayers for these loved ones mean so much to them and to their families.

Carol Anderson, Myrneth Anderson, Steve Baylor, John and Carole Browning, Trish Boger, Doris Carlow, Phyllis Delp, Carol Hollinger, Dorothy Mecca, Melvin & Marlene Myers, Jane Roberts, Jerry & Brenda Weikel, Bob Wiens

If you would like to be added to the Circle of Care or know of someone, please contact the church office.

Meal Train Ministry

St. Mark's UMC has long helped members in times of need with Meal Train meals. Meal Train is a blessing for those who need it and those who provide it. If you are in need of Meal Train, call or email Carol Smith, 406-546-7727, ctsmith106@gmail.com. If you are unable to reach Carol, call the Church Office, 317-846-4912.

Celebrations & Thank You



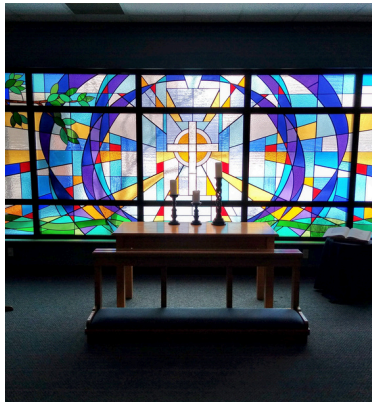
NEW PLAYGROUND

The church playground is complete! The preschool children and many St. Mark's families have already been enjoying this new outdoor space that would not have been possible without your support. Thank you! Check out a special thank you [video!](#)



GAME ON!

In October, thirteen 5th-8th graders attended our middle school kickoff event, Game On! Our afternoon included a chicken costume, shaving cream, cheese balls, and plenty of fun for everyone.



DAYS OF PRAYER

Several people expressed appreciation for our Open Chapel times ahead of Election Day. Did you know that our Chapel is generally available anytime the office is open? Feel free to drop in—or check ahead on stmarkscarmel.org/calendar or by calling the office—for quiet reflection on most weeks (9am-3pm Mon-Wed, 11am-3pm Thurs, and 9am-1:30pm Friday, except for UWF Tuesdays).



NARCAN TRAINING

Thanks to Jim Ginder of the Hamilton County Health Department for presenting NARCAN training to 15 attendees on November 10. If you want to attend workshops like this, save the date for QPR Suicide Prevention training on January 26.

Thank you for recognizing my 30 Year Anniversary at St. Mark's as Children's Music Coordinator on Oct. 27th and providing a lovely pizza party for the children. The day was full of surprises. Michael Bontrager, Staff Parish, the party planning committee, the pastors, staff, and multiple generations of children's music family members provided a joyful day that celebrated how St. Mark's values staff members, music, children, hospitality, generosity, and mission. It is a pleasure and honor to serve St. Mark's and the children by using music as a vehicle for teaching children about the Bible. Thank you for your kindnesses.

Sincerely,
Joyce and Steve Click

Thank you to many in the church family for your prayers and sympathy cards on the death of my mother Bonnie Reeves. – from the family of Roger & Kathy Reeves

Dear St. Mark's
Our family wants to thank all those who helped and contributed to the funeral meal in any way and the many sign ups that were made so that our family could join together in a celebration of life family meal in honor of my husband, Jack Hufford. Thank you and it was much appreciated.
Kind Regards,
Stephanie Hufford

St. Mark's Family,
As the end of 2024 draws near and my time on staff at St. Mark's comes to a close, I am spending time reflecting on the blessings of the past ten years. My overwhelming feeling is of gratitude. First and foremost, I am grateful for the relationships that have been cultivated. I was honored to learn part of each of your stories. I am grateful for the radical hospitality each of you exhibit to one another. There were many times when I found myself detained and unable to welcome someone but I never worried because others were extending a warm welcome. I am thankful for St. Mark's core tenet of mission and the many people who are impacted by Jesus' hands and feet at work in this place.

I will always treasure my time serving as the Welcome and Connection Coordinator. May we all continue to welcome all people, grow in knowledge and grace, and serve others locally and globally.

God Bless,
Missi Koenig

Because You Give

Brightwood Community Center: 120 boxes of food given out at food pantry, serving 448 individuals

Carmel UMC Food Pantry: 6 bags of food

East 10th St. Children & Youth Center:
\$5629.00

Family Promise of Greater Indy: \$6293.00

Fletcher Place Community Center: 377 packets of oatmeal

I Support the Girls: 25 undergarments; 50 packs of feminine hygiene products

Operation Classroom: \$205.00

Outreach IN: 10 containers of laundry detergent pods; 480 travel-size deodorants

Travel-sized toiletries: 2 bags

Use What You've Got Prison Ministry: 132 Christmas gifts for kids

World Communion Sunday: \$83.00

CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



facebook.com/stmarkscarmel



instagram.com/stmarkscarmel



youtube.com/stmarkscarmel

JUBILEE PUBLICATION NOTE

The Jubilee newsletter is published monthly, and all articles are due by the 15th of the previous month. To submit information for the Jubilee, complete the form at stmarkscarmel.org/publicity. If you have questions regarding the form, please contact techsupport@stmarkscarmel.org.

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