

May 2019

FATHER JOHN'S REFLECTION



St. Mark's lit Paschal candle

“Alleluia! The Lord has risen indeed, alleluia!” For centuries Christians have proclaimed these words. When we lit the Paschal candle next to our baptismal font, we recall our Lord’s triumph over death. Just as we are baptized with Christ into his death, we rise with Christ. As I processed into the church, I said: “the light of Christ,” and you responded: “Thanks be to God.” Let us carry the light in our hearts throughout the fifty days of Eastertide.

I am grateful to all of you who participated in our Holy Week services and especially to those who were here for the Great Three Days. Joyce Hart and Blair Hannon played key roles, of course, but so did the readers, acolytes, and altar guild. We were there when they crucified our Lord, and we were at the tomb to greet him. It is no accident that two of our stained glass windows depict Easter scenes or that the window over our altar illustrates the Last Supper. I will



*Charles Phillips helping to carry
the cross for Community Good
Friday observance*

always remember the image of Charles Phillips carrying the cross during our community service of Good Friday. You may remember the picture from the front page of *The Sentinel*.



St. Mark's altar adorned with Easter lilies

Easter came late this year (April 21), so we will spend the month of May watching Jesus prepare the disciples for his departure (Ascension falls on May 30) and then waiting for the Holy Spirit to descend ten days later on Pentecost (June 9). Lent was 40 days; the Easter season is 50 days. May these Fifty Days prepare us for mission.



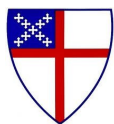
St. Mark's altar adorned with Easter lilies

We observe in May other holidays that touch our hearts: Mother's Day (May 12) and Memorial Day (May 27). While not on the church calendar, both are important. Mother's Day reminds us that a mother's love is precious and is our first experience of human love. Through a mother's love, we are reminded of God's love for us. So many passages in Scripture use female imagery to talk about divine love. Isaiah says that God will comfort us as a mother comforts her child. Jesus says that he would like to be like a mother hen and protect her chicks. Let us thank God for mothers.

Memorial Day is not just an occasion for a 500-mile race in Indianapolis and the start of summer – it is a reminder that the freedoms we enjoy were purchased by the lives of those who died in military service. In St. Mark's cemetery you will find a monument in memory of a Lewistown native who fought at the battle of the Alamo (1836). Let us honor our veterans and also seek to be peacemakers.

But most important, continue your journey from ashes to glory, carrying the light of Christ wherever you go. “The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!”

+Father John



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.



BUDGET AND PROPERTY UPDATE

The Vestry is moving forward on several projects to make the church more comfortable and more secure. In May we will do a major upgrade of our electrical panels. They would certainly not pass current building codes and have exceeded their useful life by several decades. This upgrade will require parts of our three buildings to be without power for several hours. We will also replace the fans in the church so that they will distribute the warm or cool air more efficiently in all seasons. The biggest change will be the addition of a heat pump that will provide both air conditioning and heating. We are making every effort to have the heat pump installed before the hot days of July, but we’re competing with lots of other customers who want the same thing. Be assured that these improvements are coming.

We are also reviewing a proposal to provide our buildings with fire alarms. As you may be aware, we have no central system for detecting and reporting fires. A wall-mounted fire alarm does no good if nobody is in the building to hear it. The shocking videos from Notre Dame in Paris is a painful reminder that wooden structures can burn if they are ignited.



Notre Dame Cathedral—Paris
April 15, 2019

We are entering a very exciting phase of our “windows” project. The large windows at the rear of the church needed attention from their many years of exposure to acid rain (the result of everyone burning coal and wood for heat in Lewistown). In particular, the winged lion (a symbol of St. Mark) was in such poor shape that it would have to be created from scratch – or we could replace it with a new window more relevant to modern church life. We decided to replace the lion with an image of Christ’s baptism, and at our vestry meeting in April, we received the first proposal from Epiphany Studios. The lead artist, Gene Higgins, wants our feedback and suggestions. (He has also designed new windows for the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C.) Please take a close look and share your reactions with Father John or any member of the vestry.

This is OUR window. How do we visualize the baptism of Jesus? Look carefully at the picture. What do the symbols (the dove, the scallop shell, etc.) mean? Why is the nimbus (the halo around Christ’s head) similar to the one over his head in our altar window? What is the significance of the flowers in the lower right hand corner of the image?

When we are finished, we will have the two sacraments of the Episcopal, baptism and Eucharist, in the most prominent spaces in the church.

