

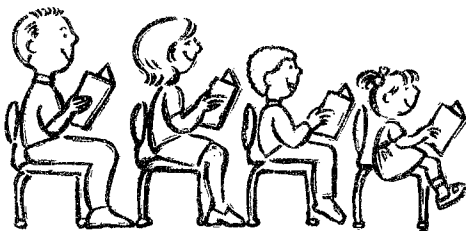


The *Lion* of St. Mark's

SEPTEMBER 2005

~ SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL ~ BEGINS SEPTEMBER 11th

Because it has been so successful, the monthly rotation-teaching schedule will again be in place this year. A special thanks to all of you who have answered the call to teach The Word to our youth and adults; to study, learn, and grow in faith with them.



CLASSES FOR ALL AGES

Youth, age three through sixth grade will use the curriculum *Life Together*. *Life Together* is the entire community, from children to adults, experiencing worship, learning settings of the church and encountering the same Bible stories and theme each week.

- † Pre-school youth – Room 307
- † Kindergarten and first grade – Room 311
- † Grades 2 and 3 – Room 312
- † Grades 4, 5 & 6 – Room 309

Youth, grades 8, 9, 10, 11 & 12:
a fun, happening place where we will talk about the amazing things Jesus can do in our lives. Breakfast will be served.
† Grades 8, 9, 10, 11 & 12 – The High School Room found in the Crossways Hallway.

One Adult Sunday Church School group will meet in the Middle Lounge. (See page 4 for more information about this class.)

The Crossways Adult Study Group will resume on Sunday, September 11, with the rest of the religious education programs.

All are welcome to sample either of these adults groups, and if they are too full, we'll establish another one!

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

“What’s that?” you say, “*Whose* birthday?”

The year 2005 marks the 225th anniversary of the very first Sunday school. Gloucester (GLOSS-ter), England, was the birthplace of Sunday school in 1780.

A suburb of London, Gloucester was a wool and textile-manufacturing center where children were working six days a week in the factories. This was before child labor laws. As a result of this grueling schedule, the children were not getting any education at all—secular or religious. A young printer named Robert Raikes reacted to the problem by going through his community gathering the children to bring them together on their one day off—Sunday—to teach them the Bible, as well as to read and write. It was the first Sunday school!

Today we don’t have to attend Sunday school to learn to read and write, but it does remain the best way to teach persons of all ages about God, the Bible and His will in our lives.

* * * * *

There’s Something in the Air!

A little dust has been flying around in Fellowship Hall as Lou DeSeau, Bob Miller and John Hoffman are working hard, finishing the stage in Fellowship Hall—sanding and finishing the floor and painting the walls. We hope to make new curtains soon. Sharon and Bernadette look forward to

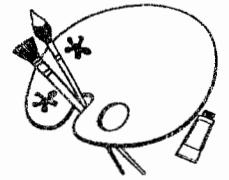


utilizing the refinished space for worship and special religious and children’s programs in the times to come.



Ladies! Have you noticed?

The Ladies’ restroom in the church office hallway has been undergoing a major facelift this summer! In addition to the new floor and new paint on the walls, Sharon Comini has contributed to the room’s beautification with a lovely window treatment and a stenciled border of roses and vines. Thank you to all involved in this project.



Lunch ‘N’ Fellowship will meet on Wednesday, September 21st at 12:00 noon. Menu will include chicken and baked potato. Join us for an enjoyable time of fellowship and fine dining!

FROM THE PARISH REGISTER



- ❖ First communion for Kline Alt was celebrated on August 7, 2005.
- ❖ The wedding of Scott Robbins and Melissa Winters was held on August 20, 2005.

LETTER TO THE CONGREGATION
FROM THE ALT FAMILY

August 2005

To Our St. Mark's Lutheran Church Family,

Where do we begin? We just do not believe that thank you is enough to say to you wonderful people of St. Mark's Lutheran Church. One of our mentors here at the church told me that our move to Georgia is a "step in faith", and I cannot begin to tell you how profound of a statement that is—in so many different ways.

You have helped raise and mold me. Beginning with music lessons, children's choir, moving into Sunday Church School and all of the amazing leaders that I was blessed to have teach me. Communion, Confirmation camp, Confirmation, graduations, council, marriage, The Way, births, baptisms and recently, my oldest child's first communion. You helped me weather the death of my beloved grandmothers, Dorothy S. Good and Madalene B. Kline, with whom I thought I could not survive, but you showed me I could. I have had the opportunity of babysitting the youth of this congregation and watching them grow into amazing young people who I consider to be poster children for our future. You welcomed Matthew with the same love and support that you have shown me throughout my life. You have helped me raise my children in the church, creating for them a foundation on which they will stand forever. St. Mark's Lutheran Church is a security blanket for them and you need to know that they, as well as Matthew and I, will always have you in our hearts. You have shown me the importance of God in our home and for that, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I pray that you know just how much you have done for me in my life. When circumstances would arise in my life giving me the chance to choose a road that could either lead me to destruction or greatness, I tried desperately to choose the greatness because I could see you all standing there before me, being that beacon of light, letting me know that God is in charge, not me, and to make the right decision.

