

St. Mark's Messenger

December 8, 2020

3502 CLAIREMONT DRIVE, SAN DIEGO, CA 92117

Vol. 47 Issue 49



Rev. Darin Arntson
Lead Pastor



Sunday, December 13, 2020

9:30 a.m. Streaming at

vimeo.com/stmarkssandiego,

YouTube and on our
Facebook page.



858-273-1480

Keeping In Touch

He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. – John 1:8

I know there are scientists (and even just very intelligent people) who understand the mechanics of light. That it is both a wave and a particle. That it can be directed and focused, but no amount of darkness can overcome it completely without the aid of obstructions. That it is a main source of life for some living creatures, and that even humans are enriched simply by its presence.

And, while we know where to locate the light-switches, or how to strike a match, or which times of day we might get our daily natural dose, we, ourselves are not the source.

In our world, we experience the benefits and blessings of God's grace and mercy and fellowship each and every day, and perhaps it becomes so commonplace that we can easily forget that we, ourselves, are not the source. That while our very lives are enriched by these gifts, and we have learned to direct them, or focus them, or even obstruct them, we too are merely witnesses. We have been created to bear these gifts—this Light—to the world, but there is one who is coming, and in fact who has come, who scatters all our fears and illuminates the way through our uncertainty.

As this season of anticipation continues, may we ever keep watch for God's Light breaking in, and remember our capacity, by God's grace, to reflect this Light to all who wait in darkness.

Advent blessings,

Pastor Darin

There will be no Messenger the week of December 28 as the office is closed from Dec. 25 to Jan. 3.

Grief During the Holidays

Final Class is Dec. 9, 2020
6:30 – 8:00 PM

If you wish to participate in the final Zoom meeting with Pastor Jeri and Diane Moreno, **please contact the church office: 858-273-1480 or by email office@stmarksumcsd.org.**

A Zoom link will be sent the morning of the session. And if you need pastoral care outside of the meetings, we are here for that, too.



Christmas Poinsettias

While we may be celebrating Christmas a bit differently this year, one tradition that will continue is St. Mark's altar of beautiful red poinsettias.

If you would like to order a poinsettia, **please submit your order to the church office no later than December 9.** Cost will be the same as last year -- **\$8.00** per poinsettia. Please indicate on the order form if the plant is being given in honor of, or in memory of, someone.

Christmas Worship in COVID Times

Your worship team is working diligently and with joy to bring you a meaningful, inspirational Christmas worship celebration.

Christmas Eve worship will be broadcast on-line at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 24. For those that cherish the candlelight, there will be an in-person, outdoor candlelight service at 11:00 p.m.

On Christmas Day, Friday, December 25, there will be an in-person, outdoor communion service at 11:00 a.m.

In preparation for on-line Christmas Eve worship, you may pick up a candle, a bulletin as well as your poinsettia in **the north parking lot on December 23, between 11a.m. and 1p.m.**

Advent Mondays: 7:00 p.m. Each Monday via Zoom

Dec 14: St. Mark's Favorite Holiday Memories. Grab your favorite holiday beverage and join your friends (via zoom) to share your favorite holiday traditions and memorable stories of Christmases past.



Dec 21: Longest Night Service. Whether you are grieving the loss of a loved one, the laying aside of plans or dreams for now; or you want to be present for the dark before the dawn, come, o come.

ST. MARK'S YOUNG PEOPLE

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

ELEMENTARY

Cherub Choir

Thur. Dec 3, 10, 17 @ 3:30p

K-8th over Zoom

Sunday School

Dec 6 @ 11a

K-6th over Zoom

JR & SR HIGH

Youth Group

Dec 13 @ 12p

6th-12th over Zoom

FAMILY

Cookie Decorating Party

Dec 20 @ 11a

Everyone over Zoom

Christmas Eve

Dec 24 Churchwide

Movie Day

Dec 27 @ 11a

Everyone over Teleparty



A Gift For The Staff

During this holiday season the Staff/Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) wishes to offer you the opportunity to thank the hard working church staff and ministers with a monetary gift. If you would like to contribute to this gift from the congregation, please send your donations to the church office. Make sure to designate your contribution as "Staff Gift" so they get handled appropriately. Thanks from the SPRC.

County COVID Update and Campus Restrictions for December

The County released new data on Tuesday this week that is of great concern to us as your pastors and church staff. We, in San Diego, are experiencing more than twice the number of COVID cases per 100,000 than the threshold that triggers our most restrictive tier of quarantine, and just in the last week there were 81 reported community outbreaks in the county (where three or more people are infected at the same time in one location).

We take this information very seriously. And while we anticipate with hope the release of a vaccine, we feel it necessary (albeit lamentable) to take the following precautions to protect our members and staff alike as the rates of infections continue to rise.

Beginning Monday, December 7th, ***the office staff will be working from home, and the church campus will be closed to all church visitors and volunteers***, at least through the end of the month. (The preschool will continue operations in compliance with state and county guidelines.)

