

the saint mark messenger

the newsletter of Saint Mark Presbyterian Church

April 2015

Worship 9:30 and 11:00 AM

Church School for all ages 9:30 AM

www.saintmarkpresby.org

Saying Grace....from Roy

Christian friendship is one of the great gifts of God in the Church. I depend upon my friends in so many ways – for perspective, for laughter, for wisdom, for counsel, for discipline, for affirmation and support, for prayer, (I could go on). Perhaps we take such friendship for granted in the Church or perhaps we don't experience it. If the former than it is time to give thanks for the gift; if the latter, I hope you will risk whatever it takes to find a friend. One of my closest friends lives in Kentucky and we speak with one another nearly every week. We share our lives with each other, pray for one another, swap stories of our families, commiserate over our sports teams, laugh and occasionally cry together. We walked together through his divorce, and through the cancer of my wife. If there is a conflict in my life, he will hear about it. I say all of this in gratitude to God and with the hope that you have friends in the Church with whom you share your life. We all need them and God in mercy has provided this for us in the Church.

The world is going through a spasm of mind-bending, heart-breaking evil and violence. We have no idea when it will end, only that we are called to be people of faith, hope and love, sharing our lives with one another and bearing witness to the gospel of God's love manifest in Jesus Christ. So we press on in hope. That's is the calling of Easter. To live in the conviction that death is not the last word; life is always the next word. We proclaim life, while the world is consumed with death. The other day my friend in Kentucky sent me this note from a devotional featuring the writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. I share it with you as my Easter benediction.

On bearing witness in a fallen world:

"It hurts body and soul that no day passes without the name of God being doubted and blasphemed.

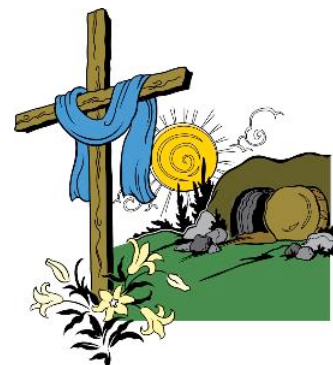
Where, then, is your God?

I confess God before the world and before all enemies of God

when in deepest need I believe in God's goodness,
when in guilt I believe in forgiveness,
when in death I believe in life,
when in defeat I believe in victory,
when in desolation I believe in God's gracious presence.

Those who have found God in the cross of Jesus Christ know how wonderfully God hides himself in this world and how he is closest precisely when we believe him to be most distant." (Dietrich Bonhoeffer. *I Want to Live These Days with You*)

On May 15, I leave for France to begin my sabbatical, walking the 500-mile pilgrim way called the Camino de Santiago, across northern Spain. I make no predictions, but with pack ready, walking sticks in hand and an open heart, I intend this to be a journey of letting go, listening and learning the next right steps in my life along the way. My hope is that this will be a mutual time of growth for pastor and congregation, particularly under the able leadership of **Shelby Etheridge** with the, elders and deacons who are spiritual leaders of our great congregation. We are blessed.



Worship and Lectionary
For April

April 5: Easter Sunday

Acts 10:34-43; Ps. 118:1-2,14-24;
I Cor. 15:1-11; John 20:1-18

April 12: Acts 4:32-35; Ps. 133; I John
1:1-2:2; John 20:10-31

April 19: Acts 3:12-19; Ps. 4: 1 John
3:1-7; Luke 24:36b-48

April 26: Acts 5:5-12; Ps. 23; I John
3:16-24; John 10:11-18



Holy Week Worship Schedule

Sunday, March 29: Passion/Palm Sunday 9:30
and 11:00 AM worship service with Holy Communion

Thursday, April 2: Maundy Thursday Worship
Service with Holy Communion and Foot Washing
7:30 PM

Friday, April 3: Ecumenical Good Friday
Worship Service held at North Bethesda United
Methodist Church 7:30 PM

Sunday, April 5:
9:30 AM **Easter Worship Service** with Holy
Communion
11:00 AM **Easter Worship Service** with Holy
Communion with Celebration of Baptism

Continental Breakfast to be enjoyed by all
10:00 – 11:30 AM

Easter Egg Hunt: Children through 5th grade are
invited to participate in an Easter Egg Hunt this
Sunday between services! Please remember to bring
your own Easter basket to collect eggs.

GROW in April: Worship & Theology and Snow day make-up!

April 12: Beverly Howard, member of the
Presbyterian Committee on Congregational Song will
join the group via Skype to discuss the theology
behind the new hymnal and the meaning behind the
rhythms of Presbyterian worship.

Then we bring back the **Rev. Margee Iddings** to
continue her engaging discussion on the stories of
Jesus that got snowed out TWICE in February!

