



The Lion of St. Mark's

JULY 2008

Our Habitat Day

(and more)



We have heard about the Habitat project, Apostle Build, currently underway in the western part of the city, and it is our turn to help. We have chosen Saturday, August 2, as our first time. One needs to be age 14 and above and breathing.

There is some way that many of us can be of service. We're looking for a crew of 15 persons for that day, as well as folks to care for a lunch for those who work.

How can you help?

1. Pray for the success of the whole project and for the safety and camaraderie of the crew.
2. Offer to prepare some food as part of the meal.
3. Help in the serving of food at lunchtime.
4. Come with willing hands and learn what the supervisor wants us to do.
5. Give a financial contribution for the meal expenses.
6. Give a financial contribution for the project as a whole.
7. Pray for all of the work crews to follow us as the project continues.
8. Participate in the calendar-contribution-plan described below.



Involve everyone!!

We have a calendar which serves as a giving schedule which gets everyone involved—from our youngest to our oldest—as they run around the house counting their blessings. On July 1, if your home is completely paid for, thank God and deposit \$1; on the 7th, deposit 20¢ for each bedroom; if you have a garage door opener, deposit 35¢ on the 20th ...you get the idea. Calendars for all and banks for the children will be in the narthex to begin giving on July 1!

ReStore

Need tools, building supplies or appliances? Purchase gently used (or unused) items from Habitat's ReStore on Lycoming Street for up to 75% off retail prices. Donate clean, good condition items of your own for a tax write-off.

COUNCIL UPDATE

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COUNCIL MEETING NOTES

The Congregation Council met in regular session on June 23 in the Crossways Room. The Council:

- received the regular reports of the pastor, officers, and committees.
- heard that Sharon Comini will be accepting responsibilities for the Campus Ministry at Penn College in addition to her continuing duties at St. Mark's.
- ratified the appointment of Beth Shafranko and Nancy Larson by the Pastor and President to terms on Mutual Ministry Committee.
- approved the recommendation of the Property Committee for re-building the heat piping in the choir wing before we have a disaster. The bid from Billtown Mechanical was received, and will be passed to the Congregation for a vote at a Special Congregation Assembly to be held on July 13.
- adopted the revised *Policy and Procedures for Children and Youth Workers*, as forwarded from the Mutual Ministry Committee. The Policy is needed in today's litigious and complicated society, and such a policy is highly recommended by both our insurance company and the synod. All other neighboring congregations should be wrestling with this as well.
- heard about progress in Family Promise.
- decided that no regular meeting will be held in July.
- set the next regular meeting for August 18, 6:30 P.M. in the Crossways Room.

Parish Register

- A Celebration of Life Service was held for Jeanne Fargus on June 9, 2008 in the Nave.
- A funeral service was held for Tom Betts, Sr. on June 19, 2008 at Maneval Funeral Home.
- Robert & Shelly Clokey welcomed twin boys.

if in doubt, love...

Staff & Officers Contact Information

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CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY NEWS

Publicity Director Needed!

...and needed right here in St. Mark's; not just to coordinate notice of events for our own parishioners, but also to get the word out to the Williamsport community at large.



We need a self-starter, a motivated individual to be responsible for organizing and maintaining regular contact with committee/departments heads for up-to-date information on events and personnel and obtaining from these individuals pre-written articles or information for pieces on the above; for confirming the placement of this information in St. Mark's newsletter *The Lion*; insuring the same, as needed, in the synod's *USS Ark* and the *West Branch Conference (of the Upper Susquehanna Synod)* publications; for recognizing the need of special correspondence with the congregation; for coordinating placement of articles and/or advertisements, as required, with newspapers, television, radio and St. Mark's website; and for managing a line-item budget for this area. *Any interested applicant should respond to Pastor Elkin by July 7, 2008.*

Nurse's Notes

July 6

Benefits of eating local produce:

- stewardship of energy costs for shipment
- meandering through the local grower's market is a relaxing, pleasurable activity that wakes up all your senses
- you'll be consuming less processed foods
- you're more likely to choose and actually eat more fruits and vegetables
- you have the opportunity to ask the grower about farming methods or pesticide use
- the money spent supports the local grower
- vouchers given to the poor for the grower's market are likely to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables (WIC, senior citizens, etc.)

July 13

It's a matter of stewardship ... Are you tired of receiving pound-upon-pound of unwanted catalogs? Check out www.catalogchoice.org and have your name removed from many of these pesky lists. Applause goes to retailers who have voluntarily opted to be a part of the solution by being listed as willing participants in saving resources (and \$) while serving customers. They can be found at www.catalogchoice.org/pages/merchants, and include companies such as Abbey Press, Burpee, L.L. Bean, Land's End, and more ...

July 20

The price of everything is rising! Even the tooth fairy is feeling the pinch! A poll by Securian Dental indicates that the tooth fairy pays an average of \$2.09 per baby tooth, and increase from \$1.71 in 2007! A spokesperson for the dental plan is quoted as saying, "The NASDAQ and Dow Jones Industrial Average indices have decreased 7.4% and 3.6% over this same period, respectively. Either the tooth fairy is an expert investor or we may be seeing something analogous to the 'lipstick effect', where during economic downturn or recession, the tendency is for consumers to purchase small, comforting items rather than large luxury items." (webmd.com/parenting/news20080222)

July 27

Know the signs of heat exhaustion! Heat exhaustion results from fluid loss or sodium loss in the heat. Symptoms include loss of coordination: dizziness or fainting; profuse sweating or pale skin; headache, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea; stomach/intestinal cramps or persistent muscle cramps. The person suffering should be moved immediately to a cool, shaded area, with legs elevated. Begin fluid replacement as soon as possible with Gatorade or other clear non-caffeine bearing liquids. If their condition gets worse (call 911), or does not improve within a few minutes, they should be seen by a physician in the ER.

