

St. Mark United Methodist Church
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Greenwood, SC 29649
<http://www.stmarkgreenwood.com>
Church Phone: 864.229.5416
Kids' World Phone: 864.227.2776

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The Witness



Bypass Campus (BPC)



Rivers Street Campus (RSC)

St. Mark United Methodist Church

www.stmarkgreenwood.com

Volume 20 Issue 6

July 2026



For the month of July, we are collecting used towels and blankets for the Humane Society of Greenwood. Help us fill the black St. Mark Cares and Shares bins to keep the animals clean and warm!

SUNDAY, JULY 12 • RIVERS STREET CAMPUS
"ONE CHURCH WORSHIP"



1 CHURCH • 2 CAMPUSES
ST. MARK UMC
ST. MARK HAS A PLACE FOR YOU



SUNDAY SCHOOL AT 9:15

10:30 am WORSHIP

A Fellowship Lunch will follow!! Everyone is invited to bring a side dish to share! Pork loin and beverage will be provided by the Nurture Committee, and ice cream will be provided by Emerald City Salkehatchie. Join us!



Jason's Journal

“They came to Bethsaida. Some people brought a blind man to him and begged him to touch him. He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village; and when he put saliva on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, ‘Can you see anything?’ And the man looked up and said, ‘I can see people, but they look like trees, walking.’ Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he looked intently and his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly.”

Mark 8:22-25

Last month, United Methodists from South Carolina gathered in Greenville for the 2026 Annual Conference. This year has been one of the best Annual Conferences for several years. There was a spirit of peace, love, and unity. It truly felt as if United Methodists were actually united. Laity and clergy gathered for worship, to conduct the business of the church, and to pack 125,000 meals for hunger relief as the Annual Conference partnered with Rise Against Hunger.

The above passage of Scripture is what our Bishop, Bishop Fairley, read and preached from in our opening worship service. Bishop Fairley challenged the Annual Conference to ask ourselves two questions. What do you see? Who do you see? In the Gospels both deafness and blindness are symbolic of the inability to understand Jesus and respond to him in faith. We are called to see with spiritual eyes, not just physical eyes, the possibilities of ministry and mission so that as disciples of Jesus we may make disciples of Jesus for the transformation of the world. We are called by Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit to love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously wherever we go. Bishop Fairley continued in reminding us that at times we all need Jesus to touch our eyes so that we may begin to truly see and sometimes we need a second touch so that we can see everything clearly.

I share all of this with you, St. Mark UMC, as a team of dedicated leaders (The Forward Focus Team) have been seeking, asking, and knocking for Jesus to open our eyes as we have been working through the Forward Focus process since February of this year. We have submitted surveys, asked hard questions of each other, and examined demographic studies of a five mile radius of St. Mark UMC. This month, Sunday July 12th, following our One Church worship and lunch, the Forward Focus team will be presenting to the congregation our study results thus far. We will meet that day at 2:00 PM at the Rivers Street Campus to deliver this information to you. May we all be praying for Jesus to touch our eyes so that we may begin to see clearly the possibilities of ministry and mission in the Greenwood community and beyond. Just as Bishop Fairley reminded us all at Annual Conference, I would like to share with you some of his closing words. Bishop Fairley said, *“We are at a pivotal place where we must begin to see differently. We must take our eyes off our golden calf...We must see our way through wilderness and darkness to God’s possibilities and away from Egypt. South Carolina, there’s nothing there for you! The best years of the South Carolina Annual Conference are not behind us; they are in front of us.”* St. Mark UMC, our best years are in front us. By God’s grace and the leading of the Holy Spirit, I pray we begin to see the possibilities as all things are possible for those who believe in Jesus!



