



MESSENGER

No. 41, October 7, 2019

More Than Vows: Why Membership Matters

"Therefore I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship." – Romans 12:1-2

Over the last few weeks, several people have decided to make Saint Mark their home church. In weeks to come, we anticipate more making that same commitment. We praise God for these kinds of decisions! A few reflections on the meaning of membership:

Membership signals a new start. In my conversations with people who are joining, many describe a new chapter in their journey with God – for some, it's a new marriage, the birth of a child, or a new job that's landed them in our neighborhood. The death of a spouse or close friend has also triggered people to go deeper with God. These transition moments are holy. They are ripe for the Holy Spirit's transformative work.

Membership signals a new way of leadership. In each conversation we have with people who join the church, we inform them of our responsibility to offer our time and talents. Membership means moving from being a recipient-only of the ministries of the church to being an active, eager participant in advancing the ministry.

Membership signals the commitment of God to humanity. I recognize that church membership isn't the end-all-be-all of the Christian life. Jesus is a lot more concerned with how we love our neighbor and how we love God than with where our church membership resides. I'm also aware that some of our Saint Mark regulars have attended for years without officially becoming members. But when we publicly acknowledge that we are enlisting to uphold the work of Jesus Christ here at Saint Mark, there's a huge claim that's being made. We are declaring a specific way that we're going to love God and our neighbor. We're going to choose to demonstrate that Jesus is alive and working with *this* community gathered on Columbiana Road. We're going to choose to offer our energy and creativity to tell other people about the good news that's been revealed to us in Christ. And as we do that, we realize that the Great Commission (Matthew 28) is being fulfilled.

Our membership vows contain a promise to uphold the work of Jesus Christ with our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. Consider a quick inventory of that commitment today: How's your prayer life? Are you lifting up your family, your friends, your church, and yes, even your enemies? Did you know that your presence here matters? We want every member to be present in worship as often as possible. It's meaningful for you, but it's also meaningful to support our brothers and sisters in Christ. How are you offering yourself to God and to others with your time, your finances, and with your skills? All of this combines for a way of life that demonstrates the love of God – a love that is available and ready to renovate every heart.

Commitment Sunday is this coming Sunday, October 13. Remember to bring your pledge cards with you to worship. Extras will be available at all three worship services. If you are ready to jump on board as a partner with what God is doing at Saint Mark, please let me know. We'll celebrate it together!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Drew".

OUR CHURCH FAMILY... NEWS AND NOTES

Thank You!

I would like to give a big thank-you to our wonderful church family. The "Purses with a Purpose" drive was a great success! I delivered over 70 purses filled with various personal items, along with a few extra items to the Lovelady Center on Wednesday, October 2. They were thrilled!! The Lovelady Center is home to almost 600 people, 100 of them being children. Their needs are ongoing. I will continue my relationship with them and will keep everyone posted for possible opportunities in the future.

God Bless each and every one of you.

Anne Cassell Watkins

Thank You!

We would like to thank everyone in our Saint Mark family for the many expressions of love that have been shown in the last few weeks. From the wonderful hospitality shown by the UMW and beautiful flowers from the Children's Ministry, to the food, cards, and calls received. My mom loved visiting Saint Mark any time she had the chance, and we are grateful for the love and support shown at her memorial service.

Alison, Richard, Hanna, Austin, and Corey Nelson



Outreach Event

Saint Mark is participating again this year in packaging meals to feed hungry people around the world. This is

a great mission project for all ages with lots of fun and fellowship.

Mark your calendars for Sunday, November 3rd from 3-5 PM in the Gym. Registration is very important in order to have ample supplies. You can register in Upper Room, Narthex, Church office or on line at <http://events.riseagainsthunger.org/SaintMarkUMC2019>. Please register all adults separately. Children may be registered as additional family members. Nursery will be provided for children 3 and under. Deadline to register is Sunday, October 27th.

Stewardship Campaign

Acts.1:8 But when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will receive power and will tell people about me everywhere- in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

You can be proud that Saint Mark UMC is a Great Commission Church! Get involved with the outreach of your church. Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can. If you are interested in joining the Missions Committee, which meets monthly, please give me a call (796-5129).

May God Bless you as you give of yourself through prayer, finances and efforts.