News from the Pews



One can never say that St. Mark's members are not visible in the community – reading through recent newspapers, one example after another appears.

Recently, I mentioned that **Ted Larson** had been honored by the Historical Society for his years of service on the model train committee – **Frank Ulman** was also a part of that group and was pictured with Ted and other committee members in the LCHS newsletter.

Todd Smith, retired Army major and high school history teacher, spoke at the pre-Memorial Day ceremony held for students of North Penn high and elementary schools. Todd discussed his experiences in Iraq and the loss of a friend in a suicide bombing incident.

The Williamsport Area High School Career and Technical Education 2008 students of the year were honored at a luncheon May 29. **Alex Larson** was named as engineering technology student of the year.

Alex was a member of the high school graduation class this May as was **Matthew Hartsock**. Matthew received a number of awards including class of 1957, class of 1963, class of 1997, Leroy F. Derr science and mathematics prize, Karen and Jay Johnson Memorial Music, Edward Kimble creative writing award, Orville Mitstifer award and the nominee for Verizon. I am sure their parents are very proud of these young people.

Congratulation to **Jeremiah Bittner** for becoming the overall champion of the EAGA Pennsylvania Amputee Open Golf Tournament held at the Carlisle Barracks Golf Course.

Best wishes also to **Emily Newcomer** and **Riley Weber** for being named to the honor roll at Curtin Middle School.

One of the candidates vying for Laurel Queen in Wellsboro is **Emily Satifka** who will represent Montoursville in the contest.

We are justly proud of all these young members of our church family.

OFFICIAL NOTICE

A Special Assembly of the St. Mark's Congregation has been called by the Congregation Council to be held on Sunday, July 13, 2008 following the 10:30 service, for the purpose of considering the bid of Billtown Mechanical for the rebuilding of the heating pipework in the choir wing of the building, in the amount of \$15,200, with the work to be completed before the next heating season, and be financed from the income from a bequest given to the congregation.

Several years ago the heating pipes under the floor of the nave failed and the entire system was redesigned that summer so that no pipes are now buried under the floor where they are subject to corrosive elements. We knew at that time that a similar situation could develop at any time in the choir wing of the building also, and the Property Committee has been watching closely since then. They judge that we should gamble no longer and rebuild the piping now before we have a disaster. In the usual luck of things, such a disaster would probably happen on some snowy Saturday night in January and cause lots of damage. Therefore, the Committee and Council now recommend that the Congregation accept this bid and proceed with the work this summer while the system is not in use. Since Billtown Mechanical did such a fine job on the work in the nave and already understands the intricacies of our heating plant, they were chosen to continue and complete this project.

Social Ministry News

July 4th Celebration

In just a few days we will celebrate our nation's birthday. At St. Mark's we will celebrate on our front lawn with food, fun, and the best seats in town for the fireworks. Festivities will begin at 6:00 p.m. At 7:30 p.m. Dick Lakey will offer a patriotic organ concert in the nave. The fireworks are scheduled to begin at approximately 9:30 p.m.

The Social Ministry committee is still in need of volunteers to set up, pop popcorn, serve drinks and snacks and clean up in time for the fanfare of the fireworks.

Donations of lemonade and ice tea mixes, bottled water, two liters of soda, individual bags of snacks and money to offset the cost of trinkets we provide the children are needed and greatly appreciated. This year your donations are needed more than ever in that we have not received donations from local businesses.



The committee needs you to:

- Volunteer to help
- Donate needed items
- Attend the celebration
- Bring a friend



Please contact Becky Miller Pryor @ 321-9523

Summer Forums Continue!

Please join Pastor Elkin and Becky Miller Pryor in the Crossways Room during the Sunday School hour to learn of programs in our community that assist people in need. Light refreshments will be served.

Dates and guests are:

July 6: Our Work Around the World DVD with Pastor Elkin

July 13: Big Brothers & Big Sisters of Lycoming County with Damon Anderson

July 20: Daniel's Closet, an outreach of Redeemer Lutheran Church, with Barbara Horn

July 27: Shepherd of the Streets with Ruth Hague



Sharing in the Caring

The Women of St. Mark's and the Social Ministry Committee continue Christian outreach to individuals locally and globally. There are several opportunities for you to reach out to individuals in need this summer.

Globally you can donate items for Lutheran World Relief. See the display in the Narthex for information on items needed.

Locally you can donate hygiene products in regular sizes for men, women, and children. These items will be donated to the Shepherd of the Streets. Your donations allow the Shepherd's clients to maintain a sense of dignity in increasingly difficult times.

Please continue to donate non-perishable food items to the United Churches Food Pantry, as there is no summer vacation from hunger. This will enable the Food Pantry to provide a three-day supply of food to individuals and families experiencing difficult times on shrinking budgets. All donations can be placed in the bins in the Narthex.

Please accept this call to serve Christ through acts of service.

ELCA Women...

...are now collecting Kits, Quilts & Soap!

WORLDWIDE REQUESTS FOR AID CONTINUE TO INCREASE

Will you help meet the needs?