We have also encountered a surprising new part of this project. I had always wondered what St. Mark’s did with the original window that has been replaced by the “Kinsey” window. While working on a project in the basement of the

church, Jim Cherry noticed two tall wooden boxes leaning against a pillar. He peeked in and found the original windows written in a newspapers dated from the 1960s. The bottom panel is identical to some of the other windows in the church, but the top panels have symbols that we have nowhere else in the church: the lamp of knowledge, the star of David, the 10 Commandments, and several others. It would be fitting and proper to restore and display these somewhere in our historical gallery as part of St. Mark’s history because they give hints about what our ancestors most valued.



Surprising find in St. Mark’s basement
Do you remember this window?

St. Mark’s Prayer List

Prayer List: Patty Attivo, Cam Auxer, Jacqueline Benevento, Michelle Bitner, Ralph Bitner, Dennis Bossinger, Bob Briar, Lisa Briar, Linda Burger, Tyler Burris, Dottie Casner, Peggy Collins, Christie Colon, Lew Copenhagen, Heather Creighton, Bishop Michael Curry, Amanda Ergler, Deanna Fawver, Shirley Ferguson, Richard Flood, Marcia Folk, Dick Gibboney, Ron Goss, Kathryn Grossman, Thomas Hart, Kassidy Hendricks, Josh Hohol, Dolores Houser, Angela Kaler, Bruce Kinsey, James Krepps, Martie Marquez, Hugh McKee, David Moore, Marsha Lynch-Mock, Austin James Moore, Virginia Nace, Gabriel Newman, Leslie Pitzer, Carol Potts, Jack Potts, Amy Reeder, Vicky Shoemaker, Shirley Sattler, Joseph Smith, Gwen Swisher, Laura Tate, Ann Wimsatt, Robert Wilson, Jr., William Wilson, and Stella Wright.

Pray for Lloyd A. Gessaman, Christopher Wilson 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.

MAY BIRTHDAYS

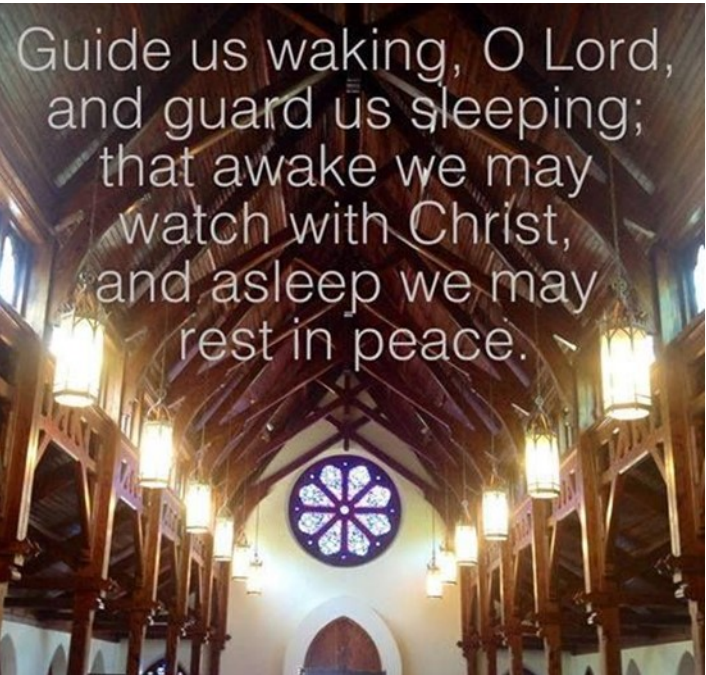
- 13 - Judy Kline
- 15—Dan Dillon
- 16—Joan Dippery
- 18—Anne Wimsatt
- 23—Richard Walters
- 24—Richard Flood
- 30—Jon Myers

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.

FUNERAL FOR BRUCE BITNER

We offer our deepest condolences to Ralph and Michelle Bitner. Bruce’s sudden death on April 27 has left a real void in our church. Baptized, confirmed, and married at St. Mark’s, he was a beloved member for 55 years. His funeral will be held on Friday, May 11, at 11AM. Family and friends will be received from 10AM-10:45; we will have a light luncheon in the parish house after the service.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory



ST. MARK’S MEN

THE MEN FROM ST. MARK’S CONTINUE TO MEET THE FIRST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT THE BURNHAM OIP AT 8:00 A.M. THEY MEET AGAIN MAY 4 , 2019. ALL MEN OF ST. MARK’S ARE INVITED TO JOIN THEM AND ENCOURAGED TO DO SO. IT IS A GREAT TIME OF FELLOWSHIP AND THE FOOD IS GOOD TOO!

