

# THE PARISH POST

July 2009

**St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
4200 Londonderry Road, Harrisburg, PA 17109  
(717) 652-6700**

**www.stmarksharrisburg.org  
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The Rev. James E. Person, 717-695-7525**

## FROM THE PASTOR

Joshua did what Moses ordered in order to fight Amalek. And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went to the top of the hill. It turned out that whenever Moses raised his hands, Israel was winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, Amalek was winning. But Moses' hands got tired. So they got a stone and set it under him. He sat on it and Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on each side. So his hands remained steady until the sun went down. Joshua defeated Amalek and its army in battle. (Exodus 17:10-13 (The Message))

There have been volumes written on "great men and women of the Bible"; Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, the prophets of the Old Testament, Mary, Elizabeth, the apostles, and many others. Perhaps the "greatest of the great" was Moses, of whom we read in the passage above. When I think of this great man of God, I conjure up the image of Charleton Heston raising his arms over the Red Sea, parting the waters for the Israelites to cross, according to God's orders.

As a pastor I sometimes see myself in a Moses-like position, called by God to be a leader of His people.

My vision is not, of course, on such a grand scale as that to which Moses was called. I am not delusional in thinking that I might even come close to leading as Moses did, (and honestly wonder if I would want to be called to such a challenge). In a much humbler way, though, I think all leaders in the Church walk at least a few miles in Moses' hard-to-fill sandals.

Even as I am reminded that none of God's great leaders ever accomplished what they did without facing challenges, I am encouraged by passages like the one above that talks about how God sends us to be helpers and supporters of one another in answering his call to mission and ministry. As leaders in the Church, we may not be engaged in physical battle against opposing armies, but we are, as are all believers, engaged in battle nonetheless. In this spiritual battle it is obvious that, many times, we need the help and support of those who "hold up our hands" so that we can remain steady in our efforts.

As God has blessed us with new growth here at St. Marks' he has also blessed us with new opportunities for ministry and, thankfully, ministers to take advantage of those opportunities. From Congregation Council to ministry chairpersons, to everyone involved in the life of this church, we seem to have more people

<b>PURPOSE STATEMENT - St. Marks is a church that</b>	
<b>P</b> raises God	Worship
<b>R</b> elishes Relationships	Fellowship
<b>A</b> cts as God's Ambassadors	Evangelism
<b>Y</b> earns to Learn	Discipleship
<b>S</b> erves God and Our Neighbors	Ministry

involved in ministry here every week. Where I was once concerned that much of our growth was only “on the surface”, I feel more confident every day that the underlying support needed to “keep our hands raised” is now growing as well.

While all of God’s great people faced challenges, they also were blessed with equally great people who helped them meet those challenges. Moses could not have continued to support Israel in battle if it were not for Aaron and Hur. Likewise, in the modern Church great things will happen through the combined efforts of many great people, not just a few gifted leaders. God has blessed us all with some sort of gift that can be used to lead or support our mission and ministry, some in traditional ways, some in ways we may not even be aware of yet.

One of the places we have folks generously sharing gifts and abilities is on Congregation Council. Many thanks to all who serve this important ministry and to those who have served recently and in years past. Each council leaves a legacy for the ones to follow and that legacy has lead us to where we are now as a congregation. Our current council is a well-rounded representation of our congregation as a whole.

We have a good balance of men and women along with a range of ages from teen-aged to “somewhat more mature.” Everyone on Council is involved in at least one ministry of the congregation and as such provides a leadership connection that is vital to our support of one another. Of course, Congregation Council could not work without the support of Ministry chairpersons and members. If we want to read about “God’s Great Men and Women” all we need to do it pull out our membership directory. Thanks be to God for the able and willing ministers of St. Mark’s Lutheran Church.

Your partner in ministry,




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## ST. MARK’S BOOK CLUB

The following list of books will be read and discussed in the coming months. If you have read any of the books, please join us for our discussions.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Book</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Facilitator</u>
6/25	Night	Elie Wiesel	John S. Herigan
7/23	The Five People You Meet In Heaven	Mitch Albom	Harry Roat
8/27	Three Cups of Tea	Greg Mortensen	
9/24	90 Minutes In Heaven	Don Piper	
10/22	Tuesdays with Morrie	Mitch Albom	
12/3	The Noticer	Andy Andrews	Donna Lee
1/28	Mr. America	Mark Adams	Pastor Jim

## EXITING COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Dear Members of St. Mark's,

It has been a very good year at St. Mark's. We have had the 50th Anniversary Celebration with the Gala at the Blue Ridge Country Club. We have had the Extravaganza. And we have made the commitment and have raised the funds to purchase a new Carillon. These are the highlights but are but several of the events and accomplishments of the past year.

