



THE GOOD NEWS

Sunday, November 28, 2021

Christmas

Children's Christmas Pageant, Sunday, December 19 at 10 AM

Christmas Eve with Band, Friday, Dec 24 at 3 PM

Christmas Eve with the Choir, Friday, Dec 24 at 9:30 PM

Christmas Day, Dec 25 one service at 10 AM

First Sunday of Christmas, Dec 26, 8 and 10 AM

Because we want to provide a safe and healthy space for children and the vulnerable, proof of vaccination will be required for the aforementioned Christmas services - including Dec 19.

Church Calendar

All meetings/events must be scheduled thru the office. Don't see your event? Email parishadmin@stmarks-upland.org or call the office, 909.920.5565 to schedule a date and time with the rooms available.

November 28-December 04 at St. Mark's

Office Hours: Monday-Wednesday, 9AM to 11AM, Thursday 8AM to 2PM

- **Sunday 8 AM and 10 AM Holy Eucharist**, In-person and streaming online. Bulletins are available in church, e-mail, and online. Please print the bulletin to use at home. Hymnals are available for home use, contact the church office to arrange pick up. Streaming on Facebook or online at: [In-Spirit Worship \(stmarks-upland.org\)](http://In-Spirit Worship (stmarks-upland.org))
- **Sunday 9:50 AM Sunday School**. Catechesis for children ages 3-6 in the Chapel. Journey with God for children ages 7-10 in the Curriculum Room off the Parish Hall. All children welcome!
- **Monday – Friday 9 AM – Zoom Morning Prayer & Bible Study**. <https://zoom.us/j/93780545256> Download prayer sheets from the website: <https://www.stmarks-upland.org/morning-prayer/>
- **Tuesday, 4PM Choristers on Zoom**. Contact music@stmarks-upland.org for more information.
- **Wednesday, 9 AM, St. Peter's Guild**. Card games and other activities in person. Info: stpeters@stmarks-upland.org.
- **Wednesday, 10:30 AM Men's Coffee Fellowship**. Bad Ass Coffee, Rancho Cucamonga. Info: menscoffee@stmarks-upland.org.
- **Wednesday, 5:00 PM – Handbell Rehearsal**, in the parish hall. Masks required.
- **Wednesday, 7:30 PM Taizé**. In person and streaming online.
- **Thursday, 7:30 PM Adult Choir Rehearsal**, in the parish hall, masks and vaccinations required.

LOOKING AHEAD

- 11/28 Evergreen Forest set up
- 12/05 St. Nicholas Dinner 3PM \$10/person. **Vaccinations required for those 12 & up**
- Preschool Nativity Pageant Dec. 10th at 6:30PM
- 12/11 Altar Guild workday
- 12/19 Advent IV with Children's Pageant, 10AM
- 12/19 Greening of the Church
- 12/24 Christmas Eve with services at 3 PM and 9:30 PM
- 12/25 Christmas Day with one service at 10 AM (no choir)
- 12/26 Christmas 1 with Sunday services at 8 and 10 AM (no choir)

Health & Community Protocols for Worship

It is strongly recommended that unvaccinated individuals (12 & up) participate online and that all (2 & up) wear a mask even when fully vaccinated.

Proof of Vaccination: Those 12 years and older, please bring proof of vaccination during November and December. Please share this information with your invited guests.

Masks must be worn at all times by those 2 years and up. Please share this information with your invited guests.

Social distancing: Please be respectful of those around you and adjust as you are able to for healthy spaces between households. We appreciate everyone's patience and flexibility.

Since children aged 5-11 are just beginning to be vaccinated, all direct physical contact with young children should be avoided; elbow bumps are fine, but no hugs or handshakes.

For the "peace exchange," everyone's space and sensitivities should be respected. If someone offers their elbow, fist, or a peace sign, please respond appropriately. Do NOT assume physical affection. The peace of Christ is offered and given with enthusiastic consent.

Restrooms: To maintain physical distancing in the restrooms, we ask that only one person or household use the restroom at a time.

Hospitality: To reduce multiple handling of shared objects such as the coffee urn, hot water dispenser, and serving utensils, please let the hospitality host serve you.