As the intensity of humanitarian needs increase worldwide, relief requests to Lutheran World Relief have been on the rise. Current inventories are unable to meet all the appeals. Please consider providing any of the following over the summer.



SOAP - A brand new bar of soap signals dignity and cleanliness. Any brand of soap in its original wrapping is welcome.

HEALTH KITS - help maintain personal hygiene to refugees while in exile and when they can return home.

SEWING KITS - provide an opportunity to make clothes to wear or sell.

LAYETTES - furnish the means for mothers to care for their newborns.

SCHOOL KITS - supply children with materials to learn.

School Kit

- 3 spiral bound notebooks (8"x10 1/2" ruled, 70 pgs.)
- 1 pair blunt metal scissors
- 2 1 12" or 30 cm ruler
- 1 pencil sharpener
- 6 new pencils w/ erasers
- 1 2 1/2" eraser
- 1 box of 16 or 24 crayons
- **Pack in cloth bag and secure with cord or rubber bands**

Layette Kit

- 2 shirts or Onesies
- 2 gowns or sleepers
- 2 receiving blankets
- 4 cloth diapers
- 1 sweater or sweatshirt
- 2 washcloths
- 1 bath size baby soap
- 2 diaper pins
- **Wrap in one receiving and secure with diaper pins**

Health Kit

- 1 hand towel (dark color)
- 1 washcloth (dark color)
- 1 bar of soap (bath size)
- 1 toothbrush*
- NO** toothpaste
- 1 wide-tooth comb
- 1 metal nail file or clippers
- 6 band-aids
- **Wrap in towel and tie with ribbon or yarn**

Sewing Kit

- 3 yards 45" cotton fabric or cotton-blend fabric (no knit fabrics)
- 1 pack of hand needles
- 1 spool matching thread
- 6 1/2" buttons on a card or
- 6 1/2" buttons tied on string
- **Wrap inside of fabric and secure with yarn or ribbon**



Any size, any brand bars of soap in their original wrappers may also be donated.

ELCA, SYNOD & WEST BRANCH NEWS

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ:

With a swiftness that we could not have imagined only weeks ago, the waters have brought chaos to a large area of the central United States. The flooding that is moving south in the Mississippi River valley follows unusually destructive tornadoes in several states and the humanitarian crisis after an immigration raid in Postville, Iowa. The scope is broad. Tornadoes have caused fatalities in 15 states, and at least 11 synods currently are involved in relief operations with ELCA Domestic Disaster Response, an unprecedented number in our history.

In the midst of these disasters, Scripture speaks to us.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult." (Psalm 46:1-3)

God remains faithful. God's Spirit is at work, moving over the face of the waters to renew life and hope. This hope will not disappoint, because God's love is being poured out through the Holy Spirit.

I write to ask you to join me in prayer and action. Please pray for all who are facing adversity, including the hidden challenges that seep in after media attention leaves: the destruction of this year's crop and the productivity of cropland for years to come; the loss of homes and neighborhoods; the severing of ties from each other and histories in particular places; and the troubling emotions and thoughts that erode confidence and faith. Pray that God's Spirit sustain them in the hope of God's faithfulness, shown to us in Jesus Christ.

An ELCA Disaster Alert with information about how you can help in recovery is being sent to you as I write. Please join me in an outpouring of love that is equal not only to the depth of the waters, but even more to the fullness of Jesus' life in us and to the Spirit's renewing work in the world. We will be the Body of Christ to those who yearn for a comforting presence. We will be the gentle hands that hold those who yearn for the healing that Jesus brought. Through our service God will speak their names and hold them as a treasured possession.

"But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior." (Isaiah 43:1-3)

Mark S. Hanson
 Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

I want to help with ELCA Domestic Disaster Response Funding!

Name _____ Envelope # _____

A Gift for U.S. Flood Relief \$ _____

A Gift for U.S. Tornado Relief \$ _____

A Gift for Where it is needed most in the U.S. \$ _____

Family Promise



Chronicle / Brant Ward

It is a slow process to convince folks around the community that we really can make a difference in the life of a family by offering such simple assistance as a place to stay and food to eat while they sort out the problems of life and develop new strategies.

A recent development was a meeting held on June 17, where Pastor Elkin and Donna Maxwell of First Methodist met at the invitation of the three County Commissioners with representatives of a number of local agencies that work in some capacity with homeless persons. We had as our guest Dawn Baxter, Executive Director of Family promise in Berks County (Reading). We presented information about what we are proposing to do, the churches that are committed at this point, and the current local response to homelessness, demonstrating that a

family trying to stay together while working through a housing crisis literally has no place that they can go. The various agencies had a number of questions about how Family Promise would work, and many of them could be answered by Ms. Baxter from her first-hand personal experience of developing the network in Reading.

We have also heard that a Family Promise network has just opened in the Stroudsburg area, and that one is in the first stages of development in Harrisburg. The need is present; the need is real. Please talk with your friends in other congregations and ask them to ask questions about becoming involved in Family Promise. Six congregations are committed, and we need seven more. Let's talk!

