

St. Mark's Messenger

January 2018

FATHER JOHN'S REFLECTION



Advent was about waiting and preparing. For the little ones, time passed SOO slowly, but for adults, we were rushed to get everything done, weren't we? And now we're in the new year. What lies ahead?

January takes its name from the Roman god named Janus. He is usually represented as having two faces, one looking forward and one looking back. He is the god of beginnings and transitions, and thereby of gates, doors, doorways, passages, and endings – things that you pass through. As we enter the new year, it is natural that we remember the past year’s joys and sorrows and look forward with hope to what the new year will bring.

For some moments in time, we have fixed markers. Valentine’s Day, Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, Labor Day, Halloween, and Thanksgiving. In our personal lives, birthdays and anniversaries are also predictable – and highly memorable! The dates are the same every year.

The Church, however, has its own unique way of keeping time. In the fourth century, we decided that Christmas would always fall on December 25, and we agreed on how to schedule Easter. Our calendar has both fixed and movable feast days. This month we celebrate both the Christmas season (all twelve days) and the beginning of the Epiphany season, which can vary in length depending on when Easter falls.

We will celebrate Epiphany at our service on January 7, and you will notice that our creche will now be complete: the magi and their camel will signal Christ's revelation to the Gentiles even while Jesus is only a baby. The parish thanks Bob Welham for his generous gift. The season of Epiphany will end on Ash Wednesday, which ironically falls on Valentine's Day. If this irony is not enough, Easter falls on April 1. I don't even want to think about all the comments that this will stimulate.



*Our new creche — ready for
Epiphany.*

Many people use the prospect of the new year to make personal resolutions. I don't know if you're good at keeping yours, but researchers have found that only about 8% achieve their goals for more than a few days. The challenge for the Church is to be faithful to our collective resolutions – we call this living into our baptismal covenants, a theme that will be prominently stressed in the new ministry service on January 16.

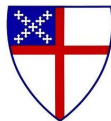
My hope is that in 2018 we can be faithful and hopeful as the people of God in this community.

John+



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The Right Rev. Dr. Audrey Scanlan, Bishop, Diocese of Central PA
The Rev. John T. Harwood, Priest
St. Mark's Vestry
Joyce Hart, Senior Warden - Fred McKinley, Junior Warden
Dev Vaughn, Clerk
John Xanthopoulos
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.

CHRISTMAS GRATITUDE

I am grateful for your many cards and gifts at Christmas. My heart was warmed by your generosity. Because I have put on a few extra pounds over the holidays, I will work to shed them in the new year. This was a very special holiday season for me and my family.

I especially want to thank all of you who helped to decorate the church so beautifully and participated in our three worship services on December 24.

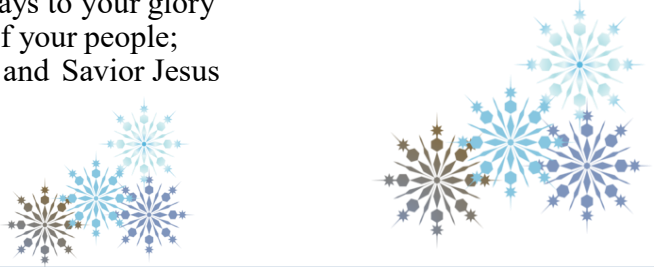


PRAYERS FOR THE NEW YEAR:
IT'S ABOUT TIME

Remember us, O God; from age to age be our comforter. You have given us the wonder of time, blessings in days and nights, seasons and years. Bless your children at the turning of the year and fill the months ahead with the bright hope that is ours in the coming of Christ. You are our God, living and reigning, forever and ever. Amen.

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated to you and then use us, we pray, as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

May the Lord bless you and always keep you. May heaven's light shine on all that you do. May health and happiness come your way and love fill your heart throughout each day. Amen.



NEW TIME FOR WORSHIP AND ADULT
SUNDAY SCHOOL IN 2018

At our December vestry meeting, we decided that if we move our worship service to 10AM, we would have time on Sundays for Sunday School from AM to 9:45. We believe that these changes will strengthen the life of the parish as we prepare for our 200th birthday in 2023. We will begin the Adult Formation program on the first Sunday in February with a coffee hour and discussion of our vision for St. Mark's. It will be FUN!