John Mark Owen

Churchwide Luncheon

As Drew mentioned in his article, this coming Sunday, October 13th, is Commitment Sunday. Following the 11 am Worship Service, there will be churchwide luncheon. Everyone is invited! Come join the Saint Mark family for a great meal and great fellowship!

Serendipity Circle

The Serendipity Circle will meet Monday, Oct. 14th, at 10:00 AM in Room 202. Janice Houck and Carole Gaston will provide snacks and Jean Schor has the devotional. We are planning to fill 18 gift bags with goodies for the Fairhaven birthday party which will be on Tuesday, October 22, at 2:30 PM. Please join us!

Kairos #70

October 17th-20th is Kairos #70 at maximum security prison Donaldson Correctional Facility. Seventy times a group of Christian men have gone into this hellish environment to bring the love of Christ to the worst of the worst...at least that's what most people think. What a surprise to find out most of these men are God created human beings just like us, not monsters. Most have some kind of family, even children of their own that they have dreams for. They made some serious mistakes in their lives and are paying the price with the loss of freedom, and some have paid with their own lives. Kairos is a ministry that is a ministry of "presence"....being there face to face, eyeball to eyeball, heart to heart. A Kairos weekend is held twice a year, once in the spring and once in the fall. At Donaldson that means 35 years of full weekends, Thursday through Sunday with 42 inmates learning of God's never ending love and forgiveness for them. Every Wednesday during the year in the chapel there is an hour and a half of "prayer and share" with Kairos alumni. Also on the third Saturday of each month is another gathering of Kairos members and inmates. "Listen, listen, love, love." This is the mantra of Kairos.

Thank you, Saint Mark, for your support of this ministry. Thank you, ladies for baking the cookies that make such a difference on each weekend. For any questions you may have contact Neil Segars at 427-8155 cell, or nsegars@msn.com.

Baked Goods Needed for Holiday Market!

The Holiday Market is Saturday, Nov. 9th, and a big part of the market is our Sweet Shoppe. We need pies, cakes, cookies, and other goodies to sell. Please package your items in Thanksgiving or Christmas colors. Also be sure to include the list of ingredients, especially for foods containing nuts, eggs and peanut butter. Remember our gluten-free friends! Our only restriction is no refrigerated items. The items should be delivered after 1 pm on Friday, Nov. 8th, if at all possible. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Ginger Ferrell at 979-8738.



Student Ministry

It's hard to believe that we are already a month plus into our fall youth ministry programming. Although it seems that time is flying, I look back and realize all that we have accomplished our first full month plus. Here are just three of the most significant things we have already accomplished.

1. We laid down essential foundations for our youth ministry through studying and discussing core values we wish to embody.

2. We started a middle school ministry for our 6th-8th graders which is off to a great start and growing!

3. We have made significant moves toward intergenerational ministry.

With these strong foundations, we're able to start some more exciting youth opportunities this month. We begin a High School Guys Discipleship Group Wednesday nights at 6:00 in the church coffeeshop. Our first study will be Andy Stanley's *Guardrails* series. We have plenty of mission opportunities with Fire House, the local fire station, and Rise Against Hunger. We are having a Halloween Party October 30th from 5:30-7:30 pm at Mrs. Donna's. *Joshua London*

Kids Ministry is excited to be planning our annual Fall Festival! This year's Fall Festival will be on Sunday, October 27, from 4pm-6pm! We will have Trunk or Treat, Inflatables, Free Food, Games, Prizes, Toddler Town, and of course a ton of candy! Donations needed: Candy: any type of candy; Little Debbie's: any kind. You may place your donations in the buckets marked "Fall Festival Candy" or "Fall Festival Little Debbie's". There will be buckets both outside the main office and downstairs outside Liz's office.

Volunteer's needed: *Trunks: you may decorate your trunk however you would like as long as it is "church/child appropriate" all trunks need to be set up and ready to go on that day by 3:30pm. There will be a prize for the Best Trunk so be creative! *Set-Up/Clean-Up help: Set-up help will begin that day at 2:30pm, and clean-up will begin at 6pm. Event Volunteers: help out during the event with Inflatables, food, and any other activity we may need help with. You can email me to sign up to volunteer at liz@saintmarkumc.org.