Family Promise

**Because
Families
Shouldn't
Have to
Live in
cars**



The Gift in Giving

Have you ever received a gift so wonderful, so endearing, that perhaps it brought tears to your eyes, and the mere utterance "thank you," just didn't seem to cover your gratitude for the absolute blessing you had received? That's the way I feel about my family at St. Mark's for all the prayers sent up on behalf of my daughter, Beth, when she was in an extremely high risk pregnancy with her twins, and for all the goodness, kindness, well-wishes, encouragement, gifts of diapers, clothes, blankets, and baby items. All during Beth's pregnancy, terrible thoughts ran through my mind. Every time I heard a helicopter coming into Hershey, I just prayed. I also saw a host of premature babies born with such assorted maladies, deformations, and obvious delays, that it made me question: Where was God? How could these things be happening to such precious and innocent babies? I would go back to my room and cry for the babies, and the parents of these babies, whose names I did not even know.

Both Dylan and Ashton were born three weeks early. I went to Pastor Elkin almost as soon as I learned that Beth was pregnant with twins, and asked that she be put on the prayer list. I sent out e-mails to all my online friends, asking for prayer, and to send the prayer along, that these twins be born healthy.

Since Beth was unable to work, her family moved in with my husband George and me, because they would be unable to pay their rent. George and I have a modest home, certainly not big enough for 6 people, and then 8 when the twins were born. Our electric bill doubled as did our water bill. We had to heat an extra room. Somehow, by the grace of God, we were able to stretch out our budget and make ends meet. All the gifts from the church to help with the needs of the children helped us to pay our regular bills. You'll never know how much giving to the children supported the grandparents who were providing a home for them. George and I can take care of ourselves, but we are not able to also support Beth's family of 6.

Beth began having labor pain a full 9 weeks ahead of schedule. On September 9, 2007 Hudson Luther (4 lbs 14 oz. & 19.25") was born at 4:01 AM and Nolan William (4 lbs. 1 oz. & 19") was born at 4:02 AM with his umbilical cord wrapped twice around his neck. I called the church office around 6 AM, to leave a message that the twins were born, and had passed all the newborn tests, but instead, Pastor was already there. I told him to feel free to announce to the congregation that the twins had been born.

Within a couple of days, Hudson developed a bowel problem and had to be transferred to Hershey. It was gut wrenching to have two babies in different hospitals, and to drive my daughter, who just had a Cesarean Section to Hershey. When Pastor Elkin showed up with up \$50 gas card, it was so appreciated.

When the twins achieved a weight of 5 pounds, they were released from the hospital. I don't suppose I have to tell any mother or grandmother about how endearing it is to be able to hold and rock a baby. Sometimes, I would just cry with gratitude and appreciation for having two healthy babies. They would laugh when I sang to them. (Most people cry when they hear me sing; dogs howl.) I'd cry because it seemed like somebody at St. Mark's had a direct line to God, and our prayers were heard. This feeling of gratitude never went away. In fact, as each day passed, and the twins were developing and growing, my feelings of gratitude developed and grew, too.

The more I enjoyed being a grandmother, and enjoyed the gift of my grandchildren, the more I was filled with this sense that the utterance of a mere thank you is just not enough. I would pray about it all the time. One Sunday morning, as others were receiving communion, I sat in my pew, praying again. "Lord, there must be something I can do within the perimeters of my disabilities that would express my gratitude for all the prayers and help offered up on behalf of the twins, and the support this church family has expressed in helping my family to feel like part of this family. Lord, you need to be really blunt." When I opened my eyes, I just happened to look down and see the list of names of people who were serving this Sunday. In the flower delivery section, it said: VOLUNTEERS DESPERATELY NEEDED. OK, God, that's blunt enough. During the next week, I thought about it. How hard could it be to take a bunch of flowers to someone? OK, directions might be a problem. But after that, what will it take? A little gas? Maybe a half an hour of my time? Since I look at older people as "Somebody's grandmother" or "Somebody's grandfather" I decided to brave it, and give it a try. Armed with names, addresses, and flowers, I was ready to go out on my first mission. One person was in a nursing home, and begged me to stay and talk for a while; the other was a homebound person who meekly answered the door, accepted the flowers, and just as quickly, retreated back within her home.

(Continued next page)

The Gift in Giving

I got a navigation system on my cell phone so all I had to do was enter the address of the delivery, and I got right-to-the-door directions.

Pastor and I agreed to give flowers to a particular lady on Mother's Day. I had no idea who she was. When I arrived at her home, I introduced myself through the intercom.

I asked if her name was "Jane Doe". (Names changed) I said, "I've brought the altar flowers to you." I saw someone peek out a window.

She said, "Oh, my, I'll be right there." The woman appeared at her door, and there were tears in her eyes. She said, "And here I was sitting and feeling all sorry for myself because I thought nobody was going to visit me on Mother's Day. Won't you come in and talk to me for a while?" "Jane" told me all about her family; her children had all moved out of the area to obtain gainful employment. Her husband had passed away. She showed me pictures of all her grandchildren. Finally, at one point, she just blurted out, "Oh dear, here I've been going on about myself, and I don't know who you are. Tell me all about yourself."

She didn't recognize my face or my name, so I asked her if she remembered the twins that the church had been praying for. She said she had. I told her I was their grandmother. She was full of questions about the twins, were they growing good? Eating good? What did they weigh now? Did we get a package at Christmastime with two sleeper sweaters? I said yes, we did. They were beautiful hand-made sweaters, somebody put a lot of love and time into making them. "Jane" blushed and confessed that she had made the sweaters.

