



The Lion of St. Mark's

MARCH 2008

Early Joy



Easter this year comes as early as it can possibly occur on the calendar, and will not do so again for decades in the future. Early we remember Jesus risen from the dead. Early we anticipate his rule and the fulfillment of his promises.

Saturday, March 15 Palm-Cross-making

Our Holy Week begins with that annual puzzle of making the palm-crosses that we wear on Sunday. Come, learn the tricks of the task, and engage in conversation at 9:00 A.M.

Sunday, March 16, Sunday of the Passion—Palm Sunday

After the bitter-sweetness of the procession with palms, we focus on the whole Passion-story, this year reading from Matthew. We all have parts to read and ponder.

Wednesday, March 19, The Passover Seder

Although the center of our story is Jesus, it begins with God's earlier saving actions in the Exodus. We retell this part of our heritage in story, song, scripture, and symbolic foods at table in Fellowship Hall beginning at 6:15 P.M. Since a served meal is part of this event, reservations are necessary.

Please phone the church office not later than Monday morning, March 17, or even better, put the reservation slip in the offering plate on March 16.

We also have the opportunity to gather for Morning Prayer each weekday at 9:00 A.M.

Maundy Thursday, March 20

The Thursday of the Command (mandamus – mandate – Maundy) which can refer to several things: to the command to wash feet *even as I have done to you*; it can refer to the mandate of Holy Communion *Do this in remembrance of me*; and it can also refer to the command to ...*love one another as I have loved you*.

We have opportunity to gather for study of the Psalms at 6:31 A.M., for Morning Prayer at 9:00 A.M., for the Holy Communion in the chapel at 12:00 P.M., and in the Nave at 7:30 P.M.

Good Friday, March 21

The community service will be held at noon, beginning with the procession around the center city for those who wish to participate.

All may come and go as their schedule permits. We also gather for Morning Prayer at 9:00 A.M. and for the Vigil at the Cross at 7:30 P.M. The Kantorei will be leading our thoughtful reflection on our sin and Christ's redemption.

Holy Saturday, March 22

We gather at sundown, 8:00 P.M. for the most important service of the entire year, the Great Vigil of Easter. The entire sweep of salvation history is celebrated, from the beginning of creation to its heavenly culmination, and centering on our Lord's resurrection. Everyone is most strongly urged to take part. All the senses are used, we use many ways to tell the story, everyone has a role. The participants in *The Way* renew their baptismal promises, and the Easter celebration begins.

Easter Sunday, March 23

The joy that began with the Vigil continues in festive liturgies at 8:00 and 10:30 A.M.

COUNCIL UPDATE

Inside This Issue:

Early Joy.....	1
Council Notes.....	2
Officer & Staff Contact Information.....	2
Parish Register.....	2
Lenten Midweek Series.....	3
Easter Egg Hunt & Breakfast with Pastor.....	3
Individual Confession & Forgiveness.....	4
Wedding Anniversary & Milestone.....	4
Easter Flowers.....	4
Trip for Confirmands and Others.....	4
New Windsor Trip.....	4
Carl Hieber Mission Trip.....	4
Orthodox Easter Basket.....	5
Nurses Notes.....	5
Habitat for Humanity Update.....	6
It's Party Time at Rose View Court!.....	6
Clothing Sale.....	6
Missionary Musings & Requests for Prayer.....	7
ELCA, SYNOD & West Branch News.....	8
Milestone Ministry & Calendar.....	9
Mt. Luther Spring Brunch Fundraiser.....	9
VBS SONWORLD Adventure Park!.....	10
A New Way to Help VBS!.....	10
Spring Open House.....	10
Pysanky Egg Dying.....	11
Fun Night.....	11
St. Mark's Lions.....	12
Senior High Adventure Day.....	11 & 13
6th ~ 8th Grade Retreat.....	14
Simple Giving.....	14
Birthdays & Anniversaries.....	15
Special Thank You Notes.....	15 & 16
Health, Healing & Wholeness.....	17
Special Concerns List.....	18
March Calendar.....	19
Holy Week Services.....	cover

COUNCIL MEETING NOTES

The Congregation Council met in regular session on February 18th in the Crossways Room. The Council:

- received the reports of the pastor, officers, and committees.
- moved to accept Jeff Wheeland as a member by Letter of transfer from Bethany Church
- affirmed the decision of the Executive Committee to purchase a replacement copier for the office at a cost of \$3,000.
- noted that Social Ministry plans a new outreach at Rose View Court in April.
- heard an explanation of the *Simply Giving* plan as a way of managing contributions, and asked that information be shared with the congregation about this possibility.
- planned a short retreat on Saturday, May 31 to do a one-year review of the *Mission at the Crossroads* emphasis.
- set the next regular session for March 17.
- concluded the time with *Prayer at the Close of Day* in the chapel.

Parish Register

- Mariah Ashley Hallabuk, daughter of Kirk and Ashley Goertz Hallabuk received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism on February 10, 2008.
- A celebration of life service was held for John Hollenback On February, 23, 2008.
- A celebration of life service will be held for Glenn Lunger on March 2, 2008

Staff & Officers Contact Information

Church Office 323-4619	stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org	Church fax number	323-2452
The Reverend Kenneth Elkin, Pastor	pastor@stmarkswilliamsport.org	Pastor's Home Phone	323-7367
Dick Lakey, Director of Music	rlakey@stmarkswilliamsport.org	Harold Hershberger, President	322-0410
Sharon Comini, Christian Education	scomini@stmarkswilliamsport.org	Matt Fortin, Vice-President	435-0271
Bernadette Jones, Christian Education	bjones@stmarkswilliamsport.org	Nancy Larson, Council Secretary	322-1068
Susan M-Smith, Parish Secretary	smsmith@stmarkswilliamsport.org	Jackie Kinney, Treasurer	323-5980
Richard Wagner, Financial Secretary	rwagner@stmarkswilliamsport.org	Jane Larson, Stephen Ministry	323-2845
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Gary Weber, Website Administrator	gweber@stmarkswilliamsport.org		

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY NEWS

Lenten Midweek Series:

*Where we walk,
where Jesus walks*



Remember that Lenten events continue up to Holy Week.

