



Office: 615-893-3455      www.stmarkstn.org  
 Fax: 615-896-2273      stmarks@stmarkstn.org  
 Preschool: 615-895-1803

Volume No. 19    December 16, 2014    Issue No. 25

**In This Edition...**

**Candlelight Christmas Eve Services at St. Mark's**

5:00 Service for Families with Small Children, Traditional Service at 8:00 - Below.

**Merry Christmas Fellowship Brunch**

In lieu of Sunday School, 9:45 a.m., Sunday, December 21st - Below

**"Bring Your Gifts" Talent Show Returns in January**

Sign Up Your Act Now for January 7th Show - Page 3.

**Calendar of Events** - Page 4.

*From the Pastor*



I love Christmas! I love hearing the Salvation Army workers ring bells at shopping centers and stores. I love the beautiful light displays on houses and other buildings. I love the taste and smell of apple cider and baked goodies. I love holding hands with friends and singing carols.

I can't remember a time when I didn't love this time of year. I have noticed that the things I love about the season change. I have come most of all to love Christmas as the fulfillment of a promise God has made to all humankind. As Brennan Manning has said in his book, *Reflections for Ragamuffins*, Christmas is about the God who came in history and comes to us daily in mystery and will one day come again. Christmas is God's way of saying that because of Jesus in the end everything is going to be all right. God will one day wipe every tear from every eye. Now, that is really a reason for a season!

Please take time to reflect on all that God has done for us. Read about our special Christmas services in this newsletter and make plans to join us as we worship God together during this special season and all through the year. You will never regret one moment you spend in worship!

Merry Christmas One and All,

Craig

**"A Night Like No Other"  
 5:00 P.M. Christmas Eve Worship  
 Especially for Families  
 with Young Children**

The Children's Ministries Team offers a 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!

**Traditional Candlelight  
 8:00 P.M. Christmas Eve Worship**

The 8:00 Christmas Eve worship service is a traditional candlelight communion service. Hear the Christmas message as our Chancel Choir and congregation sing songs celebrating Christ's birth.

Come and light your candle as we sing Silent Night and remember the birth of the Christ child in Bethlehem.

**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!

Special Music by Amelia Clark and James Touchton  
 Hosted by the Mixed Blessings Class

**Merry Christmas Pajama Party  
 Combined Sunday School  
 for Children**

*Sunday, December 28th, 9:45-10:45 a.m.*

*Movies, Popcorn, Friends and Fun!*  
 Age 2 – Grade 1 in Room 304  
 Grades 2 – 5 in Room 211

*"Making Disciples of Jesus Christ"*



Jeannie Addy, Chuck Becher, George Beers, Ron Blansett, Marilyn Brisbois, Jerry Brown, Ellen Buckner, Thomas Carr, Bertha Chrietzberg, Bob Davis, John Dawkins, Bill Denton, Teddy Denton, Susan DeWinter, Bob Doudican, Norman Foster, Bobbie Goodman, Taylor Hadley, Sue Hicks-Caskey, Mary Huhta, Justin James, Lee Jennings, Rosalee Martin, Jim McDowell, Drew Mitchell, Pat Mitchell, Katrena Moore, Thomas Noblit, Mack and Margaret

Radford, David and Louise Reynolds, Kennard Ritchey, 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).

**In the hospital** - Herman Johnson, Florence Williams

**Our prayers and sympathy** are extended to Matt Millican on the death of his mother, to Tina Petty on the death of her mother, Sonja Herring, to the Brown family on the death of Tammy's aunt, Judy Morton, to the Farrar family on the death of Dan Farrar, and to the friends and family of Pat Coleman and Marty Murphy.

### SAGES News

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all the Sages of St. Mark's.

The next meeting of the Sages' Ministry Team will be at 9:30 A.M., January 12, in Room 1203.

The Alzheimer/Dementia Support Group will meet at 1:30 on January 22<sup>nd</sup> in Room 506.

