

Sunday Worship Services 9:00 AM, 11:00 AM | Sunday School 10:00 AM

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From the Pastor's Desk

By Rev. Doug Mills

Lent is the season of the church year where Christians focus on simple living, prayer, and fasting in order to grow closer to God. Lent is the forty days before Easter. Lent excludes Sundays because every Sunday is like a little Easter. Basically, it's about one-tenth of a year (like a tithe of time). Shrove Tuesday, Fat Tuesday and Mardi Gras are the same; it is the day before Lent begins. Since Lent always starts on a Wednesday (Ash Wednesday), the day before is always a Tuesday. And it's called "Fat" or "Great" because it's associated with great food and parties. In earlier times, people used Lent as a time of fasting and repentance. Since they didn't want to be tempted by sweets, meat, and other distractions in the house, they cleaned out their cabinets. They used up all the sugar and yeast in sweet bread before the Lent season started, and fixed meals with all the meat available. (Want to know more? Watch this video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q00_7_XCtJs) Thus was born the idea of pancakes on Fat or Shrove Tuesday. The men's group which provides the Saturday VTLC breakfasts will host a Shrove Tuesday pancake dinner on March 1st and you and your friends and family are invited. Come and eat or take a box home with you. Donations for the meal will be taken. During Lent, we recognize life is a precious gift from God, and re-turn our lives towards Jesus Christ. We may make resolutions and commit to change our lives over the forty days so that we might be more like Christ. In an Ash Wednesday service, usually, a minister or priest marks the sign of the cross on a person's forehead with ashes. While the ashes remind us of our mortality and sin, the cross reminds us of Jesus' resurrection (life after death) and forgiveness. It's a powerful, non-verbal way that we can experience God's forgiveness and renewal as we return to Jesus.



Luke 6, 27-38

Sermon Theme
Live with Compassion
To prepare for the service
Please read:
Luke 6: 27-38

Some thoughts on today's scripture

From the Pastor's Desk Continued:

You may come to the sanctuary any time between 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm on Ash Wednesday, March 2nd, for reflection and to impose ashes for yourself. Or, if you are taking children to St.



Mark's School, you may take advantage of the stop-and-go administration of ashes during morning drop-off.

As we ease back into a hopefully-post-ish pandemic world, we know that we have been exhausted by the last couple of years. Stuff has happened in the middle of our carefully laid plans. Maybe life has not lived up to your expectations. The disappointments, along with the feelings of not "measuring up," can leave us thinking that the lives we are living are somehow "less than" what God requires. Following the example of Jesus, we may need to take some serious time to pray and listen for God. Lent is a great time to "repent" — to return to God and re-focus our lives to be more in line with Jesus. It's a 40-day trial run in changing your lifestyle and letting God change your heart. Perfection is impossible. But transformation is not. Our Lenten worship services will challenge our perfectionist tendencies with the idea that we are missing out on some of the joy and delight that exists right now in our lives. We don't need to wait for XYZ to happen in order for us to find peace, contentment, joy, or—especially—God. What we have in our grasp is Good Enough to find the life God wants with us.



Less than half of Americans are members of houses of worship

Membership at churches and other houses of worship is at its lowest levels since the late 1930s, according to a new report from Gallup

[Via AP news wire](#)

Tuesday 30 March 2021 19:50

Ask Americans if they believe in God and most will say yes. But a growing number have lost faith in organized religion.

For the first time since the late 1930s, fewer than half of Americans say they belong to a church, synagogue, or mosque, according to a new report from Gallup.

Forty-seven percent of Americans now say they belong to a house of worship, down from 70% in the mid-1990s and 50% in 2019. The decline is part of a continued drop in membership over the past 20 years, according to Gallup data.

The polling giant has been measuring church membership since 1937 when nearly three-quarters of the population (73%) reported membership in a house of worship. For much of that time, membership remained at about 70% but began to decline after 1999. By the late 2000s, membership had dropped to about 62% and has continued to fall.

Pollsters at Gallup looked at survey data from more than 6,000 Americans and compared data from 2018 to 2020 with two other time frames: 2008 to 2020 and 1998 to 2000.

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AP News Wire Continued:

The decline in membership coincides with the rise of the so-called “Nones” — those who claim no religious affiliation. Gallup reports about one in five Americans (21%) is a None — making them as large a group as evangelicals or Catholics. Other polls put the number at closer to 30%.

Few None’s belong to a house of worship, Gallup found.

“As would be expected, Americans without a religious preference are highly unlikely to belong to a church, synagogue or mosque, although a small proportion — 4% in the 2018-2020 (survey) — say they do,” the report from Gallup states. “That figure is down from 10% between 1998 and 2000.”

Gallup also found a decline in membership at churches, synagogues, and mosques among religious Americans, who make up about 76% of the population. In the time frame from 1998 to 2000, about three-quarters (73%) of religious Americans were members of a house of worship. That number has fallen to 60%.

Younger Americans are increasingly disconnected from organized religion, according to the report from Gallup. But the number of older Americans who are members of a house of worship has also declined in recent years. In the time from 2008 to 2010, 73% of “traditionalists” — Gallup’s term for Americans born before 1945, were church members. That number has dropped to 66% from 2018 to 2020. Membership among Baby Boomers dropped from 63% to 58% during that same time frame, as did membership among Generation X (57% to 50%) and millennials (51% to 36%).