Mar. 5, Wednesday in Lent IV
...in conflict
Acts 20:17-24 Matthew 15:1-8

Mar. 12, Wednesday in Lent V
...on the way of the cross
Philippians 2:14-17 Luke 18:31-34

Mar. 19, Wednesday in Holy Week
...in the meal of the covenant
Exodus 12 Luke 22:7-20

Each Wednesday:

Mid-day Services

11:40 Mid-Day Prayers in the Chapel
12:00 Pot-luck lunch with meat entree provided.
12:30 study-time

Evening Services

6:15 Pot-luck supper with meat entree provided.
6:50 study-time
7:30 Evening Prayer in the chapel.



Easter Egg Hunt & Breakfast with the



On grumpy days, we might question the utility of it all, so let's simply call our Easter Egg hunt an excuse for fun. The kids enjoy scrambling around the courtyard each year on Holy Saturday looking for those plastic eggs filled with all sorts of treats...some of them edible. But first, they gather for a quick breakfast with the Pastor at 9:45 and hear again the more important reasons that we get together at this time of year:

**Please
R.S.V.P.
to the**

that no en-
beat up on
even



emy can
Jesus, not
death.

**March 22nd
9:45 A.M.
Toddlers**

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY NEWS



Individual Confession and Forgiveness

Opportunity for the office of Individual Confession and Forgiveness is available to members of the parish at any time by appointment with the Pastor. The Order is located on page 196-197 in the *Lutheran Book of Worship*.

Wedding Anniversary Milestone



On May 4 we will be celebrating the wedding anniversary milestone with 6 couples who have been married more than 50 years. This year the couples to be honored are : Lawrence & Catherine Lundy, Cecil & Kathryn Calvert, William & Marion Waldeisen, Charles & Ruth Ditchfield, Theodore & Jane Larson and Arthur & Jane Kline. If a couple has been missed in this or one of our earlier celebrations, by all means let the office know right away so that the proper invitations and plans can be formulated. We don't want to

Easter Flowers



We continue our custom of enjoying flowers at the Easter festival.

Please use the envelope attached to the newsletter or bulletin and make your selection before the deadline of March 16.

There is also the option of giving a memorial gift of money for World Hunger or other causes.

Please fill out your intentions care-

Trip for Confirmands and Others, too!

Catechetical students, parents, sponsors, and any other interested youth or adult is welcome to take part in the trip this year planned for Saturday, March 15.

We will be going to Gettysburg PA, and a key part of the trip will be time at the Lutheran Theological Seminary there. Our hosts will be Matt and Lisa Schuster, the seminarians who visited with us on various occasions over the past several years, and whom we have assisted financially. They are seniors this year and have been approved for ordination upon completion of their studies in May.

We also plan some time on the battlefield, etc. in Gettysburg. All those interested may contact Bernadette Jones at the church office to make reservation.



New Windsor Trip

Everyone has read about the trip to New Windsor over the past 12 years, but not many have taken the step of signing up and traveling with a bus-group from all around the area to that depot for items to help persons in need all around the world. Let this be the year that many more send their checks for \$30 for bus and lunch to the church office for forwarding on to the trip-organizers before the April 1 deadline. The trip this year will be on Wednesday April 16. We leave from the church lot at

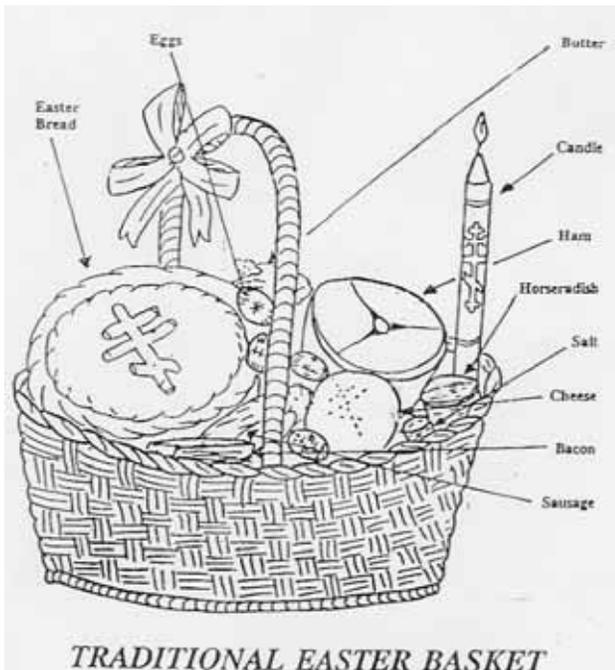
Carl Hieber Mission Trip

By the time this is read, Carl Hieber will already be on his way to Africa to assist in a medical mission there for the next several weeks. He has seen first-hand just how overwhelming the needs are in those lands, and how much the efforts of the dentist which he assists are appreciated. He asks that we continue to remember him and his fellow-workers in prayer throughout the time of his travels. We look forward to hearing about those adventures in May and June.



CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY NEWS

Orthodox Easter Basket



Each year a few persons have prepared an Easter basket of a different sort, one which contains the various foods that will become part of the feast on Easter day. We set these baskets apart with prayer at the close of the Easter Vigil service.

Any person who would like to take part in the custom may get a list from the Pastor of the typical items to be included in the basket.

The custom developed over the centuries especially in the orthodox countries of eastern Europe, but has since spread widely.