We now embark upon a new Church program year. We will face new challenges and will realize new accomplishments. Hopefully, our membership will continue to increase and our ministry and outreach will continue to flourish. We must fulfill our responsibility to meet our financial commitment to our mission. We know that we, both as a congregation and as families and individuals, will face difficult economic challenges during the coming year. However, we must view our resources in terms of Abundance rather than in terms of scarcity. We must understand that everything we have belongs to God and that we are but stewards of his bounty.

Our Ministries have accomplished much during the past year. However, God has much more work for us to do. I urge each of us to become actively involved in the work of one or more Ministries so that much good can be done. One of the positive programs which will be established in the coming year is the Harrisburg Family Promise Program which was outlined by John Bechtel on May 31. This program was enthusiastically endorsed by the Social Services Ministry and the Congregational Council. Marian Person will be the coordinator for St. Mark's, and I urge all of you to give her your enthusiastic assistance.

Finally, I wish to thank Pastor Jim and the members of the congregation for your support and assistance during my two years as Congregational Council President. We have made some positive strides and accomplishments, but it would not have been possible without your efforts. I am confident that our congregation will continue to move forward during the coming years.

We are here on this earth to do God's work, and together we will do it.

God bless and keep you!

*Jim Carl*

## NEW COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Dear Sisters & Brothers in Christ,

As you may already know, I was elected to Council at the June 7 congregational meeting, and elected Council president at the re-organizational meeting on June 16. I'd like to take this first letter to introduce myself.

Many of you already know Molly and I, and our kids James (16) and Kimberly (13, or she will be in August). We have been members of St. Mark's since November 1991, about seven months after we were married.

I've sung in church choirs since high school, and the choir was one reason I was attracted to St. Mark's. I also assist with Communion, and serve as lector regularly.

I previously served on Council about 12 years ago, including a term as vice president, and have served on the Worship, Music, and Arts, Mutual Ministry, and Endowment ministries.

I hope to learn more about what each ministry is doing by attending their meetings over the coming months. Although it may be hard for me to not voice my opinions and suggestions, I want to start by listening.

Please feel free to contact me with any hopes, concerns, or thanksgivings you may have about St. Mark's. I can be reached at 657-7725 or stonetown.jd@verizon.net.

Yours in Christ,

*Dave Stanton*

**BLANKS** - If you see Blank spots on the "THOSE WHO SERVE" page, we would like YOU to Lector, Greet, Flower or Bread Delivery, or Altar Care, please contact the Coordinator! These tasks are not hard and we give instructions for those who need them.

## THANK YOU NOTES

Dear Friends,

I am remiss in not thanking you for the many cards, flowers, phone calls, remembrances and prayers which have been given to me in the past months.

Your thoughts and kindness have been of great comfort during these trying times for me and my family.

May God richly bless you as you obey His will to love one another!

In Christian Love,  
*Peg Harnish*

Dear St. Mark's Family,

I can not thank you enough for the cards, telephone calls, meals, and offer's of rides etc. during my most recent eye surgery. It is just amazing all the warm and kind members we have in our church.

Sincerely,  
*Marsha Nicodemus*

St. Mark's,

Thank you so much for welcoming me into your congregation for the past 9 months. It has been a wonderful blessing to be part of your family. May your ministry continue to be a blessing to others. Keep in touch!

In Christ,  
*Cassandra Lamb*

Dear Friends at St. Mark's Lutheran Church,

We write to thank you for your support for the Teaching Parish program at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg. The intense involvement in the everyday life of a congregation that you have provided enables the Teaching Parish program to be a vital part of field education. Along with the important work of individual mentoring given by your pastor/s, the hospitality of the congregation is integral to shaping the ministerial formation of Cassandra Lamb.

The students have completed a successful year of reflection and study focused on the work of the

congregation. In small group sessions, personal conferences, reading, writing, and observing, the importance of your congregation's ministry has been evident. Because of your willingness to open your congregation's programs and your homes and lives to a student, the context, joys, and challenges of ministry have become real in a concrete way, and the theological reflections of our students are anchored in a living experience.

We are always looking for ways in which our seminary teaching can better reflect upon and interact with the realities of parish ministry. If you have any suggestions for ways that we can improve our program, please do not hesitate to contact us.

In gratitude for our partnership in Christ,

The Rev. Dr. Maria Erling  
The Rev. Dr. William Avery  
Director of Teaching Parish  
The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg

Dear Friends at St. Mark's,

My sincere thanks for all of the prayers, cards and calls I received during my recent surgeries.

Your thoughtfulness was, and is, greatly appreciated.

In Christian Love,  
*Harriet Mark*

Dear St. Mark's Family,

Thank you to everyone for your cards and prayers during my recent hospitalizations and recovery. I want to especially thank Pastor Person for his visit, and Lisa Evans who filled in as Julie's "surrogate mom" during Senior Recognition Sunday.