Proof of Vaccination for A Safer, Healthier, and Merrier Christmas

St. Mark's cares for the young and vulnerable. Vaccinations are essential to create a safer and healthier workplace and worship space for all - including employees, volunteers, guests and especially for children not fully vaccinated and vulnerable members and guests. Before and during the Christmas season we expect more children, grandchildren, grandparents, and singing. For everyone to be safer and healthier, we want to create a protective bubble. Our health and strength are intertwined with one another.

How can we do this with grace and compassion?

Through communication and practice. During November we will be experimenting with different ways of checking proof. And then during December we will be refining our procedures. Your suggestions, questions, and feedback are appreciated – please find our suggestion basket in the parish hall. Please spread the word to your guests.

VESTRY NEWS

New Vision and Mission Statements Finalized

The vestry is excited to announce the final vision and mission statements for St. Mark's. We have also approved a tag line to be used in various communications. Here are the statements:

TAG LINE

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Upland CA – A Community of Grace

VISION

We will be a faith community that
spreads God's word,
loves like Jesus,
enjoys worshiping together, and
helps our neighbors.

MISSION

To be a place where love and hope abound...
we welcome everyone to our worship and communion,
we help one another to understand God and know Jesus,
we nurture our community and the world, and
we celebrate diversity and work for social justice.

We are grateful for the ad hoc committee of Kay Alexander, Dean Billman, Kimberly Cortner, Edwina Golightly, Carol Morgan, and Rev. Keith Yamamoto for their months of work on this project. We are also very grateful to the many parishioners who offered their comments and suggestions on the draft statements. Well done!

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Sunday's Readings

Genesis 16:7-13 Psalm 71:4-1 Philippians 2:5-11 Luke 1:26-38

Prayer Requests

Please send your prayer requests to prayer@stmarks-upland.org or complete the prayer request form at <https://www.stmarks-upland.org/saint-marks-prayer-list/>

An Invitation to Further Reflection: A Sermon Appraisal

"An effective sermon offers one clear message of good news authentic to the preacher relevant to the audience holding attention and inviting transformation." from Backstory Preaching Please consider completing a sermon appraisal here:

<https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/5820275/Mentorship2-0-2020>

Advent: Preparing for Jesus Christ

Advent means “coming” and reminds us of the coming of Jesus Christ in history (first Christmas), mystery (here and now), and majesty (final coming). Advent begins the church liturgical calendar year. The countdown of 4 Sundays before Christmas is a time of preparation. The cycle of preparation (Advent), celebration (Christmas), and growth (Epiphany) is repeated for Lent, Easter, & Pentecost/Ordinary time.

To intentionally address our spiritual temperaments tested by unprecedeted stress and trauma please consider the Breath Prayer spiritual practice before the collect of the day. See Brown, M.D., James R. (host) 2020, June 8 “Anxiety” (No. 2) Good Medicine Explained.

This Advent we experiment with readings from the Rev. Dr. Wil Gafney from A Women's Lectionary for the Whole Church. In particular, the First Testament readings feature women with extraordinary experiences with God: Hagar, Sarai (Sarah), the unnamed mother of Samson, and Hannah.

For the Lord's Prayer experiment with a different beginning. Compare with Gen 1:27; Hosea 13:8; Deut 13:11; 32:18; Isaiah 66:13; 49:15; Ps 131:2; and Luke 13:34. Experiment with other prayers and hymns.

New! Inspired by Canon Beeks' invitation to prayer like our partners in St. Andre's in Haiti, we will extend the time following the last petition of the prayers of the people and the concluding collect to a full minute. Please consider making a plan on how you would like to use this minute.

Letters to Santa: The Mailbox is Back

Saint Mark's Upland has once again been chosen as one of the pop-up post offices for Santa! Each child will receive a reply letter that acknowledges their letter. We encourage parents and grandparents to assist their young letter writers to be sure that return addresses and names are clear. Merry Christmas and a Blessed Advent!

Home Crèche Figures Blessing - Dec 19

Bring one of your figures from your home crèche for a blessing. Place them on the altar. Let's see if we can assemble a complete set. Kings OK. Duplicates expected. Variety wanted.

