



St. Mark's

BETHANY



December 13, 2023

Join us this Sunday for worship at St. Mark's. This Sunday will be the beginning of Advent with the series titled, "Places It Happened". This week the message will be "The Hill Country of Judea". The scripture reference is Luke 1:39-45;56-66.

All Sunday school classes will be at their regular time and area. If you don't attend a class drop by one and try it out.

Sunday School classes:

- 8:30 New Life Rm. 18
Sonshine Rm. 17
- 9:30 Books of the Bibles Rm 17,
Disciple Rm. 18,
Young Adults Rm. 5
- 10:45 Faithbuilders Rm 18,
Good News Choir room,
R.O.C.K Rm. 19
Understanding God's Word Coming Jan. 7, Rm. 5



Traditional services are at 9:30 am and Modern services are at 10:55 am. If you are not able to attend Worship services there will be a live streaming of worship.

To watch the life stream, you can join us at:

[9:30 am Sunday morning](#) or at [10:55 Sunday morning](#).



St. Mark's has had a wonderful history with our Christmas Eve offerings. Each year money collected during Christmas Eve Services goes somewhere in the world to make a real difference in the world for the kingdom. This year we will be assisting to build a Women's Center in Kigoma, Tanzania. The Center will be next to the St. Mark's Methodist Church we helped to build there and will be heavily involved in the community to provide opportunities for events, teaching, shelter and other community

events. Start praying about how God would lead you into being a part in making a real difference.

Advent Calendar of Events

Dec 13 All Church Caroling

Dec 14 Second Winders Christmas Lunch

CDO Christmas Play

Dec 16 Faithbuilders Christmas Party

Dec 17 Good News Class Christmas Party

Kiespert Piano Recital

Dec 24 10 am Combined Family Friendly Christmas Service

7 pm Traditional Candlelight Christmas Service

11 pm Midnight Candlelight Service



*Wednesday, December 13th
Gather and snack 5:30 pm
Head out caroling 6:00 pm*

All regular programming will take part in the Christmas caroling

*If you can RSVP
Church Office
Becky Roman
Kathi Fisher*

Second Winders - Thursday December 13th



Second Winders will gather at 11 am this Thursday. At 11:30 am they will go to the sanctuary to enjoy the final dress rehearsal of the CDO Children's Program. Afterwards they will enjoy a meal of Ham & Beans with all the fixings. A donation of \$5. can be made. Following dinner they will play some JESUS Bingo with prizes for the winners. Join us!

**Our
First
Nativity**



New Sunday Morning Class



Starting Sunday, January 14th, 2024, at 10:50 a.m. in room 5, Don and Jan Greve will lead the class verse by verse with discussion and questions. Starting in the gospel of John, we will explore old and new revelations about God's word for His people.

To be a part scan code or sign up on counter

St. Mark's Bethany

During 2024, I commit, with the grace and help of God, to know Jesus better and support the ministries of St. Mark's with my prayers, presence, gifts, service & witness.



The amount I intend to give during 2024 is:

yearly
monthly

Prayers Presence Gifts Service Witness

My financial commitment to St. Marks for 2024 is:
yearly
monthly

If you have not turned in your pledge card, please take a moment to fill it out and turn it in. Cards are available in the Narthex.

AA Group meets weekly at St. Mark's

Every Thursday at 10 am there is an open AA meeting at the church. During this time of year this is a very difficult time for those who struggle with substances.



If you know anyone who needs a hand let them know about our group.

You are invited to CDO Christmas Program

Thursday, December 13th

6 pm doors open; 6:30 pm play begins

You are invited to join the children and family of St. Mark's CDO program for their annual Christmas Program. Songs will be presented by each of the classes as well as the older kids presenting "Our First Nativity".

Our First Nativity



Sanctuary doors open at 6 pm with the show starting at 6:30 pm. This is a great way to celebrate the season.

ROC Still Needs Your Help



St. Mark's you have done a great job of meeting needs. We will keep the grocery cart set up in the narthex for your donations of canned and boxed food for a couple more weeks. Ramen noodles, pasta, any type of canned beans and cake mixes have been requested. Plastic and paper bags are always needed to pack the food. Monetary donations are also gratefully accepted.

Thank you!

It's Coming



Watch for Details

December 2023

Prayer Guide

The Way to the Kingdom



Photo: John Wesley's prayer kneeler – The birthplace of Methodism.

Each morning at 4 a.m., John Wesley would kneel in prayer in his London home. It was in this place that the fires of Methodism began. As we seek to reconnect to our Wesleyan heritage, it seems the best place we can begin is in prayer. Join us in our monthly prayer series: The Way to the Kingdom.