Nurse's Notes

- March 2** **Video games are not all bad ...** the video game, *Dance Dance Revolution* allows you to burn up to 270 calories in a half-hour session – equivalent to a fast walk or jog. Getting to the highest level could allow you to burn 400 calories in 45 minutes as you match your footwork to the on-screen prompts. (*Prevention*, March 2008, pg. 106.)
- March 9** Have you switched to using those funny-looking, corkscrew shaped compact fluorescent bulbs yet? They use up to 75% less energy than traditional bulbs, and appear to last longer as well. What you may not know is that the bulbs contain an average of 5 milligrams of mercury (about the size of a ballpoint pen tip). Mercury is a hazardous substance, so use caution when discarding used or broken bulbs. Check with your closest municipal landfill regarding disposal, or the EPA at www.energystar.gov/ia/partners/promotions/changelight/downloads/FactSheetMercury.pdf. To date, the only recycling site is the retailer, IKEA.
- March 16** Hosting the Easter dinner this year? Check out the lower calorie versions of traditional foods at <http://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/guide/health-cooking-easter-passover-recipes> (even green bean casserole!).
- March 23** We have received the gift of grace through Christ, who came that we might have abundant life, and it is only through this gift that we can begin to experience true health and wholeness – in body, mind and spirit. In your prayer time, ask for God's guidance and wisdom in addressing the things that stand in your way of achieving balance, health and wholeness. Easter blessings!
- March 30** Still tempted by Easter candy ... those jelly beans in the bottom of the basket ...? One small jelly bean contains 4 calories – 100% carbohydrate (just over 2 grams). You will need to walk for one minute to burn off the calories consumed in one bean. At that rate, you may want to eat them “on the run”!

Social Ministry News

Habitat for Humanity Update



The Social Ministry Committee with help from the congregation served its third luncheon in nine months to a group of twenty-five to thirty volunteers on February 2, 2008. Habitat for Humanity continues to renovate the former R&J Ertel building on Ly-

coming Street into offices, warehouse space and a store for building materials.

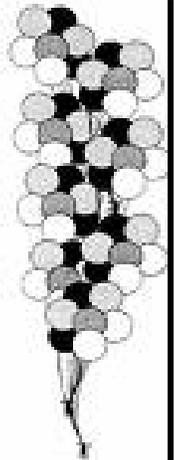
A special thanks is given to Shirley and Jackie Kinney, Mary Schultz, Elsie Sechler, Todd Smith, and Jane Zimmerer for providing luncheon items and serving the volunteers. A special thank you is also given to the members of the congregation who provided monetary support to offset the cost of the B-B-Q.

We were very well received and asked to return on another date of our choice. Please speak with Becky Miller Pryor to plan our next luncheon in late spring/early summer.

It's Party Time!

For more than thirty years we have hosted a Christmas party for the residents of the Selinsgrove Center. This good work will continue. But the Social Ministry Committee wishes to reach out to some folks closer to home. Our first venture will be to entertain the residents of Rose View Court on Wednesday, April 9, 2008 at 6:30 p.m.

We are looking for folks of any age to help with the entertaining. Do you sing, play an instrument or read poetry? The



Clothing Sale April 19, 2008

We need your good, clean clothing from all seasons and in all sizes from infant to adult for our Spring Clothing Sale. We are also accepting shoes, suits, coats, belts, pocketbooks and clothing accessories.

Your donations may be placed in the Bazaar Room.

This event qualifies for matching fund from Thrivent! And any clothing not sold will be donated to charities within our community.

Contact Shirley Hill or Becky Miller Pryor with questions, suggestions or to volunteer to help set up April 16th through April 18th or to help the day of the sale.



Missionary Musings & Requests for Prayer

From Pr. Ron Shellhamer:

Last June Pr. Ron Shellhamer of Shamokin walked onto the stage at our Upper Susquehanna Synod Assembly and was greeted with a call to serve as a missionary in Liberia. There continue to be significant dangers in such an undertaking, and we need to remember him and his family in our prayers. Here follows a portion of his first letter to us:

As I begin God's time of service in Liberia, I send you greetings from the village of Totota, a Liberian city of 5,000 residents. Totota is located in the tropical rainforest of Liberia's interior. The 3 hour drive along one of the main roads which leads out of the coastal capital of Monrovia is about 70 miles in length. Travel in Liberia can be hard and difficult as many of the two lane roads are unpaved. Even the ones that are paved often have potholes which lead to inevitable travel delays.

It is on the sprawling Totota campus where two soccer fields fill the landscape with children and teens playing and residential homes lining the periphery that the Louis T. Bowers Lay Leaders and Minister's Training Center received a fresh start in January, 2006. New curriculums offer diverse residential courses and outreach programs. The Center is a community based facility which is open to various groups for study and retreat.

Through a joint partnership between The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria (BLCB), the Danish Evangelical Mission (DEM), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), and through the cooperative invitation of the Lutheran Church in Liberia (LCL), my arrival included warm greetings from the current class of 38 Deaconesses, Deacons and Lay Evangelists who were in session at the time. As I joined in the lecture series, as their new teacher, areas of study at The Center include Biblical Interpretation, Lutheran Theology and Doctrine, Lutheran Liturgy along with an assorted array of other courses (i.e.: Preaching and Sermon Preparation).

In Liberian culture and tradition it is customary that when a guest arrives, one is greeted with the same warmth and generosity as we might greet a loved one or friend who travels from afar to be reunited in family. I was greeted with like gestures of hospitality and welcome. The Liberian people are very intentional about this.

From Carl Hieber:

As Carl Hieber is participating in the dental mission to Tanzania, we can assist with prayer. Here is a summary of the prayer requests. Full details are posted on the office hallway bulletin board, and on-line at our website, stmarkswilliamsport.org.

- Wed. 2/27 Safe travel as the team of seven leave Dulles for Zurich.
- Thurs. 2/28 Safe travel as the team flies from Zurich to Dar es Salaam.
- Fri. 2/29 Organizing supplies and equipment, meeting local missionary partner, and traveling 5 hours by public bus.
- Sat. 3/01 A safe and effective first day of clinic in Pande, an area where AIS is prevalent.
- Sun. 3/02 For worship here at home some hours after Carl & the missionary group have worshiped with the Digo people.
They have clinic in the afternoon.
- Mon. 3/03 Pain and suffering are relieved for the many patients in clinic.
- Tues. 3/04 Nurses will be welcomed in local schools to demonstrate good tooth brushing techniques & give out toothbrushes.
- Wed. 3/05 The most critical patients will be helped in this final day of clinic.
- Thurs. 3/06 Remaining missionaries are courageous & bold in Jesus' name to work where the team may have opened doors.
- Fri. 3/07 Part of the team will set up an effective clinic with the Zamoro tribe to do extractions.
- Sat. 3/08 The many exams the team does today will help them to plan their time well in clinic tomorrow.
- Sun. 3/09 Remember the team in worship many hours after they have praised God also. In their clinic today they will be doing some restorations as well as extractions.
- Mon. 3/10 For endurance as the team begins a full week of clinic.
- Tues. 3/11 The team becomes by their example and mercy effective ambassadors for Christ.
- Wed. 3/12 For the health and safety of all the team members.
- Thurs. 3/13 That equipment continues to function and supplies are adequate.
- Fri. 3/14 Post-treatment of patients is completed, and packing is speedy.
- Sat. 3/15 Safe travel from Dar es Salaam, Zurich, and Dulles, arriving home late in the evening.