And finally to Pastor Elkin. Words cannot express the utmost respect, gratitude and love that I hold for you. You have educated me not only about theology, but also about Lutheran liturgy, which I thought I knew. You opened new doors for me. You have taught me to "listen- listen God is calling", in all aspects of my life. You agreed to disagree with me but you would still listen. You gave me the opportunity to teach you as well about this house. My children adore you and when they come to this church, the first thing they want to do is to run to you with open arms and to pray with you. I cannot thank you enough for being such a good Shepherd not only to me, but also to my family and this congregation. You have had a profound impact on my family's life and me. You will be greatly missed by us.

Again, thank you from the bottom of our hearts. You all are cherished, admired and loved by us. We will miss you terribly and we look forward to hearing from each and every one of you!

God's Blessings and Much Love,

Matthew, Alice, Kline and Micah



New Beginnings

Alice Alt has served most capably as one of our Youth and Family Ministry Coordinators, but she has found it necessary to tender her resignation. Matt has secured a new position with the Miller Brewing Co. in Albany, Georgia, and in fact has already started work there. Alice and the boys will follow shortly, as soon as the sale of their house here can be arranged. Watch the Sunday bulletin for a notice of their new address in Albany as the purchase of their new home is finalized.

Alice has been a great "cheerleader" for so many of the wonderful things that happen at St. Mark's, and she will be greatly missed. At the August 7 services, we bid farewell to the family at the conclusion of the liturgy, and presented Alice with several gifts on behalf of the congregation. The staff wished her well at a luncheon on August 24.

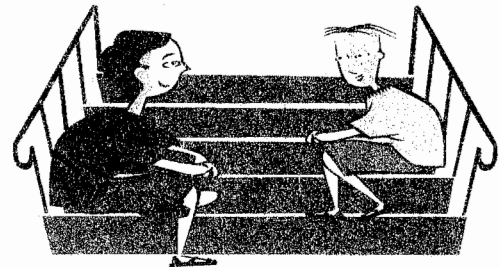


In spite of Alice's departure, our work in the gospel goes on. A person from within the congregation has accepted the challenge to lead in this area.

Bernadette Jones, a member for about eight years, is already beginning to work with Sharon Comini in preparation for fall activities. Bernadette and her husband Bob and children Declan and Sara have been participating in congregational activities as well as community functions, especially dramatics through the Community Theater League and the public schools.



As you see Bernadette and Sharon, encourage them and ask how you might be of aid in some way in the educational and relational ministry of the parish. They will be looking for additional persons, new approaches, and fresh ideas in how to share the old, old story.



The **Peer Ministry for Youth Training** event took place on August 15th and 16th at St. Luke's Church. Overall, there were twelve youth and three youth workers in attendance. Jamie Larson and Elizabeth Bonner represented St. Mark's. Pastor Kerry Aucker led this two day workshop filled with interaction, skits, role playing and other activities to help the students learn how to overcome barriers that separate people of diverse populations from living, working, and ministering together. They left the workshop with skills to help them really listen to and minister to other teens. The students commented on what a good experience it was and we are looking forward to the next peer ministry training that will be held in January 2006.

WHAT HAPPENS IN THE END?

What about the millennium, the apocalypse, reincarnation, heaven and hell, and the resurrection? Don't say you haven't thought about them.

Let's join together in a biblically grounded, gracious way to learn about and discuss these topics. We will explore popular understandings of these domains and scrutinize those understandings in light of what the Bible tells us.

Each session is built around specific biblical texts. This is for everyone. Don't miss it!
The study will begin Sunday, September 11th in the Middle Lounge at 9:15 A.M.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY NEWS

How strong is my faith?
 Who is God? Who is Jesus?
 How could reading and studying God's word
 regularly change my life?
 Why should I go to a worship service every week?
 What is so important about the Bible?
 Is something missing in my life? Does God really
 care about me? What do I really believe?

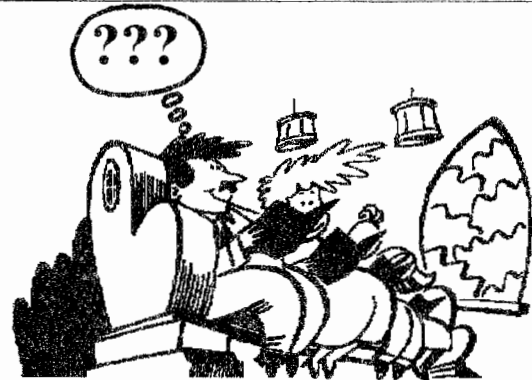
Do you find yourself
 asking questions like these?
 How and where can we find answers
 to these questions?
 Is there a place where questions
 can be asked and discussed in a
 non-threatening and friendly setting?

YES! . . . THE WAY!

THE WAY begins its sixth season Sunday, September 25th at 4:00 PM. This will be an informational meeting for anyone interested in knowing more about this process of Faith Forming for adults in which the basic disciplines of Christian Faith, worship, prayer, scripture study, and ministry in daily life are studied, understood and used regularly.