Worship Attendance Year to Date Average

As of June 21, 2026

8:45 AM - BPC	82
8:45 AM - RSC	62
11:00 AM - BPC	87
11:15 AM - RSC	91
8:45 YouTube Stream - BPC	57
11:15 YouTube Stream - RSC	40
8:45 Facebook Stream - BPC	204
11:15 Facebook Stream - RSC	210
Facebook Stream	287
10:30 AM - One Church	207
10:30 YouTube Stream - One Church	170
10:30 Facebook Stream - One Church	486
Worship Attendance	737
Sunday School Attendance	44

The next copy of *The Witness*, the church's monthly newsletter, will be emailed out Thursday, July 30. **Deadline to submit information to the church office for the newsletter is Monday, July 20.**

Copies of the July Birthdays list, July Anniversaries list, and Upper Rooms for July/August are located at the narthex/welcome area at each campus.

St. Mark UMC Men's
COMMUNITY PRAYER BREAKFAST
JOIN US!

Friday, July 31
6:30am
Rivers Street Campus
of St. Mark UMC

Our guest speaker this month is Pastor Rafael Jimenez from Gethsemene Church.




OUR FORWARD FOCUS TEAM WILL PRESENT THEIR GATHERED INFORMATION AT 2:00 PM JULY 12TH AT OUR RIVERS STREET CAMPUS. EVERYONE IS INVITED.




Upcoming Church Meetings

Finance Committee	July 19th at 12:45 PM
	Room 105/107
Church Council	July 19th at 2:00 PM
	Room 105/107
Nominations	July 26th at 12:45 PM
	Room 104

All meetings will be held at the Bypass Campus.



Hello St. Mark Family!

There is a question that I have found myself wrestling with lately, and perhaps it is one that we all need to wrestle with from time to time; Am I allowing God's Word to shape my life, or am I trying to shape God's Word to fit my life? We live in a culture that encourages us to look inward for truth. We are told to follow our hearts, trust our feelings, and determine for ourselves what is right and wrong. Yet Scripture consistently calls God's people to do the opposite. Rather than asking God to conform to our desires, we are called to conform our desires to Him.

The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 12:2, "Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." Notice that Paul does not call believers to transform the gospel so it better fits the culture. He calls believers to be transformed by the gospel itself. That is not always easy. There are passages in Scripture that challenge us. There are commands we wish were different. There are teachings that confront our politics, our habits, our priorities, our relationships, our spending, our speech, our pride, and yes, even our understanding of morality. The temptation for every generation is the same, when Scripture confronts us, we try to explain it away, redefine it, or reinterpret it until it says what we already wanted it to say.

But discipleship has never been about changing God's Word. Discipleship is about allowing God's Word to change us. I see this temptation everywhere today. I see it when people in politics use Scripture to justify positions that the Bible does not support. I see it when other politicians use Scripture to advance agendas that place nation, party, or ideology above Christ. I see it when Christians selectively apply verses that affirm their preferences while ignoring the passages that challenge them. The reality is that every one of us is capable of approaching Scripture with the question, "How can I make this support what I already believe?" rather than asking, "Lord, what are You teaching me?"

The Christian life requires humility. It requires us to come before God's Word with open hands and surrendered hearts. Sometimes that means discovering we were wrong. Sometimes it means repenting of attitudes we have carried for years. Sometimes it means laying down beliefs, behaviors, and desires that are deeply important to us because Christ is calling us to something better. As followers of Jesus, our goal is not to make Scripture fit comfortably into our lives. Our goal is to allow Scripture to shape every part of who we are. We do not stand over God's Word as its editors. We stand under God's Word as its students.

So, this month, I would encourage each of us to spend some time in honest reflection. When I read Scripture, am I looking for affirmation or transformation? Am I seeking permission or seeking holiness? Am I asking God to bless my way, or am I surrendering myself to His? My prayer is that we may be a people who approach God's Word with humility, who receive it with faith, and who allow it to do its transforming work within us. For when Scripture changes us, we become more like Christ and there is no greater goal than that.

I hope that you have an amazing July and I hope to see YOU at CHURCH! BRING A FRIEND!