When sculpture tells a story: The centerpiece for
this series is a life-sized sculpture of Mary of Bethany
and Jesus. We will approach the several stories that
are connected to the sculpture:

April 19: Mary of Bethany Anoints Jesus Feet

April 26: Jesus Washes the Disciples Feet

Local Mission

Rebuilding Together Montgomery County is April 25!

This year we have a townhouse
at 2706 Fairdale Terrace in Silver
Spring. We will replace tile and
fencing, install carpet, fixtures
and safety features, and give
hope to a family that is really
struggling.



There will be two shifts this year from 8-12 and 12-4
that include lunch with plenty of tasks for both
skilled and "enthusiastic" volunteers. Sign up for one
or both shifts in the atrium or contact **John Casper**
at casper219@aol.com

**Save the Date: Interfaith Works Shelter Meals
will be September 20-26, 2015.** This year we will
be soliciting Daily Team Captains. Daily Team
Captains will be a Server who will be responsible for
ensuring the proper food is taken to the Shelter and
takes an inventory at the end of the dinner service to
ensure an oversupply of breakfast, lunches, etc. are
not taken to the shelter the next day. Please contact
Tina Moulton (gtacmoulton@verizon.net) or **Sandy
Champion** (snchampion@yahoo.com) if you are
interested.



Music for Food DC to Support
Manna Food Center on May 17

Save the Date!

Sunday, May 17, 2015

Concert begins at 2:00 PM

Suggested donation \$25

(100% of the proceeds will support Manna Food
Center)

Christ Lutheran Church,

8011 Old Georgetown Rd, Bethesda
(ample parking available)

for information visit the Music for Food DC

This will be the first Music for Food concert in the DC area and will feature works for viola and chamber orchestra by Bach, Telemann, Handel, and Hindemith; featuring Wenting Kang and Ayane Kozasa as viola soloists.

Music for Food is a Boston based organization and we are pleased to help expand their mission to the Greater Washington, DC area. Music for Food believes that both music and food are essential to human life and growth. Music has the power to call forth the best in human beings and can inspire awareness and action when artists and audiences work together. Music for Food is a musician-led initiative for local hunger relief that sets forth a model applicable in every community. Concerts raise resources and awareness in the fight against hunger, empowering all musicians who wish to use their artistry to further social justice.



Easter Memorials

Order forms are available in the narthex and atrium, and on the website, for memorial contributions for flowers to decorate the sanctuary and for delivery to shut-ins, and donations to the Memorial Garden fund.

Earth Day Celebration

April 22 is Earth Day and Saint Mark will celebrate on April 19. St. Francis said, "The clouds, the grass, the animals, the human beings, the earth, the sun, the stars – they have all sprung from the hand of God. All creation is filled with His divine Spirit. He is everywhere. All creatures live and move in Him." We are being called to stewardship of the environment. There are a number of ways that we can individually and corporately consume less energy and resources and recycle. We also can live more simply using sustainable agriculture, purchasing food locally, and growing (and eating from) neighborhood gardens. This year to celebrate Earth Day, you will be encouraged to choose from a short list of sustainable practices to commit to for the next year. You will receive an index card during services on April 19 and asked to write your commitment on the card and put it in the offering plate.



If you would like to see more options for protecting the environment, here are some links you can visit. At <http://www.epa.gov/oncampus/pdf/pick5.pdf> you can choose at least five actions and you can see more you can take in the future. Going Green with Nutrition found at <http://dnrc.nih.gov/pdf/NutritionMonthFlyer2010.pdf> and Presbyterians for Earth care at <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/environment/earth-day-sunday/> will give you many ideas. Creation Justice Ministries (formerly the National Council of Churches Eco-Justice Program) produces Earth Day resources each year. With prayers, Christian education suggestions, action tips, and more, see <http://www.creationjustice.org/earth-day-sunday.html>. In addition you can find the 2015 resource on "Have You Anything Here to Eat: Sustainable Food in a Changing Climate" there.

Youth News

April 5: Easter, no Youth Group

April 7: Spring break service project, serve breakfast @ SOME DC (5:45-9:15AM)

April 12: Crossway cooking and devotional HS & MS together, 5:00-7:00PM (FH & K)

April 19: Eating with Jesus and the disciples (Bible study on the last supper and Jesus' relationships with his friends) (109, FH, K)

April 26: Mini-golf fellowship event after worship, Monster mini-golf of Gaithersburg

Stewardship

One Great Hour of Sharing: Sharing Resources and Changing Lives

Around the world, people lack access to food, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. Each gift to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) serves to help change the lives of people who are in these challenging situations. The Offering provides us a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need.

