



St. Mark's Messenger

February 2015

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

601 Washington Avenue ~ Hagerstown, MD

301-733-7550 ~ Website: lutheranchurchhagerstown.com

The Reverend G. Stanley Steele, Senior Pastor

PASTORAL MUSINGS...

Reverend Rick Warren of the Purpose Driven Church fame has said the true mission of churches is not to grow in membership, but rather to help folks learn to be healthy. He has written a couple of books on being healthy and has an exercise video out as well. While I do believe our bodies are temples created by God and we need to be mindful of how we treat ourselves, I would expand the concept of 'being healthy' beyond physical health to also include emotional and spiritual health as well and I would even say it is the faith community that can help folks best with these aspects of being God's child. With this thought I have decided to concentrate more this year on helping myself and others deal with each other in our faith community with deeper respect and support. We need to be a community that tolerates difference of opinion, styles of leadership, interests, and the like with sensitivity and affirmation. We need to learn to share our different perspective with each other with passion and with respect by listening carefully to each other without judgment and to speak honestly with each other without rancor or anger. So with that in mind I suggested a covenant to the church council at our recent council workshop and it was suggested that the entire congregation may benefit from this exercise.

Covenants remind people how we intend to treat one another as we fulfill our mission and vision. Let's begin with the Mission Statement:

***“With God's Love
Inspire...
Serve...
Grow Disciples!”***

Here is a beginning for a Congregational Covenant so please comment, add other ideas or suggest changes:

- Affirm, encourage, support, and pray for and bless one another.
- Appreciate and affirm each other's gifts, backgrounds, and viewpoints.
- Speak well of each other to build up the body of Christ.
- Communicate with each other in honest, open, Christ like ways.
- Commit to ongoing personal, professional, and spiritual growth.
- Be open to new ways of seeing and doing things.
- Nurture a culture of ongoing regard.
- Commit to share with each other any hurt or disagreement openly and honestly to gain a better understanding and rebuild your relationship with that person or persons.
- Stay involved in the life of the faith community even when you are angry or hurt so healing may occur.
- Be open to various styles of worship and the varying opinions expressed by others.
- Commit to studying the Bible individually and with others to further our faith development.
- Dare to share your faith story.

I could keep adding more and maybe I have stated more than is helpful. Please read these statements carefully and let me know what you think in an email, text, or in person. It is always good to hear from you as we journey together in our faith within the community known as St. Mark's.

May God's Blessings and Peace be Upon You,
Pastor Stan

Just Do Your Part

As I was listening to music the other night, I was struck by the number of different sounds and by how well they blended. Each musician had a part and played it skillfully--so skillfully it sounded like one glorious instrument. It got me to thinking how wonderful it would be to be part of a group working toward one goal like this. And then it hit me--I am! I'm part of the body of Christ--a unique group of "instruments" all working together. I'm also part of a family unit at St. Mark's that works together on a daily basis. Could our family work together like this band? If each member of our family worked hard on doing his or her part from the Lord and on listening to and following Jesus, could we "sound" so wonderful? And if we could, how would we start?

As I've been pondering how to work together as a family, I have realized that each of us has a choice to apply ourselves to the part the Lord has given us and to follow our conductor--Jesus. We are responsible for our part. Working together starts with each member of the family! Ultimately, it starts with me. As a leader at St. Mark's, I know that I need to follow God's instructions and apply myself to the part God has given to me. I also need to encourage others to listen for and to follow their part. We cannot control what others do--or the outcome. We can only do what the Lord gives *us* to do, listening to Him and relying on His strength.

That's my tip for you this month--listen to God and do *your* part. Don't allow anything to get you distracted.

*There are times when you might feel aimless
And can't see the places where you belong
But you will find that there is a purpose
It's been there within you all along
And when you're near it you can almost hear it.
It's like a symphony just keep listening
And pretty soon you'll start to figure out your part
Everyone plays a piece in their own melodies
In each one of us, oh, it's glorious
"Glorious" by David Archuleta*

With thoughts and prayers,
Julie Fiery - Council President

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

I hope you had a wonderful Christmas - all 12 days of it. I want to express my thanks and appreciation to all the singers in all the choirs for their hard work and dedication and for the great job they do, and especially, did on Christmas Eve. Speaking of Christmas Eve; many thanks also to Rick Mogensen for all the work he does to put together the ensemble that provides St. Mark's with such fabulous music every Christmas Eve. One final thank you to all the great musicians who make up that ensemble. What a blessing all these singers and instrumentalists are to us! **Thanks to all!!**

Here are a few more hymn / scripture references. The first hymn I want to mention is found in the "Festivals and Commemorations" section of our hymnal (ELW). A little background, first. In the Hebrew tradition, a baby boy was circumcised and named when he was 8 days old. Thus, Jan.1 - the 8th day of Christmas - is the (lesser) festival known as The Name of Jesus. Hymn #416, "At the Name of Jesus", though it could be sung at other times as well, is usually (and obviously) suggested as an appropriate hymn for the Name of Jesus festival. Working backwards, stanza 3 comes from Philippians 2:8, 9. The first couple lines of stanza 1 are found in Philippians 2:10, 11, and the last line of stanza 1 refers to John's gospel, chapter 1, verse 1.

Fast forward to the end of the Epiphany season. Hymn numbers 315 (How Good, Lord, To Be Here), 316 (Oh Wondrous Image, Vision Fair), and 317 (Jesus On the Mountain Peak) all tell the story of Jesus' Transfiguration. This story is found in Matthew 17:1-9, Mark 9:2-9, and Luke 9:28-36 - with a few of the verses using *almost* the exact same wording.

I may have mentioned this last time; but, the perfect time to check out / compare these hymns and scriptures is when you are sitting in your church pew waiting for the service to start, or during communion, when you have a hymnal *and* a Bible right there at your fingertips. **ENJOY!!**

Kathy Barr



From The Tool Box

Gods' blessing to you. The tower is done, and we are working on patching the outer wall behind the mural of Christ. We are also in the works of getting the side walks around the church replaced or repaired. If you have no plans for the spring or summer please contact me. I always have fun" things to do. In the lost and found is a trench coat, a couple of earrings, and a scarf. Please let me know if any of these are yours. Thanks for your support, Bill.

God bless, Bill Richards

From Friendship Mission Team

*Puddings and pies, cookies and cake
Our St. Mark's members do like to bake.
So let's get together with some of those treats
And bring games along too, who can you beat?*



It's a DESSERT AND GAME NIGHT and it would be really SWEET if you could join us in the Parish Hall on Sunday, February 8 from 6:30-9:00 pm. Don't forget your games and your treats!

*The
Season
of
Lent*



Lenten Services

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on February 18th with a noon time service and an evening service at 7:00 pm.

Lenten mid-week services begin February 25th with dinner at 6 pm followed by a presentation beginning around 6:45 pm and concluding with a brief worship at 7:30 pm in the Parish Hall. We will be doing something different this year with invited presenters talking to us about various life stage changes that necessitate changes for us or our loved ones. We are inviting Hospice of Washington County who will discuss retirement planning and estate planning, Doug Fiery to discuss end of life pre-arrangements, and Fred Barrett who is a professional in the Nursing Home industry will discuss choosing a place for a loved one or yourself and how to ensure you are receiving the care you expect and deserve, and Reverend Jason Chestnut. We will conclude with a discussion of spiritual needs of care givers and of those being cared for along with accepting the changes that occur with changes in life stages. Please join us for what we may all wish to dismiss but that which is a part of all of our lives.

Mid-Week Lenten Suppers

Beginning February 1st, there will be a sign-up sheet posted on the bulletin board in the Sacristy hallway for volunteers who wish to provide meals for the mid-week Lenten services. Meals will begin on Wednesday, February 25 and conclude Wednesday, March 25. Thank you!



Maundy Thursday Table Communion

Maundy Thursday commemorates the Last Supper when Jesus shared the Passover meal with his disciples on the night before he was crucified. In contrast to joyful Easter celebrations when we worship our resurrected Savior, Maundy Thursday is a more solemn occasion, marked by the shadow of Jesus' betrayal. Derived from the Latin word *mandatum*, meaning "commandment," *Maundy* refers to the commands Jesus gave his disciples at the Last Supper: to love with humility by serving one another and to remember his sacrifice. We will once again serve table communion during the Maundy Thursday service on April 2, 2015. Please watch upcoming bulletins for more details and reservation forms.

Mystery Movie Night

Movie night will be February 11th. More will be posted in the bulletins. This promises to be interesting!!

Lunch Bunch

February gathering of St. Mark's "Lunch Bunch" will be on Thursday, February 19th at 1 pm at Hoffman's All American Grill located at 18203 Mason Dixon Road, Rt. 63 near the entrance to I-81. Open to all ages so please join us for fellowship, laughter, conversation, and of course food.



Bible Study

Bible Study will continue on Tuesday nights at 6:30 pm and Wednesday at 10:30 am. We will conclude our study of Acts and decide on our next book of the Bible to discuss. Please come even if you have not been attending. It is never too late!

Youth ASP Fundraiser

The youth will be having a pancake breakfast ASP fundraiser on Saturday March 7th from 6 – 10 am. Tickets will go on sale beginning February 8th-March 1st. They will be available after each church service as well as from any youth!



Messa Voce Show Choir

Messa Voce, the Show Choir from James Buchanan High School, will be at St. Mark's on February 22nd. Their presentation can be seen during the 10:45 am church service. They will be singing several times throughout the service. Taylor Fisher, a youth member of St. Mark's, is a member of this group.

Altar Flowers

For 2015, the open dates are May 10, May 31, and July 5. If you would like one of these dates, please contact Judy Munday at 301-739-4669.



Thank You

Dear St. Mark's Friends,
Thank you for your continued showering of prayers, cards, visits, and food during my recovery from knee surgery. Tom and I are very grateful to be blessed with so much love from St. Mark's folks, especially my Esther Sunday School class. Also, we appreciate Pastor Stan's visits and prayers. We are blessed to be part of the fellowship of believers at St. Mark's Lutheran.
Gratefully, Linda Perry

A big "THANK YOU" to all who helped to make my birthday open house a big success. Special thanks to the Elsen family for the pizza, Tammy and Paul Needy for the gift card, Elaine Rose for the cat picture, Leigh Kees and all who helped in the kitchen and with the serving.

Special thanks to Judy Munday for putting it all together and for the beautiful poem and album. Judy, you never cease to amaze me!

If I left anyone out, I am sorry. You know who you are!

Last but not least, thanks for all the donations to the Food Bank. I feel especially blessed to have friends like you. God bless you all. Love, Millie Hluchy (The Birthday Girl)



OUR SYMPATHIES TO the friends and family of *Virginia Strine* who passed away on January 16, 2015 and *Kathryn Leedy* who passed away January 27, 2015. In the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, we remember *Virginia and Kathryn*. Death is a time of pain, sorrow and grief. The loss of our loved one brings these feelings to all of us. As a family of faith through Jesus Christ, we are called to comfort each other. There is no changing the past for it is gone; but there is the promise of hope and new life in Christ Jesus.

For now, we rest assured that *Virginia and Kathryn* is at peace with God.

A Ministry of the Faithful of St. Mark's and a Sign of the Kingdom of Heaven

Starting with this month's Newsletter we will be sharing one of the many ministries that take place here at St. Mark's. Our Food Bank was started by Beth Stouffer and now led by Julie Stouffer (coincidence of last names although if the next director is named Stouffer then we have a trend), a ministry begun over 30 years ago. This ministry has touched thousands of people's lives with the assurance that their neighbors care about them and God cares for them. Presently we are serving around 900 people a month with food and dignity. What a sign of God's presence and the work of His church. One family sent the following message in a Christmas card to express their thanks this past December, the message read: ***'Thank you for all your help. You've helped our family with food and we appreciate you very much. Praying God's Blessings will be yours this Season.'*** They signed their name which I have not include. We need to pray daily for this family, this ministry, those that give of their time and those that come in need of the basic element of life – food.

Feeding the Hungry- Both Physically and Spiritually, Takes Equal Parts of Love and Effort

It's Friday evening and I pull into the Save-A-Lot parking lot. I'm known there as "the egg lady." I grab a cart and begin my search for someone who will be able to get me eggs. There is one worker there who tries to hide from me- he doesn't like to be disturbed. As I approach the last aisle, there he is. He's the only worker out on the floor and I really need those eggs. I slowly walk up to him. He looks up and begins to shake his head. "Weren't you just here on Monday? You can't need more eggs." "Yep, we're all out. If you get me three cases of eggs, I'll fill that shelf with bread for you." He chuckles and starts to walk to the back room. "Why do give out free food to people? They need to learn to feed themselves." "Jesus fed the hungry and He teaches us to do that, too." I replied. "If that's what you feel called to do, then I guess that's what you'll do." he said. He and I have had this conversation many times before, and I think our viewpoints will always differ, and that's OK.

In a recent sermon, Pastor Stan's message focused on what each of us feels called to do. I will admit that until a few years ago, I knew that we had a food bank, but I didn't have much knowledge of the work involved in running the food bank. I didn't contribute to the food bank- not monetarily and not through volunteering. But over the past few years, I have learned so much about the importance of this ministry. The people who come to our food bank to receive food are not just physically hungry, their souls are also hungry. I invite you to volunteer in the food bank for just one day, a total of two hours. During that time, you will meet many different individuals, all with a different life story. Many have lost their jobs and cannot find a new place of employment. Many experience health issues and cannot work. Many of the people are working, but their limited income forces them to choose between paying housing/electrical bills and eating. Come and offer a smile, a listening ear. Have a conversation with someone who needs to talk. Come and hear the words spoken from the lips of those receiving food as they say, "God bless you. Thank you for helping me. Thank you for helping my family." You will leave with love in your heart.

Julie Stouffer





**Research Participants aged 74-93 Needed
to Participate in a Blood Pressure Study**

Johns Hopkins University is currently recruiting men and women to take part in a research study examining the measurement of toe, ankle, and arm blood pressures.

You may qualify to participate if you meet the following guidelines:

- Men and women between 74-93 years old, who can walk 100 feet without leg or chest pain and can lie on their back for 30 minutes.
- No open wounds, bruises, or medical devices/problems in the arms and legs.
- No history of radical mastectomy (removal of entire breast and lymph nodes).

What is involved in this study?

- A total of 10 measurements of arm, leg and toe blood pressures at rest and after leg exercise.
- Leg exercises while lying on your back, which consist of pushing pedals for 200 times (similar to pushing a brake pedal). If you become tired or uncomfortable, the exercises will be stopped.

Participants will be compensated \$30 upon completion of the examination.
All tests will be conducted in Hagerstown (Mon-Fri 8 am - 4:30 pm).

Please contact **Melissa Minotti**, study coordinator
at **301-791-1847** for more information and to
answer a screening questionnaire.

Principal Investigator: Kunihiro Matsushita, MD, PhD
Study Number: IRB00005752

Johns Hopkins University, George W. Comstock Center for Public Health Research and Prevention
1100 Dual Highway, Suite A, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

Happy February Birthday to...

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 2 Diane Baker | 18 Dorothy Haberbeck |
| 4 Shawn Baker Jr. | Pastor Stephanie Steele |
| 8 Richard Wiebel | 24 Sarah Young |
| 10 Joshua Fisher | 27 Robert Hovermale |
| 11 Sandy Davis | 29 Kay Clugston |
| 15 Michael Miner | Rob Hovermale |

*If you would like to become a sponsor for the newsletter, the cost is \$50. Please contact the church office
301-733-7550.*



The Loving Memory

February Newsletter Sponsor

In loving memory of *Wilbur Stouffer, Peggy Kendle, Maude Nutter, and Kay Albright* by
Doris Leasure.