Robby

JULY PREACHING SCHEDULE AND SCRIPTURE

This month we will be spending some time with the Gospel of Matthew. Robby and I both hope that you will take a few minutes during your week to read the passages before each Sunday as we attempt by God's grace to share with you a word from God for all of us. We pray that these passages, worship services, and sermons challenge us all in being disciples of Jesus and sharing the way of Jesus with all people so that lives are transformed by the good news of Jesus.

July 5 - Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

- Rev. Jason Wilson at the Bypass Campus 8:45 AM and 11:00 AM.
- Rev. Robby Lybrand at the Rivers Street Campus 8:45 AM and 11:15 AM.

July 12 - One Church Worship Service - Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

- Rev. Jason Wilson and Rev. Robby Lybrand at the Rivers Street Campus 10:30 AM.

July 19 - Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

- Rev. Jason Wilson at the Bypass Campus 8:45 AM and 11:00 AM.
- Rev. Robby Lybrand at the Rivers Street Campus 8:45 AM and 11:15 AM.

July 26 - Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

- Rev. Jason Wilson at the Bypass Campus 8:45 AM and 11:00 AM.
- Rev. Robby Lybrand at the Rivers Street Campus 8:45 AM and 11:15 AM.



TWO PASTORS PODCAST



Conversations About Everything

Every Wednesday at Noon

An all-new podcast from Pastor Jason and Pastor Robby! New episodes drop every Wednesday at noon!

Ideas for an episode? Let us know!



TINSEL & TREASURES

We are busy getting ready for our 3rd annual sale. Thank you so much for your donations and know that we are continuing to accept donations of items.

Our focus is beginning to change to the actual execution of the event and we will be in need of MANY volunteers. In Sept and Oct we will host informational sessions to discuss actual operations, but right now, we need to get your name on our sign up lists to help. Here is how you can help:

Contact Cyndi Cioffi for more information:
404 683-0222
cyndicioffi@gmail.com

This event is a fundraiser for the ministries & programs for St. Mark UMC!

- Sun. Nov 1: Loading & moving inventory to the Rivers Street Campus
- Mon. Nov 2- Wed Nov 4: Unpacking, organizing, & creating vignettes to create a beautiful Market Place!
- Thurs. Nov 5: Set up, Serve, and Clean up for the 1st ever, **Evening of Merriment: Dinner, Music, & Silent/Live Auction**
- Fri Nov 6-Sat Nov 7: Assist customers, help with check out process, and **NEW this year, prepare & serve Hot Dog baskets at Santa's Snack Shack!**
- Sun Nov 8: Pack up, Clean up.

******Bakers are needed to provide goodies for Santa's Snack Shack!!!!******

WESLEY COMMONS

St. Mark/Wesley Commons Fellowship
Thursday, July 2
10:30 AM




Wesley Commons Asbury Hall
1110 Marshall Road



Prayer Quilt Ministry

If you can sew, volunteer to help make the quilts. If you can't sew, donations are always needed. If you hear of someone who might need a quilt, please make sure they want it, and then contact Kay Gregory at 864-554-4740 or Patricia Rickenbaker at 864-980-4293 or email Stmarkprayerquilts@gmail.com. As of June 14th, St. Mark has given out 232 prayer quilts since this ministry started.



Santa might be taking a vacation, but we are busy preparing for the 3rd Annual Tinsel & Treasures Sale!



This year's sale will have several new elements:

(Event Dates: Nov 5-7)

*A New location....we are moving to Rivers Street! That means a BIGGER space, so YOUR DONATIONS are still needed to fill the space!

*A BIG KICK OFF EVENT: *An Evening of Merriment!* This ticketed event on Thursday, November 5th will include a 3 course dinner, music, Silent/Live Auction.

*BackPack Ministry will benefit from the Early Shopper Hours, admission will be 2 items needed for Backpack meals.

*Sweet Treats & Hot Dog Meals will be served up from *Santa's Snack Shack.....* we don't want any HANGRY shoppers!