MOTHER HUBBARD'S CUPBOARD

In December Mother Hubbard's Cupboard served 99 families. This includes 293 individuals, 7 first-time families, and 20 first-time individuals (adults and children). For 2017, we served 3,515 people (1,282 families). 94 families and 277 individuals visited MHC for the first time. Since the population of Lewistown and surrounding towns in the 2010 census was 11,447, we touched almost 30% of the people in this town. Poverty is real, and it's in our community.

BREAKING BREAD TOGETHER

On December 19 the people of St. Mark's invited nearly 80 people to share a delicious meal of lasagna, salad, bread, and Christmas cookies with punch. Before the meal, many people gathered in the church to sing Christmas carols. This meal is in the truest spirit of Christmas.



Filling bags in Mother Hubbard's Cupboard to keep up with the demand.

OTHER WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR BUDGET

Do you shop at *Amazon.com*? If so, you can financially benefit St. Mark's Church? It will not cost you anything;

Amazon will donate a percentage of your purchase to a charity you select. To do this, you need to select St. Mark's Episcopal Church through Smile.Amazon.com – and you need to make your purchase through Smile.Amazon.com.



A percentage of your purchase (excluding taxes and shipping) will be donated to St. Mark's. Right now our earnings rate is 4% BUT if we can increase the traffic to Smile.Amazon.com, we may get 6 or even 8%!!



There is no added cost to you. Simply go to <https://Smile.amazon.com> and click the link to select St. Mark's Episcopal Church (note: there are 80 of them in the US so be sure to scroll down to the one in Lewistown, PA!). Everything you purchase (including Kindle books!) will be credited toward helping St. Mark's. Easy and painless and all at no cost to you!



Another way to give back to the parish is to purchase a paver (\$95). What a wonderful way to honor or remember someone important in your life. We are all restricted in the number of words: 3 lines of engraving with maximum of 14 characters (including spaces) per line. The pictures to the left are memorials for my parents and Kathryn's.

Who would you like to remember? These pavers are also suitable as expressions of thanksgiving. Please see Father John or Joyce Hart if you are interested. The pavers that have already been purchased are now installed in our Memorial Garden.

HOME VISITATIONS AND PASTORAL NEEDS

If you find yourself in need of a pastoral visit at home or in a hospital, please let me know. I am always happy to visit you in your home. But are there shut-ins I do not know about? Who else in our community needs a visit or is facing a hard time? Please let me know.

Are there other pastoral needs? Would you like to renew your marriage vows? Would you like to talk with me about baptism or confirmation? There are many adults who "missed" this chance when they were young, but as I know from personal experience (I was baptized at the age of 60!), it is never too late for bap-

tism. Please invite me to talk with you or someone you know.

The best way is by phone: home (814-235-1198) or cell (814-571-0687). Another way is by email (jitharwood@comcast.net). While I live in State College, I am in Lewistown on Wednesdays and Sundays and frequently on Tuesdays as well. I am happy to come to your home. If you are ill or hospitalized or know someone who needs pastoral support, please call me.

Do not worry that you are "bothering me" if you call me.

St. Mark’s Prayer List

Peg Alexander, Patty Attivo, Leslie Auxer, Jacqueline Benevento, Michelle Bitner, Ralph Bitner, Dennis Bossinger, Bob Briar, Lisa Briar, Linda Burger, Peggy Collins, Christie Colon, Deb Ergler, Marcia Folk, Kathryn Grossman, Dolores Houser, Sara John, James Krepps, Martie Marquez, Marsha Lynch-Mock, Cynthia McKinley, Austine James Moore, Gabriel Newman, Leslie Pitzer, Carol Potts, Vicky Shoemaker, Joseph Smith, Gwen Swisher, Laura Tate, Joe Ughetto, and Robert Wilson, Jr.

Pray for Lloyd A. Gessaman and Max Wilson who are serving out 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.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- CAROL POTTS—3RD
- MAGGIE WILSON—9TH
- JOHN BLEWETT –9TH
- BECKY GANOE—11TH
- MARK KALER, JR.—17TH
- LEWIS COPENHAVER –20TH
- JOHN STEWART—24TH
- MARGARET “PEG” ALEXANDER—24TH
- LISA HARDEN SOCCIO—28TH
- ERIN LAUB ANEWALT—30TH

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.

