



# Messenger

St. Mark's  
United Methodist Church

1902 Vance Jackson San Antonio, TX 78213  
210-344-8393

## Things to Remember:

- † Advent Season begins, December 3
- † Charge Conference, Tuesday, December 12 @ 7 pm
- † Finance Meeting, Monday, December 18 @ 6:30 pm
- † **Candlelight & Communion Service, Sunday, December 24 @ 5:00 pm**
- † SA Food Bank - Monday, December 28 @ 8:00 am
- † Noisy Offering - Sunday, December 31
- † Wednesday Praise @ 6:30 pm (except December 27)
- † During Advent, we prepare for, and anticipate, the coming of Christ. We remember the longing of Jews for a Messiah and our own longing for, and need of, forgiveness, salvation and a new beginning. Even as we look back and celebrate the birth of Jesus in a humble stable in Bethlehem, we also look forward anticipating the second coming of Christ as the fulfillment of all that was promised by his first coming.



**St. Mark's UMW Esther Circle  
Invites all women to the**

**ANNUAL CHRISTMAS  
BUNCO PARTY**

**December 2, 2017**

**10:00 a.m.**

**In Fellowship Hall**

Join us for snacks & bunco & fun  
Bring a friend!

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## SERVING THE CHURCH

<b><u>Sunday School</u></b>	<b>10/29/17</b>	<b>11/05/17</b>	<b>11/12/17</b>	<b>11/19/17</b>
Children	<i>Reception</i>	1	2	3
Youth	<i>for Pastor</i>	3	2	1
Adults	<i>Appreciation</i>	18	18	16
<b><i>Total SS</i></b>		22	22	20
<b><u>Worship</u></b>				
Sunday	63	63	51	55
Wednesday Night	12	11	13	

### **DECEMBER USHERS**

**Kathy Jack, Sue Horner, Susan Philbin,  
Sharon Somerville, Brooke Somerville**



### **Altar Flower Calendar Openings 2018**

Thanks to everyone who participated in 2017 with flower donations. We get to do it again in 2018! A beautiful arrangement of Altar Flowers can be donated for only \$30. Flowers will adorn the altar during Sunday Worship and may be taken home following the service. Place your donation in the offering plate marked for ALTAR FLOWERS. Call Lillian Herrera at 210-344-3393 to reserve your spot.

## December Liturgists

December 3	Melinda Molina
December 10	Susan Philbin
December 17	Patti Austin
December 24	Patti Gardner
December 31	Joanne Green



## **WE GIVE TO MINISTER IN JESUS' NAME**

Together, United Methodists do remarkable ministry around the world. We care for survivors recovering from earthquakes and storms; we invest, long term, in vulnerable communities; we implement the most effective solutions to diseases like malaria; we equip the next generation to lead the church and society. In all of this, we share the good news of Jesus Christ.

**WHY do we give?  
Because all we have--and all we are-- belongs to God.**

"Why do I give?" asks David Hazlewood.

"You might as well ask, 'Why am I a Christian' Or why am I a United Methodist?" reflects David.

"The day I joined the church, a long, long time ago, I made the same promise all United Methodists make. I promised to give my prayers and my presence, my gifts and my service--a promise that means as much to me today as it did then."

Clarence Stoughton completes David's thought: "Stewardship is everything you do after you say 'yes' to Jesus." It's a life choice that recognizes everything we have is from God, a life choice we live every day, at home or at work, with friends or with strangers, in every choice, every decision we make.

Giving isn't about money. It's about ministry. And sharing God's gifts is, as Brian Bauknight puts it, "a demonstration of who we are--and what we value."

