

In This Edition...

St. Mark's Gift Bag Ministry for At-Risk Children

Your Gift Brings Christmas to City Schools Preschoolers - Below.

Final W.N.T. for 2014 is Wednesday, December 10th

MTSU Flute Choir Christmas Concert at 6:15 p.m. - Page 3.

St. Mark's Family Nativity Display

In the Sanctuary Foyer, December 10th and 14th - Page 3.

Calendar of Events - Page 4.

*From the
Pastor*



You might find this hard to believe, but I have NOT had a Christmas Eve off in over 25 years!

Okay, maybe you would..... Pastors usually don't get Christmas Eve off. Fortunately, being in worship at church on

Christmas Eve is one of the highlights of my year. Here, at St. Mark's, I love the family Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service at 5:00 and the more traditional Candlelight Communion service at 8:00.

Our average attendance for those combined service has been right at one thousand people for the past ten years.

In an effort to make sure everyone feels welcome this year, Mary Wallace, our Greeter coordinator, is recruiting special volunteers just for those services (she did say, however, that if you would like to continue as a greeter, that would also be great). Mary and I will meet with anyone interested one half hour before the service to provide you with instructions.

Listed below are some qualifications needed:

1. A sense of excitement. Someone who is glad others are visiting our church.
2. A sense of prayer. Someone willing to pray others will experience God's presence as we worship.
3. A sense of warmth. Someone who will make eye contact with our guests and greet them with a hello and warm smile.
4. A sense of helpfulness. Help our guests feel at home and ready to direct them into worship. Offer to show them around the church.
5. A sense of hospitality and welcome. Introduce them to a church or staff member.

Thank you for all you do in making our guests feel welcome week after week. Please pray for all our upcoming Christmas services and programs and invite a friend to join us!

Merry Christmas,

Craig



St. Mark's Gift Bag Ministry for At-Risk Children from Murfreesboro City Schools Preschools

St. Mark's Gift Bag Ministry provides a little Christmas for 150 at-risk preschool children who attend Murfreesboro City Schools Pre-Kindergarten programs across the city. These children might not receive a Christmas gift other than what you provide. The process is simple:

**Choose a Gift Bag from the Narthex Table
Fill with New, Small, Age-Appropriate Gifts
Return your Gift Bag to the Table
by Sunday, December 14th**

Participating in the Gift Bag Ministry is a great opportunity to help local children and families, and also teach our own children and grandchildren about the true meaning of Christmas – GIVING!

Sponsored by the Children's Ministries Team

Dementia/Alzheimer's Support

The Dementia Alzheimer's Support Group for Care Givers will meet on Thursday, December 18th at 1:30 p.m. in Room 506. We will have Dr. Paul Foster as our guest speaker. Mark your calendars, come and bring any care givers you might know.



One Can. Fight Hunger. Receives Record offering for Rutherford County & Red Bird Mission

Wow! What a Church! The Jam Session 5th and 6th Graders spent several hours last Wednesday sorting and boxing over 4000 items that will feed the hungry in the Murfreesboro area via the Cornerstone/St. Mark's Food Bank and the Rutherford County Food Bank, including dried pinto beans for the people of Red Bird Mission.

Thank you for your generous response to this food drive! Your donations of canned and dry foods are always welcome in the Cornerstone Food Bank, Room 407/409.



Jeannie Addy, Chuck Becher, George Beers, Ron Blansett, Marilyn Brisbois, Jerry Brown, Ellen Buckner, Thomas Carr, Bertha Chrietzberg, Pat Coleman, Bob Davis, John Dawkins, Bill Denton, Teddy Denton, Susan DeWinter, Bob Doudican, Dan Farrar, Norman Foster, Bobbie Goodman, Taylor Hadley, Sue Hicks-Caskey, Mary Huhta, Justin James, Lee Jennings,

Rosalee Martin, Jim McDowell, Pat Mitchell, Katrena Moore, Judy Morton, Marty Murphy, Thomas Noblit, Mack and Margaret Radford, David and Louise Reynolds, Daniel and Cindy Russell, Alex Scogins, James Scott, Belva Smith, Lewis Snyder, Bill and Cheryl Spencer, Ken and Jean Ussery, Eleanor Ward, Aleen Wasson, Florence Williams, Raimee Williams (printed as submitted).

Our prayers and sympathy are extended to the friends and family of Lynn Birdwell, and to the McFerrin family on the death of Diane's sister, Electa Wheeler.

SAGES News

The SAGES' prayer for us all is that as we move through this Advent Season we will sense The Spirit of the Promised One who is coming to bless us all at Christmas.

The distribution of Christmas Bags to shut-ins will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, December 4th. Please come to the Banquet Room if you can help. This is an opportunity to bless folks who otherwise may not be able to be out and about during this wonderful season of the year.

