



# SAINT MARK

## UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

God's Grace Transforming Lives

**Sunday, February 25, 2024**  
**Nine O'clock**

Second Sunday in Lent



# 9 AM Morning Worship

*\*You are invited to stand as you are able in body and spirit.*

## The Gathering

### Words of Welcome and Grace

We welcome each of you to this service! Maybe you've been here more times than you can count. Maybe it's been a while, maybe never. Here is what matters: No matter who you are or where you are from, you are a child of God, and you are welcome here!

### \*Hymn of Praise

**UMH No. 116 v. 1 & 4 | The God of Abraham Praise**

### \*The Passing of the Peace

One: The Peace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, be with you.

**All: And also, with you.**

*Let us offer each other signs of peace, reconciliation, and love.*

### Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father (God), who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

### \*The Gospel Lesson

**Mark 8:31-38**

One: The Gospel of Our Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God!**

Sermon

## The Way of the Cross: Denying Self

### Response to God's Word

One: God of Solidarity, thank you for being a God who enters the suffering of the world – who doesn't run from those in pain but rushes to the site of blood and tears.

**All: Release us from those empty cravings for unity that come at no cost to the oppressor. Lead us toward spaces of costly advocacy.**

One: We confess that in speaking up on behalf of the oppressed, we too soon become enamored with the sound of our own voices. Our egos spoil even our best intentions Show us when the voices of the vulnerable are being drowned out by the cacophony of the privileged.

**All: Make our presence and dignity known in a world that perpetually eclipse the voices of the marginalized. Guide us into a solidarity that demands something of us.**

One: Let us learn to risk ourselves on behalf of the vulnerable, believing that when one of us is harmed, we all are.

**All: And God, keep us from those who will demonize the fight in us, who would prefer us complacent and far from one another. Secure in us the courage to resist, knowing that together we will restore what the world has tried to suffocate in us. Amen.**

*Response adapted from "Black Liturgies: Prayers, Poems, and Meditations for Staying Human."*

**Cole Arthur Riley**

Holy Communion

### Sending Forth

\*Hymn of Dedication

**UMH No. 534 v. 1 & 3 | Be Still My Soul**

\*Benediction

## Congregational Response

**Amen**

Postlude

## Worship Team

<b>Preaching:</b>	Rev. Dr. Carolyn Stephens, <i>Senior Pastor</i>
<b>Liturgists:</b>	Rev. Andy Peabody, <i>Associate Pastor</i>
<b>Music:</b>	Justin Bowen, <i>Interim Director of Fine Arts and Organist</i>
<b>Communion Steward:</b>	J.W. Mozley
<b>Usher:</b>	Christian Fuller
<b>Greeter:</b>	Kristen Fuller

## We Welcome You

*As a United Methodist Church, we are proud to be a congregation with open hearts, open minds, and open doors. We strive to be a congregation that embodies God's absolute love and hospitality, proclaiming Jesus as our savior and as our model of the ultimate embodiment of God's love. We believe that all persons are of sacred worth and dignity as part of God's good creation. Saint Mark United Methodist Church welcomes all persons into the full life and ministry of our congregation, regardless of race, culture, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, family, or socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability, or faith history.*

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## Attendance

Please sign the attendance pad located at the end of your row or scan this QR code to register your attendance and share prayer requests using our online Connection Card.



## We Invite You to Stay Connected with Saint Mark

Visit [www.stmarkumc.org](http://www.stmarkumc.org) and subscribe to the newsletter on the homepage. We send our Remarks newsletter every Wednesday, a message from our Senior Pastor every Friday, and a Sunday Morning at Saint Mark email.

## Tithes & Offerings

Please place your offering in the plate during this morning's service, or use one of the QR codes below. Your generosity allows us to love, accept and serve the people of our community.

- Using your Smartphone's camera, scan the QR Code. & follow the prompts.

### SecureGive



### PayPal



### Venmo



### Text to Give



- To give via text, scan the QR code, and replace the \$\$ in the text with the amount you would like to give. For example, to give \$25, text operating 25.

## Saint Mark Green Team Survey

Please fill out this short survey to help steer Saint Mark's engagement with environmental issues and creation care. Whether you are interested in getting involved or not, this survey will help our green team prioritize its goals.

<http://tinyurl.com/SMUMCgreenteamsurvey>

## Safe Sanctuaries Training | March 10 | After Second Service

God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong. Safe Sanctuaries is our response to this church wide challenge.

## Current COVID-19 Safety Guidelines

If you are sick, please stay home. If you have come into contact with someone positive for COVID-19, follow the precautions recommended by the CDC. In order to care for our collective well-being, we strongly recommend that anyone who is eligible to be vaccinated do so, especially before participating in indoor activities.

## Wednesday Night Fellowship Dinners

For reservations, please email **Robert Gilleo** at [RJGilleo@stmarkumc.org](mailto:RJGilleo@stmarkumc.org) or complete the Microsoft Forms survey (<https://forms.office.com/r/29Xbv198wy>) no later than 5 PM Tuesday. Dinner begins at 5:30 PM. Program begins at 6:00 PM. Tickets: \$10 for seniors, \$11 general



## Clint Clark-Duke: Songs of Love and Heartache

Join us for an unforgettable evening of "Songs of Love and Heartache" with **Clint Clark-Duke** on Wednesday, February 28, 2024!