## **WE GIVE BECAUSE GOD FIRST GAVE TO US**

*"The earth is God's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein." (Psalm 24:1, An Inclusive-Language Lectionary)*

Source: United Methodist Communications, Why We Give

**Christmas Eve Candlelight & Communion Service  
Sunday, December 24 at 5:00 p.m.**

## *From Rev. Soto's Desk*



*I hope by now you have had a joyful Thanksgiving day with family and friends. I believe that the very thought of food brings joy to us. It is the season of celebration and feast from November till the beginning of the New Year. Those who enjoy cooking and those who delight in eating, this is your time!*

*This season should also bring joy to the world. To those who understand the meaning of Christmas; We are commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ. The gospel in Matthew 1:23 where we read, "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and **they shall name him Emmanuel,**" which means, "**God is with us.**" But not everybody is in a spirit of celebration. Some are worried about their budget, how much can they spend, some may say: "I don't have any money, not even to buy gifts for my kids, or anyone."*

*I remember Christmas at up state New York, Rochester to be specific, in the 80's. I used to ride the bus to go to work at Highland Hospital as a nurse assistant. And around this time I would see sad and angry faces riding the bus and I always wondered, why? Specially women. But the reality is that for many it will be a difficult time. Many won't have electricity or a home, they just don't have enough money to pay the bills. Or those affected by hurricanes who lost everything. Or families of victims of violent crimes, someone will be missed at their table this Christmas.*

*"Emmanuel, **God is with us**" a Hebrew word, **עִמָּנוּאֵל** *immānū'ēl*; literally means "**God with us.**" A sign of His people's deliverance, the Divine and human natures in Christ and the union of God with men. This should bring comfort to any soul. The rescuer, deliverer and liberator of the world **with us** in the midst of difficult times. For some **God is with us.** **Merry Christmas** to every one! **And Happy New Year!***

*Rev. Maria R. Soto*

## December 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<b>1</b> Office Closed	<b>2</b> 8:00 AM Saturday Morning Reunion 9:00 AM ESL Classes (LL) 10:00 AM UMW Christmas Party (FH)
<b>3</b> 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship 11:30 AM Choir Practice	<b>4</b> 10:00 AM Exercise (FH) 1:00 PM MS Yoga (FH) 7:00 PM Boy Scouts (SH)	<b>5</b> 6:30 AM ROMEO's 10:00 AM Exercise (FH) 6:00 PM Kairos Torres Advisory Council (FH)	<b>6</b> 1:00 PM Food Pantry 6:30 PM Cub Scouts (LL) 6:30 PM Praise Service (FH)	<b>7</b> 10:00 AM Exercise (FH)	<b>8</b> 4:30 PM Bexar County Decorate (GYM) 6:00 PM DANA Christmas Party (FH) Office Closed	<b>9</b> 7:30 AM - 3:30 PM KAIROS Team Mtg(FH) 8:00 AM Saturday Morning Reunion 9:00 AM ESL Classes (LL) 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM Bexar County Event for Kids (GYM)
<b>10</b> 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship 10:45 AM Children's Church (LL) 11:30 AM Choir Practice	<b>11</b> 10:00 AM Exercise (FH) 1:00 PM MS Yoga (FH) 7:00 PM Boy Scouts (SH)	<b>12</b> 6:30 AM ROMEO's 10:00 AM Exercise (FH) 7:00 PM Charge Conference	<b>13</b> 1:00 PM Food Pantry 6:30 PM Cub Scouts (SH) 6:30 PM Praise Service (FH)	<b>14</b> 10:00 AM Exercise (FH)	<b>15</b> Office Closed	<b>16</b> 8:00 AM Saturday Morning Reunion 9:00 AM ESL Classes (LL) 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM FH HOLD Baby Shower MANRIQUEZ
<b>17</b> 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship 11:30 AM Choir Practice	<b>18</b> 1:00 PM MS Yoga (FH) 6:30 PM Finance Meeting (FH) 7:00 PM Boy Scouts (SH)	<b>19</b> 6:30 AM ROMEO's 10:00 AM Exercise (FH)	<b>20</b> 1:00 PM Food Pantry 6:30 PM Cub Scouts (SH) 6:30 PM Praise Service (FH)	<b>21</b> 10:00 AM Exercise (FH) 11:00 AM Nutritional Potluck (FH)	<b>22</b> Office Closed	<b>23</b> 8:00 AM Saturday Morning Reunion 9:00 AM ESL Classes (LL)
<b>24</b> 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship 10:45 AM Children's Church (LL) 11:30 AM Choir Practice 5:00 PM Candlelight & Communion Service <b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b>	<b>25</b> 7:00 PM Boy Scouts (SH) <b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b> Office Closed	<b>26</b> 6:30 AM ROMEO's 10:00 AM Exercise (FH)	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 8:00 AM SA Mobile Food Bank	<b>29</b> Office Closed	<b>30</b> 9:00 AM ESL Classes (LL)
<b>31</b> 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship 11:30 AM Choir Practice  Noisy Offering						