COMMUNITY & FELLOWSHIP NEWS

Into Eternal Life: Carol Nichols

It is with care we inform you that Carol Nichols, 77, passed away on October 17, 2021. Carol joined St. Mark's just before COVID and was active in outreach ministries and prayer ministries including Daughters of the King and the Women's Prayer & Fellowship via zoom during lockdown. Carol was born in Missoula, Montana. She is survived by her sons: Matt (wife Martina), Warren (wife Caroly), Allen (wife Fabiana), and her grandchildren; Bianca, Samanth, Sarah, and Shasta. Please keep her family in your prayers. Her memorial service will be held at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Crescent City, CA. In lieu of flowers you can contribute to the Del Norte scholarship foundation c/o DN Unified School District, 301 W. Washington Blvd., Crescent City, CA 95531.

Rest eternal grant to Carol, O Lord; and let light perpetual shine upon her. May her soul, and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

For the Safety of All

Spread the word among your family, friends, and neighbors... At St. Mark's we are taking all precautions against the spread of COVID-19. With the increase in cases, we are especially concerned about our children, grandparents, other vulnerable members, and guests. Beginning on the Sunday of Advent IV, our ushers will be asking to see proof of vaccination. For several weeks we have been providing new name badges with a convenient place for you to display a photocopy of your official Vaccination Record Card. (To request a name badge, email kcortner@stmarks-

upland.org) Please have this ready to show our ushers on December 19, the day of the Christmas pageant, and all services over the weekend of Christmas. This will be especially important and required for admission to the 10:00 PM Christmas Eve Eucharist. (Come early. The music begins at 9:30 PM.) If you have questions or concerns, please leave a message in the basket in the Parish Hall or email kyamamoto@stmarks-upland.org.

St. Mark's Workday November

We had a very successful workday on Saturday November 20. We want to thank everyone who turned out to help. There was an amazing amount of work that got done. The Guild Room was cleaned out and is now ready to be used for emergencies or if someone just needs a quiet place to rest. The Parish Hall tables were cleaned. Room 20 and the storage rooms were cleaned out of any left-over school materials. We successfully recycled a huge amount of e-waste. The Sanctuary was cleaned of cobwebs and thoroughly dusted. A good amount of material was moved from the former Finance office, soon to be the Audio Visual office, to be recycled in the future. Some people worked in the Zondervan Library, moving old yearbooks and trophies. There is still work going on a bit at a time.

St. Lydia Sunday

December 5 honors St. Lydia, patron saint of small business. Do you own a business in the area? We would like to showcase your business on Small Business Sunday. Please fill out the form located [here](#) or email us with the following information: Your Name, How long you've been with St. Mark's, Name of business, Contact information, Category.

Peter Mow's son Jeffrey to retire from Nation Park Service

Parishioner Peter Mow's son Jeffrey is retiring from the Nation Park Service after 33 years. Jeff's last posting was Glacier Nation Park in Alaska where he worked with the Blackfeet Nation. Jeff cited wanting to spend more time with his father as one of the reasons he is making this move. Read more [here](#).

New feature

Do you have news to share with our parish? A new baby? Life event? Updates on your children? Grandchildren? Send your news to parishadmin@stmarks-upland.org and we will share it with the community.

Dinner with St. Nicholas reservations now open

This year marks the return of the St. Nicholas Dinner, Sunday, December 5 at 3PM. Tickets are \$10 per person, all ages welcome. We will have an ugly sweater contest (can you unseat Ellen S?) and fun for all ages. Tickets will be on sale Sunday, November 7 until Sunday, November 28. Look for the St Nicholas sign in the Parish Hall, you will find a reservation form and more details about the event. Please note that **vaccinations will be required for all participants aged 12 and older**.

Thank You to a Gracious Benefactor

Because of the generosity of an anonymous benefactor the preschool teachers and director will be gifted tickets to the St. Nicholas dinner. Thank you so much.

Scrip is Back!

Traveling to Grandmas? we have 76 and Shell gas cards; dashing to the store for turkeys? we have Vons, Target, and Walmart; decorating, watching a big game? Domino's; guest gift? box of See's; out gift hunting? Subway, Landry's, Burger King, and many others for that meal break; Nordstrom, Pottery Barn, Kohl's for gifting; AMC for a movie break. All supporting St Mark's. Please see Cheryl Hunley for more information or to purchase cards.

Flower Guild and Liturgical Arts

Advent is on the horizon. On November 28, the Flower Guild will need your help in setting up the evergreen forest. This will take place Sunday after the 10:00 service. Then on December 19, the Flower and Liturgical Arts guilds will need assistance with the greening of the church and the hanging of the stars and angels. We hope you will join us for these two community projects. Please contact Christy Hyder flowers@stmarks-upland.org for information or to volunteer.

