



MESSENGER

January 13, 2020

A Prayer for Navigating Uncertain Terrain

Baptism of the Lord Sunday is one of my favorite Sundays of the year. Yesterday in worship, we placed the waters of Baptism on our heads and remembered who we are and *whose* we are. It's a helpful reminder that Jesus underwent Baptism — a sign that he is fully committed to the Trinity's rescue mission of sinful-but-beloved humanity. As I sip my water today, I think of Liz's children's moment that served as a helpful reminder that every time we see water, we can think of the many ways that God nourishes us, purifies us of our sins, and calls us his beloved. Perhaps your connections with water will also be magnified as well!

We ended the service with a prayer that John Wesley offered for his churches in the middle of the 18th century. It's become known as the Wesley Covenant Prayer. You may be very familiar with this prayer already. As I've spent time praying it today, I find it both deeply comforting and deeply unsettling. Odd, I know. Here's what I mean:

Unsettling Aspects: I don't like praying for unemployment. I don't like praying to be set aside. I don't like praying to be empty and to have nothing. I don't like praying to be brought low. In fact, I've spent a decent chunk of ego-development over the years trying to insulate myself from these exact things! It's a counter-intuitive mode in our culture to pray this way. I pray it becomes more and more comfortable for the Saint Mark family.

Comforting Aspects: I find it deeply comforting to know that even when I'm praying for unemployment or being set aside or to be emptied or humbled, such decisions are being placed in the hands that crafted all things. What God wants, I want. What God needs, I need. It relinquishes control to the ultimately trustworthy One. We are praying to be connected to God. What better place could there be?

You've read how Methodism is in a time of uncertain transition. Let's be a calming, peace-making people, equipped by the Spirit in the bond of peace. As we get more information, we will have conversations about how we as a church will proceed.

We have a God who has seen denominations rise and fall countless times. It's painful to see division arise among my beloved Methodists. Yet, somehow the Spirit transcends such denominationalism. The Trinity keeps pressing ahead and making disciples who transform the world. I want to be on board with that kind of mission!

Below is the Wesley prayer I've described above. I hope you'll join me in praying this and pressing forward to demonstrate to our city and to the nations that Love Lives Here because of Jesus Christ.

"I am no longer my own, but thine. Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt. Put me to doing, put me to suffering. Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee; exalted for thee or brought low for thee. Let me be full, let me be empty. Let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal. And now, O Glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it. And the covenant which I have made on earth, Let it be ratified in heaven. Amen."

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Drew".

Registration Deadline is January 26th

Registration for the 2020 Saint Mark Church Family Life Retreat (Jan 31-Feb 2) is underway, and the deadline is January 26. You can register in the Upper Room on Sundays or at the church office during the week. Please contact Brian Parker if you have any questions, or if you need assistance with registration.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY... NEWS AND NOTES



Gail Campbell
5359 Heritage Lane
Irondale AL 35210
(205) 957-7909

Worship Schedule for February 2nd

On Sunday, February 2nd, many from the Saint Mark family will be worshipping at the Family Life Retreat in Shocco Springs. We will also have our regular Traditional Worship services at 9 am and 11 am here at Saint Mark. There will be no Modern Worship service on February 2nd.

Nominations

Nominations are being accepted for the UMW Special Mission Recognition Pins. The deadline is Sunday, February 16th. There are forms in the UMW box outside the church office with a list of previous recipients listed on the back.

Pins are given to honor individuals' work for and commitment to missions. If you have any questions, contact Ginger Ferrell (979-8738). Completed forms may be left in the UMW box outside the office area.

Wonderful Wednesday Menus for January

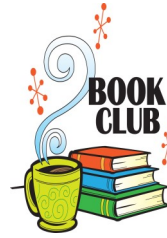
January 15	Adults: Chicken Fingers Kids: Chicken Fingers
January 22	Adults: Beefy Mac Kids: Beefy Mac
January 29	Adults: Chicken Enchiladas Kids: Tacos

Respite Care

Respite care is for children with special needs (from birth to about age 21) and their siblings. Hours for Respite care are: 6:00 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. The remaining dates for 2020 are listed below:

March 13, 2020
April 3, 2020
May 1, 2020
August 7, 2020
September 11, 2020
October 2, 2020
November 6, 2020

Team leaders are: Bill Keene, Lisa Cooper, Tim and Lara Allen, and Judy Weismann. Other volunteers are members and friends of the Saint Mark United Methodist Church family. More volunteers are needed. Please contact one of the team leaders if you wish to assist with this amazing ministry!



Come Join Us!

The book for February is *Little Princes: One Man's Promise to Bring Home the Lost Children of Nepal* by Conor Grennan. The book for March is *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles.

Anyone interested in joining us would be welcome. Contact Linda Kitchens for more info at lindaleepk3@aol.com or (205) 492-9190.

Courtyard Bricks

Faye Black will be sending in a new order soon for courtyard bricks. If anyone would like to order a brick, please call Faye at (205) 822-6229.