There was just something magical, mystical, and completely wonderful about that particular visit. I left Jane's house walking on air. I went to her house only intending to give back some small service for all that had been done for my family, and instead, the Lord was giving me even more blessings. I thought about the years during my early disability when things were not quite as managed as they are now, and how much I had longed for a visitor. Flowers would have been nice, but a visitor! Somebody to talk to for a while to take my mind off my aches, pains, and loneliness. When I left, Jane's eyes were aglow and dancing with warm memories. Her spirit was lifted because she did not spend another Mother's Day alone.

I set off to visit another lady. I walked into the room, with the flowers above my face, but able to peek through the flowers to see her reaction. What I witnessed: a sad and depressed woman's face go from bleak and dismal to full of surprise and wonder when she saw the flowers, "Oh dear," she exclaimed, "whomever would send such beautiful flowers to me?"

We had a wonderful visit, remembering good times. Her heart was just so engaged and enchanted with real flowers. The smell of real flowers vs. the smell of the nursing home was just something that she would appreciate for as many days as the flowers lived.

These wonderful feelings last for weeks. It is addictive. The more flower deliveries I make, the more people I talk to, the more friends I make, and each and every time I tried to give even just the tiniest back to serving God and the family at St. Mark's, the Lord kept blessing me with even greater and greater blessings! It just seems like the more I give, the more the Lord showers me with blessings. If people truly realized how richly the Lord rewards an earnest heart, there would be a stampede to the flower delivery sign up book.

I guess not everyone will have the wonderful experiences I have had. Maybe the Lord sees me as one with a humble heart, enormous gratitude, and a limited ability to serve, but willing to serve within those parameters. Perhaps my witness to the joy and blessings I have endowed with, will encourage others to get out there and take a turn at delivering flowers. I will certainly continue to sign up for flower delivery, as it has become such a joy in my life, but I would not want to rob or cheat others out of the gift in giving. If anybody would like to tag along during a flower delivery, please feel free to hunt me down after the 10:30 service, and I'll be happy for your company.

St. Mark's has made it easy to introduce the faith to my grandchildren, support them with love, fellowship, and a sense of a church family. I couldn't help Beth and Rob raise these boys in the faith without a single one of you. Thank you for encouraging my four grandsons, who will be baptized on August 10.

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY



THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!!
HOW MANY TIMES CAN WE SAY IT?
THANK YOU!!!

The following people were just amazing and we couldn't have had such a successful VBS without them:

Shirley Kinney
 Jane Kline
 Donna Clark
 Hannah Ramsauer
 Shelby Weber
 Stephen Boone
 Vicki Hausmann
 Beverly Schmidt
 Lou DeSeau
 Ashley Butters
 Nicole (Ashley's friend)
 Mel Wentzel
 Bob Jones
 Karen Boone
 Corey Hospes

Jackie Kinney
 Dinah Labenberg
 Nick Buckman
 Sara Jones
 Mindy Wentzel
 Jenn Robertson
 Michele Owen
 Katie Schmidt
 Kay Poliska
 Tracie Elliott
 Judy Fortin
 Brenda Gair
 Chris Heyne
 Riley Weber
 Codi Zanella

Lois Smith
 Deb Buckman
 Becky Miller Pryor
 Nicole Walz
 Christina Comini
 Bill Hill
 Kirk Owen
 Eric Comini
 Gary Weber
 Kate Lauer
 Savanna Young
 Declan Jones
 Dick Lakey
 Devin Owen
 THANK YOU!!!

...AND WHILE WE'RE THANKING FOLKS...

All those who assisted with the annual picnic contributed to one of the most enjoyable events this year!! Any of you who weren't able to attend missed out on a great time!! We gratefully thank the following people:



Todd Smith
 Theoron Hershey
 Kirk Owen
 Sara Jones
 Pastor Elkin
 Jackie Kinney
 Dick Wagner

Devin Owen
 Kara Hershey
 Bob Jones
 Lou DeSeau
 Shirley Kinney
 Sharon Comini
 Susan Mahserjian-Smith

Trish Hershey
 Michele Owen
 Declan Jones
 Bob Schultz
 Gary Weber
 Bernadette Jones
 Eric Comini

FOR PICTURES AND INFO OF THESE AND OTHER EVENTS,
 CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE AT www.stmarkswilliamsport.org

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

HAVE YOU DONE IT? HAVE YOU MARKED YOUR CALENDAR YET??

You know, you're really not giving yourself enough time to plan for this.

Okay. It's **NEXT MONTH** from August 3 through August 10,
and we still need you to participate in

St. Mark's Summer Choir Camp!



This year, we are putting together “*DAVID AND THE GIANTS!*”

The music is a little more challenging than last year and we have to enlist two armies!

And fit them in to Fellowship Hall!!!! Hmmm.....

Each of the following evenings, there will be a 5:30 p.m. meal in Fellowship Hall, followed by rehearsal from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. for choir and cast members:

Sunday, August 3

Monday, August 4

Tuesday, August 5

Wednesday, August 6

Thursday, August 7

Friday, August 8

SATURDAY, AUGUST 9: 9:30 a.m. FINAL REHEARSAL
6:00 p.m. TUREEN MEAL (meat will be provided)
7:00 p.m. PERFORMANCE in Fellowship Hall

SUNDAY, AUGUST 10: 10:30 a.m. presentation at the service

A cassette tape is being prepared so that each family may have a copy to play every day to help with the learning of the music and words!

WE HOPE THAT YOU WILL MAKE PLANS TO BE PART OF THIS SPECIAL SUMMER EVENT!!

It will surely be an exciting, intergenerational event,
with the music being sung by all ages, kids through adults!!

WE NEED HELP!!