The gap between those who believe in a specific religion and those who participate in the life of a specific congregation is likely to prove a challenge for houses of worship. And the decline in church membership is likely to continue, according to Gallup.

“Churches are only as strong as their membership and are dependent on their members for financial support and service to keep operating,” said the report. “Because it is unlikely that people who do not have a religious preference will become church members, the challenge for church leaders is to encourage those who do affiliate with a specific faith to become formal, and active, church members.”

AP News Wire Continued:

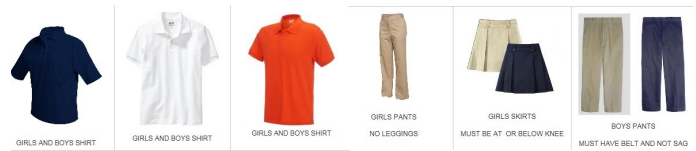
RELATED: White Christian Americans built a social safety net. What happens when it is gone? Measuring church membership and religious affiliation remains a challenge for researchers. From 1850 to 1950, the U.S. Census Bureau collected data on religious congregations in the United States and from 1906 to 1936 published a "Census of Religious Bodies." "The Census of Religious Bodies was conducted every 10 years until 1946," Pew Research noted in a 2010 article on religion and the Census. "The 1936 Census of Religious Bodies was the last one published, however, because the U.S. Congress failed to appropriate money either to tabulate or to publish the information collected in the 1946 census. By 1956, Congress had discontinued the funding for this census altogether." **RELATED:** The Nones are growing - and becoming more diverse. Statisticians from more than 230 religious denominations and other religious bodies also compiled membership statistics for the 2010 U.S. Religion Census: Religious Congregations & Membership Study. That study, which includes county by county data, found religious organizations claimed just under half (48.7) of the United States population as adherents. Similar reports have been compiled every 10 years since 1980.

**INVITE A FRIEND
TO CHURCH IN-PERSON OR ONLINE**



**Borderland Missions of Mercy
"Serving Christ on Both Sides of the Border"**

Borderland Missions of Mercy, a 501(c) nonprofit closely associated with St. Marks, will meet Wednesday, February 23, at 6:30 pm to plan several of its mission outreaches for 2022. Join us at 222 Caporal Court (79932 - Upper Valley) to learn more about BMM and, if interested, find out how you can be a volunteer in this important mission group.



Children's Clothing Drive

**Sponsored by
Borderland Missions of Mercy**

Earlier this year, EPISD combined Lincoln Middle with Bond and Roberts elementary schools in a brand new state-of-the-art Don Haskins Pre-K – 8th grades. The project not only renovated the existing Lincoln Elementary School buildings but a new building was erected that offers 21st-century classrooms, a new gym and library, fine arts classrooms, and modern administrative offices. The school enrolls more than 1,600 students. Many reside in Government-Assisted apartments and some they are homeless. Recently, the Principal reached out to Patty May, and other former teachers from the area to request assistance for the critical needs of student uniforms. Many students have grown out of their uniforms or simply wore them out. In addition to St. Mark's School, Borderland Missions of Mercy have stepped up to assist. Haskins has developed an Amazon Wish List of the clothes needed. A Clothing Barrel will be set up in the Main Entrance for collection. Clothing Donations may be purchased to be delivered to St Mark's 5005 Love Road, El Paso 79922. Borderland Missions of Mercy will handle the distribution of the clothing and donate all proceeds to Haskins Elementary.

**NOW
HIRING**

Network technician

The church office is looking for a person with a computer and network skills and knowledge. We need someone who can set up email, initialize software, troubleshoot problems; who also has hardware knowledge and the ability to re-locate servers, install wifi boosters, run cable, move security monitors. Will need to be network savvy and able to interface with the ISP.

Social Media Leader

We are looking for a person to be part of the communication team who will take primary responsibility for social media interaction. An understanding of all social media platforms, including Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, and Twitter adding multiple weekly posts of the life of the church, and a knowledge of social media analytics is needed. The ability to help with live streaming would be useful.

Letters of interest can be sent to the Church Office 5000 Love Road, El Paso TX 79922; office@loveroad.org. For questions call (915) 581-4444

OUR CHURCH FAMILY



Happy Birthday!

February 20 - February 26, 2022

Janathan Hermosilla, Feb 20th

Patricia Jay, Feb 20th

West Middagh, Feb 21st

Preslee Torres (3), Feb 21st

Robert G. Drake, Feb 22nd

John Williams, Feb 22nd

Holly Brown, Feb 23rd

Joe Castelo, Feb 23rd

Alfredo E. Flores, Feb 23rd

Henry Flores, Feb 23rd

Lane Gaddy, Feb 23rd

Henry Gutierrez, Feb 23rd

John Hall, Feb 23rd

Olive E. Roede (17), Feb 23rd

Mary Barnes, Feb 24th

Dennis Neessen, Feb 24th

Kathi Poulos, Feb 24th

Peter Dewetter, Feb 25th

Eric Brooks, Feb 26th

Sebastian Santana, Feb 26th

Volunteers Needed

If you would like to volunteer to be a photographer, please contact the church office at 915-581-4444.