THE WAY is for people who have little or no experience of faith, people who are questioning their faith, as well as those members in the congregation who think they could benefit from opportunities for conversation, fellowship, and mutual growth in their faith and life.

Why not join us Sunday,
September 25th at 4:00 PM
in the Crossways Room?



TEN-MINUTE FORUM....

When you have a question about something in the service or especially in the sermon, what do you do? It is difficult to remember what it was and to call the pastor later in the week, and to ask it at the door is awkward. For years, Pastor Elkin has begun the Sunday Church School session with time for questions and comments, but this only helps those who attend the 8:00 service.

In order to accommodate those who attend at 10:30, Pastor Elkin invites folks to greet one another and then come to the front pews near the pulpit for what we'll term *Ten-Minute Forum*, a chance to ask, propose, object, and converse about the impact that the scriptures are to have on us today. It is intended that this will be an ongoing opportunity.

A New Opportunity: The 6:31 (A.M.) Fellowship

Men are invited to join Pastor Elkin and Eric Comini at 6:31 A.M. each Thursday morning for 33 minutes of Bible study, prayer, and conversation.



CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY NEWS

KITS AND SOAP DUE

Completed kits and soap bars for Lutheran World Relief should be turned in by September 11th, so they can be processed and packed. There are boxes in the Narthex and Parish House coatrooms. Thank you for "Reaching Out - God's Way".

INVITATION TO ALL WOMEN OF ST. MARK'S

Our *fall luncheon meeting* will be on Wednesday, September 14th, at noon in Fellowship Hall. Bring your own bag lunch. Coffee and dessert will be provided.

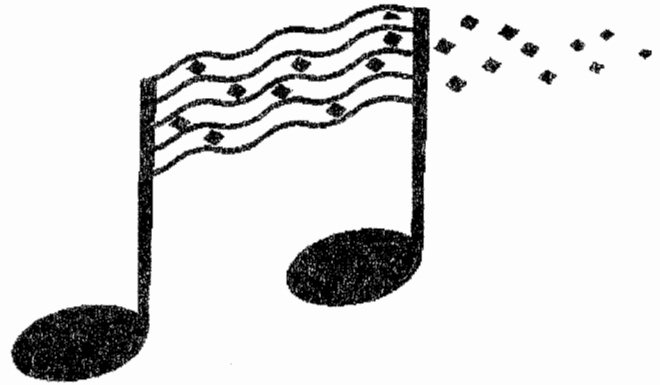
Also, please bring an item for a layette for Lutheran World Relief. We will assemble complete layettes as a group project. Larue Dieter has knitted sweaters. We will need onesies undershirts (Size Small or Medium), gowns or sleepers, washcloths, receiving blankets, and flat diapers. Come and enjoy the fellowship while helping others.

Quilting Is Back!

Wednesday morning quilting will resume on September 7th. Pastor Elkin begins with Morning Prayer at 9:00 a.m. At 9:15 a.m. we break into groups. Some cut cloth squares, some sew them together, and others assemble the quilt layers. The largest group meets in the Middle Lounge to insert knots to fasten the layers together. Much non-sewing work goes into the making of the completed quilts. Bring scissors and give it a try. It is a very pleasant and fulfilling way to spend a morning. If you prefer to work at home, contact Louise Kneeder at 433-4278.

WOMEN OF ST. MARK'S FALL SCHEDULE:

September 7 - Sewing begins
September 14 - Women's meeting and lunch
September 11 - Kits and soap collections due
October 2 - Blanket Sunday



New Choir!!!

Beginning on September 11th and 25th, we will have two brief 15-minute rehearsals at 11:30 a.m. (immediately following the 10:30 worship service) in the choir room. On Sunday, October 2nd, we will sing at the 10:30 service.

The music chosen will be of a contemporary style, at times with piano and/or guitar accompaniment. We hope that this choir will help provide an avenue of expression for participants from a wide range of ages (from youth through adult).

We plan to sing on October 2nd, then again in the fall, sometime at Advent or Christmas, again in Lent, and finally in the Easter season. Keeping the commitment times short and seasonal may be helpful for those who would like to sing in a choir.

We hope to see you at our first rehearsal on Sunday, September 11th at 11:30! For more info, please see Dick Lakey or call the church office at 323-4619.





STUDYING IN CAIRO

Stacey Pistritto, the 20-year-old daughter of St. Mark's secretary, Joan Blank, is currently involved in an off-campus study program that is offered by the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities. The Council provides opportunities for students to spend a semester abroad in Oxford, Uganda, Australia, China, and Russia, as well as in Cairo, Egypt.



Stacey, a junior majoring in journalism at Gordon College near Boston, MA, left for Cairo on August 22 and will be returning in December. While events abroad are being constantly monitored, the safety and security of these students are a concern. We ask for your prayers as Stacey and all of the students involved in these overseas programs help spread God's word around the world. (For more information about the program, check online at www.bestsemester.com.)

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Thanks for your help
this summer!