ELCA, SYNOD & WEST BRANCH NEWS

Immersion and Competitive Mini Grants for College Students

Sponsored by a grant from the Lilly Foundation through Project Connect, a number of Immersion and Competitive Mini Grants are available to college students by application for this summer and the next school year. Immersion and Competitive Mini Grants are for 10 weeks in the summer at 40 hours per week or 40 weeks during the academic year at 10 hours per week. Both are carried out in a congregation under the supervision of the pastor. The purpose of these grants is to help the student further discern his / her sense of call by actively engaging in ministry. Immersion provide an opportunity to experience the day to day life of a congregation as a pastor experiences it. By being involved in an Immersion you are getting to know first hand about the life of a parish pastor. Project Connect provides you with a stipend of \$2,500.

Competitive Mini Grants allow students to design a special project that will take place within a congregation and ultimately help the congregation grow. Amounts of up to \$5,000 can be awarded with up to \$2,500 that can be designated for the student.

Applications and more information are available at www.projectconnect.org. First Deadline February 1, 2008. Second deadline date April 10, 2008.

Volunteer Opportunities at Buffalo Valley Lutheran Village

Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries is pleased to announce the arrival of Hospice St. John to our campus at Buffalo Valley Lutheran Village. The folks at BV would like to invite individuals who may be interested in volunteer opportunities within the senior living center or the new hospice program to an Open House on Wed. March 12 (snow date of Mar. 19) from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. The open house will be held in the lobby of the Nursing Care Center. Questions? Contact either Emily Kerstetter at (570)524-2221 or Diakon Hospice St. John at (877) 438-3511.

Training dates for hospice volunteers will be Fridays, March 28, April 4, 11, and 18, 2008 from 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the BVLV Common. The contact person is Cathy Sweeney at (877)438-3511 or sweeneyc@diakon.org. Please consider becoming a volunteer for in this important service!

Lutheran Youth Day: Saturday, April 12, 2008

Plan now to attend this year's Lutheran Youth Day, sponsored by the Chaplain's Office at Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, Saturday, April 12. Last year's LYD was attended by more than 300 youth, advisors and rostered leaders.

The day includes large and small group gatherings, singing, worship, and a concluding concert. Registration deadline: April 3, 2008 Theme: "Go Fish." Cost: \$10 per person, includes lunch and concert by: A Bunch of Guys. Downloadable flyer, invitation letter, and registration forms are online at <http://www.susqu.edu/chaplain/lutheranyouth/> For more information contact: Nancy Musser, Administrative Assistant to the Chaplain, Susquehanna University, 514 University Avenue, Selinsgrove, PA 17870; (570) 372-4303; musser@susqu.edu.

Vocational Discernment Retreat for College Students

Young adults are thinking about what do with the rest of their lives, finishing college, maybe grad school or seminary, career, family, friends, church. How can they best serve God? What does God want from us? This retreat will help participants continue to figure out God's call for their lives. Held at Camp Nawakwa on March 28-29, for college students age 18-30. See registration form and information at www.projectconnet.org.

Thinking about Education

The ELCA church-wide Assembly last August adopted a Social Statement "Our Calling in Education." Topics within the statement include: What does God have to do with education? 2. What faith will our children have? 3. Will all children have access to high-quality education? 4. Will our church have schools and colleges? Will our schools and colleges have a church? 5. Will public higher education serve the common good? A copy of the Social Statement is available in the parish office.

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

Milestone Ministry



On Sunday February 3rd, St. Mark's gave out the "All the Languages of the Good News" milestone to those children in kindergarten here at St. Mark's. Gillian Buckman, Madalyn Fortin, Hannah Haussmann, Sean Jensen, Dylan Ott and Brandon Pelleschi were the recipients of the milestone. Some of the children and their families

enjoyed a tasty lunch in Fellowship Hall. During the event, the kids got to decorate their own bags and Pastor Elkin helped them "discover" the contents: an icon of Jesus as "The Good Shepherd," a CD of Christian music and several books. This milestone is a reminder that the St. Mark's congregation is a huge part of the **Passing on Faith** ministry. The bags may be used as a tool for nurturing faith in the home.

Passing on Faith: The Prayer Pillow, for our two-year-olds: Emma Elkin, Gabriella Gregory, Kathryn Haussmann, Lisa Rose Lewis, Gabriel Nichols and Abigail Robertson, marks the beginning of prayer within the family. This Milestone will be celebrated during the service on March 2, 2008. A get-together will be held on that Saturday, March 1. We will have conversation with the families on ways to make prayer a part of our daily lives with our children. A light lunch will be served at that time, followed by conversation in Fellowship Hall.

REMINDER:

Blessing of the Keys: We have a special milestone celebration for the youth in our congregation who attain their junior driver's licenses. It's a meaningful observance, during which the new driver gives up something from his or her childhood in exchange for the new responsibility of driving. We have also developed a means of recognition for those drivers receiving their senior license. **BUT YOU NEED TO TELL US WHO SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED!!**

Since different families have different timetables for these events, we can't just refer to the church register for the information. We have no idea which youth are reaching this important milestone in their lives—unless you tell us!! Please let the church know if your child has recently received a junior or senior license as soon as possible. A date for celebration will be set once we know who these special teens are. **PLEASE CALL US!!**



MOUNT LUTHER Spring Brunch Fundraiser

Sunday, April 27, 2008
11:00 a.m. to 2:00

Come to Mount Luther for our popular brunch made by Chef Carol Segraves. You can enjoy fellowship with others, good food (all-you-can eat!) and even take a walk on our grounds. The fundraiser benefits the camp's general operating fund.