The Way to Wisdom

Dr. Steve Seamands

“Select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, *full of the Spirit and of wisdom.*” (Acts 6:3, emphasis added) Faced with growing dissension within their ranks, that was the Apostles solution for the growing food distribution problem in the Jerusalem church. And their proposal *pleased the whole community* (Acts 6:5). So, they chose seven persons like Stephen. Later, even those who violently opposed him, “could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke.” (Acts 6:10)

From its inception, the church has needed leaders, “full of the Spirit and of wisdom.” And how desperately we need them today, especially as we prepare to embark on a perilous voyage into uncharted waters, in the formation and establishment of the Global Methodist Church. So, we need to earnestly pray for wise leaders that the new church will walk in the way of wisdom. And that’s the focus of our prayer guide this month.

But what exactly characterizes a wise leader? In *New Testament Words*, William Barclay discusses the background and meaning of the three great Greek words (*sophia, phronesis, sunesis*) associated with wisdom found in the New Testament.

Each captures an essential element of wisdom.

- **Sophia** pertains to awareness of eternal things. It has to do primarily with knowledge of ultimate things, human and divine.
- **Phronesis**, often translated *prudence*, is the ability to apply knowledge to the practical problems of daily life and living. Much of the Old Testament wisdom literature such as Proverbs falls into this category.
- **Sunesis** is the ability to test, evaluate and form appropriate judgments. The wise can intelligently assess difficult situations and then choose the right course of action in response to them.

The way to wisdom combines all three elements. According to Barclay, it involves being “wise in the things of eternity and efficient in the things of time.” In Jesus, we find the perfect embodiment of wisdom. Paul stresses that He himself is wisdom, the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24, 30). In Him are all the treasures of wisdom (Col. 2:3).

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A Suggested Pattern of Prayer

As you pray through the following prayer points, invite the presence of the Lord into your time of prayer. Each day's prompt has a Scripture reference for you to pray through. As you pray also allow time to listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying to you. When you have prayed through the Scripture and prayer point, you may be led to add your own prayers. Pray and consider what action steps you might take in response to the Lord's leading. Repeat this prayer pattern weekly for the month.

Sunday: James urges us to ask, and God will give us wisdom "generously and ungrudgingly". Pray, boldly asking God to grant us wisdom for the living of these days. (James 1:5)

Monday: Pray for wisdom as *sophia* in the GM Church, the ability to distinguish between the eternal and the temporal so that we can hold fast to the things that never age. (Matthew 7:24-27)

Tuesday: Since Christ himself is our wisdom, pray for a deepening of our union with Christ, so that as our love and devotion for him increases, our wisdom will increase. (Colossians 2:3)

Wednesday: Pray for prudential, practical wisdom (*phronesis*), particularly in relation to complex decisions GM Church leaders must make. (Proverbs 8:11-12)

Thursday: Pray that we would not be seduced by the power and wisdom of this world but hold fast to the foolishness of God's wisdom revealed in Christ's cross. (1 Corinthians 1:22-25)

Friday: Pray for an increase of wisdom as *sunesis*, so that we might discern the long-term implications and consequences of current decisions. (1 Kings 3:9)

Saturday: Pray that God will raise up women and men "full of the Spirit and of wisdom" to lead us in the coming days. (Acts 6:3)

In Him are all the treasures of wisdom. (Col. 2:3)

Dr. Stephen Seamands is Emeritus Professor of Christian Doctrine at Asbury Theological Seminary, where he taught for 35 years. He is the author of numerous books, including his most recent, Follow the Healer: Biblical and Theological Foundations for Healing Ministry, Seedbed, Inc.

Facts and Figures

2023 Annual Budget	601,800
Rec'd toward Operating 12/2/2023	4916
Year to Date 2022	
Rec'd toward offering (thru 12/2/23)	512,903
Expenses (thru 12/2/23)	521,768
<u>Attendance</u>	
Sunday, December 10 Total	359
Traditional Worship	199
Modern Worship	78
Online Worship	82

Prayer Box

- Miller Gerardy
- Laurie Bucholtz
- Kristen & Mike Musick
- Barbara Hill
- Winn & Ginger Lusk
- Diana & Jeff Davidson
- Judy McMinn
- Jane Foreman
- Dan & Norma Boland
- Cheryl Andrews
- Greg Spiser
- Mike Spiser
- Lee Spiser
- Paula Galt

- Roger Pautsch
- Dorothy Sipes
- Karen Hall (friend of Sandy Kelly)
- Jeff & Tiffany Montesano
- Geo Montesano
- Hand Brueggen
- Carol Hall
- Mary Jane Svejkovsky
- Beth Bidne
- Judy Knight
- Cindy Wilkerson
- Mary Desmukes
- Kelli Pavelko
- Karen Anderson family
- (friend of Frankye Flemings)
- Larry Gaston