A note from Joan:

A special thank you to Shirley Vognet and Lois Smith for helping out in the church office while I was on vacation. As I sat in the sun at Myrtle Beach, I was confident that things were running smoothly back at the office! Thank you so much!



(NOTE: St. Mark's Youth and Family Ministry was recently contacted by members of the Hepburn Baptist Church to inquire about the possibility of borrowing items that we had created for our VBS (specifically, the LARGE cardboard cut-outs of animals) for use in their upcoming VBS program. Sharon and Alice graciously offered to lend them a variety of items.)

Dear Sharon and Alice:

How can we thank you enough for all you did to make our VBS a success? Indeed, you "set the stage" quite literally, for a fabulous week for our 44 children and 30 helpers. Everyone was just transported to the Serengeti by your talent! Throughout the week, your characters became beloved to all of us and we will miss them!

Friday night, especially, they were a God-send. As our children arrived for our closing, a serious accident occurred right outside the church. Most of the children saw far too much that evening and entered the sanctuary haunted with images of the accident.

The familiar presence of "Zach," "Gigi," "Lug," "Roary" and "Elaine" really helped Pastor Mark focus the children on the way God, even now, was working to assist in a troubled world.

Thank you for helping us bring the good news of Jesus Christ in the VBS at Hepburn Baptist this week.

God bless you.

Lee Austin
Board of Christian Ed.
Hepburn Baptist Church



CHOIR PRACTICE RESUMES

The summer is nearing its end and the choirs at St. Mark's are soon to begin rehearsals. You may have been longing for just a hint of when our rehearsals might begin...so here is the new schedule:

Senior Choir

Thursday, September 8th at 7:30 PM will be our first rehearsal, and we will sing on Sunday, September 11.

Adult Handbells

Monday, September 12 at 6:45 PM will be our first rehearsal.

Family Handbells

Sunday, September 18 at 5:00 PM will be our first rehearsal.

Expanded Kantorei

This year, the membership of this choir will expand to include those singers who wish to participate in the rehearsals and performance. Our first choral work is Felix Mendelssohn's "Te Deum," which will be sung in morning worship on October 30th.

Sunday, September 18th, following the late service, will be our first rehearsal.

Recorder Group

We will have our first rehearsal on Monday, September 19th from 4:30 to 5:30 PM in the choir room.

New Choir

We are looking to provide a somewhat expanded range of music that might help to fill the needs of members in the parish, such as an intergenerational choir, which will sing 4 to 5 times a year. We will rehearse 2 times following the late service for no more than 15 minutes each rehearsal.

We will rehearse Sunday, September 11th and Sunday, September 25th in the choir room following the late service. We will sing at the 10:30 service on October 2nd.

**Bring your voices and join us
as we make
beautiful music together!**

~ Dick Lakey



Community News

Fourth Annual Mt. Luther Dandelion Trail Run Saturday, September 3, 2005 9:00 a.m.

The Dandelion Trail Run is a 5 and 10 kilometer entry-level trail race benefiting Camp Mount Luther. Runners decide on race day if they want to do 5K or 10K (a double loop of the 5K). All miles are marked; there's one water stop on the course.

Awards and Age Categories

- Overall Male and Female
- 3 Awards for each age group
- Ages 11-14; 15-19; 20-24; 25-29;
- Ages 30-34; 35-39; 40-44; 45-49;
- Ages 50-54; 55-59; 60-over
- Ages 50-54; 55-59; 60-over
- Overall Masters 5K & 10 K
- Must be 11 years of age or older

For more information and/or registration form, please contact the church office at 323-4619.

Alzheimer's Association MEMORY WALK Saturday, October 8, 2005 Registration at 10:00 a.m., Walk begins at 11:00 a.m.

For more information call 570-822-9915 or visit www.alzpa.org, click on Memory Walk 2005, Northeastern Region, to register and make donations online.

CROP WALK IS COMING SOON!

Four Crop Walks will be held in our area on Sunday, October 9th. Registrations begin at 1:00 p.m. and the walks begin at 1:30. Plan to get involved *this year!* For more info, check online at www.cropwalk.org.

Camp Mt. Luther Women's Retreat Saturday, September 24, 2005 9:30 a.m.—2:45 p.m.

The theme for this retreat:

What the Bible says about stress!

Cost: \$8.50 (includes coffee, tea, snacks, and lunch)

For more information and/or registration form, please contact the church office at 323-4619.

Camp Mt. Luther Fall Chicken Barbeque Saturday, October 9, 2005 11:30 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Come to Mt. Luther to spend a Sunday afternoon enjoying the fall foliage. You can enjoy our famous chicken (take-outs are available) and even take a walk on our grounds. The fundraiser benefits the camp's general operating fund.

Price: \$7.00 adults; \$3.50 children under 12

Menu: Barbeque chicken, baked beans, potato salad, roll, dessert & beverage

Tickets are available by contacting the camp office at 570-922-1587. Deadline for ordering tickets is October 3, 2005.

AutumnFest 2005 Sunday, Sept. 18, 7:30 a.m.—7:00 p.m. Divine Providence Hospital Grounds

Stop by for a full day of food (sausage & pancake breakfast from 7:30 to 11:00 a.m.; other goodies all day), fun, and healthcare information and more!

