

# St. Mark's Messenger

## July 2020

### FATHER JOHN'S REFLECTION

I was overwhelmed with delight to see 22 people in the pews in June for the first time since March. Sure, the new seating arrangements are strange, and those darned masks make everyone look odd, but I could tell that you were as joyful as I was.



And yet. Like the Israelites who were wandering and grumbling in the desert for forty years, we have to ask, "How long, O Lord, how long?" This isn't the way it used to be. How long is this going to last?

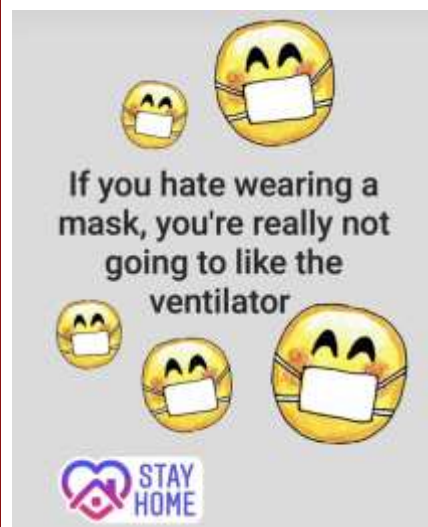
Dr. Anthony Fauci said that a vaccine *might* be approved by the end of this year because so many different companies are working feverishly on it. He's a realist and knows how hard it is to develop vaccines. We still don't have one for AIDS, MERS, Ebola, and many other dreadful diseases.

How long will it take to distribute a COVID throughout the world? I have no clue. Events that were postponed in 2020 have been rescheduled for 2021, but even such international events as the Olympics are not guaranteed. As my father used to say about many things, "we'll just have to see."

Americans may feel as if we're finished with COVID, but COVID is not done with us. We have had record spikes in cases and hospitalizations in the past month. Arizona is now where New York was two months ago: hospitals have run out of ICU beds. Several states have instituted (again) mandatory face masks.

State College is bracing for the return of thousands of students in August, and while they're required to wear masks on campus, I doubt that they'll do so downtown. Nor will they avoid large gatherings. The Nittany Lion Inn will be closed to the public for a year so that it can serve as an infirmary for sick students. The schedule for all athletic events is mind-boggling: Beaver Stadium will hold no more than half of its usual crowd, which will upset many long-time, loyal season-ticket holders who will watch the games on their TV's.

I believe in and practice the three W's: (1) wash your hands, (2) wear your masks, and (3) watch your distance. I will not enter a business if masks aren't required. I am very cautious in my visits to parishioners' homes and wear a mask throughout the visit. I love folks at a distance.



Some parishes in our Diocese will not resume worship until mid-July. Many clergy are apprehensive about returning at all because they have underlying health conditions or a family member who does. Bishop Audrey \*hopes\* that we can return to "something like normal" after Easter next year – it falls on April 4. As my father would say, "we'll just have to see." People who are at risk SHOULD STAY HOME.

Let's hope for the best, prepare for the worst, focus on taking care of ourselves and our neighbors, and know that God is with us on this unexpected journey. What we're doing now is not the "new normal" but the price we're paying to be good stewards of all our precious lives.

Father John+

## WORSHIP GUIDELINES

Even if this list sounds like the new 10 Commandments for 2020, such changes support the common good and help us be good neighbors. If you are uncomfortable returning to church at this time, we will understand, and I will bring you communion at home. Please let us know of if you would like me to bring you communion by calling me (814-571-0687) or the church office (717-248-8327).



### St. Mark Wants You To

- Practice social distancing
- Wear your mask
- Take your service bulletin as you enter
- Put your donation in the plate before the service
- Use the hand sanitizer in the pew
- Avoid hugs or handshakes even at the Peace
- Receive communion in your pew
- Leave quietly after the service

Be safe, trust God, and help your neighbor

THE *Episcopal* CHURCH

## THREE WAYS TO WORSHIP: IN PERSON, BY THE WEB, OR BY PHONE

We have returned to regular worship on Wednesdays and Sundays at 10AM! You can connect easily by the Internet or a toll-free call. All services are recorded, so if you can watch it at 10PM.