## ALL SAINTS' DAY

(by Rob Remig)

On Sunday, November 5, "All Saints' Day" was celebrated at St. Mark's. For the sermon, Pastor Soto chose Revelation 7: 9-17, where reference is made to our loved ones who have departed this life this year and joined the Heavenly Father. They are referred to as "The Great Multitude in White Robes." These Saints have come out of the great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

What a comfort to the rest of us, who have not yet made this transition, to picture our loved-ones being protected by God as he spreads His tent over them. And it is stated, "Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; He will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

What a healing picture this is to the following families and to the St. Mark's family, and to hear these words of promise and hope:

**Willie Barnes**  
**Bob Cermin**  
**Mel Davison**  
**Abner Ross**

**Myrtis Burney**  
**Sarah Connor**  
**David Duewall**  
**Gwendolynn Sawdon**  
**Steve Reyes, Sr.**

**David Cavazos**  
**Wally Crow**  
**Thad Harkins**  
**Marilyn Snook**



St. Mark's is once again partnering with Arnold Elementary School to provide two gifts each to 20 needy children. Look for the Angels to be available starting Sunday, November 26. Contact Susan Philbin for more information.

If you still need a beautiful calendar for 2018, the Youth have 16 available for sale at \$7 a piece. The calendars are high quality with the thicker sheets that stand up to lots of notes. Thank you for your support!

# NOTES AND NOTICES



A great big THANKS to all who helped at the Food Truck distribution. We served **195 families** in November. Please come join us in doing God's work. We have a lot of fun. It is a great feeling to help others.

Thanks again, Patti Austin

Looking for a Handyman?  
**Johnny Mendoza**  
210-765-1869



## Don't forget our Food Pantry!

- ♥ Rice, Beans,
- ♥ Spaghetti, Pasta Sauce
- ♥ Macaroni & Cheese
- ♥ Cans of Tuna, Chicken, Spam
- ♥ Cans of Fruit
- ♥ Boxes or bags of Cereal
- ♥ Cans of Soup, Stew, Chili...
- ♥ Instant Mashed Potatoes
- ♥ Canned Vegetables
- ♥ Cooking Oil



***Don't forget our Noisy Offering the last Sunday of every month!***

## PASTOR APPRECIATION (by Rob Remig)

October was "Pastor Appreciation Month," and the St. Mark's congregation met during Sunday School time on October 29 to host a reception for Pastor Maria Soto. Thanks to Sue Horner and her committee for putting together a delicious table of breakfast snacks, punch, and coffee! It was a fun time for all of us to visit and to meet casually with Pastor Soto and her husband, Reynaldo. Pastor Soto was presented with the table centerpiece, a lantern, to light the way as we move together to serve St. Mark's and our community.



*This is the day the LORD has made.*

*We will rejoice and be glad in it.*

*-Psalm 118:24 New Living Translation (NLT)*

### **Healthy Tips - Just in time for Thanksgiving Day!**

**Start the day off with a good breakfast so you won't be tempted to overeat.**

**Nibble on raw vegetables with low-fat dips before dinner rather than salted nuts or cheese and crackers.**

**Have a small plate of the foods you like best and then move away from the buffet table.**

**Eat slowly. It takes at least 20 minutes for your brain to realize you're full.**

**Choose white rather than dark turkey meat, without the skin.**

**Make mashed potatoes with low-fat milk and margarine instead of butter, and take it easy with the gravy. Skim the fat off the top of the gravy before serving.**

**Steam vegetables like peas and green beans rather serving them in a casserole with creamed sauces.**

**Bake stuffing in a casserole dish rather than inside a turkey so you can make it with less fat. Bake with low-fat broth and margarine.**

**Make cranberry sauce with fresh cranberries. Canned cranberry sauce is high in sugar.**

**If you're going to drink a glass or two of wine, do it with dinner, rather than starting earlier. Consider diluting white wine with seltzer water to make a wine spritzer.**

**Have dessert with everyone else, but choose pumpkin pie over pecan pie, or bring dessert you've made with an artificial sweetener. Top it with low-fat whipped cream.**



**Don't take home leftovers.**

**Wishing you a very blessed Thanksgiving Day!**



*Sandra Montes RN*





## SOUNDS FROM THE BEANCOUNTERS

The following provides the financial overview for the month of October.