Christmas Flower Dedications

We are so blessed to be back in church and we are fortunate to have a wonderful flower guild that is ready to make Christmas fabulous. If you would like to help beatify the church by donating to the flower guild in honor of, thanksgiving for, or in memory of someone, please follow this [link](#) to fill out your dedication. All dedications received by December 16th will be listed in the Christmas bulletins.

Sunday Morning Readers

As you may know, the Sunday 10am service is live streamed on Facebook and YouTube for our friends and parishioners who cannot be with us in person. To welcome and lead everyone in prayer, we would like to extend an open invitation to all in-person attendees who would like to participate in reading a paragraph or two from the lectern. The qualifications are simple: anyone who can read and speak clearly is welcomed. Contact Andrea Flasher – readers@stmarks-upland.org.

If you are interested in becoming a Lector and reading one of the appointed scriptural Lessons, please contact Chris Watson lectors@stmarks-upland.org.

Parish Staff to Observe Holidays

Members of the parish staff – whether working from the church or from remote locations – will take days off for several upcoming holidays and observances.

Church offices will be closed on the following dates: Thanksgiving holidays: Thursday and Friday, November 25 and 26; Christmas holidays: Friday and Monday, December 24 and 27; and New Year's holidays: Friday, December 31 and January 3.

PRESCHOOL NEWS

- The Preschool will be closed for Thanksgiving week, Nov. 22-26. School resumes on Nov. 29
- Preschool Nativity Pageant, Friday, Dec. 10, 5:30 PM
- Last day of school for Christmas holidays, Friday, Dec. 17, noon dismissal, school resumes Jan. 3

AROUND THE DEANERY

Deanery Calendar

- 12/11- Deanery 6 Quiet Day by Rev. V.R. Marianne Zahn: St. Hildegard of Bingen. Christ Church, Ontario
- 12/19 - Deanery 6 Advent Lessons and Carols, Holy Trinity, Covina, at 4PM

Advent Quiet Day at Christ Church Ontario

Join The Rev. V.R. Marianne Zahn for reflections on the words, music, life and art of Hildegard of Bingen. The day Saturday, December 11 10AM to 2 PM will be interspersed with contemplative labyrinth walks, as we seek what Hildegard called "the greening of the soul. Dress comfortably, light lunch served. Suggested donation \$10. RSVP with attendance and dietary needs to Rev. Liz at revliz@stjohnslaverne.org Christ Church is located at 1127 N. San Antonio Ave, Ontario, CA

The Church We are Called to Be: 3 Open Conversations in Advent, Dec 1, 8, & 15, 6-7:30PM

What is your idea of what the Church is and ought to be? What are we able to do as Church that we cannot do as individuals? Where should we direct our efforts as a community in the Inland Empire?

Join Dr. Jim Dunkly, Bloy House, & Rev. Gianluigi Gugliermetto, Christ Church/Rebecca's Garden/Spirit, Earth, Action: The Center for Spirituality for an open conversation the first three Wednesday evenings in December via Zoom.

Children's Christmas Pageant - Sun, Dec 19, 10AM

Casting begins December 5 for the Dec 19 Christmas Pageant at 10AM. Participants wanted; no rehearsal needed. Assistants appreciated. If you have a child or grandchild who might want to participate, please let Susan Mackall know.

OUTREACH

Thank You!

I would like to thank everyone at Saint Marks for their generosity to touch Ministry. Living on the streets is tough and your check for \$500 is greatly appreciated. You are a blessing, Connie Anaya, Director, Touch Ministry.

Christmas for Our Neighbors

St. Mark's Church has a legacy of serving more people during the week than on Sunday morning, more people outside the sanctuary than inside, more non-Episcopalians than Episcopalians. And we have found a unique way to serve those not able to join us for church through Ash & Dash for the past four years. Please help us use what we have learned to offer a special gift to our neighbors for Christmas. We want to fill and give away 250 Christmas bags to our neighbors who cannot join us for our Christmas Eve services for whatever reason. Ideas for items include an ornament, a small toy for a child, seasonal tract, hot cocoa packet, individually wrapped cookies, prayers for families, and information from around the deanery. Will you help us fill a Christmas bag? Our tentative date for assembling will be Sunday, December 12. Contributions are welcome. More details to follow.

