

St. Mark Connection

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Issue 1

St. Mark Presbyterian Church
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January
2024

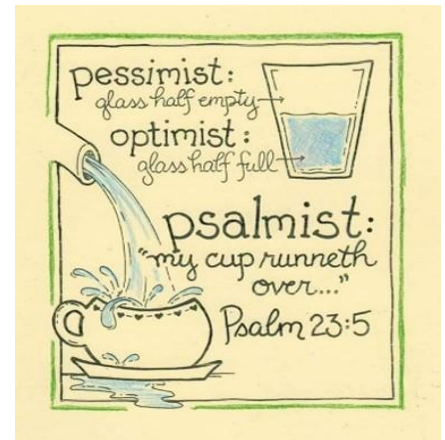
HAPPY NEW YEAR
2024!



Dear St. Mark Members and Friends,

I am thrilled to begin 2024 as your pastor! As much as I love the Christmas season, I find the annual flipping of the calendar exhilarating. Each new year brings new possibilities and another chance to make life-giving changes.

I want to introduce you to a model for church vitality that I have been working on that I will believe will aid St. Mark to deepen its discipleship and grow as a community. I will be preaching on these concepts to kick off the new year. Let's call it "An Overflowing Church." Some of us are glass half empty folks and some are glass half full. God doesn't want us to be half full or empty. God wants to overflow our cups!

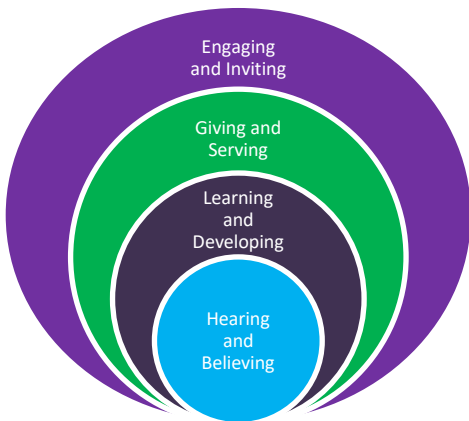


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reminders

January 13 – Mini Church
Workday
January 21 – Commitment
Sunday



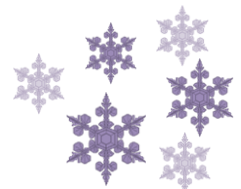
The Four Levels of An Overflowing Church:

- 1) **Hearing** and **believing** the Gospel of Jesus Christ and that with God nothing is impossible.
- 2) **Learning** the Bible and **developing** a deeper relationship with God through prayer.
- 3) Responding to God by **giving** and **serving**.
- 4) Overflowing Level: **Engaging** people with the Gospel and **inviting** them to join St. Mark.

We are already working at the first three levels of an Overflowing Church. The more fully we engage in those first levels, the more natural the fourth level will become to us. Engaging people with the Gospel and inviting them to join our community will be what overflows in you as you grow in the first three levels. Engaging people with the Gospel and inviting them to church is the only tried and true way to grow numerically as a church. It's how the church has grown since Jesus first invited his first disciples to follow him.

You will know you have grown mature in the first three levels when engaging people with the Gospel becomes second nature for you. Let's spend 2024 becoming filled to overflowing with the life of God!

Happy New Year!
Pastor Paul



Sunday Sermons and Scriptures

January 7th

Baptism of the Lord
Celebration of The Lord’s Supper
“Overflowing Cups: Hearing and Believing”
John 4:7-1:15, Acts 19:1-7



January 14th

Second Sunday after Epiphany
“Overflowing Cups: Learning and Developing”
1 Samuel 3:1-10, John 8:31-38

January 21st

Third Sunday after Epiphany
“Overflowing Cups: Giving and Serving”
Luke 9:10-17, John 13:3-17

January 28th

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
“Overflowing Cups: Engaging and Inviting”
Luke 14:15-24, 2 Corinthians 5:16-21



With Deepest Sympathy

Bill Nowlin, Cheryl McIntosh Nowlin’s husband, suffered a cardiac arrest on December 16th and passed away peacefully surrounded by his family on December 19th. A memorial service celebrating Bill’s life is being planned for January. Please keep Cheryl and all those who loved Bill in your prayers.