Community News & Thank You's

Lutheran Shared Ministry presents
The SCHOOL OF RELIGION
 OCTOBER 5, 12, 19 & 26, 2004
 at St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Please contact the church office at 323-4619
 to sign up or for more information.

Classes offered this year include:

The Gospel of John
 Presented by: Pastor Driesen

Issues in Science and Religion
 Presented by: Pastor Zetto

Being the Church according to Matthew
 Presented by: Pastor Showers and Pastor Diebler

My Personal Prayer Life
 Presented by: Mrs. Miriam Logan and Mrs. Dawn Zetto

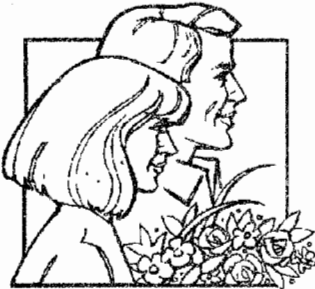
For more information and registration, call the
 church office or check upcoming Sunday bulletins.

Family Life Services
 (formerly Tressler Lutheran Services)
 will be offering a pre-marriage workshop titled:

"Fit to be Tied"

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
 Saturday, Sept. 24, 2005

This workshop is meant to supplement, not
 replace, pre-marriage counseling. Cost is \$25
 per couple for food and materials. Location is
 Christ Lutheran Church,
 1125 Mahoning Street,
 Milton. For more info
 and/or registrations
 forms, please call 570-
 320-0520 or 570-322-
 7873.



*Word of
 thanks to:* **St. Mark's**

We wanted to thank the church for
 the Classic Devotional Bible that we re-
 ceived the other Sunday.

We also want to say what a wonderful
 time we had at the Blueberry Blast!

Thanks again,
Steve, Bonnie & Jarrett Eyer

*From the Evangelical Lutheran
 Church of America:
 For donation of \$313 to World Hunger
 For donation of \$199 to Bette McCrandall*

A big **THANK YOU** goes out to all those
 who made the St. Mark's Blueberry Blast a huge
 success. About 100 people had a great time
 eating all those delicious blueberry treats,
 playing "blue" games and winning blue prizes.
 We would like to thank the following people for
 lending a hand with set up, baking, prizes and
 contributing to the success of the picnic. So
 many people have helped to make this day a
 success, we apologize if we omitted anyone on
 the thank you list. Thanks again everyone, and
 we look forward to next year's Blueberry Blast.

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Pastor Elkin | Lou DeSeau |
| Lois and Russell Smith | Richard Lakey |
| Shirley Dieffenbach | Trish Hershey |
| Carl and Lucille Weaver | Sharon Comini |
| Bonnie Eyer | Marie Byerly |
| Catherine Lundy | Marion Waldeisen |
| Mary Schultz | Becky Miller Pryor |
| Ruth Rees | Gail Hoffman |
| Doris Brown | Shirley Kinney |
| Stephanie Fortin | Elsie Sechler |
| Louise Kneedler | |

"BEAR ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS"

Dear Jesus, we come together to learn how we, as individuals and as a congregation, can better "bear one another's burdens." Grant us courage to care and be cared for, and provide us with insight on how Stephen Ministry can make St. Mark's a more caring community. Bless our time together. In your name we pray. Amen.

Let's consider some New Testament passages that include the phrase "one another" or "each other."

John 15:12 "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."

Romans 15:7 "Accept one another, then just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God."

Galatians 6:2 "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." ("Bear one another's burdens" in the NRSV.)

Ephesians 4:2 "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love."

Ephesians 4:32 "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

I Thes. 5:11 "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."

Hebrews 10:24 "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds."

James 5:16a "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed."

The words "one another" and "each other" are used over 50 times in the New Testament. What this tells us is that God did not create us to be independent. He created us to be interdependent. We are made in his own image—to be loving, caring, forgiving. He created us to need one another. "It is not good that man should be alone" (Genesis 2:18).

Also note that these passages do not simply say "bear *other's* burdens" or "love *others*." The "one another" and "each other" phrase gives them a reciprocal meaning: I will bear your burdens, and you will bear mine. In this sense, an openness to Christian caring is not just being willing to care for and help others. It is also being willing to be cared for and be helped by others. For many that part can be much more difficult.

Let's look in depth at one ministry we have here at St. Mark's that offers an organized way for us to bear one another's burdens.

Stephen Ministry is a system of caring ministry we have here at St. Mark's. In it, Stephen Ministers, specially trained congregation members, provide one-to-one Christian care to people who are experiencing a life challenge or crisis.

St. Mark's Church has had Stephen Ministers since 1997. In that time we have trained 14 of our members as Stephen Ministers. Twelve of these Stephen Ministers are currently active. Since we began Stephen Ministry 8 1/2 years ago, our Stephen Ministers have provided many hours of one-to-one caring ministry.

