

ST. MARK'S MESSENGER

May 2016

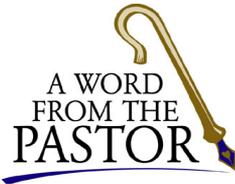
Valley, Nebraska

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402.359.2315

ST MARK'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH

from the pastor...



“ANXIETY AND FEAR are what we know best in this fantastic century of ours. Wars and rumors of wars. From civilization itself, to what seemed the most unalterable values of the past, everything is threatened or already in ruins. We have heard so much tragic news that when the news is *good* we cannot hear it.

But the proclamation of Easter Day is that *all is well*. And as a Christian, I say this not with the easy optimism of one who has never known a time when all was not well but as one who has faced the Cross in all its obscenity as well as in all its glory, who has known one way or another what it is like to live separated from God. In the end, his will, not ours, is done. Love is the victor. Death is not the end. The end is life. His life and our lives through him, in him. Existence has greater depths of beauty, mystery, and benediction than the wildest visionary has ever dared to dream. Christ our Lord has risen.”

by Frederick Buechner

(Originally published in *The Magnificent Defeat*)

He is Risen, indeed! Alleluia! What a joy it is to celebrate our first Easter in the midst of you at St. Mark's!

I like this reading above by Frederick Buechner (pronounced – Beekner) about Easter, and how our existence is deeper, more beautiful, and more mysterious than even our wildest expectations. *That* is our God-and God is greater and more wonderful than we can even imagine! Easter reminds us of this deep surprise!

Christ, risen from the tomb has destroyed the hold death has on us. We need no longer fear death, for it is no longer eternal, but

temporary. Because of Christ's victory, during the Church season of Easter which is the next 6 weeks, we will stand when we receive communion at the altar. Our bodies, by standing, will *also* bespeak the news that Christ is risen, and that we are participating in a meal that is a foretaste of the feast to come. A feast of victory of life over death, of love and forgiveness over hate and sin.

This is a joyous season in the Church; one in which we raise our alleluia's again, remember our baptisms, and rejoice in Christ's presence with us, as we gather to worship each week. We rejoice in the signs of life and beauty around us, the reminders of God's deep truths embedded in nature.

We also rejoice with families in this next month as 6 children are confirmed and affirm their faith here at St. Mark's. They signal to us their readiness to be responsible for their faith and to begin to be active members of the church.

We also will rejoice with those who have children graduating from local high schools this month. The time has flown for parents; who may find they have feelings that are bittersweet over children graduating, growing up and in some cases, leaving home. Congratulations to the graduates!

In all these things, we recognize and rejoice in God's gifts, and God's goodness to us and can say with Frederick Buechner that 'all is indeed well'

May the joy of this Easter season be with you,

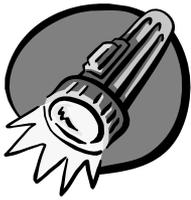
Pastor Barbara

from the PMA...

Cleansed

When plans were being made for the Maundy Thursday service, it was decided to include a foot washing during the reading of the Gospel. Since the symbol of the Parish Ministry Associate is the pitcher, basin and towel; it seemed only natural that I would be the “washer”. A member of the church council was selected to be the “washee”. A pitcher and basin were gathered from church members and the kitchen. Selecting the remaining object, the towel, had me concerned. It needed to look like it was from bible times. It couldn’t be decorative or made of manmade fibers. Jesus would never have used terry cloth or a microfiber towel! I eventually went to my stash of linens that belonged to my mother and grandmother. I was hoping to find a plain unused cotton tea towel. As I took the lid off of the storage container, I saw it. There on the top of the stack of linens was small linen table cloth. It was only about 20 inches square and from a distance it would certainly look like the towel I had in mind. I hesitated at first because this cloth was probably over 100 years old. It was never intended for washing feet, but then it was never intended to be kept in storage. Its purpose was to be used. Something (perhaps the Holy Spirit) told me to use this cloth. As I pressed it, I noticed several brown stains most likely from house plants placed on the cloth. If I folded it just right, no one would know. The pitcher, basin and towel were displayed by the lectern. All were used for the washing and I noticed how incredibly soft this linen cloth was. At the end of the service, I took it home and tossed it in the laundry. I took the precaution of putting it in a bag for delicates because of the fringe...didn’t want it to unravel and make a mess. It wasn’t until after it was washed and dried that I noticed something. All of the previous stains were gone. These stains that had been present for at least 40 years and probably longer were totally gone! Isn’t it just like God to take away our stains no matter the origin and no matter how long we have had them. It was when the cloth was used for God’s purpose that it became not only an instrument of cleansing but became cleansed itself. God has a purpose for you. He will use you to do marvelous things and unexpected ways.