Need more information:
Donations & Sale:
Cyndi Cioffi 404 683-0222

Evening of Merriment & Auction:
Andrea Doucet: 337 739-6361

July 5th Food Collection Sunday

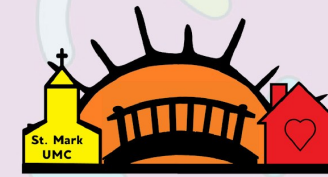


Blessing Box items needed:

Canned tuna, chicken, or salmon, Peanut butter and jelly, Meals in a can (chunky soups, stew, chili), Canned fruits in its own juice or water, Canned food with pop-top lids, Dried beans (pinto, blackeyed, kidney, lima, etc), Pasta (including whole grain), Rice (brown, white, yellow), Low-sugar whole grain cereals, Grits and Oatmeal (bag or box), Powder or shelf-stable milk, Bottled water and fruit drinks,

Healthy snacks (granola bars, nuts, dried fruit), laundry detergent, and toiletries.

ST. MARK



BRIDGE KIDS



THANK YOU to everyone who helped with VBS! Vacation Bible School is a huge endeavor, and it could not happen without the support of our church. From the financial support this ministry is given to the smiling volunteers that welcomed the children the first day, the kitchen staff that lovingly prepared the snacks, the crew leaders, the station leaders, the individuals who worked tirelessly to create the set, the families, and the children - thanks to all of you, we were able to minister to over 225 children!



Sunday, July 26th - The Blessing of the Backpacks in all worship services!



KREW returns Sunday, August 9! Look for details coming soon!

DISCOVER WORSHIP PRAY SHARE LIVE



Dear Parents,

At St. Mark, we believe that both Sunday School and KREW play a vital role in your child's spiritual growth, each with a unique purpose.

Sunday School is where children build their foundation. It's where they learn the Bible stories, explore God's Word, and begin to understand the essential truths of our faith.

KREW, our high-energy Sunday afternoon program, is where that foundation comes to life. It's where kids learn how to apply what they know, living out their faith through worship, service, relationships, and fun, hands-on experiences.

Together, these two ministries work hand in hand to help your child grow in faith, knowledge, and confidence as a follower of Jesus.

We are honored to partner with you on this journey!

Don't miss out!

Spark **SUNDAY SCHOOL**

WWW.STMARKBRIDGEKIDS.COM



EPIC STUDENT MINISTRY



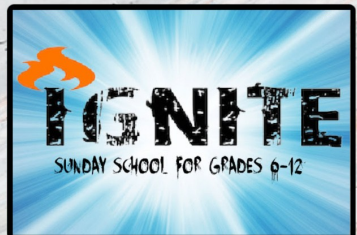
WWW.STMARKEPIC.COM

GET READY FOR THE BEST EPIC YEAR YET! EPIC IS OUR STUDENT MINISTRY. EACH SUNDAY NIGHT, WE MEET FOR EPIC SUNDAYS. WE HAVE A TIME FOR FOOD, FELLOWSHIP, GAMES, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY WORSHIP, WE GATHER IN LARGE GROUP FOR OUR MESSAGE AND THEN IN AGE APPROPRIATE SMALL GROUPS FOR DISCUSSION. GRADES 6-12 ARE WELCOME AS WE KICK OFF OUR NEW SCHOOL YEAR AUGUST 9TH! SPREAD THE WORD - SUNDAYS 6:15-8:00. GET READY.



PASSION CAMP 2026 IS JULY 13-17. PRAY FOR OUR LEADERS. PRAY FOR OUR STUDENTS. THIS WILL BE A WEEK LIKE NO OTHER AS OUR STUDENTS IMMERSE THEMSELVES IN WORSHIP, STUDY, PRAYER, AND PRAISE IN DAYTONA BEACH.

IGNITE Sunday School meets from 10:00-10:45 Sunday mornings upstairs at Rivers Street! Glenn and Alyson Perrin lead this interactive, engaging group. We hope to see you July 26th when we welcome in the newest middle schoolers and kick off for the new school year! All 6th-12th graders are invited to join us!