Yes, in a nutshell, we need everyone!!!

Sewers, carpenters, painters, phone callers...you name it, we need it!!

Stay tuned for more information!!!

Please contact Bernadette or Dick to let them know of your interest.

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

The Milestone Celebration of 70, Single and still Praising God!



Last year, a joyous celebration was held for the first time last summer, honoring valued members of our congregation who had attained 75 or more years of age, were single, and still praising God!

This year, on Sunday, August 24, we celebrate those singles who have attained 70 years of age or more and are still praising God! The invitees include all single members in our congregation who are seventy years of age or more and who were not honored at last year's celebration.

The following are on our list of honorees: Beverly Best, Doris Brown, Sis Chrisman, Catherine Drake, Jean Gulliver, Alice Helm, Dick Kneedler, Carl Knowlden, Ann Kuntz, Robert Myers, Prudy Poff, Ray Reams, Ruth Rees, Elsie Sechler, Jean Soars, Eleanor Sobers, Marlene Vollmer, Eleanor Whiting, and Bobbie Yetko.

If you or anyone you know should be on this list, but aren't, please let us know im-

Friday Fun Night July 18th ~ 6:30 pm

Okay...we don't play with our food or eat our games.

But, we do bring yummy treats and have a great time!!

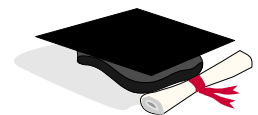
Come and join us!!



Congratulations, 2008 graduates!!

"What we are is God's gift to us. What we become is our gift to God."

-Eleanor Powell



College ~ Ashley Miller ~ Shippensburg University

High School ~ Eric Powley, Tait Thorne & Stephen Dewar

If we overlooked anyone, it was unintentional and we apologize.

Please provide us with that information and we will print it next month.

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

ST. MARK'S SUMMER PLAYGROUP!



Summer is upon us! Grab your calendar and pencil in the following dates for some Summer Fun with the kids. If time permits, we'd love for you to join us in socializing, snacking and tiring out the kids!!

Wednesday, July 9	10:00 a.m.	Indian Park (Montoursville)
Wednesday, July 23	10:00 a.m.	Shaw Park (by East End Pool)
Wednesday, August 6	10:00 a.m.	Short Park (by Loyalsock Pool)
Wednesday, August 20	10:00 a.m.	Bruce Henry Park (bring a picnic lunch)



If you have any questions or need directions, please call Vicki Hausmann at 320-0561. Hope to see you there!

SUMMER FAMILY FILM FESTIVAL at the NEW CINEMA CENTER!

At 10:00 on Tuesday mornings from the end of June, through August, there are free showings of films for families. We are organizing a trip each of these weeks. We will walk over at 9:15 a.m. Please call to let us know if you want to go. We wouldn't want to leave anyone behind!

- July 1.....*Bee Movie* (PG)
- July 8.....*Mr. Bean's Holiday* (G)
- July 15.....*Charlotte's Web* (G)
- July 22.....*Evan Almighty* (PG)
- July 29.....*Over the Hedge* (PG)
- August 5.....*How the Grinch Stole Christmas* (PG)
- August 12.....*Madagascar* (PG)



For info on ratings and content for these or any other movies, go to <http://www.kids-in-mind.com/m/index.htm>

If you can't be in the cast for "David & the Giants," please join us for the dinner-theatre performance in Fellowship Hall on Saturday, August 9.

Dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m., followed by the Choir Camp's production of "DAVID AND THE GIANTS"

Happy Birthday!

Kristine Wacker	07/02	Bonita Crossley	07/13	Dorothy Berndt	07/20	
Maxwell Hospes	07/03	Luther Doeblor	07/13	Eleanor Sobers	07/20	
Theodore Larson Jr.	07/03	Declan Jones	07/14	Pamela Jensen	07/21	
Charles Ditchfield	07/04	Nancy Larson	07/14	Mary Schultz	07/21	
Philip Thomas	07/04	William Confer Jr.	07/15	Constance Shaible	07/22	
Ardath Houser	07/05			Reba Jacobs	07/23	
Corey Hospes	07/06		David Weaver	07/23		
Erma Super	07/06		Bryce Young	07/23		
Andrea Hinds	07/07		Edward Gair	07/24		
Sarah Little	07/08		Carol Confer	07/25		
Robert Lynn Jr.	07/08		Shirley Hill	07/25		
Hugh Byerly	07/09		Ashley Butters	07/16	Kristi Maggs	07/25
Nicholas Buckman	07/10		Stephanie Confer	07/16	Gail Greninger	07/26
Bethany McCullough	07/10		Kay Plankenhorn	07/16	Ann Kuntz	07/27
Edgar Miller III	07/10		Eugene Jacobs	07/17	Jonathon Phillips	07/28
Mary Martin	07/11	Russell Smith	07/17	Matthew Fortin	07/29	
Doris Brown	07/12	Brenda Bower	07/18	Carol McMorris	07/30	
Annika Waffenschmidt	07/12	Patricia Alexander	07/20	Stephen Dewar	07/31	

Happy Anniversary!