Operating Cash balance at 9/30/2017	2,126
Non-Designated Contributions - October	14,642
Operating Expenses:	
Council on Ministries	595
Special Mission	
Giving	0
Mission Giving	2,971
Administration	
Expense	274
Trustees	5,744
Pastor's	
Compensation	4,081
Lay Personnel Compensation	5,337
	<hr/>
	19,002
Other Income/(Expense)	<hr/>
	2,717
Operating Cash balance at 10/31/2017	<hr/>
	483

### Comments:

October contributions were \$2,828 less than budgeted and \$5,665 less than October 2016. Other income was \$1,685 higher than budgeted and \$2,658 higher than 2016.

Operating expenses were \$2,858 less than budgeted and \$1,353 higher than 2016. Versus the budget Operating expenses were favorable primarily due payroll expense being lower due to Pastor Soto versus Pastor Brown coupled with lower Secretary and Maintenance payroll. Versus 2016, operating expenses are higher as a result of higher Mission Giving, partially offset by lower payroll.

October had a cash outflow of \$1,325. Our operating cash balance decreased to a positive \$483.

We were able to maintain a positive operating cash balance as the result of October having five Sundays.

The Finance Committee asks you to review your level of support to St. Mark's, especially as we approach Commitment Sunday. Your support is necessary to sustain the church. Please keep St. Mark's in your prayers.


God Bless you all.

# ST. MARK'S BUZZIN'S . . .



- |                 |                 |                |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Bob Ailerson    | Carol Crenwelge | Lisa Travieso  |
| Jill Anderson   | Esdras Cuervo   | Kirk Tomerlin  |
| Kennedee Bailey | Sylvia Gonzales | Kathryn Wilson |
| Connor Benjamin | Alice Logan     | Warren Dunetz  |
| Patty Braselton | Michael Mendoza | Wix Gaston     |
| Kylee Brown     | Eric Miletti    | Melissa Thomas |
| Megan Brown     | Gerald Morriss  | George Vogel   |
| Bucky Coley     | Will Schuetze   |                |

Our sincere sympathy to the family of:  
 Steve Reyes, Sr.  
 You remain in our thoughts and prayers.



12/02 Eddie Rodriguez		12/20 Sandy Molina Patsy Rolirad
12/03 Jacob Wilke Kathryn Wilson		12/25 Daniel Leija
12/05 Johnny Mendoza	12/10 Bruce Schmidt	12/17 Tom Jack Vanessa Pe'Vey
12/08 Sandra Leija	12/11 Billy Kiesel	12/18 Carolyn Brown Brienne Somerville
12/09 Sanjuana Allen Val Korzekwa Lynn Swatzell	12/15 James Wilson	12/19 MacKenzie Hoffman
	12/16 Cody Black	12/26 Christa Colunga Joseph Scutti
		12/29 Katie Wilke
		12/31 Jerry McDuff

*Charles & Sanjuana  
 Allen  
 (December 10)*



*Hubert & Melinda  
 Molina  
 (December 25)*

St. Mark's United Methodist Church  
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**MISSION STATEMENT**

- TO HELP ALL PERSONS DEVELOP AND STRENGTHEN A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD THROUGH HIS SON, JESUS CHRIST
- TO NURTURE THEM IN THE CHRISTIAN FAITH THROUGH OPPORTUNITIES FOR FELLOWSHIP, WORKSHIP, AND STUDY
- TO STRIVE TO IDENTIFY AND SERVE THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS IN OUR COMMUNITY AND TO ENCOURAGE ALL TO LIVE IN THE WORLD AS CHRISTIAN DISCIPLES



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**OFFICE HOURS**  
 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Monday—Thursday  
 CLOSED on Friday

PASTOR	Rev. Maria Soto
SECRETARY	Lillian Herrera
CHOIR DIRECTOR	Carolyn Hahn
ORGANIST	Joseph Scutti
WESLEY NURSE	Sandra Montes
CUSTODIAN	Johnny Mendoza