God Bless You on Your Birthday

January 4

Vickie Lall

January 5

Selina Cantu
Sue Duncan

January 15

Cody Robinson
Travis Stephen



January 24

Norma Murray

January 26

Clive Duncan

January 27

Mary Allison Crawley

January 30

Marie Chambers

January 31

Marilyn Jackson

SOCK, HAT, AND GLOVE TREE UPDATE

Thank you for your generous donations to our Sock, Glove and Hat drive! The donations will be delivered to **White Rock Center of Hope in Dallas**. We will count each donation and let you know what we gave. Thanks to everyone for your thoughtfulness and generosity.



Susie Miller
For the Mission and Membership Committee

St. Mark Church Family,

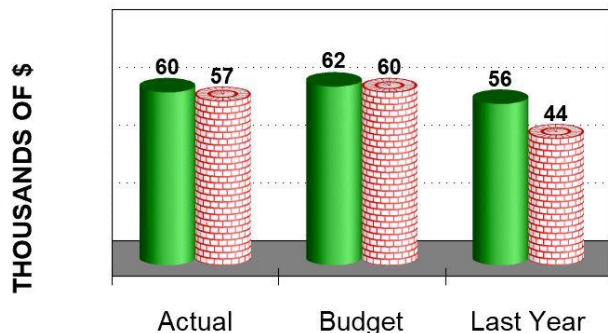
We are so very blessed by the generosity of this congregation. Thank you so much for your gift and your loving support. You continue to be such a remarkable congregation, existing to know Jesus and to make Him known. May God bless you richly in the coming year. And may God its leadership.



Blessings,
Pastor Paul Burns, Bob King, Randall McGee,
Gary O’Neal, and Darlene Wright

Treasurer's Report

5 MONTHS THROUGH 11-30-2023



OPERATING FUND

■ +INCOME ■ -EXPENSE

Operating Fund – YTD unrestricted contributions are \$1,300 below budget, and \$7,400 below last year. YTD expenses are \$2,900 below budget, and \$13,300 above last year. Bottom line, we are approximately \$3,100 positive YTD, which is \$1,400 better than budgeted but \$9,600 behind last year.

Flower Calendar



Thank you to Ellen Roberts for creating our 2024 Flower Calendar, which is on the wall outside the church office! To reserve a date for a special flower arrangement in the sanctuary, just write your name on the date line. Prior to your selected date, please provide the church office with the message you want printed in the Order of Worship and specify whether you will bring your own fresh flower arrangement (which you will need to take home after the worship service) or if you want an artificial flower arrangement provided by the church (a donation to the Flower Fund will be appreciated).

Commitment Sunday – January 21st

The Session of St. Mark invites you to participate in our annual stewardship program. Commitment Sunday will be January 21st this year. We have been blessed to be able to gather in person the past several months and continue to provide worship online through YouTube and Sermon.net. The work of St Mark goes on in the community and around the world.

The Operating Fund is the recipient of our tithes and provides funding for weekly worship, Christian education, building operations, and salaries, as well as our support for mission and outreach. If you wish to make a Faith Promise to another permanent fund, please make this promise as an “over and above” gift after supporting the Operating Fund.

Please watch for more information and a Faith Promise card coming in the mail soon, and join us on Sunday, January 22nd as we once again commit to the future of St. Mark Presbyterian Church. Your financial commitment to the support of St. Mark Presbyterian Church is vital to our future mission.

Session Highlights

December 19, 2023 Stated Meeting

Motion passed to close the church office on the following holidays in 2024:

News Years Day	January 1
Memorial Day	May 27
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	September 2
Thanksgiving Day	November 28
Christmas Eve	December 24
Christmas Day	December 25

Motion passed to adopt and implement the existing Child Protection Policy and Sexual Harassment Policy currently in place for 2023, with the intent for the Administration and Personnel Committee to review and update both policies, as needed, in 2024.