Ray & Cynthia Huff	07/03		Sean & Maria Elkin	07/24
Peter & Norma Prato	07/07		Robert & Susan Curry	07/29
Larry & Catherine Lundy	07/10		Scott & Brenda Bittner	07/30

Directory Changes

Patricia Alexander, 505 Center Street, Apt #61, Williamsport, PA 17701

Alan Matthew Zimmerer, Apt. #303, 5924 Founders Hill Dr., Alexandria, VA 22310-5462

Dr. Valerie Doeblor, 90 Selkirk Rd., Williamsport, PA 17701-1845

Erick & Stephanie Fortin & family, 200 Grove St., So. Williamsport, PA 17702

Lunch N' Fellowship July 16th

Cold Meat Salads (Tuna, Turkey, etc.)

Special Thank You's

“A simple act of kindness has a beauty all it's own...”

The Fornwalt family would like to thank Pastor Elkin for the beautiful memorial service done for Harriet and for the choirs lovely contribution. She would have loved it as she loved this church and it's members. We know she is up in Heaven singing her heart out!

A special thank you to the kitchen crew, Lois & Russell Smith, Carl & Beverly Hieber, Shirley Kinney and Bernadette Jones for a beautiful luncheon. It was set up nicely and a very nice gathering to honor Harriet.

Thanks Lou DeSeau for the clean up!
Thanks again!

Henry Fornwalt & families

Dear Parishoners at St. Mark's,

How lovely are the flowers that you sent! I am in the Valley View Nursing Center. It was extra nice because the woman who delivered the flowers was my neighbor when I lived in Montoursville.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Jane Fisher



Dear St. Mark's Church congregation & Pastor Kenneth Elkin,

Kay Poliska delivered the most beautiful bouquet of flowers that made my day! I thank all who donated the flowers to the church and then make it possible to put smiles on other's faces & brighten their day.

Thank you again,
Karen Opp

“This note has come to thank you for the wonderful surprise! Your thoughtfulness means so much more than you could realize!”

Thank you so much for the Anniversary Package. Charlie & I really appreciate being remembered.

Sincerely,
Ann & Charlie Kuntz

We want to thank each and everyone who was involved in the Anniversary dinner on Sunday, May 4th. The food was delicious and the service was extraordinary.

Thank you all very much.

Saint Mark's,

Thank you for the lovely dinner, the gifts and the service held for couples observing more than 50 years of marriage. The food was delicious and a good time was had by all!

Many thanks to all who helped make our day!

~ Cecil & Kitty Calvert

“Defending life, Meeting Needs”

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for the wonderful assortment of bears. They will make our little children very happy. Thank you for sharing with us.

Sincerely,
Darlene, Pregnancy Care Center Volunteer

HEALTH, HEALING & WHOLENESS

"Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing." (Ezekiel 47:12)

Google the terms "healing and water" and you will come see more than one million "hits" – websites that contain some fact or claim about the healing properties of water. We know that in the Bible healing water describes special medicinal pools into which the lame could submerge in hope of a cure. Healing is implied in the "living water" that Jesus offers the woman at the well who is living in sin. It was there when Naaman, and later ten other nameless fellows were suffering from leprosy. It is described again in the book of Revelation as the River of Life, and even today, it is there to wash us clean through the waters of our baptism.

Today we know that exercising in a pool of water is beneficial for those who have degenerative joint disorders such as arthritis, and that swimming laps can give a good cardiac workout. Few would argue that the image and sound of flowing water contain a balm that soothes the soul and quiets the mind. There is no doubt that water is precious to our very existence – spiritually, mentally and physically!

As the summer weather heats up, more and more folks will be seeking the cooling and refreshing qualities of water at pools, oceans and water parks across the country and around the world. However, unlike the Biblical healing pools, some water sources, instead of making us feel better, may instead serve as the source for the spread of illness. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is alerting swimmers to two particularly nasty parasites named *Cryptosporidium* (*Crypto* for short) and *Giardia*. In 2007, the CDC had a record number of reported outbreaks (triple from 2004); a phenomenon they've termed **recreational water illness**. Both can lead to diarrhea – lasting from one to three weeks and causing stomach cramps, nausea, vomiting, fever, dehydration and weight loss - which can begin between 2 and 10 days after infection. These and other germs are particularly dangerous to the very young, the elderly, pregnant women, and those who have compromised immune systems. Both parasites require reporting to the states' Departments of Health and to the CDC. *Crypto*, *Giardia*, and other infectious agents, such as *E. coli* O157:H7 and *Shigella* can be spread through the use of swimming pools, hot tubs, decorative water fountains (many are not chlorinated), oceans, lakes, and rivers (www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/print.htm). Most are spread through swallowing or breathing in contaminated water. Skin, ear, eye and wound infections are "picked up" just by being in the water. How does this happen? The most obvious is by small children having "accidents" in their diapers while in the water, but according to the CDC, the **average person** can have about 0.14 grams of fecal material on their bottoms when entering a recreational water source without having first showered! Chlorine does kill germs, but does not act immediately – in the case of *Cryptosporidium*, the parasite can survive for days. Other RWIs affecting skin, ears, eyes, lungs, are caused by germs that are natural to the environment (soil, water) – infection occurs when disinfection is lax, allowing the germs greatly to increase in number, and be more likely to contaminate the swimmer.