Karen



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

**This is a synopsis of the Council meetings held in
March and April, 2017.**

March 21, 2017

- Since Pastor Barbara's arrival at St. Mark's, 13 new members have been received and she has presided at 4 baptisms.
- The Discipleship Recognition Fund has approved 4 recommendations.
- A new pictorial directory will be done beginning with portraits taken on April 11 and 12, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week. Sign up for the portraits will be on March 26, April 2 and April 5
- Evangelism plans to host a New Member Recognition Get-together for recent new additions to the St. Mark's family. The Church Council will also be invited to the occasion.
- A surveillance system will be purchased from Silverhammer Surveillance at a cost of \$2650. This was the lowest of 2 bids. The system will include 5 cameras inside and 3 cameras outside of the building. A video monitor, and doorbell that allows visibility of who is at the door is also included in the amount.
- The Sherron Fund assisted with the payment of a water bill.
- Payton Saathoff's Confirmation Project raised over \$500 for C.O.P.E.

April 18, 2017

- Pastor Barbara and Father Gnirk are planning a Joint Lutheran /Catholic Prayer Service commemorating Reformation. The service will be held on Sunday, May 21st at 4:00 p.m. at St. John's
- The new Pictorial Directory portraits are completed. The majority of members decided to use previous photos from last pictorial pictures.
- The Evangelism Committee is working on the 500th Reformation Celebration that will be on Sunday, October 8, 2017.
- There is no reduction in St. Mark's insurance rate unless the security system is monitor 24/7. The equipment that was installed is covered under our insurance with no additional premium.
- The lawn sprinkler system will be turned on in a week or so.
- The air conditioning has been turned on.
- There are new LED light in the narthex and the bathrooms.
- Bids will be gotten on the cost of tilling and sowing grass seen where the gophers have been.
- There was discussion and vote on summer services.



THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION
SUNDAY, MAY 7, 2017 – 10:30

A.M.

One of the stepping stones in the Lutheran faith is the Affirmation of Baptism, otherwise known as The Rite of Confirmation. St. Mark's is blessed to have six young people willing to take that step of affirming their own faith before God's altar. The

Christian Education Committee is delighted to announce the following people have completed and are ready to move forward in their walk:

Elly Kennec

daughter of Bill and Niccole Kennec

Morgan Kerwin

daughter of Jeremy and Jennifer Kerwin

Ethan Maline

son of Dan and Kathy Maline

Dillon Saathoff

son of Brent and Kristi Saathoff

Payton Saathoff

son of Brent and Kristi Saathoff

T J Smith

son of Mike Dye and Becky Ryckman

It is the hope and prayer of this congregation, these Confirmands will continue to keep learning and growing in their faith, find ways to serve in the name of Jesus, and commit themselves to regular worship among God's people.

Their *Faith Project Story Boards* will be on display in the Fellowship Hall, please take the time to view them. The Confirmands will be available by their boards on Sunday, May 7th following the service to answer any questions. They have worked hard throughout the past two years of Confirmation, please share your encouraging words with them.

All praise and glory to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit for continuing to raise up young believers and followers of Jesus. May the Spirit continue to guide them on their faith journey in the years ahead.

2017 GRADUATES

Listed below are the students who have graduated or who will graduate this year of 2017. CONGRATULATIONS on a job well done! The Seniors will be recognized on May 21st at the 10:30 service. If we have inadvertently omitted a name, we apologize.



HIGH SCHOOL

Jeffrey Allen

Lane Eggen

Nickolas Kahlandt

Mitchell Lopeman

COLLEGE GRADUATES

The church office is unaware of any college graduates. If you are graduating from college this year, please contact the church office and your name will be listed in the June newsletter.

A PRAYER FOR ST MARK'S COUNCIL

Creator God, give our leaders fresh inspiration to discover new ways to reach our communities with your message of grace. Amen.