Ok, you know that I reuse ideas and repeat themes on a regular basis. This month is one of those months. I was looking back at previous January articles to see what I was thinking about as a new year began in past years. I decided to reuse last year's article and add some commentary and pondering it the end. It may be a chance to look back and forward at the same time. So here we go.

"The other day I was reading Matthew 2 for a different project. I was focusing on the second half of the chapter starting at 2:13. It is a familiar story, but you might want to read it before you read the rest of my article.

(I'll wait while you read. FYI... my favorite online Bible is the Oremus Bible Browser: <https://bible.oremus.org/> I have it open to Matthew 2 on my iPad as I write. OK, have you had time to finish reading? Great. Back to my writing.)

I don't know how many times I have read this chapter and the story of what happened after the wise men came looking for Jesus. But this time something jumped out at me that I don't recall noticing before.

Twice an angel or messenger from God appeared to Joseph in a dream. I remembered that. But it is the command of the messenger that jumped out at me. Both times it was a command to "get up." The first was to get up and flee to Egypt. The second was to get up and leave Egypt. And both times Joseph obeyed the command.

As we start a new year, I am fascinated by the command to "get up." I have never had a messenger from God exactly like Joseph. But I believe that God still calls people and congregations to do particular things. There have been times when I have sensed a call from God. Often it comes not in a dream but through the voice of a trusted friend. And there have been times when in hindsight I didn't listen or misunderstood the call.

So, I am wondering if we as individuals or together as a congregation might experience calls to "get up" this year. I wonder what we might be called to do if that happens. Get up and do what. Hmmm. I wonder how we will respond. I hope we will be listening. What do you think?"

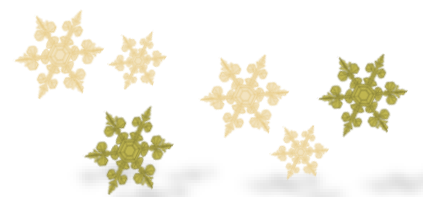
Thanks for rereading. As you think about last year, did we (or you) experience any calls to "get up?" Were they dramatic or very quiet? How did we (or you) respond? How is it going?

If we (or your) didn't respond there is no need to spend too much time dwelling on it. After all it is a new year! A chance to look forward and think about what God might be up to with us.

And as I said last year: So, I am wondering if we as individuals or together as a congregation might experience calls to "get up" this year. I wonder what we might be called to do if that happens. Get up and do what. Hmmm. I wonder how we will respond. I hope we will be listening.

What do you think?





St Mark Presbyterian Church, Dallas Texas

January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 9:45a Worship Service New Year's Eve 	1 New Year's Day OFFICE CLOSED 	2 6:00p Fellowship Com Mtg	3	4 10:30a Bible Study 6:00p Zoom Yoga	5	6 8:00a Dallas Cluster Officer Training (Gleaners Classroom) 
7 9:45a Worship Service Communion 	8 6:00a Admin & Personnel Com Mtg	9 6:00a Stewardship & Finance Com Mtg 6:00p Christian Educ Com Mtg	10 6:00a Handbells Rehearsal 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	11 10:30a Bible Study 6:00p Zoom Yoga	12	13 8:00a Property Com Mtg 9:00a Mini Workshop 
14 9:45a Worship Service	15	16 6:30p Session Meeting	17 6:00a Handbells Rehearsal 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	18 10:30a Bible Study 6:00p Zoom Yoga	19	20
21 9:45a Worship Service 	22	23 6:00a Mission & Membership Com Mtg	24 6:00a Handbells Rehearsal 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	25 10:30a Bible Study 6:00p Zoom Yoga	26	27
28 9:45a Worship Service	29	30	31 6:00p Handbells Rehearsal 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	1 10:30a Bible Study 6:00p Zoom Yoga	2	3