

St. Mark's Messenger

July 2026

FATHER JOHN'S REFLECTIONS

Summer finally arrived at St. Mark's on June 21. After a very cold spring, the weather suddenly turned wonderful. The Amish farmers' markets are once again of wonderful produce and we are enjoying the chance to walk outside without jackets. Hallelujah!

The passage of the seasons reminds us of the passage of time. In 1876, Lewistown had a float that dramatized the signing of the Declaration of Independence: I am sure that there were speeches and the ringing of church bells.

In 1976, fifty years ago, Lewistown celebrated the bicentenary of the United States. I've seen pictures of Cynthia McKinley dressed as Dorcas Buchanan, and some of you will remember other local events. Were there public speeches or concerts? Parades or picnics? Let me know.

In 2026, as part of the America 250 program, St.



1876-Float in Lewistown Bicentennial Parade

Mark's sponsored a talk about the "First Lady" of Lewistown, Dorcas Buchanan: we drew about 150 people to the parish house because we wanted to honor her memory and celebrate our history. Yes, we're still here. The church is directly across from where Dorcas lived. She would not recognize our modern world: not just cars but also cell phones. Electricity would seem like magic. Out with the country store that she ran in her house and in with Walmart and Amazon.

In our church service on July 5, we will have music, prayers, and reflections as we ponder what we cherish and give thanks for the blessings of citizenship in this nation and community. May we be strong, wise, and merciful in the century ahead. Here is the collect for Independence Day in our Book of Common Prayer:

LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, IN WHOSE NAME THE FOUNDERS OF THIS COUNTRY WON LIBERTY FOR THEMSELVES AND FOR US, AND LIT THE TORCH OF FREEDOM FOR NATIONS THEN UNBORN: GRANT, WE BESEECH THEE, THAT WE AND ALL THE PEOPLE OF THIS LAND MAY HAVE GRACE TO MAINTAIN THESE LIBERTIES IN RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PEACE; THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, WHO LIVETH AND REIGNETH WITH THEE AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD, FOR EVER AND EVER. AMEN.

Father John✠

MOTHER HUBBARD'S CUPBOARD AND BREAKING BREAD TOGETHER

In May we helped more than 600 folks at Mother Hubbard's Cupboard. A year earlier we helped about 500. Why the change? Inflation and the sharply increased cost of energy have really stretched people's budgets. We continue with our summer program of providing extra food for families with school-age children. During the school year, these kids received breakfast and lunch at school. We want to help feed them now that school is out.

On June 23, we served 75 guests a "crowd favorite": smash burgers. Our volunteers are now wearing name tags so that our guests can get to know who we are. We are also inviting folks to worship with us on Wednesdays and Sundays.

MUSICAL HIGHLIGHTS COMING OUR WAY

On June 21 we said farewell to Kaley Yeager, who served us as our music leader for almost four years. She was not only a musician; she was also a member, confirmed by Bishop Audrey Scanlan. We are grateful for her many gifts and wish her the best in her new career.

While Joanne Yang is visiting her parents in Taiwan this summer, we will have guest pianists and soloists until she returns at the end of August. At that time we'll be joined by our new music leader, Nic Stark, who provided a marvelous concert in June.



Nic holds adjunct instructor positions at Lycoming College & Carl Albert State College. He earned his Master's of Music in Voice Performance and Pedagogy from Penn State and his Bachelor's of Musical Arts from Oklahoma Baptist University. Nic is an exceptionally talented musician who loves classical, religious, and popular music. He grew up in the Southern Baptist Church and knows by heart many of the hymns we love to sing. Look for him to use a guitar from time to time.

On August 2, our "First Sunday" concert will feature Josh Evert and Jonah Glunt. Both have performed many times at St.

Mark's, so you can already be sure that the concert will be great. Josh will sing lots of favorites from years gone by: the Frank Sinatra era.

We do not yet have a September concert scheduled, but stay tuned for further developments.



PROPERTY UPDATES

Thanks to a busy crew of workers, we have cleaned up, pruned, and mulched the beautiful area behind the church.

PRAYER LIST

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

JULY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

3—Georgia Olson; 4—Joyce Sabol; 8—Jeff Wilson; 9—Phyllis Sikorsky; 11—Lillian Myers and Cathy Beers; 13—Anniversary of Tony & Sharon Hatfield-Nicholson; 22—Anniversary of Tim and Tracey Mckee; 23—Fred McKinley

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