NEW SUMMER WORSHIP TIME ANNOUNCED

Beginning in June, through August, St. Mark's will be going to a single Sunday worship time- 9:30 am. There will continue to be coffee and fellowship time after the service. While we try out this new schedule, it is hoped that folks from the early and late services will have a better

chance to become acquainted, that we will need less volunteers for the summer, and that it will be a more robust and better all-around worship experience for all! Please help us to make it a great summer, with good worship and the friendliness St. Mark's is known for.

The logo features the word "PRAYER" in a large, white, serif font above the word "SERVICE" in a smaller, white, serif font. Both words are centered within a dark brown rectangular background. The word "SERVICE" is flanked by two white, stylized arrow-like shapes pointing outwards.

PRAYER
SERVICE

SAVE THE DATE!! On May 21st, in honor of this 500th year since the Reformation, we are privileged to be participating in a Joint Catholic/Lutheran prayer service!

Where: St. John's Catholic Church-Valley

When: Sunday, May 21st at 4pm

Who: St. John's congregation, led by Father Lloyd Gnirk, and St. Mark's congregation, led by Pastor Barbara Oshlo

Please come and be a part of this historic event, as together we pray for peace, for our community, for forgiveness and for God's guidance into the future. We are blessed that we can pray together with our Catholic brothers and sisters in this community.

Come be blessed to participate in this service!



Upcoming Synod Events...

...PMA Retreat – April 28-29

...Reformation Prayer Service – May 1

...First Call Theological Conference – May 16-17

...Nebraska Synod Assembly – June 1-3

COPE's Corner

COPE Golf Tournament

2017 Annual COPE Classic Golf Tournament takes place on Friday, May 5, at Pacific Springs Golf Course.

Remember COPE in Omaha Gives24!

COPE is proud to be included in Omaha Gives24!

Omaha Gives24! is a 24-hour charitable challenge organized by the Omaha Community Foundation. The online giving holiday is Wednesday, May 24, from midnight to midnight.

Please mark your calendars because COPE's clients need your support. You can participate even if you do not live in Omaha.

How your gifts helps during Omaha Gives24! *Donate to COPE on May 24. *All monies donated assist in providing for the needs of those in our community. *Spread the word among your family and friends. *Learn more at www.omahagives24.org Click on GIVE NOW then in the NAME KEY BOX enter COPE, click on enter to view COPE's information and donate.

Easter Dinner Bags

The Western Douglas County Food Basket committee agreed to pay for Easter Dinner Bags for COPE families again this year. Food for 220 bags ordered from Hy-Vee, residents from Elk Ridge Village volunteered to pack the bags, Nancy and Jane distributed bags to families April 10 thru 14.

Family Fare Receipts

Direct Your Dollar Latest Information - Direct Your Dollars totals \$615 for February and \$616 for March, cumulative total (beginning December 2016) of \$3,829. Watch for April's totals, it already exceeds January totals. Thank you for your participation in collecting Family Fare receipts. Keep up the good work.

Volunteer

Message from COPE Website, "COPE consistently needs volunteers to sort clothes, help with the food pantry, assist with fund-raising events, or use your talents to help others. COPE is a volunteer-run organization, and without your help COPE would not be able to assist families, distribute food and bread, or get clothing to those in need."

Perhaps your heart is leading you to become a COPE volunteer, call 402.616.2330 and visit with Nancy or Jane.

Website

COPE's website www.copeinfo.org

Thank you for supporting COPE's vision of building relationships with families in Western Douglas County.

Bev Griffin

Volunteer and Board Representative

2017 MARCH MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

March Budget = \$18,361

March Expenses = \$18,550

March Giving = \$18,275

YEAR TO DATE FINANCIAL REPORT

January - March Budget = \$55,082

January - March Expenses = \$54,346

January - March Giving = \$49,586

End of year 2016 Balance in Savings = \$50,124

End of March 2017 Balance in Savings = \$50,124

End of March 2017 Balance in Checking = \$71,883*

*(including \$35,000 for the Worship Enhancement Design Plan)



Church Secretary, Jan Reis, is a **General Notary Public**. This service is available to the congregation at no charge.