Don't panic! Before you give up enjoying the water, here are some safeguards you can take to make sure your vacation/swimming time is a healthy one:

- Before using any pool, check for clean, clear water - you should be able to easily see any decals, stripes or seams at the bottom of the pool. Tiles and liner should not be slick or slippery. Is the pool equipment working – can you hear it?
- Ask how often the pool is checked for chlorine and ph levels (ideally... twice daily); is this done during time of heavy use? You can check the water yourself using test strips available at home improvement or pool stores (chlorine should be 1 – 2 parts per million; pH should be 7.2 – 7.8) (see www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/pdf/test/_strip_instructions.pdf). Are pool maintenance personnel aware of health risks and how to prevent illness?
- **Do Not Swim if you have diarrhea** – and don't get back into the water until two weeks after your symptoms have subsided!
- Don't swallow the water – avoid even getting it in your mouth, eyes or ears. Drain water from the ear canals – ask your pediatrician or physician how to best accomplish this.
- Shower **before** and after swimming – make sure children wash their bottoms with lots of soap and water.
- Wash hands and (whenever possible) bottoms after using the bathroom or changing diapers. Take along flushable diaper or personal cleansing wipes. If no water is available for hand washing, use hand sanitizer gel.
- Have children take frequent bathroom breaks; check diapers often and do not change them by the pool.
- Chlorine evaporates more quickly in hot tubs, making it even more important to maintain disinfectant levels; without it contaminated water vapor can be breathed in, and skin rash germs are spread easily
- Avoid swimming in lakes and rivers immediately after a rainfall; check on beach conditions by contacting state or local health departments or at www.epa.gov/beaches/ under "Find Your Beach".

Enjoying the water can be beneficial to spirit, mind and body. It just takes a little planning and preventive action to make it safer for everyone! Have a wonderful summer, and don't forget the sunscreen (at least 15 spf)!

*Debbie Best, Program Coordinator
Congregational Health Ministries and Family Life Services; Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries*

SPECIAL CONCERNS LIST

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1900 Ravine Road
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Nancy Bohartz
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Lock Haven, PA 17745

Ethel Chambers
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Hillsgrove, PA 18619-9300

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Beulah Wrede
Faxon Commons,
1804 Loyalsock Drive, Apt 305
Williamsport, PA 17701

Ralph Zeigler Sr.
Rose View Court
1251 Rural Ave., Apt. 209
Williamsport, P A 17701

St. Mark's Calendar of Events

July 1 Tuesday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:15 am – Summer Film Festival	July 12 Saturday July 13 Sunday <i>Pentecost IX</i> 8:00 am—Holy Communion* 9:15 am—Summer Forum: <i>Big Brothers & Big Sisters of Lycoming County</i> 10:30 am—Holy Communion* 11:00 am—Cong. Assembly	July 21 Monday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer July 22 Tuesday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:15 am – Summer Film Festival 7:00 pm—Family Promise July 23 Wednesday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:15 am—Staff Mtg. 10:00 am –Playgroup - Shaw Park (East End Pool) 11:00 am—Soc. of Holy Trinity July 24 Thursday 6:31 am—Men's Ministry 9:00 am—Morning Prayer July 25 Friday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:15 am—Lion Crew July 26 Saturday July 27 Sunday <i>Pentecost XI</i> 8:00 am—Holy Communion* 9:15 am—Summer Forum: Shepherd of the Streets 10:30 am—Holy Communion* July 28 Monday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer July 29 Tuesday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:15 am – Summer Film Festival July 30 Wednesday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:15 am—Staff Mtg. 7:00 pm—Mutual Ministry Mtg. July 31 Thursday 6:31 am—Men's Ministry 9:00 am—Morning Prayer
July 2 Wednesday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:15 am—Staff Mtg.	July 14 Monday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer July 15 Tuesday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:15 am – Summer Film Festival 12:00 pm—Lutheran Shared Min. 6:30 pm—Fine Arts & Property combined meeting	July 29 Tuesday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:15 am – Summer Film Festival July 30 Wednesday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:15 am—Staff Mtg. 7:00 pm—Mutual Ministry Mtg.
July 3 Thursday 6:31 am—Men's Ministry 8:00 am – Stephen Ministry I 9:00 am—Morning Prayer	July 16 Wednesday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:15 am—Staff Mtg. 12:00 pm—Lunch N' Fellowship (Cold Salads)	July 31 Thursday 6:31 am—Men's Ministry 9:00 am—Morning Prayer
July 4 Friday Office Closed 5:30 pm – 4th of July Ministry 7:30 pm – Patriotic Organ Concert	July 17 Thursday 6:31 am—Men's Ministry 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 5:00 pm—Stephen Ministry II	
July 5 Saturday July 6 Sunday <i>Pentecost VIII</i> 8:00 am—Holy Communion* 9:15 am—Summer Forum: <i>World Mission DVD Pastor Elkin</i> 10:30 am—Holy Communion*	July 18 Friday Newsletter Deadline 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 6:30 pm—Friday Fun Night	
July 7 Monday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer	July 19 Saturday July 20 Sunday <i>Pentecost X</i> 8:00 am—Holy Communion* 9:15 am—Summer Forum: Daniel's Closet 10:30 am—Holy Communion*	
July 8 Tuesday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:15 am – Summer Film Festival		
July 9 Wednesday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:15 am—Staff Mtg. 10:00 am –Playgroup - Indian Park (Montoursville)		
July 10 Thursday 6:31 am—Men's Ministry 9:00 am—Morning Prayer		
July 11 Friday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer		

ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
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WILLIAMSPORT, PA 17701

Phone: 570-323-4619
Fax: 570-323-2452

Website: <http://www.stmarkswilliamsport.org>
Email: stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org



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July 4th Celebration



Annual Patriotic Concert
by Organist Dick Lakey at 7:30 pm

Refreshment Stations

Popcorn Drinks Candy Snacks

Gifts for the children