Feb 20- Feb 26 Next Week at St. Mark's

Sunday, February 20

8a Nursery (Ages 6 Weeks - 2 Yr)

9a Kids Church

9a Praise Worship Service

10a NUDGE Youth Sunday School

10a Agape Class

10a Sunday School (Ages K - 6)

Monday, February 21

School Closed - Presidents Day

6p Traditional Service Choir Rehearsal

6:30p Boy Scout Troop 59

Tuesday, February 22

7:30a PSIA

12p Needlework Group

6p Jazz Band Rehearsal

6:30p Grief Share

Wednesday, February 23

8:30a PSC MEETING

6:30p Borderland Missions of Mercy

Thursday, February 24

9a Women's Bible Study

6p Praise Band Rehearsal

6p Weight Watchers

Friday, February 25

5:30p Messy Church (Call Church to be invited)

6:30p NA - Narcotics Anonymous

Saturday, February 26

8:30a Weight Watchers

PHOTO DIRECTORY

During Lent, the church will set up indoor and outdoor displays like the one featured in the above photo . We will take photos of individuals and families for our Church Directory . You will be invited to choose your favorite ladder display to use as a backdrop for your photoshoot. We will begin taking photos on Sundays after each worship service between February 27 - April 10th. More details to come!



Where love leads community

Please Pray for...



Tammie Fleming

By Patti Calhoun Can you please pray for my sister-in-law Tammie Fleming? She has brain cancer and will be starting chemo & radiation on February 7. Even with the treatments, she has just a 20% chance of recovery and a 25% chance of stroke during treatment. Tammie is from Foley, AL but will be receiving treatment at the UF College of Medicine at the University of Florida in Gainesville. Her doctor is Dr. Michael Okun, and we ask for prayer for him and his team, as well as they guide Tammie through her treatments. We are faithful believers in the power of prayer and have left prayer requests all over the country for Tammie! Tammie is a Christian & she loves the Lord! Thank you so much for your prayers!

Melinda Roy(Kitchen Staff)

By Nancy Watters Please pray for Melinda Roy(Kitchen Staff) for the loss of her husband

Wayne's Mom

By Wayne and Patty May Please pray for Wayne's mom she broke her pelvis

Sister of Ferris Karam

By: Ferris Karam - Please pray for my sister Sue. Her husband, Joey passed on 1/23.

Pat Thompson and Duane Coleman

By Ed and Joann McElroy - Please pray for Pat Thompson and Duane Coleman

Drew Calderon

By: Joyner Family - Please pray for Drew Calderon a 19 yr old Bball player in college with a back injury.

Justine Coleman, Pat Thomas, Brad Watson, Barbara Onahead, and Ann Johnson

By Joann and Ed McElroy ask for prayer for Justine Coleman, who had a fall; for Pat Thomas who has Covid; for Brad Watson, who has Covid; and for Barbara Onahead and Ann Johnson.

Gerald Harmon

Marguerite Byers Ramey requests prayer for her stepfather, Gerald Harmon, who has his hands and heart full dealing with an elderly mother. Please pray for caregivers of those with dementia and Alzheimer's. Now his nineteen year-old grandson is coming to live with them after losing his brother, father and most recently his mother. Pray for them to be comforted. Thank you.

Joseph Lecher's Mother, Christine

By Joseph Lecher Please pray for my mother Christine who is fighting COVID



SHAREPRAYER

Each of us can pray gratitude for fellow Christians drawn together to be St. Mark's Church, and for the church buildings provided for worship, teaching, and fellowship.

Each new season brings new challenges. At the same time, the Lord continues to provide His leadership in response to our prayers.

Be part of this shared prayer. In your conversation with God, tell your gratitude and your hope. Then listen and follow.

AMEN!

How to Share Prayers:

Send your prayer requests to prayer group leader Ruth Lindstrom at ruthlindstrom@yahoo.com.

Call the church office at 915-581-4444 during office hours. (See St. Mark's Chaplains tab on the website).

You can ask that your prayer requests be published to groups or kept private.

<https://www.loveroad.org>





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forming information
on the printed version]*

St. Mark's 2021
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To receive our weekly email version,
go to loveroad.org
Click Messenger Our mailing address is:
5005 Love Rd. El Paso, TX, 79922
Phone: (915) 581-4444

St. Mark's Church Staff

Senior Pastor – Rev. Douglas Mills
to schedule an appointment with Dr. Mills
<http://meetme.so/WDouglasMillsmaster>

Associate Senior Pastor - Layloni Drake

Business Office Manager - Laura Ronald

Cheri Bridges - Office Assistant

Traditional Music Director - Stephen Jackson

Children's Ministry Director - Bianca Milan

Analla Communications Director - Bill Wilkson

Praise Team Director - Lawrence Brown III

Facilities Superintendent - Bunnie Betancourt Head

Kitchen Chef - Miguel Guillen

St. Mark's School Principal - Linda Smith