Price: \$9.50 for Adults
\$4.50 for Children under 12

Tickets are available by contacting the camp office.
Deadline for ordering tickets is Friday, April 18.
A limited number of walk-ins will be available.

CAMP MOUNT LUTHER

355 Mt. Luther Lane
Mifflinburg, PA 17855

Phone: (570) 922-1587

Fax: (570) 922-1118

E-Mail: cml@campmountluther.org



Upcoming Milestone Calendar

March 2 and 9

Blessing of Affirmers

March 22

Affirmation of Baptism

May 4

Wedding Anniversary

May 11

Sending our members of *The Way*
with prayers for their Christian Vocation

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY



Give kids the ticket to adventure! This exciting event is based on Joshua 24:15, "Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve." Each day, kids will learn from various people in the Bible what it means to choose Jesus as their Savior. A great time is a good way to reinforce learning as the children have a blast playing fun games, singing, crafting and enjoying park-themed snacks!

June 8th -12th, make SonWorld Adventure Park your destination: where fun and faith combine to make memories that last a lifetime!



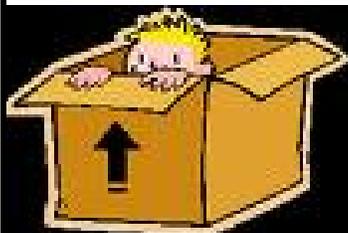
A NEW WAY YOU CAN HELP US FOR VBS!



In an effort to avoid last-minute preparations and Sharon and Bernadette wearing themselves out the week *before* VBS, we have planned three workdays for the construction and painting of theme pieces for "SonWorld."

On alternate Saturdays beginning April 12 (then Apr. 26 and May 10), we will be working from 10:00 a.m. until noon or 1:00.

So if you have any artistic talent, can wield a mean utility knife, paint a solid base coat, or just be able to keep the coffee coming—please join us on one or all of these Saturdays to prepare for the opening of "SonWorld."



If you have access to any large-appliance boxes, the donation of same would be greatly appreciated!

**Spring
Open
House**



Are you a little concerned about your first camp experience? Never been to Mount Luther and have heard so much about it? Come to Camp Mount Luther for an enjoyable afternoon. Guests can learn all about our Summer Program and take a guided tour of camp.

**Sunday
April 27, 2008
2:00 pm-4:00 pm**



CAMP MOUNT LUTHER

355 Mt. Luther Lane
Mifflinburg, PA 17855

Phone: (570) 922-1587
Fax: (570) 922-1118

E-Mail: cml@campmountluther.org

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

Thank You!

St Marks Lutheran Church

raised:

\$31.00 and 146 non-perishables

Thanks to your efforts this year, more dollars have been raised, more lives have been changed and the entire community has seen the good that happens when we all work together to help those in need. Together, we are transforming Super Bowl weekend into an unprecedented time of giving and serving.



FEBRUARY 3, 2008

Brad Smith

Rev. Dr. Brad Smith
Founder/Executive Director
The Super Bowl of Caring

Pysanky!!

Learn how to dye these beautiful eggs!

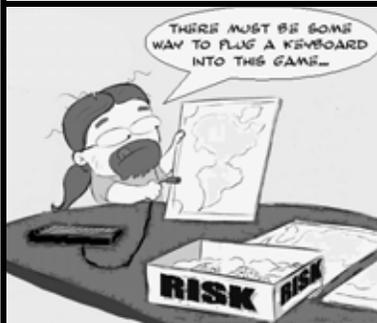


Bernadette will be having a workshop on the art of Ukranian egg-dyeing from 6:30-8:30, Tuesday evening, March 18. Learn this or the American form of egg decoration in which the eggs are "dyeed" by cooking them in onion skins or cabbage leaves, then scratching out a design. Due to some of the tools being used, attendance is limited to adults or older youth. If you are interested, call or e-mail her at the office.

Senior High Adventure Day in Bloomsburg for grades 9-12 will be May 3, 2008. Find out what Camp Mount Luther is like at the Spring Open House on Sunday, April 27, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Go early and enjoy the Spring Brunch Fundraiser, where they will have an all-you-can-eat buffet which includes: ham, sausage, home fries, scrambled eggs, cheese strata, fruit salad, juices, pastries, coffee cake, chicken noodle soup, coffee and tea.



Booklets for the programs this year are available in the staff hallway. More information is on other pages—get these dates on your calendars now!



Fun Night March

So--do you like to play games? Do you just like to sit and kibitz? Come on down!! Bring your favorite game, snack and enthusiasm to Fellowship Hall on March 28. What's that? You don't have any games to bring??

C'mon down anyway!!

REMEMBER:

**IF YOU DON'T DRIVE AT NIGHT OR DON'T WANT TO COME ALONE—
DON'T LET THAT STOP YOU!!!!**

WE WILL PROVIDE A RIDE FOR ANY WHO WOULD LIKE ONE!

Check it out—6:30 p.m., Friday, March 28!

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

St. Mark's Lions

Our athletes have been playing great games with lots of fantastic teamwork! Our coaches have been awesome in the guidance of these young players. Our Beginners had a blast—especially with nets they could shoot at (the league lowered them to 8' this year)! We're building a great bench for next year! In the older team, players are working together very well on the court. All-in-all, we have a fantastic group of kids representing us!!

We enjoyed a celebratory party for February 19, at 6 p.m., at Trinity: pizza and snacks, games and awards. Contributions toward the refreshments and awards were gratefully accepted. These special youth and their coaches were recognized at service on Sunday, February 17.