2026-2027

Kade Scott
Josie Garrett
Tucker Chapman
Maggie Timmons
Max Westmoreland
MacKenzie Cook
Kayden Lollis
Lilly Johnson
Adam Fennell
Maddie Ray Shirley
Isabelle Jenks
Walker Weathers
Addi Grace Chapman
Sarah Simmons

President:
Jennings Sears

YOUTH COUNCIL

Congratulations to the students who were chosen by their peers to lead our youth group for the upcoming school year!

Prayers of the Church

Prayer requests will remain on this list for three weeks unless we are notified differently.

RESIDENTIAL LIVING

Ansley Glen
(1408 Parkway, Greenwood, SC)
Faye Adams

Wesley Commons
(1110 Marshall Road, Greenwood, SC)
Ruth Clark
Dodie Conley
George and Betty Crane
Skip Heintzelman
Betty Moss McGuirt
Gene Zittrouer

Shut-In/Homebound
Mary Ellen Anderson
(864.223.5275)
1830 Alexander Road W
Greenwood, SC 29649

Tom and Beth Downtin
122 Hemlock Ct
Greenwood, SC 29649

Mary Anna Evans
5800 Old Providence Road
Apt 4310
Charlotte, NC 28226

Evelyn Fennell
308 Marietta Drive
Greenwood, SC 29646

Evelyn Fooshe
1062 West Mills St.
Apt. 118
Columbus, NC 28722

Charlie Helms (704.535.7848)
c/o Teena Williams
4600 Crofton Ct.
Charlotte, NC 28205

Miriam Laswell
122 Leslie Drive
Greenwood, SC 29649

Bob and Jean Lax
801 Musgrove St
Unit 84
Clinton, SC 29325

Julie McCaffrey
101 Wendover Road
Greenwood, SC 29649

Shut-In/Homebound Cont'd

Wilma McCall
106 Cessna Avenue
Greenwood, SC 29646

MEMBERS AND REGULAR ATTENDEES

Tommy Wilson
Lauren Austin
The Family of Terri Nicoletti
Grae Markward
Dodie Conley
Betty Moss McGuirt

MEMBERS' FAMILY

Craig Clark
Daughter
Chris Littlefield
Whitney Stennett

MEMBERS' FRIENDS

Ted Green
Rosie Mullett
Friend with breast cancer
Robert Dean
Shea Hall
The Family of Harriette Wideman
Kyrsten Spurrier
John-Mark Scruggs
Dee Dee Setzler
Rebecca Hall
Valerie Hazlett

MILITARY

Sgt. Jack Boyd - Army
Sean Cornelsen - Army National Guard
Christian Furman - Army
Audrey Garver - Army
Ethan Garver - Army
Randall Geddings
Joshua Goff - Marines
Kos Kerhoulas - Navy
Mackenzie Latham - Air Force
Will Peeler - Army National Guard
Banner Peksa - Army

COLLEGE STUDENTS

Anderson University:
Luke Godwin and Eric Philcox

Chowan University:
Cameron Addis

Citadel:
Olivia Murray and Owen Whittington

COLLEGE STUDENTS Cont'd

Clemson:
Adam Prince, Bentley Setzler,
Brady Wilson, Caroline Addis,
Charlee Layland, Chloe Ison,
Dawson Hudson, Emma Arnold,
Jackson Hamm, Josh Godwin,
Julia Creswell, Lexi Layland,
Liam Tompkins, Lily Lambert,
Liza Justesen, Matthew Dalton,
and Thomas Goff

Erskine College:
Hampton Ashley

Guilford College:
Jillian Mapes

Hunter College
Kynslea Philcox

Kenneth Shuler:
Rylee McManus

Lander:
Kylie Camp, Mary Peden Light,
Meghan Philcox, and Rhianna Philcox

MUSC Charleston:
Wyatt Prince

Mississippi State University:
Walker Self

Piedmont Technical College:
McCutchen Geoly and Savannah Mallon

Presbyterian College:
Beatty Murray and Noah Perrin

University of Georgia:
Haley McLaughlin and Kathryn Goff

University of South Carolina:
Caroline Bell and Grace Lollis,

University of Tennessee
Trevor Brewington

Wofford College
Hannah Crooks



St. Mark gratefully acknowledges the following gifts:

- To *The Choir Fund - Musician Scholarship* in loving memory of Lorene Waldrep by Al and Leigh Grambrell.
- To *The Choir Fund - Musician Scholarship* in loving memory of Susan Hood by Al and Leigh Grambrell.
- To *The General Fund* in loving memory of Archie Rush by J. David Goldman.
- To *The General Fund* in loving memory of Susan Hood by Guy and Lisa Hendrix.




EMERALD CITY SALKEHATCHIE

**Wednesday Night
Wish List Hymn Sing
Supper is Provided!**
Wednesday, July 15, 2026
6:30 p.m.
Please RSVP by July 11th.

Contact the church office, and let us know you are attending!
office@stmarkgreenwood.com or 864.229.5416





**YOUNG
AT HEART**
FELLOWSHIP
FOR AGES 50
AND UP

Lunch in Founders Hall
11:30 am

Join your friends for lunch! Chicken tenders will be provided. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share!

Contact Fran Brown at (864) 341-4092 or franbrown112@gmail.com to reserve your spot.

*Monday,
August 10*



**The church office will
be closed Friday, July 3,
in observance of
Independence Day.
Thank you for your
understanding.**



July 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Worship Services are: Bypass Campus: 8:45 am & 11:00 am Rivers Street Campus: 8:45 am & 11:15 am Sunday School 10:00 am</p>			<p>1 6:30 Men's Bible Study</p>	<p>2 5:30 Al-Anon Meeting 5:30 West Side AA</p>	<p>3 Church Office is closed</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>6 Kids' World is closed 5:30 West Side AA</p>	<p>7 Kids' World is closed 10:30 Staff Meeting 6:00 Teen Journey 6:00 Women on My Journey AA</p>	<p>8 Kids' World is closed 6:30 Men's Bible Study</p>	<p>9 Kids' World is closed 9:30 Founders Hall in use 5:30 Al-Anon Meeting 5:30 West Side AA</p>	<p>10 Kids' World is closed</p>	<p>11 Adults and youth arrive for Emerald City Salkehatchie</p>
<p>12 10:30 One Church Worship Service Passion Camp sending off in Worship service 2:00 Forward Focus update in Worship Center at RSC</p>	<p>13 8:00 Adults and youth leave for Passion Camp 5:30 West Side AA</p>	<p>14 6:00 Teen Journey 6:00 Women on My Journey AA</p>	<p>15 6:30 Men's Bible Study</p>	<p>16 5:30 Al-Anon Meeting 5:30 West Side AA</p>	<p>17 7:00 Adults and youth return from Passion Camp</p>	<p>18 Adults and Youth leave from Emerald City Salkehatchie 8:00 Founders Hall and kitchen in use</p>
<p>19 12:45 Finance Committee meeting 2:00 Church Council meeting</p>	<p>20 Information is due for church newsletter 5:30 West Side AA</p>	<p>21 6:00 Teen Journey 6:00 Women on My Journey AA</p>	<p>22 6:30 Men's Bible Study</p>	<p>23 5:30 Al-Anon Meeting 5:30 West Side AA</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>26 12:45 Nominations Committee meeting</p>	<p>27 5:30 West Side AA</p>	<p>28 6:00 Teen Journey 6:00 Women on My Journey AA</p>	<p>29 6:30 Men's Bible Study</p>	<p>30 5:30 Al-Anon Meeting 5:30 West Side AA</p>	<p>31 6:30 Men's Prayer Breakfast</p>	