Touch Ministries

Collections for TOUCH Ministries should be brought to the church or office or, on Sunday, placed in the Touch bin on the bench at the south entrance of the narthex. The weather is growing colder and for those living outside, the cold is even more pronounced. Gloves, beanies, sleeping tarps, sleeping bags, personal hygiene items, new socks & underwear, gently used shoes, camping equipment, and \$10 gift cards for fast food or Walmart are always needed. Any questions, email Dave Nalbach at touch@stmarks-upland.org.

Foothill Family Shelter

Have you donated to the annual Thanksgiving Baskets yet? If not, there is still time, if you cannot shop, your donation of \$40 will provide a basket for a family in need. Make your check payable to St. Mark's and put Thanksgiving Basket in the memo line. There is always a need for nonperishable packaged food, diapers, wipes and gently used clothing to the shelter Tuesday through Friday, 9am-5pm, (closed for lunch from 12-1pm) 1501 W. 9th St, Suite D, Upland. For more information or current needs, contact Yelitza Banuelos at yelitza@foothillfamilyshelter.org.

STEWARDSHIP

2022 Stewardship Campaign "Every Perfect Gift"

Thank you to all those who made a pledge to St. Mark's for the 2022 fiscal year. If you have not turned in your form, there is still time. All pledges are kept confidential and may be amended at any time if your situation changes. Please pick up a pledge form in the Narthex or if you prefer, you may fill out your pledge information through our [website](#). Please know that your information will be confidential and secure. Questions should be directed to Katherine Abdohosseini our business manager, contributions@stmarks-upland.org.

Your Generous Contributions are Appreciated

Third quarter pledge statements have been mailed out. Please review your statement for accuracy. We are so blessed to have parishioners who support our ministries. Please continue to send your contributions to St. Mark's Church, 330 E. 16th St., Upland, CA 91784. Consider online bill pay for automatic payments, or donate through PayPal: contributions@stmarks-upland.org

Ways to Give: Planned Giving

Did you know there are other ways to support your parish Ways in which the church, you, and your loved ones can all benefit at the same time?

Such giving options are called "planned gifts," because with thoughtful planning, you create win-win solutions for you and the faith communities you care about. Whether giving through your will, living trust, qualified retirement plan, or life insurance policy, planning ahead is an expression of commitment through a very special and important form of financial support. To learn more, email 1910legacy@stmarks-upland.org

Every Perfect Gift



The Gift of Light

“Keep awake!” Jesus tells us, as if we could possibly let ourselves sleep right now. This year, full of plot twists has not given us a chance to rest. Staying vigilant has been standard operating procedure since the first cases of COVID-19 started making news. This was followed quickly by economic unrest and work disruptions, changes of our routines. Suddenly our living rooms were classrooms and our kitchens stocked snacks for quick meals between web conferencing. Our summer was marked by political upheaval, demonstrations for justice, natural disasters of every kind – more sleepless nights. Thank you for the words of advice, Jesus, but keeping awake has not been a problem this year.

But I don’t think Jesus was worried about our sleep cycles; rather, his words were a caution to stay focused, to pay attention. Further, I believe Jesus was not asking us to merely pay attention to the news cycle, to the obvious events that shape the big moments in the world around us, but to notice the subtleties, the patterns of behavior, the nuances.

Advent is a subtle season. Its quiet refrain offers us hope and patience in equal measure. Around us it is characterized by a frenzy of shopping and planning; but deep into the darkening evenings and cooler days of the Northern Hemisphere, or fully into the languid heat and brightening skies of the south of our globe, there is a silent stirring of movement and of expectation, as the things we have planted deep, begin to take root and find the light. Those small moments, the delicate actions and thoughts of Advent, open our hearts to see that faint light as it breaks through the chaos of our culture.

These are the gifts of the season: patience, hope, anticipation, and like every perfect gift, these presents bestow on us just what we need when we need it most. In a season marked by the opposing forces of starkness and extravagance, God’s generosity appeals to us in the simplicity of God’s desires for us: to be patient, to live in hope, to anticipate the freedom that will unshackle us from oppression. “And what I say to you, I say to all: Keep awake!” |

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION



What are the gifts that you can give that meet the needs of the world?

What patterns in yourself to you want to nurture with the coming Light?