Quest Sunday night was so much fun! We made blankets for children in need! Our next Quest will be Sunday, October 20, from 5:30-7:30 pm. We meet every other Sunday night from 5:30-7:00pm. If you have any questions, please let me know! liz@saintmarkumc.org



Music Notes

It was inspiring to hear John Mark Owen remind us of our involvement in Missions and the challenge to do more! It was particularly meaningful in worship on World Communion Sunday. Sharing this Holy meal with people everywhere reminds us to invite others to join us. Check the Time and Talent Survey to see where you can get involved!

Stewardship Sunday will find special music at both services as we recommit our acceptance to spread God's love in our homes, church, communities, and the world! See you in church! *Ruth K. Miller*

Stewardship and Service

Sunday, October 6, 2019

Morning Worship	234
Sunday School	185
Toward Budget	\$16,927.00
Toward Capital Fund	\$868.00

Sunday, October 13, 2019

Counters

Jennifer Colbaugh
Stan Holloway

Children's Church

9 am Amy Owen
11 am Amanda Traynham

Monday, October 14, 2019

Visitation

Connie Goodwin
Sally McClanahan



Please note: If you see any changes needed in the assignments, please call the office ASAP!

ON SUNDAYS, WEDNESDAYS AFTER 4:00 PM AND OTHER CHURCHWIDE EVENTS

Upper Level Parking

Restricted to Seniors (75 and older),
People with Disabilities
& 5 Slots for Parents with Infants



SAINT MARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
2901 COLUMBIANA ROAD
BIRMINGHAM, AL 35216
 CHURCH OFFICE: 822-5980
 EARLY LEARNING CENTER: 822-1312
 WWW.SAINTMARKUMC.ORG

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

SENIOR PASTOR: Rev. Drew Clayton
ASSOCIATE PASTOR: Rev. Ryan Karr
ASSOCIATE PASTOR: Rev. Don Cross
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRY: Ruth K. Miller
DIRECTOR OF STUDENT MINISTRY: Joshua London
DIRECTOR OF KIDS' MINISTRY: Liz Benninger
DIRECTOR OF ELC : Sandy Jenkins
SECRETARY: J. Ruth Miller
FINANCIAL MANAGER: Deanna Holmes
FACILITIES MANAGER: Ashley Kirby
DIRECTOR OF MODERN WORSHIP & YOUTH CHOIR: Dan Cater
ORGANIST: Matthew Toone

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS
 Monday-Friday: 9 AM to 5:30 PM

Next Week at Saint Mark

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13
 9:00 am Modern & Traditional Worship
 10:00 am Sunday School
 11:00 am Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)
 12:00 pm Churchwide Luncheon
 4:30 pm Adult Handbells/Youth Praise Band
 5:30 pm Chancel Choir/UMYF
 7:00 pm Men's Prayer/Share Group
 7:15 pm Godspeed Rehearsal

MONDAY, OCTOBER 14
 10:00 am Serendipity Circle (202)
 5:30 pm Bagpipe Rehearsal (CM2, 109)
 5:45 pm Chris Stoutermire (BB) (Gym)
 6:00 pm Prayer Meeting (Sanctuary)
 6:30 pm UMW Executive Committee (202)
 6:30 pm Girl Scout Leader Mtg. (208)
 7:00 pm Voices of the South (FH)

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15
 8:00 am Feed the Homeless (Highlands)
 10:00 am Staff Meeting (202)
 6:00 pm Good Neighbor Fellowship (Gym)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16
 8:30 am Feed the Homeless (Reconciler)
 5:00 pm Wonderful Wednesday
 6:00 pm Bible Studies/Holiday Market Wkshop

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17
 9:00 am ELC Fall Festival
 10:00 am Quilting Group (208)
 4:55 pm Boys' Choir Rehearsal
 6:00 pm Praise Band Practice (Gym)

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18
 8:00 am Feed the Homeless (Highlands)
 9:30 am ELC Chapel (Sanctuary)
 10:00 am Knitting Fellowship (202)
 6:30 pm Memory Catchers (202)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19
 1:00 pm Gym set up for Modern Worship

October 2019						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Save the Date!
 The 2020 Saint Mark Family Life Retreat is scheduled for January 31- Feb 2, 2020. Mark your calendars! If you are interested in helping with the retreat, contact Brian Parker, who will be the retreat coordinator again this year.