When you see any of these players or their coaches, please congratulate them on their dedication and good sportsmanship. These kids and their leaders did an awesome job and were a joy to watch. They are:

Beginner Pee Wees:

Liam Breasette
 Makensi Doebler
 Dylan Garbrick
 Hannah Hausmann
 Kara Hershey
 Sean Jensen
 Dawson Owen
 Brandon Pelleschi
 Lynna Robertson
 Cody Shimp
 Annika Waffenschmidt

Coaches:

Rick Robertson
 Kirk Owen
 Jeff Hershey



Midgets:

Stephen Boone
 Morgan Comini
 Jarrett Eyer
 Brett Garbrick
 Alex Haefner
 Theoron Hershey
 Corey Hospes
 Max Hospes
 Devin Owen
 Dustin Pelleschi
 Trenton Ventrello

Special note: We wish to thank Rick Robertson for his six years of service as the head coach for our teams. We would not have had a program without him. We welcome Kirk Owen as the

Lunch N' Fellowship resumes Wednesday, April 16th

In the interim during the Lenten period please join us for Wednesday Mid-day prayer in the Chapel (11:40 a.m.), lunch & a time of study or Dinner (6:15 p.m.), a time of study and Evening prayer in the Nave.

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY



Check out the new bulletin board displays in the staff hallway!

Information about this year's VBS, along with a very special display from the catechetical class has been put up.

During the past month, the students and their mentors have been bringing in documentation and mementos from their Baptisms. In some cases, we had to send for verifications. But, in due course, they were received and our bulletin board is ready for your viewing.

The display shows how Baptism unites all of us in God's family. Through sacrament, tradition, and familial and congregational ties, we are all one.

As you view the bulletin board, take a moment to reflect on your own Baptism and, maybe, share those memories with those around you.

A youth event for grades 9-12 of the Upper Susquehanna Synod—Youth



Senior High Adventure Day!

Saturday, May 3, 2008

10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Bloomsburg University's Quest

Cost: \$25

Where can YOU . . . test your endurance?

... challenge your skills?

... soar to new heights?

... learn the essentials of team work?

*Find out at the Senior High Adventure Day on the Quest
high ropes course at Bloomsburg University!*

(last year we conquered the climbing wall—this year we will go up to the high ropes course)

SEE BERNADETTE FOR REGISTRATION FORMS ASAP.

PRE-REGISTRATION BY APRIL 7 IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY!



CHILDREN'S CHURCH

will be held on Sunday, March 9, 2008, at 10:30 a.m., in
the Chapel.

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

ANNUAL WINTER 6TH-8TH GRADE RETREAT AT CAMP MOUNT LUTHER

Sara Jones, Christina Comini and **Stephen Boone** attended this annual retreat on February 1 & 2, along with **Sharon, Bernadette** and **Bob**.



They met a lot of new friends, got really cold, got really warm (especially the top bunk), and participated in several small groups and worship services. The theme of the weekend was Baptism: Dead to sin/New Life in Christ. Sessions were held on finding Baptism themes in media, making of soap, vocation and several small group discussions. The bonfire on Friday night was cancelled due to rain and ice, but after the evening service, we all met in Maple Lodge for snacks and fellowship until bedtime. In addition to the evening service, there was a service Saturday morning, a lot of singing, and a final service with Communion before we left.



A Simple Choice, A Generous Choice

Often we talk about giving thankfully. The subject today is about giving regularly. *Simply Giving* is a way for us to give our offerings by using electronic funds transfer. Many people are already having withdrawals from a checking or savings account to cover mortgage or utility payments. Now our thankful gifts to God through the church can be regular and "off the top".

There is no cost to individuals or the church. Our friends at Thrivent Financial for Lutherans are picking up all the costs associated with it. We do not have to write a series of checks throughout the year. And we do not have to wonder where we put our offering envelopes each week.

We do not have to have special arrangements with our banks; Thrivent will take care of paperwork for us. Each family that wishes to participate will fill out a single form and attach a voided check. The form will ask the amount the individual or family would like to contribute, and at what interval: weekly, bi-monthly or whatever. As soon as Thrivent processes the paperwork, enrollment can begin.

One of the questions that has arisen about the program is this: What happens when the offering plate comes past me on Sunday morning? Two possibilities: (1) We might use a special envelope and give an additional offering for a special purpose or (2) A new edition of our pew card will soon be printed which will say "Look for my offering through *Simply Giving*." Check that line, add your name, place the card in the offering plate. The money counters will get the card and then check the list that the treasurer will receive each week from Thrivent. Thus each of us can have something to put into the offering plate, and the counters will have a double-check on their work.

Enrollment forms will be available shortly. Richard Wagner, our financial secretary, will be delighted to answer questions about the process, and he will be handling enrollment. Call him at 323-4619



BIRTHDAYS

Ruth U. Pile	03/01	Aletha Swartz	03/13	Alan Zimmerer	03/17
Richard Hafer Jr.	03/03	Kimberly Caster	03/15	Diana Davenport	03/18
Jessica Curry	03/04	Roxanna Larson	03/15	Beatrice Doebler	03/21
Trisha Harvey	03/05			Randy Lukens	03/21
Barbara Switzer	03/05			Christopher Hoagland	03/23
Pamela Lehman	03/06			Gary Weber	03/24
Robert Shaible	03/06			Nancy Bohartz	03/25
William Hibschman	03/08			Sara Larson	03/25
Rose Marie Hafer	03/09			Jonathan Bower	03/27
Robert Lynn	03/09			Raymond Stiller	03/27
Patricia Thayer	03/09	Eileen Georg	03/16	Sandra Edler	03/28
Beulah Wrede	03/09	Dinah Labenberg	03/16	Tyler Bower	03/29
Mason Peluso	03/10	Hannah Lynn	03/16	April Hartzel	03/29
Michael Kinney	03/11	Henrietta Tyson	03/17	Carl Hieber	03/29



ANNIVERSARIES



Ralph & Elda Zeigler Sr.	03/01
Gary & Donna Clark	03/06
Kenneth & Lois Winters-Goldy	03/19

Special Thank You's

Dear Friends at St. Mark's Lutheran Church:

We would like to thank you for your recent donation of stuffed animals to the *ywca Wise Options* program.