Altar Flower Calendar Posted

Thanks to everyone who provided the beautiful altar flowers this past year. Some of you are eager to sign up for special dates in 2020. The new calendar has been posted on the bulletin board just outside the church office. All of the January dates have been filled. We'd love to fill the first quarter (through March) so if you haven't had a chance to sign up, please stop by and do so at your earliest convenience.

Our regular florist is Continental Florist, and if you order a regular arrangement, it will all be taken care of from the office. If you wish to do a special arrangement, you can do that. There are several options available. You can also call the church office to sign up or to get more information (822-5980).

Your help in filling our calendar is greatly appreciated!





Student Ministry

We want to thank Ed Randle for teaching our youth about money management. This upcoming Sunday Keith and Virginia Foster will be our guest speakers. This Wednesday, our middle schoolers will continue our series on The Armor of God and our high schoolers will continue to learn about the Wesleyan quadrilateral. In Sunday School, we have started the Groove curriculum and this month we are studying important spiritual practices.

Sunday, January 26th, we invite the whole church to join us for the Katie Lacey Souperbowl Youth Fundraiser. This year the fundraiser will be a churchwide fellowship lunch from 11:00-1:00 in the Fellowship Hall. (Early worshippers can eat at 11 and later worshippers can eat at 12!). We could use some additional help rounding out the meal, so if you are able to bring soup or a dessert contact Joshua London or Bonnie Gaston at (205) 907-5649. *Joshua London*

This week in Kids Ministry our lesson is, Noah's Bad Day, and our scripture for this week is, Genesis 6: 5-7. We hope during the week you will discuss the lesson with them, ask them what they learned at church, and engage in helping them learn all about Noah!



Quest, 4th-6th grade student ministry, kicked off the new year last night, playing games, eating pizza and setting our goals for 2020. We had a blast creating our "2020 Goal Books!" Our next Quest Sunday night will be Sunday, January 26, from 5:30-7:30pm. Meet in the gym! Come join us for games, snack supper, lesson, and of course a lot of Fun!!

Wonderful Wednesdays resumed last Wednesday night, January 8! We were so excited to see everyone and start the new year! We are now back to our regular Wednesday night schedule. Ages 3k-6th grade meet in the gym at 5:45pm. Parents, please remember you must walk your child into the gym and sign them in.

Kids Ministry will be starting off 2020 with a small change in our age groups. Our current 3rd graders will now be moving to our older Elementary Sunday School Class. We will now have the following classes: 3k-5k; 1st grade-2nd grade or Young Elementary Class; and 3rd grade will move to our Older Elementary class. This is the class directly next door to their current class and DeAnna Ryan is the lead teacher. I know our 3rd graders will be excited to join this new class!

Liz Benninger



Music Notes

As I walked around my home Sunday, I saw many little branches blown out of the trees from Saturday storms. My home is in the forest, and I was grateful for no damage! Others were not as fortunate and I know you join me in prayer for all who suffered loss. God did promise that he would be with us in every storm.

We were missing a few of our youth singing on Sunday morning, but they are gearing up for a new tour, and ending fall sports, so you will be seeing them in force. Dan sent the youth home with copies of John Wesley's Covenant Prayer after rehearsal to ponder. Commitment is serious business at every age! Thanks to John Wesley for sharing!

This coming Sunday, Jan. 19, the Men's Club Choir sings at 9:00 worship and Chancel Choir sings at 11:00. *Ruth K. Miller*

Stewardship and Service

Sunday, January 12, 2020

Morning Worship	262
Sunday School	188
Toward Budget	\$16,676.00
Toward Capital Fund	\$570.00

Sunday, January 19, 2020

Counters

Ed Craig
Betsy Eaton

Children's Church

9 am Alison Nelson
11 am DeAnna Ryan

Tuesday, January 21, 2020

Visitation

Donna Baird
Jean Schor



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

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, JANUARY 19
 8:00 am Men's Club Breakfast (FH)
 9:00 am Traditional Worship/Modern Worship
 10:00 am Sunday School
 11:00 am Traditional Worship
 4:30 pm Youth Praise Band/Adult Handbells
 5:30 pm Chancel Choir/UMYF
 7:00 pm Men's Prayer/Share Group

FRIDAY, JANUARY 24
 8:00 am Feed the Homeless (Highlands)
 9:30 am ELC Chapel (Sanctuary)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25
 1:00 pm Set up Gym for Modern Worship

MONDAY, JANUARY 20 (Church Office & ELC Closed)
 6:00 pm Trustees (202)
 7:00 pm Voices of the South (Gym)

TUESDAY, JANUARY 21
 8:00 am Feed the Homeless (Highlands)
 10:00 am Staff Meeting (202)
 6:00 pm Good Neighbor Fellowship (Gym)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22
 8:30 am Feed the Homeless (Reconciler)
 5:00 pm Wonderful Wednesday
 6:00 pm Adult Classes (202, 204, 208)

THURSDAY, JANUARY 23
 4:55 pm B'ham Boys Choir Rehearsal
 6:30 pm MW Band Practice (Gym)

January 2020						
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	

Please call the office if any changes are needed on the calendar!