The Sages will travel to Beersheba on December 5th with the bus leaving at 9:30 a.m. The cost is \$15.00. Please come by the church office and pay this amount and make your reservations. Look for the book!!! We enjoy the retelling of the Christmas story, carols, a great meal and a host of very enjoyable activities

The SAGES' Christmas Luncheon will be at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, December 8th in the Recreation Center. The meal is \$12.00. The program will be the Senior Singers from the St. Claire Senior Center. Plan now to attend. Please make your reservations by signing up now in the church office or in the narthex on Sunday. Please look for the book!

The Dementia/Alzheimer's' Support Group will meet at St. Mark's Thursday, December 18th at 1:30 p.m.

SAGES will provide the meal at the Veterans' Fisher House on December 18th at 5 :00 p.m.

Tree of Special Wishes

There is still time to choose an ornament from the tree in the Narthex and return the item wrapped and tagged by December 14th for delivery to the parents. The youth also provide a Christmas party for the children on the tree on December 13th. Help or donations for the party are welcome also.

Stewardship Summary as of November 30, 2014

Your donations since January 1, 2014 have provided assistance to families in Murfreesboro and throughout the southeast.

Disaster Relief	20 homes in 5 cities	Food Boxes	386
Furniture Program	211 Families	Home Communion	146
Children's Books	29 Families	Worship DVDs	146
Begin Again Boxes	24 Boxes	Food to Redbird	45,000 lbs.



Did You Know St. Mark's Now Has an Endowment Fund?

Stocks and bonds are excellent means of making a gift to your Church. You can be entitled to an income tax deduction, if you give these securities during your lifetime. Ask your professional advisors for assistance.

Belize Mission Trip

Our church wide mission trip to Belize is scheduled for December 27, 2015 – January 2, 2016. We will be staying and working in central Belize in Belmopan. The total cost of the trip is \$1,100.00. We are taking \$100.00 deposits beginning now through February 1st. An additional \$500.00 will be due May 31, 2015 with the remaining balance due November 8, 2015. There may be some fundraising opportunities for the group, but mainly the cost is the responsibility of the participant. This trip is open to youth and adults (it is recommended that middle school youth participate with a parent).

Parents Day Out

The Youth will be sponsoring a **Parents Day Out** on December 13th from 9:30 – 3:30. Lunch will be provided. \$40.00 for one child, \$65.00 for two children and \$90 for three or more children.

The fees will be used to provide a snack and all supplies needed for the evening. Proceeds will benefit the 2015 Youth Trip fund.

Children's Coin Offering

Sunday, December 14th

Benefitting Miriam's Promise, serving children, expectant parents and families hoping to adopt throughout Middle Tennessee.

UMW News

The Lois Shipp Circle invites all UMW groups to a Christmas Luncheon at Through the Grapevine on December 12th at noon.

Wednesday Night TOGETHER

Food, Faith and Fellowship

5:15 - 6:00 p.m. Church Family Dinner

Reservations due by 12:00 p.m. Monday
\$6.00/Adult, \$2.00/Children 10 and under and MTSU
Students, \$20.00/Family Max

5:45 - 7:30 p.m. Childcare Available

For Infants to Age 4 in Rooms 201-202

For the Kids, Ages 4 – Grade 6

G.R.A.C.E. (5:45 – 6:15 p.m.)
Vocal Choirs for all ages! (6:15 – 7:15 p.m.)

For the Youth, Grades 7 - 12:

Youth Bible Study (6:15 – 7:15p.m.)

Final WNT for 2014 is

Wednesday, December 10th!

4:30 – 8:00 p.m. Family Nativity Display

5:15 p.m. Church Family Dinner

6:15 p.m. MTSU Flute Choir Christmas Concert

“A Night Like No Other”

5:00 P.M. Christmas Eve Worship

Especially for Families with Young Children

The Children's Ministries Team is offering a special 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve worship service especially for families with young children. The service will include music, readings and prayers led by our children and their families. The Christmas story will be portrayed through a spontaneous Christmas pageant with all the children participating as animals, angels, shepherds, kings, and stars. The service will conclude with communion and candlelight singing, and each child will receive a beautiful Christmas ornament. Child care for infants and toddlers is provided during the service.

Any children or other family members who would like to provide pre-service music or participate as readers are asked to contact Rev. Touchton as soon as possible to volunteer!

St. Mark's Family Nativity

Nativity sets shared by St. Mark's members are a new addition to the Christmas season. They will be displayed in Sanctuary foyer with the opening held Wed. December 10th from 4:30 - 8:00 p.m. in conjunction with the Flute Choir performance, and on Sunday, December 14th, 8:00 a.m. - 1 p.m. Take time to feel the spirit of Christmas.

Youth News



The youth were glad to help with the One Can drive by participating in our annual Scavenger Hunt for Food. We thank those adults who drove or helped with the hunt: Meg VanPatten, Caroline VanPatten, Michele Farley, Kristin Naylor, Kim Ward, Layne Allen, Louie & Stacey Blades, John and Michelle McDaniel, George Jackle, Todd and Kathy Waldecker, Reid and Carrie Henderson, Tyler Neale, Penny Clark, Amy Foster and Butler Touchton. We gathered over 1,000 food items in our hunt!

