

Saint Mark United Methodist Church
781 Peachtree Street, N.E. Atlanta, Georgia 30308
(404) 873-2636 • www.stmarkumc.org

The Saint Mark Care Line (after hours emergency): 1-800-673-0411

The Reverend Doctor Beth LaRocca-Pitts	Senior Pastor
The Reverend Jennifer Hansen	Minister of Outreach & Missions
The Reverend Joshua M. Noblitt	Minister of Social Justice & Evangelism
Ms. Jess Cusick	Director of Youth Ministries
Mr. Jonathan Easter	Director of Fine Arts
Minister Sheila Stephens	Director of Children's Ministries

Church Parking

Please do not park in the lot on the other side of the 805 Peachtree condominium building (located across 5th Street from the church). Instead, please park in either of the 2 church parking lots located directly behind the church or in the lot at 763 Juniper Street.

Welcome, Visitors!

If you are visiting Saint Mark this evening we are delighted you have chosen to celebrate Christmas with us! We invite you to come back and worship with us on Sunday mornings at either the 9am or 11:15am worship services.

Many thanks to tonight's Communion Servers, including:

Julie A. Arms Meeke, Jerry Becker, Darrell Card Harper, Jill & Trudy Lee-Barber, Hannah Taylor, Cheryl Thompson, and Roger Brown at the 7:00 service and Josh Kinsey, Andrew Moulder, Mark Talliard, and Craig Pigg at 11:00.

Church Office Holiday Schedule

The church office will be closed from December 26 – January 1 and our weekly newsletter *The Remarks* will not be published on December 26.

If you need to reach a minister in case of an emergency, please call 1-800-673-0411. The Saint Mark staff wishes you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

The Finance Office will remain open during the holiday break on Wednesday afternoon, December 27 and all day December 28 and 29 to receive any year end gifts. Any gifts to the church that you would like to be credited for 2017 must be dated / received by the church no later than Dec. 31, 2017. Questions? Contact Deana Hilton in the business office at 404-873-2636.

Looking Ahead

Our Wednesday night fellowship dinners and Midweek Retreat programming have ended for the year. They will resume on January 10, 2018.

Rev. Josh Noblitt will be organizing a group from Saint Mark to attend the book release party for Dr. Gregory C. Ellison II's new book *Fear+Less Dialogues: A New Movement for Justice* at the Atlanta History Center on Thursday, January 11, 2018 at 7pm. For more information, contact Josh at jnoblitt@stmarkumc.org.

Coat Drive continues

Now through February, Saint Mark is holding a coat drive. While most of us are fortunate enough to have warm coats and hats to protect us from the cold weather, many folks with limited means do not. Please bring any gently worn coats, scarves, hats, and gloves to church so that we can share them with those who come to our doors. Drop off your donations in the bins in the narthex and Wade Hall. Your generosity is appreciated!

Music reproduced within this document is done so with permission under the following licenses: CCLI 22532952: OneLicense.net A709229

2017 Saint Mark Christmas Mission Offering

Dear Friends,

Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we turn our eyes to Bethlehem and celebrate the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Christmas is the ultimate demonstration of God's giving to us. God became flesh in the form of the Christ child and made his dwelling among us. Emmanuel - God is with us! The Light of the world was sent to shine here on earth so that all may know of God's deep, deep love for each of us. In the Light of God's love this time of year, the nitty-gritty and mundane our lives, the conflict, stress and disagreements all take a backseat to what really matters. The world around us seems to sparkle more luminously and we see peace, kindness and hope abound.

As you ponder the Christmas season and what it means to you, I invite you to remember those around you who wake up each day in a cloud of darkness because of their current circumstances. Not everyone will experience a Christmas filled with peace and joy as they lead lives filled with worry and pain. At Saint Mark, we believe in the dignity of all human beings regardless of the place they find themselves, and our church family is committed to being a relevant, active and hope building presence in the lives of all persons, particularly the least of these. Each year we ask for your help through giving to our annual Christmas offering. This offering allows us to share the gifts we have received with those who are less fortunate, both here in our community and around the world.