We have trained two classes; the first class was commissioned in September of 1998 and the second in February of 1999. Our Stephen Ministers are:

Larry Bair	Larue Dieter
Eugene Jacobs	Catherine Lundy
Elsie Sechler	Connie Shaible
Carol McMorris	Dr. David McMorris
Jane Angle	Lou DeSeau
Henrietta Tyson	Carl Weaver

As a Stephen Ministry congregation, we're proud of something big. There are over 7,000 Stephen Ministry congregations from over 90 denominations worldwide. Over a quarter-million lay people have been trained as Stephen Ministers. Stephen Ministry was developed in 1975 by Dr. Kenneth Haugk, a pastor and clinical psychologist, who saw that he alone as pastor could not provide all the caring ministry needs in his congregation. So he began training lay persons, called Stephen Ministers, to help provide high quality Christian care. The ministry was so successful that other churches became interested and Dr. Haugk founded the not-for-profit Stephen Ministries organization. Today, 30 years later, Dr.

(continued on next page)

"Bear ... Burdens" (continued from previous page)

Haugk is still the executive director of the Stephen Ministries organization, based in St. Louis. The 50-person staff of Stephen Ministries St. Louis produces and delivers resources and training to support Stephen Ministry in thousands of congregations.

The team of people who direct our Stephen Ministry in the congregation are our two Stephen Leaders, who were trained at a seven-day Leader's Training Course taught by the faculty of the Stephen Ministries organization. Our Stephen Leaders are Jane Larson and Pastor Elkin. Our Stephen Leaders recruit, select, and train members of our congregation to be Stephen Ministers. Stephen Ministers receive 50 hours of training in Christian caregiving skills. This training involved general topics like listening skills, feelings, assertiveness, and boundaries, and specialized topics like using prayer and other Christian resources or how to minister to someone experiencing grief, divorce, a terminal illness, and more.

Upon completion of their training, we commission our Stephen Ministers in our worship services. This is a way for our whole congregation to recognize that we are sending out these trained caregivers to provide one-on-one Christian care on our behalf to people in need. By commissioning our Stephen Ministers in a worship service, we are all recognizing that Stephen Ministry belongs to all of us—everyone at St. Mark's. It is our ministry and a way we as a congregation care for the needs of people in our congregation and community.

Our Stephen Leaders pair up each Stephen Minister with a member of the congregation or community who needs care. To whom are Stephen Ministers trained to provide care? They care for people experiencing divorce, the death of a loved one, hospitalization, loss of a job, a terminal illness, a relocation, the birth of a child, an empty nest, the transition into retirement, loneliness, a spiritual crisis—the list goes on and on. Many of these needs might otherwise go unnoticed or slip through the cracks because we would have lacked the staff to meet them. With Stephen Ministry, we have a team of well-trained Christian caregivers who can provide care in these situations.

Stephen Ministers have one care receiver at a time. They meet with that person in a private, one-to-one, confidential setting for about an hour a week but may touch base on the phone once or twice a week. Here is where we want to underscore one of the key points of Stephen Ministry: It is a confidential ministry. The only people who know the identity of a care receiver are that care receiver him—or herself, his or her Stephen Minister, and the pastor or Stephen Leader who linked the two together. Nobody else knows—not even the other Stephen Ministers or Stephen Leaders. This way, care receivers can feel assured that anything they tell their Stephen Minister will remain confidential.

Stephen Ministers and Stephen Leaders get together twice a month for continuing education and supervision. Continuing education is a way for Stephen Ministers to be always learning, growing, and enhancing their caregiving ability. Supervision, meanwhile, allows Stephen Ministers to guide and support one another in their ministry—and provide the best care possible to their care receivers. Confidentiality, again, is a major emphasis of supervision. Names are never mentioned and details about the care receiver are never discussed. The focus of supervision is not what is going on in the care receiver's life—it is on the relationship between the Stephen Minister and the care receiver. This way, care receivers can feel assured that no one will know they are receiving care from a Stephen Minister and that anything they tell their Stephen Minister will remain confidential.

These are the basic concepts of Stephen Ministry. It is important to note that Stephen Ministry is an ongoing ministry. More people may attend a Leader's Training Course to be trained as Stephen Leaders to replace existing ones to to expand the team. More Stephen Ministers are trained as needed. As one caring relationship ends, Stephen Ministers are given a new assignment, so caregiving goes on and on and Stephen Ministry becomes a permanent fixture in our congregation.

(continued in next month's *Lion*)

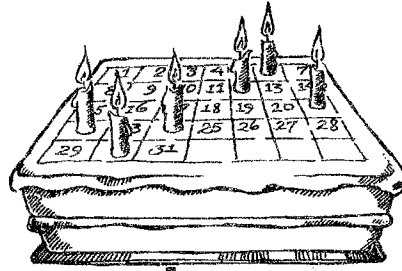
A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE PASTOR

You've been curious: What does the pastor do during the week?

Everyone can see what happens on Sunday morning, but there are so many other things that go on in the pastor's life each day. Since someone recently asked, and to give you an idea of a typical slow summer day, the pastor kept a somewhat detailed list of activities on August 17, 2005.