Wise Options provides numerous services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and other violent crimes. Some of these services are a 24/7 hotline, emergency shelter; help with protection orders, accompaniment and advocacy with the legal system and counseling.

As a non-profit organization, we rely heavily on donations in running our many programs. Because of you and people like you, it is possible for us to offer the kind of services our clients need.

Sincerely,
Diane Glenwright, Executive Director &
Deborah Shivetts, Director of Wise Options



Little things can mean a lot!

Here is a sample:

St. Mark's Lutheran Church
Mr. Frank Vognet, Usher

Dear Sir,

Last year I attended Good Friday service at your church & was handed a wooden cross necklace upon arrival, leaving my husband, Bill at home, with lung cancer.

When I came home, I gave him that cross. Little did I know then, how much he would treasure it and wear it faithfully. He only removed it to bathe.

This last year he suffered so much, but he always took time to talk to the Lord. I knew that your cross would go with him when he passed.

Bill was laid to rest on Tuesday, January 29th and he was wearing that simple, but beautiful, wooden cross. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Jean Welty



Special Thank You's

Dear Shirley & Women of St. Mark's,

I cannot begin to thank you enough for helping me with buying sweat suits for Head Start children at the Becht Center. Every year when I receive the requests from Head Start, I start to panic about clothing 276 little ones, despite my bargain shopping the past winter. This year was no different. I was shocked by the number of size three and size four sweat suits I needed and how much more money I would need to find to fill the requests.

For the 276 Head Start children, you helped provide 26 coats, 35 pairs of shoes and 1,096 articles of new clothing! Every child receiving a sweat suit received additional donations, of T-shirts, socks, underwear and Jesco sports wear. We were blessed to receive those items as donations, thus stretching our budget. Those children receiving a coat or shoes also received similar donations of clothing or accessories,. On an average, every Head Start child received four or five articles of new clothing.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your interest and assistance on behalf of my favorite non-church charity, the Newberry Branch of the NGA. Please consider continuing your support.
Fondly, Becky Miller-Pryor

Dear Pastor Elkin,

Thank you so much for sharing the story of Baby Jesus with us.

Love, The Little Lambs

Dear friends at St. Mark's.

Thank you for your generous donations of baby things. Our clients are thrilled to receive them. You are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely, Darleen D., volunteer

We would like to thank the members of the congregation for their gracious gifts over the past months including bread and soup, flowers, pork and sauerkraut, cookies, and other gestures of comfort and support.

~ Bob and Anne Miller

Dear friends at St. Mark's Lutheran Church,

PVS General Secretary Eric Corson has informed me that you have made a donation of \$37.50 to Prisoner Visitation and Support (PVS).

Today, because of laws passed in the mid-1980's by Congressmen who did not want to be considered 'soft on crime', our country is first in the world in the number of it's citizens it incarcerates and it has 16 federal prisons and hundreds of state and county prisons.

The prisoners I visit, today, at FCI Danbury are women. Many of the women are in prison because their male partners sold drugs and the women just happened to be too close. Most of their sentences are for eight years or more—eight years when their children are in their formative years, growing up without either parent on the scene. When the women are arrested, they must hastily arrange for the care of their children by someone from their family or friends who can take them in. The federal government does not help.

These women need friends-not connected with the prison-with whom they can share what is in their hearts. That is what PVC does. We provide a friend for a heartsick prisoner to talk with.

Thank you for your generous donation to help PVS find additional volunteer visitors and to support them with the proper training to do their visiting.

Sincerely Yours, Betty Woodman, PVS Visitor

Dear Friends at St. Mark's Lutheran Church,

Your recent \$31 donation to the Shepherd of the Streets Ministry on February 21st is deeply appreciated, as is the gift of calendars and blankets you provided on February 11th. Your gift of love is the spark needed for the candle to burn brighter in the hearts of those walking a difficult road. May the Lord shine brightly in all you say and do.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,
J. Morris Smith, Th. D.

“A thoughtful act or a kind word may pass in a moment, but the warmth and care behind it stay in the heart forever”.

**Dear Pastor Elkin and Congregation,
Thank you very much for the soup, flowers and cookies ~ it was much appreciated.**

Bless You all, Beulah Wrede

HEALTH, HEALING & WHOLENESS

Throughout Chapters 7-12 of the book of Exodus, we hear repeatedly how the Pharaoh's heart was hardened by his own will, and on occasion at God's behest. His anger and spitefulness toward the Israelites cost him dearly, in land, water, crops, livestock, citizens, an army, even innocent children. So it was with great interest that I read an August article released by the National Institute of Health regarding the link between hostility and anger and chronic inflammation (www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/print/news/fullstory_52995.html).

For a number of years, scientists have been studying the role of inflammation in the development of heart disease. Though not being able to pinpoint the exact cause, we have known for a while, that those people who are under a great deal of stress and/or who were chronically anxious had an increased likelihood of developing heart disease – in fact we attached the label of *Type A Personality* to them. There may be a reason.

Typically the word inflammation conjures up images of healing wounds, sore throats, or arthritic joints, not heart disease. However there is increasing evidence that chronic inflammation of the lining of blood vessels has a great deal of influence on whether or not patients develop atherosclerosis, perhaps better known in layman's terms as "hardening of the arteries". Hardened arteries can no longer respond to changes in blood pressure, narrow the opening in blood vessels and can lead to memory problems, dementia, stroke, angina or heart attack.

Risk factors such as high blood pressure, obesity, smoking, high cholesterol and recently identified rheumatoid arthritis (www.johnshopkinshealthalerts.com, January 28, 2008), periodontal disease (infection of the gums), and now anger and hostility, appear to initiate a chain reaction within the lining of our blood vessels. Upsetting normal cell function, inflammation, in turn, leads to the production of immune cells that are released to the areas of vessel irritation. Much as they would in fighting off a skin infection, these cells then accumulate in an attempt to heal the damage. Instead these helper cells attract deposits of cholesterol, platelets, and calcium, all clumping together to form a hard substance called plaque. The plaque buildup is what leads to the inevitable narrowing and hardening of the blood vessels. If the plaque ruptures, clots may develop and migrate to the heart or brain causing stroke or heart attack.