Your pastors and staff will continue to be accessible via email, and will respond promptly to voicemail left at the office number. (These are forwarded to our email address, so please don't hesitate to call.) ***Online Worship, Communion, and groups/studies, as well as regular church communications will all continue as planned.*** We will be sure to keep you updated as to any changes we will need to make regarding outdoor services at Christmas.

Those who are scheduled to participate in the recording of worship may do so in communication with me or the music staff, and those who have critical tasks to tend on campus may do so with prior consent and agreement to follow check-in and on-campus protocol. Any new request to come on campus should be sent to me directly at Darin@stmarksumcsd.org or 858-273-1480 x12 with 48 hrs notice. This will ensure any essential business on campus (especially indoors) may be staggered to lower the risk of transmission.

While we continue to long for the day when we may be together, engaging in the life-giving work and worship of our communal life as a congregation and family of faith, we trust that our call is first to care for the health and well-being of each beloved sibling and friend among us, as well as our neighbors in the community. Thank you for sharing with us in this critical work of doing all the good we can in this season of waiting.

Ever in hope, Pastor Darin

Christmas Eve Offering

Over the past few years St. Mark's has received your Christmas Eve offerings and donated them for a mission ministry program. Because we are a community of peace and compassion, St. Mark's will again receive an offering for our neighbors in need through the work of CCSA.

St. Mark's Missions will match your funds received for this year's Christmas Eve offering. Mission ministry has designated \$2000 to accompany your gifts for our neighbors who rely upon CCSA for their support. Each dollar received will be sent to CCSA for their on-going work in Clairemont and PB. Please put Christmas Eve in the memo line so we can match your gift with the mission ministry designated matching funds.

The January/February *Upper Room* Has Arrived!

If your New Year's resolution is to do a daily devotional, request a copy of the *Upper Room*. They come in pocket-sized and a large-print version. They make a great stocking stuffer, too! Please call or email the office to have you request mailed to you.

Pastor's Bible School Wednesdays @ 1 p.m.

Join Rev. Jeri Wednesdays in November at 1 p.m. via Zoom as we explore the Lectionary Passages of the week. A Zoom link will be sent by email each Wednesday morning. Here are the passages for next week:

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

- 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
- Luke 1:46b-55 and 1:26-38
- Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
- Romans 16:25-27

In Our Prayers

Please keep all those in prayer who are experiencing grief, chronic illness, addiction, loss of direction and disenfranchisement. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Our military personnel:

- ♡ Brook Bossen, Coast Guard
- ♡ Kris Brendal, Army
- ♡ Robert S. Chisholm, Navy
- ♡ Craig Clemans, Marines
- ♡ Paul Clemans, Air Force
- ♡ Blake Cross, Navy
- ♡ Nathan Streeter, Navy
- ♡ Lenny Hezelett, Navy
- ♡ Henry Hoadley, Navy
- ♡ Milo Riegle, Marines
- ♡ Adam Shelar, Navy
- ♡ Robert Tarango, Navy



You are invited to participate in the St. Mark's prayer chain via email. Prayer requests will be sent to you via an email account you provide; you will not be asked to do anything other than offer your private prayers for requests you receive. **To participate, please email Carol Brown at carol.brown@cst.edu.**

St. Mark's Messenger (USPS 516-260) is published weekly by St. Mark's United Methodist Church, 3502 Clairemont Drive, San Diego CA 92117. Periodicals Postage paid at San Diego, CA POSTMASTER: Send address changes to St. Mark's Messenger, 3502 Clairemont Dr, S.D., CA 92117

 Find us on
Facebook
Facebook : St. Mark's San Diego

Next Week @ A Glance

Wednesday, December 9, 2020

- 1:00PM Bible Study w/ Rev. Jeri/Zoom
- 6:30 PM Grief During Holidays/Zoom

Thursday, December 10, 2020

- 3:30PM Cherub Hallelujah Choir/Zoom

Sunday, December 13, 2020

- 9:30AM Worship broadcast from St. Mark's
- 12:00PM Youth Group (6th-12th)/Zoom

Monday, December 14, 2020

- 7:00PM Advent Monday: Holiday Memories/Zoom

Tuesday, December 15, 2020

- 4:30PM Finance Meeting/Zoom

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

- 1:00PM Bible Study w/ Rev. Jeri/Zoom

Catch Up/Get Ahead

Some people find it advantageous from a tax standpoint to prepay their church commitment for the coming year. All gifts, whether they are to fulfill your 2020 intentions or to prepay part or all of your 2021 planned giving must be in the church office by noon, Thurs, Dec 31 (or postmarked no later than 12/31/20), in order to be credited on your 2020 giving statement for tax purposes. There is no "grace period" as far as the IRS is concerned!

If your gift is a prepayment of part or all of your 2021 planned giving, please make sure that you label it as such so that it gets credited properly. If you would like to find out whether or not you are caught up on your 2020 intended giving, please call our finance secretary, Arlene Dempster, at (858) 273-9938.

Rides Needed

From time to time, a church member will reach out for a ride to and from a doctor appointment. If you are able to help, please call or email the office so we can put you on our resource list. Thank you!