# LGBTQIA+ GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP



EVERY TUESDAY | 6 PM - 7 PM  
March 19 - April 23  
October 29 - December 3  
VIRTUAL | FREE

A grief support group for LGBTQIA+ people and for friends and family grieving the death of a loved one from the LGBTQIA+ community. If interested, please RSVP using information below.



Barbara Ingram, Bereavement Coordinator  
[barbara.ingram@wellstar.org](mailto:barbara.ingram@wellstar.org) | (470) 732-6710

## Celebrating Black Excellence | Things to Do for Black History Month

### February 24th- 25th, 2024

#### Blacklisted! Book Fare and Conference

Where: Loudermilk Conference Center  
Time: morning or afternoon, half day tour  
Cost: Free through Eventbrite  
Description: Minibook fair and conference featuring African American authors creating work that challenges the status quo and speaks truth to power. More than 1,600 books were banned in 138 school districts across 32 states between 2021 and 2022. The vast majority featured BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) or LGBTQ+ characters or are written by BIPOC or LGBTQ+ authors. There will be moderated panel discussions, interactive exhibitions about banned books, Youth Book Fair with interactive children's activities and more.

### February 24th-25th, 2024

#### Sistah Shop Black History Month Market

Where: Atlantic Station (1380 Atlantic Drive NW, Suite 14125 – next to Publix)  
Time: 11am-6pm daily as indicated  
Cost: Free  
Description: The market will feature more than 40 Black women-owned brands, live music, giveaways, a hot chocolate bar and more.

FAITH HOPE LOVE



GIVE BLOOD

Saint Mark  
United Methodist Church  
Blood Drive

Sunday, March 3

9 a.m. – 1 p.m.



*Click or scan the QR code!*

*All donors will receive a \$20 gift card!*

All donors will receive a recognition item and a free cholesterol screening. Donors must be 16 or older, weigh at least 110 pounds, and show photo I.D. 16-year-olds require written parental permission.

**LIFESOUTH**  
Community Blood Centers





## Find your Small Group Community at Saint Mark

Now during the season of Lent, is a good time to reestablish your spiritual discipline of going to a Sunday School or Spiritual Growth class. At Saint Mark, we have 5 classes that meet on a regular basis most Sundays from about 9:45 AM until 10:45 AM.

### **Interactions**

**Room 206-207**

The Interactions class is a diverse group of individuals. Every week, we rotate between many different presenters, who cover a wide range of topics. We are an interactive group that likes to have variety in how we conduct class.

### **Faith-Seekers**

**Room 205**

All are invited to the Faith Seekers Class beginning Sunday, February 18, when Robert Giacomini will be leading the Class in the Lenten Study: The Way, Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus by Alan Hamilton. This video presentation was produced in the Holy land with Adam Hamilton actually walking in the footsteps of Jesus from his time of baptism in the Jordan River to his last days in Jerusalem. While Robert will be using the video in the presentation, an optional companion book is also immediately available through Amazon for \$14.99.

The Faith Seekers Class is a Bible oriented adult Christian education class which meets every Sunday from 9:30 AM to 10:30 AM in room 205 of the education building. Coffee and refreshments are served. Come early to enjoy fellowship and listen to favorite hymns and gospel songs.

For more information about the Faith Seekers Class and its programs, contact Jerry Becker at [JerryB390@gmail.com](mailto:JerryB390@gmail.com).

## **Foundations**

**Room 111**

Meets from 9:45-10:50 - Beginning February 18th, we will start a new Lenten Series - "Luke: Jesus and the Outsiders, Outcasts, and Outlaws." In this study pastor and bestselling author Adam Hamilton explores the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus as told in the Gospel of Luke. Through Luke's stories we find Jesus' care and compassion for all as he welcomes sinners and outcasts. As we study Luke and see Jesus' concern for those who were considered unimportant, we hear a hopeful and inspiring word for our lives today.

There is a companion book you can purchase, but it isn't required (<https://www.cokesbury.com/Luke-5?refq=Luke>) to participate, and you can attend one or all six sessions. If you have questions about the class please contact Michelle Levan 404-405-0274 or Sherri Graham who is teaching the study 404-550-7170.

## **Vision**

**Room 209**

We spend our Sunday mornings discussing our life experiences in relation to the Gospel of Jesus. We are frank, understanding, irreverent and open-minded. Please join us as we continue to churn through the daily confusion of today's world, our place in it day-to-day, and how best to apply Christianity to our complicated lives.

## **Young Adult Sunday School**

**Room 200-201**

Join us for this weekly Sunday school class for young adults to connect with others and grow in community as we dive into conversations about life and faith. Our gatherings will focus on opportunities for fellowship, collaborative discussion, and spiritual formation. Here, all questions are encouraged and topics range from the mundane to the mysterious as we seek to find meaning in all of it.

## **Children's Ministry-**

**Children's Ministry Hallway 1st floor**

The Children's ministry at Saint Mark is a growing program focused on play-based learning and finding opportunities to laugh as we learn! All Children (birth-5th grade) have a place in Children's Sunday school! During Lent, we will be exploring Jesus's ministry through the colors and traditions of the season using a mix of story, craft, and games that all children of God will enjoy! Feel free to join us as we explore coloring outside the lines and as we grow in love with the wonderful world the Lord has made!

For more information about the Children's Ministry and its programs, contact Madi Dunn at [mdunn@stmarkumc.org](mailto:mdunn@stmarkumc.org).