There is much more that science has yet to learn about the inflammation process, however in the mean-time, there are some concrete things you can do to lessen the effects of chronic inflammation on your body:

- ♥ stop smoking (your own as well as those around you); watch your weight; get moving/exercise; lower your blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar
- ♥ care for your teeth and gums with regular brushing and regular exams
- ♥ dietary changes – cut out trans fats and saturated fats and replace with olive oil and omega-3 fats from fish; cut way back on refined carbohydrates (white bread, white rice, French fries, sugar laden sodas, etc.); increase your intake of fruit and vegetables; add nuts seeds to your diet; eat dark chocolate (low-fat, low sugar however!); add spices such as turmeric, ginger, garlic, basil and pepper to recipes (these and others have anti-inflammatory properties) (www.health.harvard.edu, *HEALTHbeat*, August 14, 2007)

And finally, as in the case of Pharaoh,

- ♥ reduce your stress (often self-imposed) and reign in anger & hostility by working with your pastor or a trained therapist.

Spring Blessings!

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

SPECIAL CONCERNS LIST

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Edith Anderson
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1900 Ravine Road
Williamsport, PA 17701

Nancy Bohartz
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Williamsport, PA 17701

Doris Brownlee
Fulmer's Personal Care Home
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Lock Haven, PA 17745

Ethel Chambers
1129 East Third Street
Williamsport, PA 17701

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Hills Grove, PA 18619-9300

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Mary Helen Scinicarello
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Eleanor Sobers
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Beulah Wrede
Faxon Commons,
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Williamsport, PA 17701

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

St. Mark's Calendar of Events

March 1 12:00 pm – Prayer Pillow Milestone	Saturday	6:45 pm—Adult Handbells 7:00 pm—Civic Chorus	9:00 am—Morning Prayer 12:00 pm – Holy Communion Chapel 7:30 pm – Holy Communion Nave
March 2 <i>Blessing of The Way II</i> 8:00 am—Holy Communion 9:15 am—Sunday School 10:30 am—Holy Communion & Prayer Pillow Milestone 11:45 am – Nominating Committee 4:00 pm – <i>The Way</i>	Fourth Sunday in Lent	March 11 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 10:00 am—Conference Pastors 12:00 pm—Lutheran Shared Min 6:30 pm—Egg Decorating.	Good Friday 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 12:00 pm – 3:00 pm – Community Service 7:30 pm – Tenebrae Service
March 3 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:30 am – Little Lambs Mtg. 3:30 pm – PVC Recorders 6:45 pm—Adult Handbells 7:00 pm – Civic Chorus	Monday	March 12 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:15 am—Staff Mtg. & Quilting 11:40 am—Mid-Day Prayer 12:00 pm—Lenten Lunch 12:30 pm—Lenten Study 4:30 pm – Executive Committee 6:15 pm—Lenten Supper 6:55 pm—Lenten Study 7:30 pm—Evening Prayer Chapel	March 21 9:45 am—Easter Breakfast & Egg Hunt with Pastor 8:00 pm – Great Vigil of Easter
March 4 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 7:00 pm – Worship & Music Mtg.	Tuesday	March 13 6:31 am—Men's Ministry 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 7:30 pm—Senior Choir	March 22 8:00 am—Holy Communion 9:15 am—Sunday School 10:30 am—Holy Communion
March 5 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:15 am—Staff Mtg. & Quilting 11:40 am—Mid-Day Prayer 12:00 pm—Lenten Lunch 12:30 pm—Lenten Study 6:15 pm—Lenten Supper 6:55 pm—Lenten Study 7:30 pm—Evening Prayer Chapel	Wednesday	March 14 9:00 am—Morning Prayer	March 23 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 6:45 pm—Adult Handbells 7:00 pm – Civic Chorus
March 6 6:31 am—Men's Ministry 8:00 am – Stephen Ministry I 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 5:00 pm – Stephen Ministry II 7:30 pm—Senior Choir	Thursday	March 15 6:00 am – Catechetical Trip 9:00 am Palm Crosses	March 24 Newsletter deadline 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 6:45 pm—Adult Handbells 7:00 pm – Civic Chorus
March 7 9:00 am—Morning Prayer	Friday	March 16 8:00 am—Holy Communion 9:15 am—Sunday School 10:30 am—Holy Communion 4:00 pm – <i>The Way</i> 6:00 pm – Catechetics	March 25 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 7:00 pm—Mutual Ministry
March 8	Saturday	March 17 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 6:45 pm—Adult Handbells 6:30 pm – Council Meeting 7:00 pm – Civic Chorus	March 26 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:15 am—Staff Mtg. & Quilting
March 9 <i>Blessing of The Way III</i> 8:00 am—Holy Communion 9:15 am—Sunday School 10:30 am—Holy Communion 10:30 am—Children's Church 4:00 pm— <i>The Way</i>	Fifth Sunday in Lent	March 18 9:00 am—Morning Prayer	March 27 6:31 am—Men's Ministry 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 5:00 pm – Stephen Ministry II 7:30 pm—Senior Choir
March 10 9:00 am—Morning Prayer	Monday	March 19 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:15 am—Staff Mtg. & Quilting 6:15 pm – Seder	March 28 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 9:15 am—Lion Crew 6:30 pm—Fun Night
		March 20 6:31 am—Men's Ministry	March 29
			March 30 8:00 am—Holy Communion 9:15 am—Sunday School 10:30 am—Holy Communion with Lyc. Coll. Choir
			March 31 9:00 am—Morning Prayer 6:45 pm—Adult Handbells

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WALK
with the
RISEN
LORD



MAUNDY THURSDAY

12 PM HOLY COMMUNION ~ CHAPEL
7:30 PM HOLY COMMUNION ~ NAVE

GOOD FRIDAY

12 PM ~ 3 PM COMMUNITY SERVICE
7:30 PM TENEBRAE SERVICE

SATURDAY

8 PM ~ GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER

EASTER SUNDAY

8 AM HOLY COMMUNION
10:30 AM HOLY COMMUNION