IF YOU ARE ILL, PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OR FATHER JOHN

If you are ill or hospitalized or know someone who needs pastoral support, please call me. Do not worry that you are “bothering me.” St. Mark’s is committed to visiting the sick, but we can’t do this unless you contact us. The best way to reach me is by phone: home (814-235-1198) or cell (814-571-0687). Another way is email (jtharwood@comcast.net). While I live in State College, I am in Lewistown on Wednesdays and Sundays.



NEW PASTOR WARRANTY

- *It has come to our attention that the pastor you received was shipped with a slight defect -- he is not psychic. Because of this, you must observe certain procedures to ensure optimum performance.
- *It is necessary to inform him of any members who are hospitalized. If someone you know is in need of prayer, the pastor must be told, or he won't know. If you are in need of a pastoral visit, you will get the best results if you ask him.
- *We regret any inconvenience this may cause.

www.PastorsHelper.com

PASTORAL CARE

St. Mark’s has about 10 shut-ins right now, and our pastoral care team (Deb Vaughn, Blair Hannon, Phyllis Sikorsky, and Father John) visits or talks with each person every month. If someone is in the hospital, we need to know about it, so can you help by calling the Church Office and letting Joyce or Father John know?

While Father John is on vacation in Morocco (May 3-12), the Rev. Alex Dyakiw (pronounced: die cue) will provide emergency care. Contact Joyce Hart (717-248-8327) if there is an urgent need.

This and That.....and another thing

A note of gratitude is extended to all of the people who help keep St. Mark’s “going” — especially the women of the Parish who work endlessly conducting soup and salad bars, etc and are instrumental in providing meals for special occasions. St. Mark’s would be lost without you. Also a thank you to those of you who help us with our Breaking Bread Together meals. We may never know the impact these meals have the ones who enjoy them.

We are nearly done with the Church Directory, making sure the information that is printed is correct and up-to-date. Hopefully sometime in May it will be made available to you.

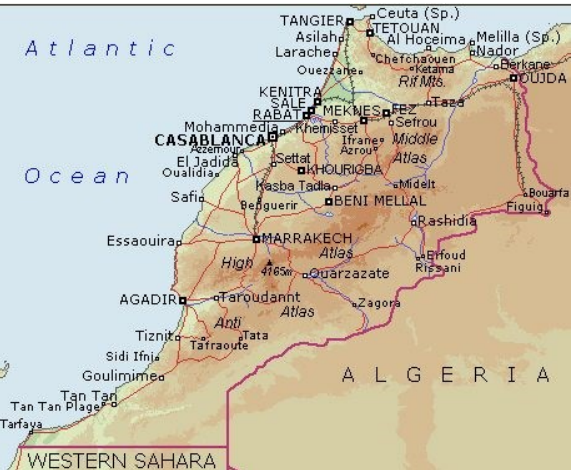
Please check out the Altar Flower list which is on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall. There are still quite a few empty spots for 2019. The cost is \$35.00.

Also, please check our Prayer List. If there are any updates, please let the Church Office know. It is important for us to be mindful of these persons in our prayers. Of equal importance is to know that our prayers have been answered and names can be taken off our lists.



CASABLANCA, HERE WE COME

Kathryn and I are looking forward to our trip to Morocco (May 3-12). About the size of California, Morocco is home to about 33 million people, most of them quite poor and many of them living as their ancestors did at the time of Jesus. Like Jerusalem, Morocco had been conquered by the Greeks and Romans, but at the time of St. Paul there was a thriving Jewish community in the coastal cities. Only seven miles from Spain, the Moroccan people were a blend of peoples, languages, religions, and cultures. Today almost all people are Muslim, and we arrive on the first day of Ramadan, a period of fasting and prayer somewhat similar to Lent.



Devout Muslims pray five times daily, always facing toward Mecca. In America and Europe, the tradition is to have our altars facing East – Jerusalem. Like Christianity and Judaism, Muslims believe in one God, and they recognize a family tree that includes Abraham as a great prophet and Jesus as a great teacher.

Islam has five pillars of belief: faith, prayer, charity, fasting, and a pilgrimage to Mecca. (Episcopalians have three pillars: Scripture, tradition, and reason.) These obligations apply to Muslims throughout the world. You don’t find ANYTHING here about violence or cruelty. indeed, a hallmark of Mideastern culture is hospitality. Kathryn and I are looking forward to seeing some early sites of Jewish and Christian worship alongside the places where ancient Phoenicians, Greeks, and Romans called home. We will pray for the people of St. Mark’s on the two Sundays we are away, hopefully in a Christian church.

We have been practicing our Arabic – most of the greetings will sound very familiar to you (“peace be with you”; “God’s blessings be upon you and your family”).