KEEPING THINGS UP-TO-DATE

WE WOULD LIKE TO UP-DATE OUR “LISTS” SO THAT INFORMATION IS CURRENT AND ACCURATE. PLEASE CHECK THE PRAYER LIST AND LET JOYCE KNOW IF ANYONE CAN BE TAKEN OFF THE LIST. GOD DOES ANSWER PRAYERS!

ALSO, IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHOSE BIRTHDAY IS NOT LISTED EITHER IN THE NEWSLETTER OR SUNDAY BULLETINS, PLEASE LET JOYCE KNOW SO THAT THEY MAY BE ADDED. WE WOULD ALSO LIST WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES!!!

THE NEW ALTAR FLOWERS SCHEDULE IS ON THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE PARISH HALL. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR FLOWERS IN HONOR OR IN MEMORY OF SOMEONE, PLEASE CHECK THE SCHEDULE AND SIGN-UP. THE COST IS \$35.00 FOR TWO ALTAR VASES.

WE ARE NEED OF SOME ADDRESSES AS WELL. IF YOU KNOW THE ADDRESSES OF ANY OF THESE PEOPLE, PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE: NANCY JOHNSON, KAY RICHARDS, AND MARY VASCO. WE REALIZE THAT THESE PEOPLE MAY OR MAY NOT BE CONFIRMED MEMBERS OF OUR PARISH, BUT THEY HAVE CONTRIBUTED IN SOME WAY TO OUR CHURCH LIFE AND WE HAVE LOST TOUCH WITH THEM RECENTLY.

IF YOU KNOW OF ANYONE WHO IS NOT RECEIVING OUR NEWSLETTER AND/OR OTHER CORRESPONDENCE, PLEASE LET EITHER FR. HARWOOD OR JOYCE KNOW. WE HAVE RECENTLY CHANGED OUR COMPUTER PROGRAMS AND THERE MAY BE A FEW NAMES THAT GOT LOST “IN THE SHUFFLE”.

REPENT OR REPAINT?

We'll talk about repentance when we get to Lent, but now is the time for you to help us brighten up the kitchen. You will notice the new sink, of course, but we also want to repaint the kitchen for the first time in several decades, and good paint is expensive (\$35 per gallon). We also need to replace the kitchen countertops, which are now quite difficult to clean because they are so old.

You are invited to make a contribution to the kitchen renovation by writing a check with "Kitchen" on the memo line.



Our dedicated sexton—making sure the kitchen is suitable for Sunday morning!



Jim Cherry getting the walls ready to paint. Lots of cracks to fill and smooth



The new triple sink..... and primed walls!



Another “before” picture.

SERVICE FOR NEW MINISTRY AND RECTOR (AS PRINTED IN LEWISTOWN SENTINEL)

The Wardens, Vestry, and Parishioners of St. Mark’s Episcopal Church announce with great pleasure, the Celebration Service of the New Ministry and Institution of John T. Harwood as Rector of St. Mark’s Episcopal Church, by The Right Reverend Audrey Scanlan, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania. The service will take place on **Tuesday, January 16, 7:00 PM**, with a reception to follow.

Father Harwood came to St. Mark’s on Pentecost, 2017, after spending seven years serving Trinity Episcopal Church and Zion’s Evangelical Lutheran Church in Renovo, Pennsylvania. He was ordained to the diaconate in 2010 and priesthood in 2011 by Bishop Nathan Baxter. He received his certificate in Anglican Studies in 2013 from the California Divinity School of the Pacific. He completed his training in pastoral care at the Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, and his parish internship was at St. Luke’s-Altoona. Within the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania he has served on the Board for the School of Christian Studies (now the Stevenson School), the Standing Committee, and the Clergy Discipline Committee. He retired from Penn State in 2016 after a long career as a faculty member and administrator. He is the author of three books and many articles and has a forthcoming volume, *John Evelyn: Dramatist*, in preparation for the Penn State University Press. His most recent article on the theology of Sallie McFague, a contemporary American theologian, can be downloaded from the *Anglican Theological Review*. Much of her work has investigated how metaphors reflect and shape meaning in Scripture and theology.

Fr. Harwood joins St. Mark’s Episcopal Church as we serve as the Body of Christ in Lewistown and beyond. His leadership will help us continue to deepen our faith, fulfill our mission, and serve a world in need. We hope you will join us on **January 16, 7:00 PM** as we celebrate this new phase of our life together at St. Mark’s.



John T. Harwood