One Great Hour of Sharing, received in the season of lent, makes a difference in the world through three impactful programs:

- Presbyterian Disaster Assistance – works within communities as they recover and find hope after the devastation of natural or human-cause disasters
- The Presbyterian Hunger Program – takes action to alleviate hunger and its systemic causes and creates access to food for entire communities
- Self-Development of People – partners with people and communities, leveraging development and education to alleviate poverty, oppression, and injustice

For example, the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is responding to Vanuatu.

Vanuatu Cyclone Pam

Destruction caused by Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu



Cyclone Pam hit Vanuatu causing widespread destruction. Act Alliance is responding with emergency food, shelter and water.

Situation Overview

Tropical Cyclone Pam, an extremely destructive category 5 cyclone, hit the Pacific Island Nation of Vanuatu on March 14. The entire country has likely been affected, to some extent, by the extremely damaging winds, heavy rainfall, storm surges and flooding.

Communication infrastructures with the 65 islands in the archipelago are down, many areas are inaccessible and information about civilian safety outside of the capital of Port Vila is not known. The one international airport was damaged and is closed to commercial operations. The United Nations has stated that Pam could be one of the worst natural disasters in the history of the Pacific. Vanuatu's President, Baldwin Lonsdale, has appealed to the global community for help. PDA Response Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is responding to Vanuatu as a member of ACT Alliance (Action by Churches Together). In this early stage, fellow ACT member, Act for Peace, is proposing immediate response (including food and NFI distribution) and early recovery (including water restoration and food security) activities.

A large response is needed to provide lifesaving services including medical, food, WASH and shelter. A longer term response will be required for rebuilding and re-establishing basic infrastructure, homes, schools and livelihoods. There is also unprecedented damage to the country's subsistence agricultural sector.

(Stewardship con't)

Projects supported by One Great Hour Of Sharing are underway in more than 100 countries in the world. You can support this effort by praying that the peoples' needs may be met and they may be reminded of the hope and compassion that are offered in Christ.

Saint Mark will receive the One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering on Palm Sunday and Easter.

5th Annual Alternate Transportation Sunday



Leave the car at home and BIKE or WALK or CARPOOL or METRO/BUS TO CHURCH DAY!

May 3, 2015

Mark your calendars for this fun Spirit and Service Sunday. Dress will be casual. Help with carpools and biking teams upon request. If this effort speaks to your heart, please call Alison Bennett to volunteer. Questions? alison.bennett72@gmail.com

Saint Mark Book Lovers

Book Lovers is the Saint Mark Book Discussion Group which meets the 2nd Monday of the month at 7:00 PM in the parlor. The entire reading list can be found on our website. Everyone is welcome!



April 13: Candle in the Darkness, by Lynn Austin
Available free for Kindle on Amazon!

May 11: The Power of One by Bryce Courtenay

An Important Volunteer Opportunity!

Audio Visual Ministry

Bryan Whitney has been deeply involved in serving the audio-visual needs of Saint Mark for over 12 years. It is time for him to step down and allow others the opportunity to do so.

Over the last few years, we have approached many of our members and teens about joining the A/V team. We do have the valuable service of **Joe Piff**, who has worked with Bryan tirelessly. But its only the two of them. So far, few others have been able to undertake this role for any length of time.

However, we have a hopeful suspicion that there are those in the Congregation who have a desire to serve in this way and may have ideas about how to improve sound and vision support for worship-things we have not thought of. We would very much like to hear from you. Bryan will step down effective the first part of May. **Please contact Bryan, Jane Karakashian, Karl Kaufman, Roy, Shelby or Christina for a complete job description if you would consider supporting worship in this way.**

Some audio and video production experience is helpful but not required. We have worked over the years to streamline the process as much as possible in order that a larger pool of people can realistically do this. At the same time, our A/V integration in worship has grown over time and consequently it has become more sophisticated, so there will be a learning curve, but it is not rocket science.

It does require a substantial commitment of time at church, both on Sundays and during the week. It could be possible to team up with one or more members and split the leadership responsibilities- and of course Bryan will be around to help with the transition.

It is our sincere hope and prayer that someone is willing to take this on; to further enable our Church to fulfill its role as a community of spirit and service, by enhancing the worship and education experience for all who pass through this community of Faith.

Planned Giving

Multiplying Your Stewardship With a Planned Gift

Multiply your annual stewardship commitment by considering a planned gift to the Saint Mark Endowment Trust. Planned gifts can be made using a variety of assets, including life insurance designations, retirement assets, charitable gift annuities, or a gift of appreciated capital assets. Planned gifts can also provide tax benefits, while supporting the future mission of the church.

Men's Breakfast

The Men's Breakfast Group is meeting on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at the IHOP at 355 and rt. 28. This is a change from Tuesdays and a new location. Please join us!

Preschool Sunday School Photos from Lee LeRoche



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your heart and an
opportunity to serve. Regardless of
race, class, marital status, sexual
orientation, ability or disability.