
SAINT MARK



Saying Grace from Pastor Roy

I've been thinking about hope. We've been living through a string of human disasters that could make you hopeless. But since I want to be a faithful Christian, hope is not an option, even if I feel hopeless at times. Hope is one of the three most important virtues, faith and love being the other two. I'm not willing to give up on hope - or faith and love, for that matter. It's just how to find it and live it. The other day I read a piece about the late French geologist and paleontologist, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, who was also a Jesuit priest. His perspective as an earth scientist and Christian gave him a very long view of progress. Rather than look upon short periods of history - say 250 years of the American experiment or even 2,500 years of Western Civilization, Teilhard (as he was known) looked upon geologic time. He spoke about "deep hope that flows over deep time." This long perspective on the ways of earth and human evolution gave him a hope that was far deeper than the present predicament. After all, he points out hopefully, human beings appeared after a 10,000 year ice age.

"For sure, we need to fall on our knees every morning and beseech God to help us through this latest dark time of human greed and destructiveness. But our real task at this evolutionary cusp is not to lose sight of what is coming to us from the future, the vision of our common humanity that is indeed "groaning and travailing" to be born (Romans 8:22)."

Advent is the season of hope in Jesus Christ who comes to us. Perhaps, this year our faith will be kindled into a lively hope in Christ that will deepen our capacity to love.

What's Happening: November & December

November 5- One service, 9:30.

Consecration Sunday- Bring your pledge cards! Lunch following worship.

November 12, 19, 26- Two services 9:30 and 11:00, Christian Formation for all ages at 9:30

December 3- First Sunday of Advent! One service at 9:30 am, followed by the Advent Festival in the Fellowship Hall.

December 10, 17- Two services 9:30 and 11:00, Christian Formation for all ages at 9:30

December 24- Christmas Eve! Christmas Pageant at 11:00.

Christmas Eve services: 5:00 Family Service, 7:30 Candlelight & Communion

December 31- One service at 11:00, no Sunday school

The Saint Mark Library is now open!

We hope everyone who came by on October 15 for our grand reopening got to scan the shelves to see what we are offering! There are books for Bible Study, devotions, biography, health, family life, Book Lovers, and young adults to name a few categories. Feel free to browse any time, not just Sunday morning...the library is always open. We will be highlighting different categories every few weeks. If you didn't sign up this week, you will be put in the database after taking out a book.

Also, there is a new Children's Corner in Fellowship Hall! Hopefully when parents come to coffee hour or any event their children can enjoy their own library. Just fill out the card in the back of the book and leave it in the card box! There are Thanksgiving books out now with a Christmas display coming next month.

We hope the congregation will be enriched by our collection....many new books have been added! Let us know if you have suggestions for more!

The Library Team....Marlise Asher, Pat Simmons, Lyn Hill, Nancy Shea, Claudia Pavlin and Ellie Hagner

Why not make a joyful noise to the Lord?!

Would you like to sing in the choir for Christmas Eve (and possibly Advent), but don't have the time to join the choir year-round? Then, please consider this possibility. The Chancel Choir welcomes you to sing on a temporary basis (but of course, you're welcomed to stay after, as well). We rehearse every Thursday from 7:30 to 9 PM (except Thanksgiving), and will sing every Sunday, except the morning of 12/24 (the Pageant). Please contact Jeff (jeffdmusic@gmail.com) or a choir member if you have questions. I can let you know when to start attending rehearsals.

*Saint Mark Family
Ministry & Youth Group
made meals for the
Interfaith Works Women's
Shelter*



College Care Packages- Sunday Nov. 20

On Sunday Nov. 20, the whole congregation will be invited to come together between services to pack care packages for our college students and write cards to wish them well during their exam season. We will be sending out a link with supply needs once the date gets closer!

Advent Festival- December 3, 10:30 am

This is a joyful occasion to gather to prepare ourselves for the season. You will have the opportunity to engage in the following activities:

- Make an Advent wreath for you and your family,
- Make small Christmas gifts for teachers, grandparents or friends,
- Put together toiletry bags for our neighbors in need,
- Share in snacks and fellowship with your church community!

Saint Mark Women's Retreat- February 23-25

Present over Perfect will be the theme for our upcoming Saint Mark women's retreat. This will be based on the book Present Over Perfect, by Christian writer Shauna Niequist. We will explore this theme in our lives through conversation, prayer, Bible study and fellowship.

To register: Email Pastor Shelby and put your 100.00 deposit in box #6 in the church office. Heather Karakashian is working as our women's retreat registrar. If you have questions ask her or Pastor Shelby. The deadline for registration is Dec. 1. But the sooner you register, the better!

A few logistics:

- The retreat will begin with dinner on Friday, Feb. 23 and end Sunday Feb. 25. The retreat will be at the Hallwood Retreat Center in Dickerson, MD.
- The cost is 250.00 per person and scholarships are available. A 100.00 deposit (check made out to Saint Mark) will be required to reserve your space. Rooms are shared (two beds, one bath per room).
- Reading the book is recommended but not required.
- Women aged high school and up are invited (under 16 should plan to come with a parent).

Confirmation Begins January 2018

If you have a high school aged youth who has not yet participated in confirmation, please contact Pastor Shelby. The class will begin in January and is a great opportunity to grow in faith!

Saint Mark Prayers

- Jane Tebbutt in rehab at the Hebrew Home
- Sandy and Tom Champion
- Mary and Tom Fleisher, and their family

Hawari Family



From the left: The kids, Yazan (19), Mayar (6), Ryan (11), and the parents, Fayez and Manal.



The Hawaris and Tommy Omar. Tommy is the manager of a car dealership in Leesburg, and is Amie Gribbins' friend. He gave the Hawaris an incredible deal on this 2010 Honda. Thank you, Tommy and Amie!

Update on the Hawaris

Meet the Hawaris, a Syrian refugee family our congregation has been blessed to assist as they adjust to life in the United States!

After spending two years in a refugee camp in Jordan, the Hawaris arrived in Maryland last November. They have been living in Hyattsville, PG County, since then. They were initially sponsored by the Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC) and after 3 months, at the end of their program with ECDC, the Hawaris started to count on the support of Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church to find jobs, improve their English, navigate the metro, school systems etc. In May, Saint Mark was contacted by CCPC and agreed to sponsor them, with the backing of our partners in refugee efforts, Congregation Beth El and Bethesda United Methodist Church.

Since then, Saint Mark has been assisting the family with the following: the purchase of a used car (together with ECDC), summer camp at the YMCA for the kids, school registration at the International Office in PG County, school supplies and uniforms for the kids and, more recently, the church has helped them find and secure the lease of an apartment in Rockville. The move to Montgomery County in November will improve their lives significantly as they will be very close to their jobs and the kids will be able to attend better schools. As their move to Montgomery County gets closer, we will update the congregation with other ways we can help the Hawaris and possibly other refugee families, as our efforts with Beth El and United Methodist expand.

On World Communion Sunday the Hawaris visited Saint Mark for the first time and were very happy to meet Roy, Shelby, and several SM members. It was the first time the Hawaris, who are Muslims, attended a Christian service. They enjoyed the service, the Scottish and Brazilian music performances, and the international potluck lunch and fellowship that followed. What a perfect way to celebrate our communion with brothers and sisters all over the world!

Saint Mark will continue to assist the Hawaris as they transition from PG County to Montgomery County and continue to adjust to life in the United States. We feel blessed Saint Mark has been given the opportunity to contribute first hand to the well-being of at least one family from war-torn Syria. As Christians, it is an opportunity to show our neighbors compassion and hospitality, and to put into practice Christ's teachings.