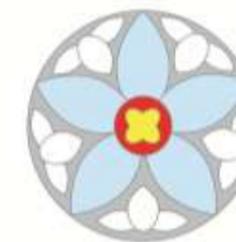
Your gift this season will enable us and partnering agencies to make a difference in the lives of those in the community around us by providing food for the hungry, shelter for those needing a home, and care for those who are sick. This offering will allow many to get a glimpse of the Light of Christ through sponsorship of missionaries around the world and in partnership with agencies right in our community, such as Midtown Assistance Center, Breakthru House and the Georgia Tech Wesley Foundation. You will enable us to continue our involvement in ministries such as Habitat for Humanity and Trinity Table. Your gifts will be sowing the seeds of hope that come from the fulfilled promise of Christ's birth.

Please prayerfully consider giving an additional gift this year to the Christmas Mission Offering so that the Light may shine on all this Christmas season and beyond. Please place your gift in the designated envelopes for Christmas mission in the offering plate on Christmas Eve, give online on our website, or mail your gift to the church. Thank you for sharing your love and blessings with others.

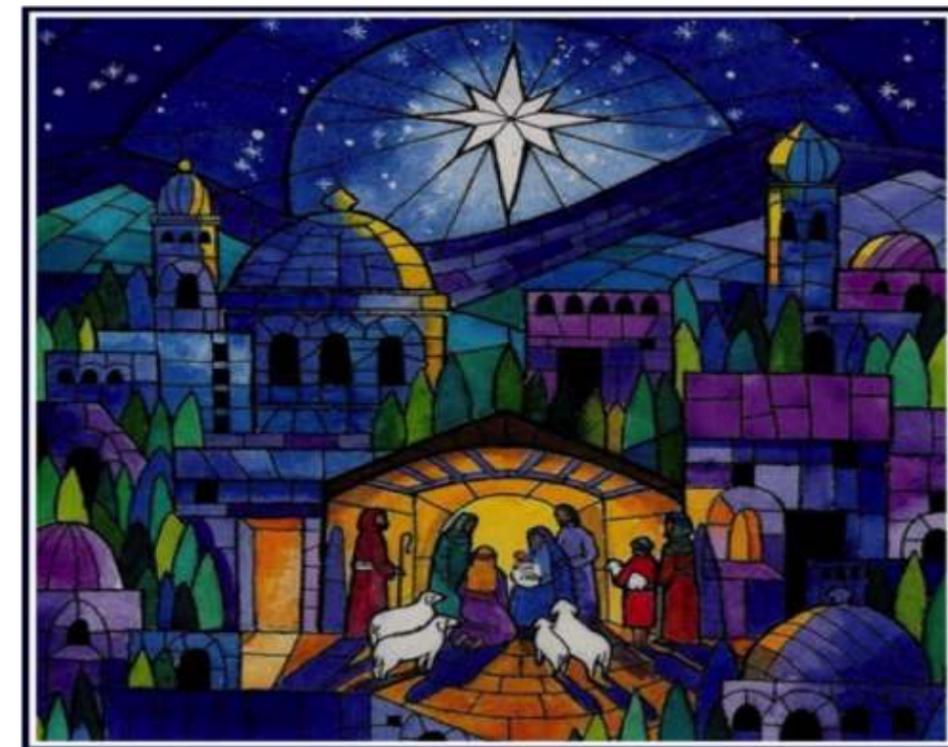
Blessings,

Rev. Jennifer Hansen
Minister of Mission & Outreach

WELCOME HOME
TO



SAINT MARK
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



THE WORSHIP OF GOD

Saturday, December 24, 2017

Christmas Eve

7:00 p.m. & 11:00 p.m.

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Enter to Fellowship † Sit to Pray † Stand to Worship † Leave to Share

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

* - Where indicated, those who are able, please stand.

We sing from 2 hymnals at Saint Mark. The United Methodist Hymnal (UMH) is the large red hymnal in the pew racks. The Faith We Sing (TFWS) is the smaller black hymnal found in the pews.