- ❖ Morning activities at home, including care of plants and garden.
- ❖ Arrive at church shortly after 7:00, a bit later than usual.
- ❖ Spent time in prayer in the chapel and preparing to lead Morning Prayer.
- ❖ Entered additional details in the bulletin copy for Sunday.
- ❖ Talked with the sexton Lou and reviewed his plan of work for the day.
- ❖ Fielded a telephone call from a member.
- ❖ Planned for tomorrow's Stephen Ministry session. Spoke with our new Family and Youth Ministry Coordinator as she discovers what needs to be done first in her job.
- ❖ Lead the staff in sung Morning Prayer in the Chapel at 9:00, where we are currently hearing the tragic story of King David from II Samuel.
- ❖ Led the weekly Staff meeting at 9:20, where we reviewed everyone's current activities and plans, checked the calendar, and welcomed Bernadette.
- ❖ At 10:00, assisted volunteer Lois in final editing of bulletin copy for this week (since Secretary Joan is on vacation this week). Directed the bulletin artwork selection.
- ❖ In conjunction with Sharon, rewrote an announcement to fit current information.
- ❖ Consulted with property committee member Bob about an outdoor matter.
- ❖ Greeted the folks who are checking and packing the school kits for shipment to New Windsor.
- ❖ Helped volunteer Gene solve a problem with his ministry project.
- ❖ Introduced current property projects to several senior members.
- ❖ Had telephone conversation with a member and planned a time for prayer and Bible study.
- ❖ Had various other conversations and telephone calls. At 12:00, joined the Luncheon Fellowship group for wonderful meal, followed by conversation with 15 of our senior members dealing with questions and topics of their interest. Thanked volunteers. Consulted with staff members.
- ❖ Checked a piece of music with Pat for possible use in my STS meeting in Chicago in September. Read some things in my files that will lead eventually to sermon preparation.
- ❖ Consulted with Donna about Katy's travel plans. After 2:00, wrote a newsletter article.
- ❖ Discovered that a newspaper ad for the congregation had been misdirected.
- ❖ Had an intense telephone conversation with a member in a difficult situation.
- ❖ Made a telephone call to answer a sermon question posed by a member.
- ❖ Briefly checked a book catalogue for materials needed later.
- ❖ Opened the day's mail.
- ❖ Fielded a phone call from a fellow pastor asking for assistance and advice in introducing *Child in Our Hand* process in his congregation.
- ❖ Brought journal up to date. Home 4:30 P.M.
- ❖ At home, read the day's mail. Paid nine bills on-line. Posted six medical expenses on computer report. Mowed the yard. Had a quick swim. Ate supper. Conversated with my sister on the telephone. Returned to church 7:00 P.M.
- ❖ At church, telephoned a senior member whom I haven't spoken with in awhile. Made several calls to recruit additional persons to be trained to serve as Assisting Ministers. No answer on a number of other attempted calls. Telephone call made to a senior member. Forty-five minute telephone call with a member in distress. Fifteen minutes of keyboard practice.
- ❖ Home 10:00 P.M.

SPECIAL DATES



Birthdays This Month

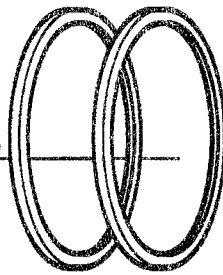
9/4 Jeannette Lukens
 9/5 Brett Campbell
 Lauren Campbell
 Valerie Doebler
 Sean Elkin
 Kirk Owen
 9/6 Laura McCullough
 Betty Rechel
 Derek Lewis
 9/9 Debra Buckman
 Ava Peluso
 9/10 Mary Clouser
 Mark Davis
 Jane Oakes
 9/11 Carol Harvey

9/12 Theodore Larson
 Beth Shafranko
 Marion Waldeisen
 Mary Ann Stiller
 9/13 Alice Helm
 Timothy Maggs
 Stefan Weber

9/15 Shirley MacGill
 Andrea Welker
 9/16 Louella Bair
 9/17 Tammy Fitzpatrick
 9/19 Deborah Holmes
 9/20 Richard Harris
 9/22 Ronald Arner
 Brittany Dewar
 9/24 Jeffery Maggs
 Aeric Powley
 9/25 Richard Kneedler
 9/26 Blanche Doebler
 9/28 Lawrence Satifka
 Bailey Sims
 Ralph Zeigler
 9/29 Harold Davis

Celebrating

An Anniversary This Month



9/3 Ronald & Grace Arner
 Steven & Nancy Bieber
 Eric & Sharon Comini
 9/10 William & Marion Waldeisen
 9/19 Johnny & Renee Hinds
 9/25 Michael & Jackie Kinney
 9/27 Art & Jane Kline
 James & Donna Maule



On July 1, 2005, Andrea (Doebler) & Tracy Gregory became parents of **Gabriella Anna Marguerite**. Best wishes to the entire family!



**Congratulations to
PASTOR ELKIN**
 as he continues in his tenth
 year of service at St. Mark's.
 And, Sunday, September 11th,
 marks the 28th anniversary of
 Pastor's ordination. May God
 bless you and guide you
 in the years to come.