* On Sunday, May 21st, "Mom" by Garth Brooks will be presented by the St. Mark-e-teers. Don't miss them!

MAY NEWS FOR WOMEN OF ST. MARK'S

FAITH CIRCLE NEWS

Faith Circle meets in **May on Tuesday the 2nd at 1:00 p.m.**
Please come and join us.

FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE NEWS

Our next meeting will be on **Monday, May 1st at 6:30.**
We will continue our Bible Study "Contagious Joy" (Chapter 4) with Karen King leading our Study and Marilyn serving as hostess. Please join us for our meeting.

JOY CIRCLE NEWS

Joy Circle will meet on **Sunday, May 7th at 9:15 a.m.** Please join us for Bible study and fellowship.

PEACE CIRCLE NEWS

Peace Circle meets again on **Tuesday, May 9th at 7:00 pm.**
All are welcome.

R.E.N.E.W.

Refueling- Energy- Needed- Every-Wednesday!

MEAL MENUS FOR May

May 3	Chicken Casserole; Salad; Dessert
May 10	Loose Meat Sandwiches; Salad; Chips

Congratulations to our Youth Leader, Hillary Fick, for being chosen to be on the Synod LYONs Leadership Team for 2017. We are proud of your leadership here and your leadership in the Nebraska Synod. Hillary will be attending different meetings and leadership events as part of her team. Please talk with Hillary if you have questions or to congratulate her.

Celebrating Wedding Anniversaries in May

Happy 10th Wedding Anniversary to Willard and Angela Cos on the 24th;
20th Wedding Anniversary to Shawn and Cheryl MacDonald on the 24th;
and 15th Wedding Anniversary to Mike and Barb Baker on the 31st!

NEW SOLDIER GROUP

Michael Woodall

US ARMY

Location: Iraq

Attn: Any Soldier

Representing: 34 Males

HHC, 2-325 AIR, 2 BCT, 82nd ABN DIV

Q West

APO AE 09351



We are a platoon of 34 gentlemen who despite their lack of daily showers and unique smells are pretty swell guys. We would like to request a few comforts of home to keep up morale. Our chow hall does not have enough food to provide every meal so our soldiers are eating MRE's but would love some other treats.

We are requesting:

Campbells micro soup/ Poptarts/ Micro Popcorn/ Chips (cans)/ Crackers/ Nuts/ Protein Bars/ Cookies/ Micro Mac n Cheese/ Lunch to go tuna/ Beefsticks/ Candy/ Baby Wipes/ Deodorant/ Shower Gel/ Toothbrushes/ Toothpaste/ Foot Powder

Pack & Pray ...Sunday, May 14th @ 9:20 am.

Postage funds are always appreciated.

Please pray for our soldiers and their families.

(APRIL REPORT: 6 boxes were sent to Iraq)



2017 LUTHERAN NIGHT

AT Werner Park

Celebrate the 500th Reformation with us!

2017 Lutheran Night tickets are now available for the Monday, June 5th game.

The special ticket rate this year is \$7 for group outfield box seats (\$13 value!) and \$11 for group infield box seats (\$15 value!) when purchased by May 31st. *(see the flyer posted in the bulletin board for more information)*

“Prayer of an Anonymous Abbess”

Lord, thou knowest better than myself that I am growing older and will soon be old. Keep me from becoming too talkative, and especially from the unfortunate habit of thinking that I must say something on every subject and at every opportunity.

Release me from the idea that I must straighten out other peoples' affairs. With my immense treasure of experience and wisdom, it seems a pity not to let everybody partake of it. But thou knowest, Lord, that in the end I will need a few friends.

Keep me from the recital of endless details; give me wings to get to the point.

Grant me the patience to listen to the complaints of others; help me to endure them with charity. But seal my lips on my own aches and pains—they increase with the increasing years and my inclination to recount them is also increasing.

I will not ask thee for improved memory, only for a little more humility and less self-assurance when my own memory doesn't agree with that of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be wrong.

Keep me reasonably gentle. I do not have the ambition to become a saint—it is so hard to live with some of them—but a harsh old person is one of the devil's masterpieces.

Make me sympathetic without being sentimental, helpful but not bossy. Let me discover merits where I had not expected them, and talents in people whom I had not thought to possess any. And, Lord, give me the grace to tell them so. Amen.