St. Mark’s will be in good hands. The Rev. Dee Calhoun will preside on May 5 and 12, and pastoral care will be provided the Rev. Alex Dyakiw, a deacon from St. John’s-Bellefonte.

SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW

Many churches have a holy water font at the entrance to the church. As you enter from the street, you first pass through the narthex (the space between the door and the nave). By dipping a finger into the water and making the sign of the cross on your forehead, you remind yourself of your baptism. We are all baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; through our baptism we enter the spiritual doors of the church universal. Thanks to a generous gift by Tracey McKee in memory of her family members, St. Mark’s now has such a font. Please give it a try and reflect quietly on your baptismal promises that we renewed in our Easter liturgies.



ST. MARK'S COMMUNITY COLUMBARIUM AND YOU

As Woody Allen says, "Nobody gets out of here alive." You will do your family members an enormous favor by planning your funeral and making arrangements for your funeral well before the funeral itself. About 75% of the funerals in Lewistown now involve cremations. St. Mark's Community Columbarium is a wonderful final resting place for you and your family members, although it is also available for non-members just as our cemetery is. The Church's website (<http://www.stmark-lewistown.org/st-marks-cemetery-and-columbarium/>) now features information about both resources.

The economic advantages are many for the family. A niche in a columbarium is modest in cost, liturgically satisfying, and ecologically sound. The quiet design of the columbarium invites solitary contemplation and meditation of dear friends and members of the family. It also becomes a peaceful gathering place for families and friends to assemble in prayer, love and remembrance, and creates a consoling link between life and death.

Besides the theological significance of being inurned on consecrated ground, you should also consider the cost. A traditional "casket funeral" and burial could cost more than \$15,000, not including a tombstone or other kind of monument. A niche in the largest cemetery in Lewistown costs between \$2,500 and \$3,000 – depending on the location. This does not include the cost of the urn itself, the cremation, or the service of inurnment (think of this as the burial of the ashes). If you do the math, funerals are costly.

St. Mark's has a much simpler, less expensive solution. If you purchase a niche before August 1, the price is \$850 for members and \$1,000 for non-members. After that date, the Vestry has authorized the cost to be \$1,000 for members and \$1,500 for non-members. There is no additional cost for the cylinder or the lettering on your niche.



We will advertise the new prices in *The Sentinel* in August, and so you will want to make your intentions known to the Church if you wish to purchase a niche now at a reduced price. Your family will be grateful for your making decisions.

BREAKING BREAD TOGETHER

In April the people of St. Mark's served 80 people a delicious meal of meatloaf and scalloped potatoes. Thanks to Joyce Hart for playing some of our favorite music. We rejoice for the hands that prepared the meal, served it, and cleaned up – but most especially we rejoice for the chance to serve those in need.



MOTHER HUBBARD'S CUPBOARD NEEDS YOUR HELP

In April Mother Hubbard's Cupboard served 140 families. This includes 389 individuals, 15 new families, and 61 first-time individuals (adults and children). Time and time again, we hear amazement about the magnitude of our ministry. None of it would be possible without the generosity of the people that have designated MHC as their opportunity to make a difference in our community. **Poverty is not going away – we served 63 more people in April than the month before. We are now distributing food monthly rather than every other month. A very big concern is for the school-age children when classes end in June. They will no longer receive a hot breakfast and lunch.**

There are also many non-food items that MHC needs. If you are willing to buy them for MHC, you can drop them off at any time we're open (Tuesday-Thursday, 9-12, and Friday, 2-5). Here's our current list:

- No show socks
- Wash cloths
- Sanitary pads

- Shampoo
- Toothpaste
- Toilet paper
- Laundry detergent
- Deodorant
- Liquid hand soap
- Tissues
- Combs
- Cat and dog food
- Gloves and hats (for fall)



Items for kids' bags:

- Fruit cups
- Applesauce cups
- Hot chocolate packets
- Granola bars
- Pop tarts
- Oatmeal packets
- Peanut butter crackers
- Juice boxes
- Fruit snacks
- Pencils and one-subject note books



WISH LIST



As I enjoyed the Sky Family's 90-minute concert, I experienced first-hand just how hard our pews are. While our services seldom are longer than an hour, they could be more comfortable if we had pew cushions. This item is not currently in our church budget, and I'm sure that the cost would be several thousand dollars to have them custom made for our pews. If you are interested in making a contribution toward this project, please let Father John or Joyce know and we'll find a suitable company (<https://www.churchsupplywarehouse.com/flat-based-cushions.html>).

We also would welcome contributions that we can use for landscaping our St. Francis Memorial garden. We would like to plant a beautiful assortment of bulbs next fall with the goal of having as many beautiful colors as possible throughout the year.