

The Messenger

St. Mark's Episcopal Church



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December, 2020

AN ADVENT PASTORAL LETTER

Dear Christian Friends,

The great New York Yankee player and malapropism champ, Yogi Berra, once said to a friend about seeing a place, "This feels like Déjà vu all over again". So, again ending "in person" worship because of the Covid virus makes me want to say, "This feels like Déjà vu all over again." Yes, after worshipping live and in person since August 8, 2020, it is difficult to move back to "Face Book online only" worship as the new Church year begins. Yet as the monastic, Thomas Merton was known to say, "The Gate of Heaven is everywhere."

As the months of quarantine march through the new year and we cannot receive the Eucharist, I ask you to remember that "gates of heaven are everywhere" and available to encourage your spiritual life in the dead of winter and a pandemic. So consider the world around you and notice the "little things." When I sit on my back porch and notice the creatures that come to drink in the creek running through the back acre, I am amazed at how deer and herons, groundhogs and foxes all drink in some kind of orchestrated order every day. Watching their dance at drinking, I am certain more is going on; it is there for you to drink in as well. So notice the "little things" as we await the big things to come.

We will once again join each other at church for "live" and in "person worship", for the sacraments, for singing hymns, for coffee hour and for a Covid vaccine celebration. Until then, remember the words of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, "The earth is crammed with heaven. And every common bush afire with God, but only he who sees takes off his shoes; the rest sit around and pick blackberries." So notice the "little things" to nourish your spiritual life until the big thing seems to arrive. It then may be "like Déjà Vu all over again."

Hold steady, wear your mask and pray,

Fr. Kim

Bill Bremer, husband of Marilyn, former church treasurer and parishioner passed away on Sunday, November 29th. Funeral arrangements are in progress and will be announced when completed. Please pray for Marilyn and her family during this sad time. If you would like to send a card to Marilyn, contact the church secretary for her address at secretarystmarkshb@gmail.com.



A "Gift of Love" in the Christmas Season

This year at Saint Mark's I would like to invite you to make a local underprivileged child's Christmas a little brighter. You can do this by purchasing a Christmas gift requested by a child in our community.

We have been given ten children's names needing gifts, five boys and five girls. Each child has written a Christmas card with a gift they hope to receive. You can pick up their gift request and a tag with the child's name by calling Fr. Kim at **610-389-2828** or emailing him at pastorg340@gmail.com, or picking one up at the church office on Wednesdays or Fridays. Gifts should be wrapped and returned to the church office, left on the Parish house porch or in the undercroft by **Dec. 15th**. Gifts may also be picked up at your home.

Please consider making a gift to a child in our community this Christmas when no child can sit on Santa's lap and whisper a request in his ear. But, they may be asking Jesus.



Happy Anniversary

Bill & Marilyn Bremer, 12/23
Karl & Verna Emery, 12/26



Happy Birthday

Mara Witman, 12/1
Anne Lorah, 12/1
Julie combs, 12/4
Joe Orlando, 12/5
Paul Colombo, 12/9
Linda Jones, 12/14
Dean Kaiser, 12/16
Hunter Pasela, 12/22
Lucia Costanzo, 12/29
Linda Duguy, 12/30

A PRAYERFUL WORD

Each day during Advent, follow this calendar and include the word of the day in your prayer life.

Dec. 1 Strengthen	Dec. 15 Pray
Dec. 2 Earth	Dec. 16 Learn
Dec. 3 Rebuild	Dec. 17 Bless
Dec. 4 Fellowship	Dec. 18 Turn
Dec. 5 Glorify	Dec. 19 Rejoice
Dec. 6 Speak	Dec. 20 Mystery
Dec. 7 Comfort	Dec. 21 Wisdom
Dec. 8. Patient	Dec. 22 Holy
Dec. 9. Mercy	Dec. 23 Proclaim
Dec. 10 Baptize	
Dec. 11 Word	
Dec. 12 Honey	
Dec. 13 Go	
Dec. 14 Worship	



ST. MARK'S OUTREACH UPDATE NOVEMBER, 2020

Ivanna Freeman

Steeple to People	2 bags of groceries
Seaman's Church Institute	52 care personal care items for "ditty bags" for foreign sailors on cargo ships docked in Philadelphia
Samaritan's Purse	75 shoeboxes filled with Personal care items, school supplies and small toys for "Operation Christmas Child" distributed to children in need around the world.

