

# ST. MARK'S MESSENGER

## MAY 2026

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### FATHER JOHN'S EASTER REFLECTIONS

Many thanks to all who contributed to our Holy Week services: Tracey, Deb, and Blair worked heroically on our linens and flowers; our readers did overtime on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday (a new service for St. Mark's). While disappointed that our attendance in 2026 was lower than in 2025, I am grateful for the richness of our liturgical tradition and the faithful attendance of many people.

Scout Sunday was a real treat on April 12. I was delighted to have the front pews filled with Scouts, their leaders, and their parents. I was so glad to meet them. One Cub scout, who listened carefully to my sermon and the joke about squirrels, waited in line so that he could ask me to tell my story of hand-to-hand combat with a squirrel. I was touched and glad that he hopes to become an Eagle scout.



Kaley's long-awaited concert on April 12 was a delight. How terrific to share her gifts not just with the parish but the larger community.

May you have a blessed Eastertide until Pentecost on May 24, which coincidentally marks my ninth anniversary as your priest. Father John ✠

### MAY AT ST. MARK'S

We will have a very busy month. On Saturday, May 2, I'll head to Harrisburg to hear a presentation on how the Episcopal Church is changing – and needs to change. Who wants to go with me? The Rev. Stephanie Spellers has studied closely the cultural changes that lead many young people to indicate “none of the above” when asked to indicate their religious

background. She calls this group the “nones.”

Another group is the “dones.” These folks have tried church or churches and want nothing to do with them.

How can our church reach out successfully to these folks?

On Sunday, May 3, at 2PM, we present the next concert in our “First Sunday” program. Two doctoral students in piano performance at Penn State, Yucheng Xu and Xiang Su, will play a handful of classical works arranged for two pianos. I guarantee that you will never have heard or seen such a spectacular performance. Each of these is a brilliant pianist (Yucheng has accompanied our services several times). Please bring a friend.

On May 10, we will celebrate Mother’s Day. The Bible uses 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 who protects her chicks.

**Piano Duet Recital**  
Sunday, May 3, 2026 at 2pm  
at St. Mark’s, 21 South Main Street, Lewistown, PA

*Yucheng Xu and Xiang Su, pianists*

**Johann Sebastian Bach**  
Hunting Cantata, BWV 208 - No. 9,  
“Sheep May Safely Graze”

**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**  
Andante and Variations in G Major, K. 501

**Camille Saint-Saëns**  
Danse Macabre, Op. 40

**Claude Debussy**  
Petite Suite, L. 65

**Anton Arensky**  
Six Children’s Pieces, Op. 34

And more to be announced



After the concert there will be refreshments in the Parish House.  
We will take up a collection to benefit our Shelter.

Questions?  
rector@stmark-lewistown.org  
or 814-571-0687


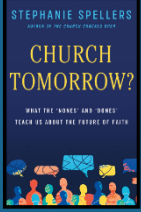
THE *Episcopal* CHURCH 

# THE CHURCH IS CHANGING. HOW WILL WE RESPOND?

*Not just preserving the Church—  
but becoming who God is calling us to be.*

An Afternoon with  
The Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers

**Saturday, May 2  
2-4 pm  
St. Stephen's  
Episcopal Cathedral  
Harrisburg PA**




2:00 PM – Gathering  
2:15 PM – Teaching with Canon Spellers  
3:30 PM – Reception & Book Signing  
4:00 PM – Optional Taizé Eucharist

At a time when many are spiritually curious but disconnected from the Church, Canon Stephanie Spellers invites us to listen deeply, reimagine boldly, and follow the Spirit into a future shaped by belonging, justice, and transformation.

Free event  
registration requested

Sponsored by the  
Diocese of the Susquehanna Evangelism  
Commission  
and  
St. Stephen's Episcopal Cathedral

**RSVP**  
<https://bit.ly/4tczEfr>



Let us thank God for all who have loved us – Moms, Grandmas, and Aunts as well as Dads,

Grandpas, and Uncles. Families come in all shapes and sizes: let us be grateful for those who have shaped us.

Later in May we will place flags on the graves of our veterans for Memorial Day and will celebrate both Memorial Day and Pentecost on May 24 with special prayers and music.



## PENTECOST 2026

The first Pentecost arrived not with quiet certainty, but with a rush—like wind through open windows, like breath returning to weary lungs. The disciples, once hidden in fear, found themselves swept into something far greater than their own understanding. Flames, resting above them, did not consume but awakened; voices

once hesitant now carried across languages, across boundaries, across hearts.

In that moment, the Spirit did not erase differences—it spoke through them. Strangers became neighbors. Confusion gave way to clarity, and isolation gave way to community. What began as a small, trembling gathering became a living, growing body, sent into the world with courage and joy.

Pentecost reminds us that God still breathe life into ours—calling us beyond fear, beyond comfort, into a shared story of grace. We are not left alone. We are gathered, filled, and sent.

What does God have planned for this parish? Parishes are like a person: they grow, learn, adapt. They have both a past AND a future. God is not done with us.



## MOTHER HUBBARD'S CUPBOARD & BREAKING BREAD TOGETHER

In March MHC provided food to 514 people; we also provided special Easter meals in early April.

## ADULT EDUCATION (FORMATION) AT ST. MARK'S

Most churches have Adult Education on Sundays for children and adults, but did you know that we have TWO classes? One meets on Sundays from 9AM to 9:30 and is currently reading Joan Chittister's *The Monastic Heart: 50 Simple Practices for a Contemplative and Fulfilling Life*. The other one meets on Wednesdays from 10:45 to 11:30 or so. We are currently doing Bible study, discussing the lessons that we will hear on Sundays through a different lens. What don't we understand in the text? How do the lessons work together or work against each other? What points, questions, or issues are raised in the texts as we look at today's world, our own community, and our own lives.

Which one interests you?

## **PRAYER LIST**

We pray for Myra Bannon, Judy Clare, Wade Colyer, Mary Daily, Larry Lasher, Shirley Mancino, Tony Hatfield-Nicholson, Deacon Carole Mease, Susan Morse, Sandy Stelts, Lynn Stricker, Nancy Vickers, Bob Welham, and Evelyn Wilson.

## **MAY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES**

3—Second Anniversary of Ashlyn and Lane Kuhns; 15—Dan Dillon, 18—Jeff Baumgardner, 20—Anniversary of Hal and Sandy Jenkinson, 23—Richard Walters, 30—Jon Myers

**ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
21 SOUTH MAIN STREET  
LEWISTOWN, PA 17044**