### Recreation News

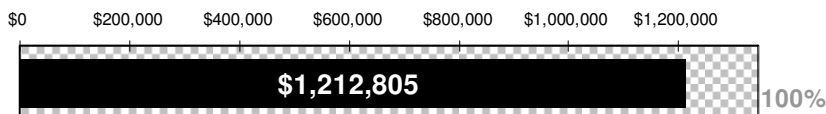
St. Mark's now has a men's over 30 basketball team playing games on Tuesday nights at Fellowship UMC! Check the calendar for the schedule and come out and cheer them on. We want to thank Matt Millican and City Auto for providing their beautiful new uniforms.

### FusionYouth Selling T-Shirts

Need a great gift for your favorite St. Mark's member? The youth are selling St. Mark's T-shirts. These are white with the St. Mark's logo on the left chest. We have a limited number of long-sleeved shirts available now and short-sleeved can be ordered. Long-sleeved shirts are \$15.00, \$17.00 for sizes 2x and up. Short-sleeved are \$10, \$12 for size 2X and up.

### Stewardship Summary

as of December 7, 2014



**We are \$131,973 from reaching our budget goal by the end of the year.**

*Thank you for your faithful support of the daily operational needs of your church!*



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

Under current laws, appreciated securities and real estate can be deductible for federal income tax purposes at their current market value. In most cases the appreciation is not taxed at all. Consider using such outright gifts to make your gift larger for current ministries, special gifts, or the church endowment fund.

### 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 1<sup>st</sup>. 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).

There will be an informational meeting for the Belize trip on January 11<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. in the Banquet Room.

### St. Mark's Family Nativity

We are considering displaying shared nativity scenes again in December 2015. While your Christmas decorations are displayed in your home this year, take a picture of the item(s) you would be willing to share with your church family next year. Email those pictures to Mike Rose at [mike@stmarkstn.org](mailto:mike@stmarkstn.org) or mail them to Rev. Martha Touchton at 1267 N Rutherford Blvd, Murfreesboro, TN 37130.

Please include a brief history and/or explanation of the origin of the nativity, approximate size of space needed for display, and your contact information.

\*\*If you would be willing to help with this event next year, please indicate this on your submission or contact Rev. Martha Touchton in the church office.



**St. Mark's Fulfills  
Gift Bag Ministry  
for Children  
from Murfreesboro  
City Preschools**

Thank you for sharing the love of Christ in your hearts by adopting all the bags for 150+ at-risk preschool children who attend Murfreesboro City Schools Pre-Kindergarten programs across the city. The bags were delivered to six different preschool programs this week!



**Stocking Up On Christmas!**

St. Mark's UMC will receive an offering of

**GLUE STICKS, CRAYONS,  
DRY ERASE MARKERS, AND  
WIDE-RULED NOTEBOOK PAPER**

at the 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service  
to help the children of Reeves Rogers School  
re-stock their supplies for 2015!

Place your donations in the big red stocking  
in the Narthex or Sanctuary  
December 21<sup>st</sup> – January 4<sup>th</sup>



**Epiphany Ring Concert**

St. Mark's Chancel Ringers will again join  
with several other area handbell groups for  
Epiphany Ring at 1<sup>st</sup> UMC on Sunday,  
January 4<sup>th</sup> beginning at 7:00 p.m.

*Get ready for the*

**Fourth Annual "Bring Your Gifts"  
Benefit Talent Show**

which will take place  
on Wednesday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, at 6:15 p.m.!

Proceeds will benefit the  
**2015 SONlight Youth Choir Tour**  
to Cincinnati!

Audience members will vote on different acts by pledging their  
money, so the act that raises the most money is the winner!  
Deadline for entry forms is Sunday, December 28<sup>th</sup>,  
and the registration fee is \$10 per act.

You may download the form from [www.stmarkstn.org](http://www.stmarkstn.org)  
under the "forms" tab, or you may pick one up  
at Rev. Henry's office.

**Youth News**



The youth want to thank Tyson Ferguson and the MTSU Wesley Foundation for allowing us to have our Christmas party in their facility. The prize for the best pajamas went to Amelia Clark, and the ugliest sweater winner was Beth Shirley. And....we really appreciate Santa coming for a visit.

This Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, youth will meet at 10:50 a.m. to go to 61<sup>st</sup> Ave. UMC for a day working in the Last Minute Toy Store. Bring money for dinner. We will return at 6:30 p.m.