St. Mark's Outreach is now collecting hats, mittens, gloves and scarves for Mychal's Message. All donations will be given to the homeless in New York City, Philadelphia, Lancaster and other cities in the area. Donations may be dropped off at the church and left between the downstairs doors or left at the parish house. Please attach a note that says for Ivanna. For more information contact Ivanna Freeman.

The Eagle

*Tw'as the Eagle they chose, as a symbol of strength
for a
new and mighty land.
That was forged in Truth, and Liberty; delivered
By God's own hand.
That Eagle stands for Integrity and Pride
Throughout our age.
To remind us of the wars we've fought for
Freedom and the price we've paid.
And so it was when Lord Powell called on his troop
Of boys to be men,
That this symbol so strong, so pure and so proud
Was called to serve again.
Not every Scout can wear this badge, in fact they
Are but few
Who rise above their peers today to remind us of
What is true.
That Loyalty and being good will always be our aim,
That Courage and Faith are the best of us, that
The Eagle knows no shame.
These honored few who wear this badge walk
Among us to this day.
To exemplify the very best that we strive for,
So now we pray;
That God will bless
and keep these Scouts always
In His sight.
For it is they, not us who know it best, the Eagle
Stands for Right.*

Written by Tom Lalor for Jonathan Lint



Outdoor classroom at
Conestoga Christian School

Congratulations

Mark Hunter Combs!



Please continue to pray for those in need: Mae Bailey, Charles Blosenski, The Bremer family, Billy Brennan, Shaun Chandler, Donald Combs, the Darby family, John & Elizabeth Deering, The DeHaven Family, Sandy Dawson, Betty Gallagher, Nick Gehman, Piper Hatfield, Rick Hilferty, Katie, the Largent Family, Greg Leinweber, Linda, Christopher Macomber, John & Sally Macomber, Karen Mannke, Margaret Moore, Fran O'Neil, Rory O'Neil, The Pasela Family, Virginia Pavero, Susan Peet, DickRainer, Trish Rhoads, Trent Rutt, Sadie & Kathy, Bob & Dawn Schell, Bob, Lois & Elisabeth Schultz, Diane Spath, Sue Staton, Doris Stacey, Nancy Summers, Holly Weaver, Richard & Kathy Wilson, Jim Woolwine, Andrew Yambor.

*"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God."
Philippians 4:6,7*

Women of the Bible

Mary of Nazareth



Mary was a humble village woman who lived in a small town, a place so insignificant as to lead Nathanael to say, “Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?” (John 1:46), but out of it, and from the womb of the peasant woman came the greatest Man the world has ever known. Mary was of the tribe of Judah, and the line of David. In the royal genealogy of Matthew and the human genealogy of Luke, Mary is only mentioned in the former, but her immediate forebears are not mentioned. She became the wife of Joseph, the son of Heli (Luke 3:23). Apart from Jesus, called her “first-born,” a term implying that other children followed after the order of natural generation (Luke 2:7). As a virgin, Mary bore Christ in a miraculous way, and Elisabeth most spontaneously and unaffectedly gave her the most honorable of titles, “Mother of the Lord” and praised her unstintedly as one, “Blessed among women.” Later Mary was married to Joseph the carpenter and she bore him four sons and several daughters, the former being named – James, Joses, Judas and Simon, and the daughters unnamed (Matthew 13:55, 56; Mark 6:3). During His ministry, none of His brothers believed in Him. In fact, they sneered at Him, and once concluded that He was mad, and wished to arrest Him and take Him away from Capernaum (Mark 3:21, 31; John 7:3-5). But as the result of His death and Resurrection, His brothers became believers, and were among the number gathered in the Upper Room before Pentecost.

<https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/all-women-bible/Mary>

“But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that



A joyous Christmas to my friends at St. Mark's!

Donna Woods
Parish Secretary

City Gate Men's Mission

St. Mark's continues to supply dinners to City Gate in Coatesville. If you would like to help with cooking, contact Frank Weaver or Fr. Kim before the second Saturday of each month. The next dinner is on December 12th.

Food for Thought

The next “Food for Thought” Zoom meeting will take place on Tuesday, December 15th at 7:15 pm. We will continue on our topic of “How to be an Anti-Racist.”

2021 Giving

The 2021 Stewardship pledge cards have been mailed to each family in the Parish with a stamped return envelope. Please return your 2021 pledge card by December 15th. Thank you for your financial support of St. Mark's.



- Wash your hands with soap & water for at least 20 seconds, especially after being in a public place or blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. If soap is not available, use hand sanitizer**
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose & mouth with unwashed hands.**
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick and practice social distancing by keeping at least 6' away from others if you must go out in public.**
- Wear a cloth mask being sure it covers your nose & mouth when out in public or around others.**
- Cover your nose & mouth when sneezing or coughing.**
- Clean & disinfect frequently touched surfaces.**

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1

“Christ didn’t only come into the world that first Christmas night in Bethlehem, but He wants to come into our lives today, and every day of the year.”
Billy Graham



<https://www.unwsp.edu/>



Image: Peoplepill.com

“So God throws open the door of this world – and enters as a baby. As the most vulnerable imaginable. Because He wants unimaginable intimacy with you.

Ann Voskamp

Once in our world, a stable had something in it that was bigger than our whole world.”
C.S. Lewis



<https://religion.blogs.cnn.com/>



Image: www.desiringgod.org

The Almighty appeared on earth as a helpless human baby, needing to be fed and changed and taught to talk like any other child. The more you think about it, the more staggering it gets. Nothing in fiction is so fantastic as this truth of the Incarnation.”

J.I. Packer

Sally's Corner

Father, Thank you for sending us the gift of your awesome Son, who is our Savior, Counselor, Prince of Peace and our Messiah. We know that His life and death and resurrection purchased eternal life for us.

During this season of Advent I would like to share some of my favorite hymns with readers.

*J*oy to the world, the Lord has come. Let earth receive her King. Let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing.

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie. Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars to by.

*H*ow silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given. So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.

*C*ome, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free; from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.

*F*or Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondrous love.

*R*ejoice! Rejoice, believers and let your lights appear. The evening has advanced and morning light is near.



Mary Did You Know?

Mary, did you know that your baby boy would one day walk on water?

Mary, did you know that your baby boy would save our sons and daughters?

Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new?

This child that you delivered, will soon deliver you.

Mary, did you know that your baby boy will give sight to a blind man?

Mary, did you know that your baby boy will calm the storm with His hand?

Mary, did you know that your baby boy walked where angels trod?

When you kiss your little baby, you kiss the face of God?

Mary, did you know?

The blind will see, the deaf will hear, the dead will live again.

The lame will leap, the dumb will speak the praises of the Lamb.

Mary, did you know that your baby boy is Lord of all creation?

Mary, did you know that your baby boy would one day rule the nation?

Did you know that your baby boy is Heaven's perfect Lamb?

That sleeping child you're holding is the GREAT I AM!

Mary, did you know?

George and I would like to wish everyone a very merry Christmas and a healthy New Year filled with peace, joy and love!

Faithfully yours,
Sally Nickle

"Mary, did you know", source: musixmatch and songwriters: Green Lee Rufus and Lowry Mark Alan



Virtual Advent Services

Join the Bishop from the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas every Sunday during Advent on KYW (CBS) at 5:30 am.