You do NOT need to have an account on Facebook or Zoom to participate; a telephone will suffice. I will email you the Sunday service materials, including the readings and the music for the hymns. Go to either address below to participate by Internet.

<https://www.facebook.com/stmarkepiscopalchurchlewistownpa/live>

OR

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82334928109>

Meeting ID: 823 3492 8109

OR

By phone: +1 646 558 8656

Meeting ID: 823 3492 8109



building.

Hunger does not go into quarantine. Our schools have fed many poor children during the school year, and many local restaurants have distributed lunches during the shutdown.

Who will feed them next month and during the summer?



Mother Hubbard's Cupboard—  
Covid 19 Style!!

## FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ST. MARK'S: A BIG THANKS!

Thank you for being faithful in paying your pledge! Halfway through the year, our budget is in good shape and so is Mother Hubbard's.

Just like you, we must pay for insurance, utilities, and routine repairs. We mow the cemetery lawn every two weeks; we have more than 13 acres, and it costs \$700 per mowing. We pay our sexton and housekeeper to keep our three buildings in good order; Mother Hubbard's costs continue each month, and even if usage is light this summer, it will increase when supplemental unemployment benefits end in June.

You can make your contributions in person on Sundays or Wednesdays or mail your checks to the church: 21 South Main Street, Lewistown, PA 17044.

You can also contribute online: <https://diocesecpa.org/stewardship/>

Just go to this secure website and scroll down to Lewistown; you'll find St. Mark's there, and you can make a one-time or an on-going contribution. I tried it myself at Easter, and it worked great.



## COMMITTEE REPORTS (CEMETERY AND COLUMBARIUM, PASTORAL CARE, PROPERTY, AND SAFETY)

The Cemetery Committee is delighted to report that we have begun the process of digitizing our cemetery records. Since 1845 we have recorded more than 6,000 burials; nobody knows the true figure, but soon we will be able to tell you. You can see the records from 1845-1980 or so on the church's website: <http://www.stmark-lewistown.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/St.-Marks-Cemetery-1844-1980.pdf>. But we can't yet even offer a PDF for the last forty years. This project will solve these problems.

For the first time we will easily be able to tell a visitor where a relative is buried or say how many veterans of the Revolutionary War are buried in our cemetery. If we want to see the impact of the Spanish Flu had on the parish in 1918-1919, we can find the number of burials.



The Property Committee has received two bids for replacing the steps on our Water Street entrance with something that will be safer and more attractive.

## BREAKING BREAD TOGETHER



On June 23 we served a tasty take-out picnic meal of hotdogs, coleslaw, chips, and a cookie to about 35 people. We distributed the meal in front of the church, and all of us wore masks and gloves. We were glad to see familiar faces and to meet some new people.



All will be grateful for our return to normal, but we will provide take-out meals for the months to come.

Thanks so much for the loyal volunteers who help each month.

## ST. MARK'S IN 2030

Let me quote the conclusion of my sermon two Sundays ago:

Evangelism IS the agenda of the church and this parish. If you want to visualize St. Mark's in 2030, think about what we're starting in 2020. For another perspective, imagine what happens if we do nothing different.

Evangelism and our sense of mission are joined at the hip. There is no record of Jesus walking up to someone out the clear blue sky and saying: "I am the Messiah" and then beginning to show that he cared for them. He fed them first – sometimes 5,000 at a time. "If you love me, feed my sheep."

Abraham and Sarah went way out of their way to welcome the three strangers, to show them that they cared. And they were blessed beyond measure.

I end with three questions.