On Tuesday, December 22<sup>nd</sup>, we will meet at 3:00 at Sunnington for some Christmas Bingo.

Warmth in Winter is January 30<sup>th</sup>-February 1<sup>st</sup>. This is a great conference retreat that is a St. Mark's tradition! Our cost for the weekend is \$125. We are now taking registrations with a deadline of January 11<sup>th</sup>. Check the website or the youth bulletin board for a brochure.

Thank you! to all who took names from our Tree of Special Wishes! We were able to provide for almost 30 children! Many of the younger children were able to be here for a Christmas party last Saturday – they were able to play, make a craft, see the nativities, shop for their parents, have lunch and visit with a special guest from the north. Thanks to all the youth who partnered with a child and helped in others ways and to Meg Van Patten, Kim Ward, Stacey Blades and Tyler Neale for helping as well!

**Church Council**

The Church Council of St. Mark's UMC meets at least quarterly. The next meeting will be in January. This meeting will be a retreat for both new and returning members of the Council.

The Council sets policy, hears reports from staff and committee chairs, makes decisions about program and financial matters, and basically guides the church through the year.

Thanks to everyone who serves!

**Newcomers Class Offered in January**

The next Newcomers Class begins on January 11<sup>th</sup> at 9:45 a.m. in the east end of the Banquet Room. If you are new to St. Mark's or would like to know more about our church, you are invited to this class. The clergy and lay leaders of St. Mark's will conduct the sessions.



1267 N. Rutherford Blvd.  
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**DATE AND TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL**

To be removed from the mailing list,  
e-mail [stmarks@stmarkstn.org](mailto:stmarks@stmarkstn.org)

**Calendar of Events**

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18**

7:30 a.m. Gym Open for Walking - RC  
10:30 a.m. Knit Together - N  
1:30 p.m. Alzheimer's/Dementia Support  
Group - 506  
5:30 p.m. Strength Training - N  
6:00 p.m. Walking Exercise  
6:30 p.m. Men's Basketball Practice - RC

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19**

7:30 a.m. Gym Open for Walking - RC  
10:30 a.m. Revival: Faith as Wesley  
Lived It-1203  
5:15 p.m. Soccer - RC

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20**

8:00 a.m. Disaster Team at Cracker  
Barrel

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21**

8:30 a.m. Worship - S  
9:45 a.m. Christmas Brunch - BR  
11:00 a.m. Worship - S  
5:00 p.m. Chancel Ringers - 1117  
Covenant Bible Study - 1203  
FusionYouth - YC  
6:00 p.m. Chancel Choir - 1119

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 22**

7:30 a.m. Gym Open for Walking - RC

4:00 p.m. Covenant Bible Study - 1203  
5:30 p.m. Girl Scouts - 209, 212, 213

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23**

7:30 a.m. Gym Open for Walking - RC  
4:30 p.m. Boys Basketball Practice - RC  
5:30 p.m. Strength Training - N  
6:00 p.m. Walking Exercise

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24**

7:30 a.m. Gym Open for Walking - RC  
9:00 a.m. Prayer Group - Chapel  
5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship - S  
8:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship - S

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25 - CHRISTMAS**

Office Closed

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26**

Office Closed

5:00 p.m. Daws Wedding Rehearsal - S

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27**

4:00 p.m. Daws Wedding - S

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28**

8:30 a.m. Worship - S  
9:45 a.m. Christian Education  
Combined Sunday School - 211  
and 304  
11:00 a.m. Worship - S

5:00 p.m. Chancel Ringers - 1117  
6:00 p.m. Chancel Choir - 1119

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 29**

7:30 a.m. Gym Open for Walking - RC  
4:00 p.m. Covenant Bible Study - 1203

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30**

7:30 a.m. Gym Open for Walking - RC  
4:30 p.m. Boys Basketball Practice - RC  
5:30 p.m. Strength Training - N  
6:00 p.m. Walking Exercise

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31**

7:30 a.m. Gym Open for Walking - RC  
9:00 a.m. Prayer Group - Chapel

More dates at: [www.stmarkstn.org](http://www.stmarkstn.org)

**facebook**

[www.facebook.com/stmarkstn](http://www.facebook.com/stmarkstn)