

Our History: In the Spring of 2004, Rev. Sam Hardie invited William Scroggins, a licensed family and marriage counselor and leader of Tuscaloosa Prayer Network, <http://tuscaloosaprayer.net/>, to lead with his wife, Beverly, a marriage class at St. Mark. Thereafter, in Fall 2004, the Scroggins and others facilitated St. Mark's first *Dynamic Marriage* class. Between Fall 2004 and Spring 2010, 75 couples graduated from that class at St. Mark. In January of 2009, St. Mark established its Marriage Ministry Committee as one of its official congregational ministries. The logo and mission statement on the right identify our purpose.



"To enrich, empower and encourage the Lord's sacred creation of marriage."

st.mark umc MARRIAGE MINISTRY

Enriching , Empowering and Encouraging the Lord's Sacred Creation of Marriage

1. **Dynamic Marriage Class:** Each January—March, we offer an eight-week interactive class for couples on Sunday evenings. See <http://www.familydynamics.net/dynamicmarriage.php>
2. **Other Marriage Classes:** We regularly sponsor other classes on Sunday or Wednesday evenings for couples, using various curriculum such as Fireproof, Communication class using Family Life Homebuilders series books, the Five Love Languages, etc. We encourage couples to also take the Money Map course when offered at St. Mark.
3. **Date Nights:** In Summer 2009, we hosted *Ten Great Dates to Energize your Marriage*. In Summer 2010, we partnered with Tuscaloosa Christian Counseling, www.tccounseling.com, to offer *Summer Date Nights*: five presentations followed by a date night with free childcare for St. Mark members. Presentations included "Roommates to Teammates," "Sexy Christians," "Anger Management/Conflict Resolutions: Battles of the Sexes," "Growing Together Spiritually," and "Navigating Marriage Roadblocks: Dealing with Stress in Marriages."
4. **Co-Sponsor *Legacy of Love* Community-Wide Marriage Banquet:** During Healthy Marriage Month in February of each year, we co-sponsor with Tuscaloosa One Place and other churches *A Legacy of Love* banquet honoring couples who have healthy marriages that positively influence and encourage others. More info: <http://www.etfrc.org/legacyoflove.html>
5. **Identify Educational Materials:** We created a Marriage Ministry website which provides links to several organizations committed to strengthening marriages through resources, conferences, etc. (www.stmarkmethodist.org—select Get Connected, Marriage Ministry) . We also work with St. Mark's Library to identify, update and advertise marriage-related resources.
6. **Marriage Counseling:** Our pastors provide counseling and when appropriate refer couples to local Christian counselors.