Our schedule for the coming weeks:

Sunday, Dec. 7 – Christmas worship during FusionYouth

Wednesday, Dec. 10 – Christmas Caroling

Sunday, Dec. 14 – Christmas party to be held at the MTSU Wesley Foundation

Friday, Dec. 19 – 61st Avenue Last Minute Toy Store

Sundays, Dec. 21 & 28 – No FusionYouth meeting

Our Wednesday night crowd will be heading out for Christmas Caroling on Wednesday, December 10th. We will meet at 5:00 and go to dinner before singing. We should return by 7:30.

We will have our youth Christmas party at the MTSU Wesley Foundation on Sunday, December 14th. We will have dinner and entertainment followed by more fun! You are welcome to wear your Christmas Pajamas and we will also have an ugly sweater contest. Bring a teenagers gift that we will take to 61st Avenue. We will meet at the Wesley Foundation at 5:00 p.m. and pick up will be at 8:00 p.m.

On December 19th, we will meet at 11:00 a.m. to head to 61st Avenue UMC to participate in the Last Minute Toy Store. This provides shopping opportunities for Davidson County residents whose children have not been served by any other agency for Christmas. Last year, the Toy Store helped close to 5,000 children. We will return at 7:00. Bring money for a snack on the way home.

MERRY CHRISTMAS FELLOWSHIP BRUNCH

Sunday, December 21st, 9:45 - 10:45 a.m.,
in lieu of Sunday School

BRING A FAMILY-SIZE BREAKFAST FOOD TO SHARE!

Coffee, Juice and Milk Provided
Invite your FRIENDS and FAMILY!

ELVES NEEDED IN THE KITCHEN!
Volunteer yourself or your class to Rev. Touchton!



1267 N. Rutherford Blvd.
Murfreesboro, TN 37130

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 155
Murfreesboro, TN

DATE AND TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

To be removed from the mailing list,
e-mail stmarks@stmarkstn.org

Calendar of Events

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4

7:30 a.m. Gym Open for Walking - RC
9:00 a.m. SAGES Make Christmas Bags-BR
10:30 a.m. Knit Together - N
12:00 p.m. Local Pastors - 506
5:30 p.m. Strength Training - N
6:00 p.m. Walking Exercise
6:30 p.m. Men's Basketball - RC
7:30 p.m. Youth Basketball at St. Rose

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5

7:30 a.m. Gym Open for Walking - RC
9:30 a.m. SAGES to Beersheba
10:30 a.m. Revival: Faith as Wesley
Lived It-1203
6:00 p.m. Choir Christmas Party - BR
Mixed Blessings Class Party

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6

7:30 a.m. UMM Breakfast Meeting - BR

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7

8:30 a.m. Worship - S
9:45 a.m. Christian Education
11:00 a.m. Worship - S
12:30 p.m. Discussion Class Party
4:00 p.m. SONlight - 1119
Finance Team - 506
Preschool Committee - Library

5:00 p.m. Chancel Ringers - 1117
Covenant Bible Study - 1203
FusionYouth - YC
6:00 p.m. Chancel Choir - 1119

MONDAY, DECEMBER 8

7:30 a.m. Gym Open for Walking - RC
11:30 a.m. SAGES Christmas Luncheon-BR
4:00 p.m. Covenant Bible Study - 1203
5:30 p.m. Girl Scouts - 209, 212, 213
6:00 p.m. Boy Scouts - RC
7:00 p.m. MSC Rehearsals - 1119

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9

7:30 a.m. Gym Open for Walking - RC
8:00 a.m. BSF Leaders
9:45 a.m. Preschool Chapel - Chapel
11:30 p.m. Minerva Harrell Class Lunch-BR
4:30 p.m. Boys Basketball Practice - RC
5:30 p.m. Strength Training - N
6:00 p.m. Walking Exercise

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10

7:30 a.m. Gym Open for Walking - RC
8:00 a.m. Bible Study Fellowship
9:00 a.m. Prayer Group - Chapel
9:45 a.m. Preschool Chapel - Chapel
10:00 a.m. Women of the Bible - 504
4:30 p.m. Nativity Display - Foyer
5:00 p.m. Youth Caroling

5:15 p.m. WNT Dinner - BR
6:15 p.m. MTSU Flute Choir Concert - S
7:15 p.m. Chancel Choir - 1119

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11

7:30 a.m. Gym Open for Walking - RC
10:00 a.m. Quilting Bee - BR
10:30 a.m. Knit Together - N
5:30 p.m. Strength Training - N
6:00 p.m. Walking Exercise
6:30 p.m. Men's Basketball - RC

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12

7:30 a.m. Gym Open for Walking - RC
10:30 a.m. Revival: Faith as Wesley
Lived It-1203
12:00 p.m. UMW Christmas Lunch at
Through the Grapevine

More dates at: www.stmarkstn.org

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