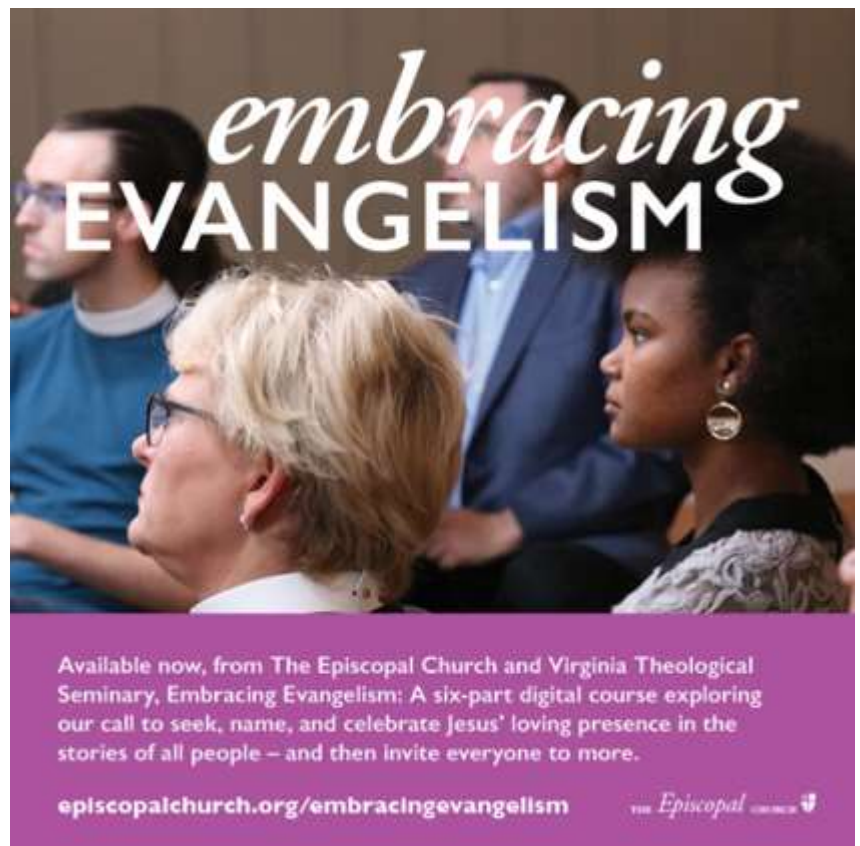
- Do you believe that anything is too hard for God to do in Lewistown?
- Does St. Mark's need your help to flourish?
- Will you help me to find new ways for us to serve God and our neighbors?

For St. Mark's to be healthy in 2030 requires us to take steps this year. COVID is a crisis and it will pass. But we have a different healthcare challenge: its symptoms are shrinking attendance and aging congregations.

The cure is possible but requires sustained treatment, and it starts with evangelism.

Who wants to join Father John, the vestry, and thousands from the Episcopal Church? If 20 of us complete the program, we will be much stronger together.

We're getting ready for 2030 this year.



## St. Mark's Prayer List

**Prayer List:** Patty Attivo, Jacqueline Benevento, Michelle Bitner, Ralph Bitner, Dennis Bossinger, Bob Briar, Lisa Briar, Linda Burger, Tyler Burris, Dottie Casner, Peggy Collins, Lew Copenhaver, Heather Creighton, Bishop Michael Curry, Amanda Ergler, Shirley Ferguson, Richard Flood, Marcia Folk, Dick Gibboney, Kathryn Grossman, Thomas Hart, Cassidy Hendricks, Josh Hohol, Dolores Houser, Angela Kaler, Bruce Kinsey, Judy Kline, James Krepps, Martie Marquez, Pam Lawson, Hugh McKee, Marsha Lynch-Mock, Austin James Moore, David Moore, Virginia Nace, Gabriel Newman, Carol Potts, Jack Potts, Amy Reeder, Sattler, Makenzie Shearer, Vicky Shoemaker, Joseph Smith, Gwen Swisher, Laura Tate, Henry Walk, Jackie Walk, Ann Wimsatt, William Wilson, Stella Wright and Ashley.