SPECIAL CONCERNS LIST

Patricia Alexander
1745 Chestnut St.
Williamsport, PA 17701

Ruth Best
Sycamore Manor
1445 Sycamore Rd., Rm 213
Montoursville, PA 17754

Nancy Bohartz
624 Sixth Ave.
Williamsport, PA 17701

June Decker
338 Sherwood Ave.
South Williamsport, PA 17702

Larue Dieter
2150 Warrensville Road Apt. 2
Montoursville, PA 17754

Jane & Luther Doebler
Wmspt. Home, Apt. #115A
Williamsport, PA 17701

Harriet Fornwalt
729 Wilson Street
Williamsport, PA 17701

Doris Fortin
Rose View Court
1251 Rural Ave., Apt. 308
Williamsport, PA 17701

Earl Foulkrod
Sycamore Manor
1445 Sycamore Rd., Rm 412
Montoursville, PA 17754

Anna Harris
2018 Wheatland Ave.
Williamsport, PA 17701

Charles Homan
2215 Warrensville Rd.
Montoursville, PA 17754

Charlotte Hughes
140 Blueberry Lane
Williamsport, PA 17701

Lucille Markel
Rose View Center, Room 213 A
1251 Rural Ave.
Williamsport, PA 17701

Geraldine Martin
1900 Ravine Rd. Rm. 109
Williamsport, PA 17701

Anne Miller
947 Hepburn St.
Williamsport, PA 17701

Randy Miller
2420 North Hills Dr.
Williamsport, PA 17701

Jane Oakes
Rose View Center, Room 327 A
1251 Rural Ave.
Williamsport, PA 17701

Frank Pile
Manor Care S., Rm. 52
Williamsport, PA 17701

Anne Rhodes
Rose View Court Rm. 232
1251 Rural Ave.
Williamsport, PA 17701

Dorothy Rivetti
450 Center Street Apt. 505
Williamsport, PA 17701

Marian Rubendahl
1900 Ravine Road Bldg. C
Williamsport Home Apt. 1010
Williamsport, PA 17701

James Scheaffer
Rose View Court Rm. 321
1251 Rural Ave.
Williamsport, PA 17701

Mary Helen Scinicarello
Danville St. Hospital
Ward #311
Danville, PA 17821

James Sechler
Manor Care N. Rm. 202
Williamsport, PA 17701

Geraldine Shipman
1900 Ravine Rd.
Apt. #222A
Williamsport, PA 17701

Fred Stover
600 Bayard St. Ext. SW
S. Williamsport, PA 17702

Kester & Eleanor Sobers
425 W Highland Ave.
S. Williamsport, P A 17702

Ira Tuxford
1838 Blanchard Ave.
Williamsport, PA 17701

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

HEALTH, HEALING AND WHOLENESS

“Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.” (James 1:23-24 NIV)

It's maddening – embarrassing – but most times, completely normal. I'm referring to memory lapses – those times when you've walked into a room, and couldn't remember why you'd gone in it. Most frustrating for me is placing an important letter or paper in “a place where I won't forget it”, only to have forgotten where'd I'd placed it. I've hidden gifts, and discovered on Christmas morning, that I hadn't remembered to locate or wrap the one item my son most wanted (Sorry, Andrew!)! Thank heaven for decorated gift bags!

If you are like me, and have put the peanut butter in the fridge and the milk in the cupboard, take heart! There are some important differences between forgetfulness and dementia (impaired memory and thinking). In dementia, memory loss is severe enough to interfere with the person's ability to function socially and at work. Other symptoms can include personality changes, impaired judgment, language, ability to perform a job that requires remembering several steps, or recognition of objects or people. In contrast, “normal” forgetfulness does not progressively worsen or become disabling. Memory lapses are most likely to occur when you are under stress, are tired, ill, distracted, or just trying to remember too many details.

Forgetfulness can also be linked to physical problems, such as:

- a reduction in blood flow to the brain caused by high blood pressure.
- those who suffer from sleep apnea (stop breathing temporarily many times during the night). Given memory tests, these folks score lower – scores usually rise after treatment.
- an under-active thyroid; can affect learning, memory and attention.
- low iron levels; important for our blood to carry oxygen throughout the body, including to the brain.
- cardiovascular disease, diabetes, depression, or the side effects of medications can also contribute.
- And what may appear to be forgetfulness just might be attributed to poor hearing or vision.

Yes, it's true. It appears we really do lose some brain cells over a life-time. Researchers have found that a half to two-thirds of people age 50 or over have some degree of memory loss, however, they disagree over how much deterioration is “normal”.

According to Harvard Medical School, “It's important to note, though, that memory loss isn't inevitable.” To combat and sharpen your memory try reducing stress and improving your organizational skills. Regularly challenge your brain – play games, do crossword puzzles, word scrambles, play chess, or take some classes. Personally, I'd be lost without my daily planner. However, even though I've written something down, I still have to remember to read it ... just ask my friend Jenny ... she showed up for lunch yesterday ... and I, of course, had forgotten! ☺

September blessings to all!

Debbie Best, Congregational Health Ministries and Family Life Services
Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries