

THE HAPPENINGS



November is the month of Thanksgiving. What a perfect time to take a closer look at what the Psalms tell us about gratitude - what does it look like, how do we practice it, why does it matter?

Sunday Service

This week:

Psalm 100

Gratitude as Worship

Rev. Ann Marie Quigley-Swanson

GROWING FULLER at Table Fellowship

November 9

The Bevy

November 16

Sauced Wing Bar

November 23

Los Guitarras

November 30

Shang Hai

Deadline for Articles

The Happenings is a weekly newsletter published for the members of St. Mark. The deadline to submit articles is

12 pm on Tuesday.

Contact:
communications@stmarktx.org



In Memory of Philip Cashion



With a deep trust in God's gift of new life, we share that Philip Cashion entered the church triumphant October 13, 2025. Our prayers are with Paul, Jenny, Adam, Andrew and Philip's wife, Beth.

A memorial service for Philip will be held on **Saturday, November 22**, at 1:00 p.m. at St. Mark Presbyterian Church.

ELC News



Many thanks to all who helped with our Fall Fest! Even though the rainy weather meant we had to pivot to an indoor event, we still, we had a very fun and successful morning. It was so wonderful to see so many ELC and church families having such a great time together while supporting the ELC.

BIG THANK YOU TO EVERYONE

THANK YOU

340 cans of Cranberry Sauce has been collected by St. Mark for Hill Country Daily Bread Ministry's Thanksgiving Distribution. Your donations are providing for a cook-at-home Thanksgiving meal for each family they serve. You are a blessing!



Make-A-Difference Day

Saturday,
November 8, 2025,
8:00 a.m. – 12:00
p.m.



Join us for a fun-filled Saturday being of service to our community in Jesus's name

Projects

Rise Against Hunger Meal Packaging - Pack 10,000 meals in the Family Life Center

Early Learning Center - Painting walkways (outdoors)

CIA Projects in the Family Life Center - Learn to Crochet; Make Turbans for Cancer Patients; Deliver Items

Center for Refugee Services - Pack "Baby Welcome Bags" in the Family Life Center

Hill Country Mission for Health, Boerne - Carpentry to extend a walkway cover (outdoors)

Love Kendall County Kids, Boerne - Organize their indoor food pantry

Presbyterian Children's Home & Services, San Antonio - Organize school supplies

Help with Games in The Family Life Center - Help the Kitchen Crew in The Family Life Center

[Register](#)

Mission Trip to Cuba By Dinah McDougall

On November 13-18, I will travel to Cuba with members of the Madison Square Presbyterian Church of San Antonio, a member of the Cuba Partnership Network which has led several church missions to Cuba in recent years. We will be visiting Presbyterian facilities for children and senior citizens just outside the colonial town of Placetas (pop. 65,000). Each of the five members travelling to Cuba will bring suitcases filled to the weight limit of donated necessities to be left behind, as well as the per-person limit of U.S. dollars. Travelers will also bring their own food and necessities, so as not to burden our hosts in an economy where food resources, electricity, and commodities are scarce.



Placetas, Cuba



This year, the Cuban church hosting our group asked us to focus on items for children and youth ministry. While this certainly includes basic necessities, they expressed a special need for items that would bring holiday cheer – such as Christmas decorations and crafting items that could be used in Sunday school classes where children learn about teachings of the Bible and the Life of Jesus Christ. The reality is that even if Cubans had money, they would have no place to buy these items, with the only possible exception being black markets that charge exorbitant prices. While they appreciate receiving suitcases of food and medical products throughout the year, the “stuff” doesn’t help feed the souls of youth that hunger for hopes and dreams, creative outlets, and friendships. Help us bring the spirit of Christmas Joy to the children this year!



Mission Trip to Cuba By Dinah McDougall



Additionally, the church in Cuba also has their National Retreat Center (CANIP), which strives to stay open and provide programs for children, youth and adults. In the summer of 2024, the Synod of Cuba asked for Cuba Partnership Network's help, as the Cuban denomination faces remarkable challenges. Particularly they wanted assistance in reopening the summer camp, CANIP, in the central part of the country, so youth could see a glimmer of hope. So far, the Network has sent about \$40K in relief funds, and St. Mark participated by contributing \$4,500 at the end of last year. The camps were a smashing success, though everyday needs persist.

Why Cuba?

After years of political oppression and sanctions, Cuba's economy is currently going from bad to worse. In 2023, Cuba was ranked as the poorest country in Latin America, with 89% of the population living in extreme poverty, defined as having total household daily income of \$1.90 or less. While this may seem shocking in an American context of high inflation, the Cuban cost of living is low due to food and medical rations, public transportation, energy being highly subsidized.

Nevertheless, informal surveys report that households are increasingly skipping meals due to a lack of money or resources to obtain food, and only 6% of those who manage to get medications acquired them from the pharmacies of the Cuban healthcare system. The rest obtained them through churches or charitable organizations, from relatives abroad, or through other means.

In a country where people struggle with enough to eat, the hunger for the Bread of Life is even stronger. Seventy years ago, when Fidel Castro upended Protestant Christianity with his declaration of "Marxist Communism", 70 percent of Presbyterian ministers and 50 percent of the church membership fled the country. Woody Paul's father described the situation: "Church-sponsored schools were forbidden. Education was conducted by the government. Church clinics were forbidden also since healthcare was provided by the state. In order to be considered for employment in any government entity one was required to sign an affidavit that you were not a practitioner of any religion. This requirement seriously affected the earning capabilities of faithful people."



Mission Trip to Cuba By Dinah McDougall



Thankfully, the Cuban government eventually walked back the outright prohibitions and developed a more neutral position on religion – it tolerates religious activity as long as it tends toward similar societal goals of communism. Today, Presbyterian churches offer services to senior citizens, including free laundry, food supplements, meals in church facilities, over the counter medicines, exercise classes, adult education classes, psychological counseling (suicide prevention) - all formerly restricted. However, it seems religious activity is tolerated so long as it conducts itself peacefully and quietly and administers help to those in need. Human rights groups report that religious protesters still run the risk of arbitrary detentions.

The Cuba Partnership Network

Founded over thirty years ago by member congregations, the Cuba Partnership Network has a long and rich history of encouraging and supporting vital partnerships between the Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA) and the Presbyterian-Reformed Church of Cuba (IPRC). The Cuba Partnership Network is committed to developing relationships which are grounded in companionship, cultural humility, and co-development – whether between congregations, presbyteries, the IPRC Synod, or the Ecumenical Seminary in Cuba. Companionship is visible in regular WhatsApp calls and chats between Cuban and U.S. church members who pray for one another. Cultural humility is listening first and speaking last, taking time to learn about one another's reality instead of making assumptions. Co-development is operating in partnership with each partner bringing their own gifts to the table, planning together, and doing together.

Due to the long-time strained relationship between the governments of the United States and Cuba, the Cuba Partnership Network understands part of Christ's call to us is to walk with our brothers and sisters in the churches in Cuba, visiting one another as we are able, praying for one another, and communicating as often as possible.

In closing, we are asking for your help to make this trip a success by considering a donation of items as described above. Cash is needed for the partner churches in Placetas and is used for feeding/nutrition programs with seniors, youth programs, and help for the shut-ins.

Thank you for reading about this ministry, praying for these people, and making donations if able!

Donations can be placed in the suitcases located in St. Mark's Hospitality Center until **November 8th** – which is Make a Difference Day!



Suggested Donations for Cuba

School/Crafting Supplies:

- Construction paper / colored paper / Sheets of colored foam or felt
- Washable markers / glitter paint / crayons
- Christmas crafts / jumbo wooden popsicle sticks
- Adhesive stickers or decorations
- Christmas decorations for classrooms
- Christmas craft kits

New children's clothing, especially:

- Socks – especially white for school uniforms
- Underwear / training bras
- Thinx Teens Period Underwear, Brief-Style Period Panties for Teens, Reusable (Amazon, Walmart)
- Warm items, like thick hoodies – many places don't have
- windows or heat, so it can get cold at night

Mosquito towelette wipes;

Individually wrapped insect repellent (DEET or organic essential oils)
– just no liquids or sprays, please. (Amazon, Walmart)

While the Cuban government provides basic food, some items are hard to come by and considered “treats”:

- Coffee (ground beans or instant)
- Instant oatmeal (especially in kid-friendly flavors)
- Swiss Miss hot cocoa packets
- Jello (helps with dehydration caused by dengue or diarrhea)
- Nutella / peanut butter

Medications / Personal Hygiene Items:

- Rehydration packets (these help with dehydration caused by dengue or diarrhea)
- Antibiotic ointments, band-aids, bandages
- Children's Over-the-counter medication (Tylenol, Advil, Motrin, etc.)
- Children's vitamins



December Events



We're having a Christmas party!
Please save the date for the All-Church Christmas Party,
Friday evening, December 12.
This TGIF fellowship event for the entire congregation will
include dinner, dancing, an Ugly Sweater contest, and fun.
Mark your calendars!
More information to come as we get closer to the date.



December Events



God's Gift Factory

Saturday, December 6
9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Family Life Center

Drop-off event for children, birth-5th grade
Children will make and wrap gifts for family and
friends, hear the Nativity story, create a special
lunch and enjoy silly games!

\$10/child | register 11/10-12/1
www.stmarktx.org



Register

December Events



Your invited to join us for the

Christmas Parade

2025

with

St Mark Presbyterian Church and Early
Learning Center

ELC children and families as well as St mark
Congregation are all welcome to join us in riding or
marching alongside our float!

- December 6th at 6pm on Main street
- Participants are expected
to be at our designated spot
at 5:30

- Theme: Saddles and
Sleigh bells (come
dressed in your best
cowboy/cowgirl outfits!)



REGISTER NOW



Out of Chaos:
FAITH

MATTHEW 14: 22-33

MISSION PRESBYTERY'S
**Midwinter Youth
Conference 2026**

at

Mo-Ranch

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: REV. AMY MEYER

JANUARY 16-18, 2026

FOR 6TH-12TH GRADERS

[Register](#)

WEEKLY CALENDAR November 9th – November 15th

Online Service **Youtube:**

<https://www.youtube.com/@stmarkpresbyterianchurchbo7319/streams>

Click here to view Calendar

Sunday, November 9, 2025

- 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM ↻ Explorers Class FLC # 107
- 9:15 AM - 10:15 AM ↻ Youth Sunday School # 103
- 9:15 AM - 11:45 AM ↻ Nursery Care (birth to pre-kinder) FLC # 106
- 9:15 AM - 10:15 AM Confirmation- Prayer FLC # 103
- 9:15 AM - 10:15 AM ↻ Engaging God's Word FLC # 101
- 9:30 AM - 10:00 AM ↻ Breakfast Club Parlor
- 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM ↻ St. Mark Worship Service (In Person and Lives
- 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM 🍷 Table Fellowship Bevy
- 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM Family Task Force FLC #107/108

Monday, November 10, 2025

- 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM ↻ Hill Country Newcomers FLC Main Floor, Kitch
- 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM Crestmont FLC
- 5:30 PM - 6:00 PM Jericho Setup FLC
- 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Jericho FLC
- 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM ↻ Finance Ministry FLC # 107/108

Tuesday, November 11, 2025

- Tue 11/11/2025 (All day) Veterans Day United States
- 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM ELC Parent Conferences Parlor
- 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM 🍷 Staff Meeting FLC # 107/108
- 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM G2G Meeting FLC #107/108
- 5:30 PM - 6:00 PM ↻ Pickleball setup FLC
- 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM ↻ Pickleball - Carol Trono FLC
- 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM Elders and Deacons Training FLC # 107/108

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

- 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM ↻ Morning Glorias ZOOM with Carlyn Crawford
- 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM ELC Event Hospitality
- 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM ↻ Bible Study (Rev. Ann Marie Quigley- Swanso
- 12:20 PM - 12:30 PM
- 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM CIA (Compassion in Action) FLC #107/108
- 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM Children's Sanctuary Library
- 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM ↻ A Few Good Men (R. Klein) Parlor
- 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM ↻ Choir Rehearsal (Mary Beth Thomas) Choir Roo

Thursday, November 13, 2025

- 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM ELC Parent Conference Parlor
- 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM ↻ WOW FLC #107/108
- 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM ↻ Pickleball (DeWitt Ragsdale) FLC
- 5:00 PM - 9:00 PM Bach Basketball FLC

Friday, November 14, 2025

- Fri 11/14/2025 (All day) ↻ CHURCH ADMIN OFFICE CLOSED

Saturday, November 15, 2025

- 2:30 PM - 4:30 PM Adam Johnson FLC