**Pray for** Lloyd A. Gessaman and Max Wilson who are serving our Country.

*God of everlasting love, who provides all things, we pray for all people: make your way known to them, your saving power among all nations. We commend to your fatherly goodness all who are afflicted or distressed in body, mind or circumstances.; relieve them according to their needs, giving them patience in their sufferings, and deliverance from their afflictions. This we ask for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.*



### DO YOU WANT TO ADOPT A WINDOW AS A MEMORIAL GIFT?

Last summer Jim Cherry discovered a part of our heritage wrapped in newspapers in our basement. These windows were part of the "new" St. Mark's in the 1880s and had been removed when memorial windows were installed between the 1890s and the 1990s. They were not a pretty sight: lots of glass was missing and the lead came had degenerated. We sent them to Epiphany Studios to see what could be done. On Sunday or Wednesday mornings, look at our "new" windows from the 1880s. See how the sunlight streams through them: that's the magic of stained glass. They tell a story through beautiful color and design, and each symbol is part of our Christian heritage. This is the language of faith.

The vestry invites you to adopt one of the restored windows as a memorial gift or to honor someone important in your life. Kathryn and I adopted two windows in memory of our parents, and Diane Carter adopted one in memory of her parents as well. So we have six left.

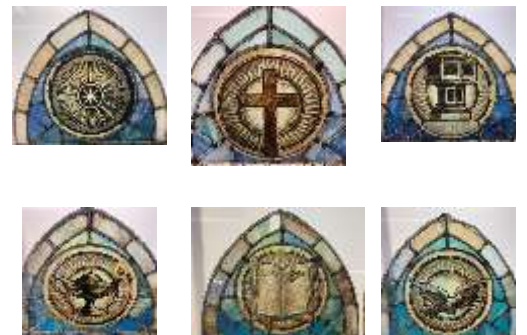
We will display the restored windows so that all can enjoy them and have another piece of our original history in this place. By the way, do you know the meaning of these symbols? Why do we have "IHS" surrounded by the star of David? What's the story with Aladdin's lamp? All of these will be perfect in St. Mark's Chapel (also known as the Parish House).

The cost is only \$580. Please see Father John if you're interested.

### JULY BIRTHDAYS

- 3—Georgia Olson
- 9—Phyllis Sikorsky
- 11—Cathy Beers
- 18—Henry Walk
- 19—Jackie Leight
- 23—Fred McKinley

O GOD, OUR TIMES ARE IN YOUR HAND:  
LOOK WITH FAVOR, WE PRAY, ON YOUR  
SERVANT *N.* AS (*S*)*HE* BEGINS ANOTHER  
YEAR. GRANT THAT (*S*)*HE* MAY GROW IN  
WISDOM AND GRACE, AND STRENGTHEN  
OUR TRUST IN YOUR GOODNESS;  
THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.  
AMEN.



**Saint Mark's Episcopal Church**  
 21 South Main Street Lewistown, Pennsylvania 17044  
 Telephone: 717-248-8327  
[www.stmark-lewistown.org](http://www.stmark-lewistown.org)  
 The Right Rev. Dr. Audrey Scanlan, Bishop, Diocese of Central PA  
 Father John T. Harwood, Priest-in-Charge  
**St. Mark's Vestry**  
 Blair Hannon, Senior Warden - Hal Jenkinson, Junior Warden  
 Deb Vaughn, Clerk  
 Dan Dillon, Lillian Myers,  
 Jane Smith, and Robin Wilson  
 Deb Vaughn—Coordinator of Pastoral Ministries  
 Joseph Sikorsky—Treasurer



**ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

21 S Main Street  
 Lewistown, PA 17044

The Mission of St. Mark's

*We gather to celebrate as the family of God, that we may be fed spiritually through the Sacraments and teachings of the Holy Scriptures, in order that we serve others in the love of Christ.*