WE GATHER

MUSIC AS WE GATHER

WELCOME AND LIFE OF THE CHURCH Beth LaRocca-Pitts

Leader: We thank God for these opportunities for fellowship and service.
Many: Thanks be to God!
Leader: Let us take a moment to center our hearts on God.

PRELUDE AND CHIMES *Silent Night* Aaron David Miller

*THE LIGHTING OF CHRIST CANDLE

Mary Abbott Waite & LuAlice Waite (7:00)
Jay Varnedoe & Jason Henderson (11:00)

*Response

The Candle of Hope

Carolyn Winfrey Gillette STANLEY BEACH

The Christ can - dle's light that shines for us here
Tells out the good news that God has come near!
God came, a poor ba - by, in one time and place,
to show all cre - a - tion the wealth of God's grace.

*CALL TO WORSHIP Sheila Stephens (7:00)

One: Sing to the Lord a new song; Jennifer Hansen (11:00)
Many: Sing to the Lord, all the whole earth.

One: Sing to the Lord and bless God's Name;
Many: Proclaim the good news of salvation from day to day.

One: For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised;
Many: Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;

All: Tell it out among the nations: "The Lord reigns!"

*HYMN OF PRAISE *O Come, All Ye Faithful*
UMH No. 234 ADESTE FIDELES

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

THE GIFTS OF AND FOR OUR YOUNGER CHURCH

Sheila Stephens (7:00)
Jennifer Hansen (11:00)

*Gospel Lesson Luke 2:1- 20 Beth LaRocca-Pitts

SERMON "Let Us Go to Bethlehem" Beth LaRocca-Pitts

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

PASTORAL PRAYER Jennifer Hansen

OFFERING OURSELVES TO GOD

The Invitation Jennifer Hansen

The Offertory *Where Shepherds Lately Knelt* Craig Courtney

*Where shepherds lately knelt, and kept the angel's word,
I come in half belief, a pilgrim strangely stirred;
But there is room and welcome there for me.
In that unlikely place I find Him as they said:
Sweet newborn Babe, how frail! And in a manger bed:
A still small Voice to cry one day for me, for me.*

*How should I not have known Isaiah would be there? His prophecies fulfilled?
With pounding heart I stare: A Child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me.
Can I, will I forget how Love was born and burned its way into my heart
unasked, unforced, unearned, to die, to live, and not alone for me, for me?*

*The Doxology *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow
Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures here below,
Praise God above ye heavenly host, Creator, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.*

*PRAYER AFTER THE OFFERING Jennifer Hansen

At the preparation of the table

*HYMN OF PREPARATION *Away in a Manger*
UMH No. 217 AWAY IN A MANGER

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION Beth LaRocca-Pitts

Prayer of Confession

Let us pray together. God of all mercy, we confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives. We have denied your goodness in each others, in ourselves, and in the world you have created. We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve only your will. Amen.

Response UMH No. 482 *Lord, Have Mercy* KRIEWALD KYRIE

Words of Assurance Beth LaRocca-Pitts

Communion Liturgy after the Prayer of Confession, UMH page 13

Musical Setting A, UMH page 17

Communion Hymns

UMH No. 218 *It Came upon the Midnight Clear* CAROL
UMH No. 230 *O Little Town of Bethlehem* ST. LOUIS
UMH No. 221 *In the Bleak Midwinter* CRANHAM

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION Sheila Stephens (7:00)
Jennifer Hansen (11:00)

WE ARE SENT FORTH INTO GOD'S WORLD

INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP AND MEMBERSHIP Sheila Stephens (7:00)
Jennifer Hansen (11:00)

*HYMN OF DEDICATION *Joy to the World*
UMH No. 246 ANTIOCH

*BENEDICTION AND TRINITY CHIMES Beth LaRocca-Pitts

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE - LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES
UMH No. 239 *Silent Night, Holy Night* STILLE NACHT

*POSTLUDE *Toccata on Antioch* Craig Phillips