God Bless You,  
*Nancy Rowe*

Thank you to all my friends at St. Mark's for all my birthday card and good wishes for my 76th birthday. They were greatly appreciated.

In Christian Love,  
*Gitta May*

Dear Church Family,

It is so wonderful to have a church family when one's biological family is not close by. With all the cards, prayers, visits, errands and taxi service for Roy, my stay here would be even more difficult for me. I never knew a broken leg could keep one in a rehab facility for so long.

I thank you one and all for the love, care and support you've given to both Roy and me.

With Christian Love,  
*Judith K. Leister*

I want to give a special and long overdue thank you to Bill Van Nieuwkuyk for making coffee EVERY Sunday for Coffee Hour. I don't know how many people know that Bill has been doing this for "quite a few years", but he does it tirelessly, sometimes coming Saturday nights to get it ready. I need my coffee in the morning and I just want to say Thank you from Zara and many others too, I'm sure. Many thanks to those who provide the goodies that go so well with coffee!

**PLEASE NOTE** in an effort to ensure the continuing quality of the ministry and communication provided through *The Parish Post*, the Mutual Ministry Committee asks that all articles submitted for publication in *The Parish Post* be submitted in complete form, as they will appear in *The Parish Post*. Handwritten or typed articles are OK, but content should be complete when submitted. If an article needs to be written from an outline or other minimal content, it should be submitted by the Thursday prior to the final deadline for submissions. The final deadline for Parish Post information will continue to be the third Sunday of the month preceding the month in which the information is to appear, unless affected by holidays or other circumstances.

Submission dates for upcoming *Parish Post* articles are:

July 19th for the August *Parish Post*  
 August 16th for the September *Parish Post*  
 September 20th for the October *Parish Post*

Material submitted after the deadline will appear the following month if the information *is still pertinent*.

## WAY TO GO!!!

Below are listed several youth in our congregation who have received awards and have assumed positions of leadership in various organizations. Congratulations to all of you, keep up the good work!!

**Casi Frey** – Received the Most Improved Cheerleader Award as well as the P.A.R.E. student of the month for April. P.A.R.E. stands for Positive Actions for Ram Efforts. The award is given to students who are active in school and community activities. The students must demonstrate good academic skills, responsibility, good behavior, friendliness, and helpfulness.

**Damieon Frey** – Was the co-chair of the 4 Diamonds fundraising committee and was the highest fundraiser for the junior class this year. He is also the co-chair of the 4 Diamonds Activities committee.

**Kimberly Stanton** – Kimberly received the Central Dauphin School District's Excellence In Braille Reading Award. This award was given to Kimberly because she showed the most improvement in her Braille reading and use of her technology. She is now the fastest Braille reader in the district.

**Taylor Trout** – Achieved the rank of Life Scout and is the Senior Patrol Leader for Boy Scout Troop 302.

We would like to make this an ongoing feature in the Parish Post. We would like to acknowledge ALL who have received awards or honors, those celebrating special events such as special anniversaries, births, etc. We believe that with all of the negative things going on today, we need to accentuate the positive and recognize those that are making a difference in our church and community. If you have a submission, please contact Molly Stanton @ joyfulnoise4@verizon.net or (657-7725)

## CONGREGATIONAL MEMBER PROFILES

were given out at both services on June 7 and 14...If you have NOT received a Member Profile, please contact Zara Bennett at 732-3423. If you have NOT completed a Member Profile for *each member* of your family, please complete and return to the Ushers or Zara Bennett as soon as possible.

## LOOK FOR NEW FACES!

St. Mark's members look for new faces! Even more visitors will be coming to worship with us soon. Evangelism Ministry is sending personalized *Invite Cards*, this summer and fall, to people moving to St. Mark's area.

100 Invitations will be sent each month. Look for new faces, be friendly (as usual), if visitors feel welcome they will return. What to say: *Hi my name is (Bill or Jane) have I met you before?* (If a visitor) Ask if they received an *Invite Card*. Call the church office, 652-6700 with information about the visitor receiving a card.

See a sample of the *New Mover Card* posted on the Pastor's bulletin board.

## RALLY DAY/BRING-A-FRIEND

**SUNDAY** - Sunday September 13, is Rally Day/Bring-A-Friend Sunday. The Christian Education and Evangelism ministries are inviting you and your friends for a morning of food, fun, and fellowship. The Christian Education Ministry will provide refreshments after both services that day. We will be introducing the new curriculum (Spark) from Augsburg Fortress as well as introducing the teachers for the year, and the kids will show us what they did during Vacation Bible School. Worship services are at 8:15 and 11:00 with the Rally Day fun starting at 9:30 in the Fellowship hall. Hope to see you there!!!

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL** - Come join us for three nights of fun and discovery as we explore Discovery Canyon. Vacation Bible School will be held from Wednesday August 26 through Friday August 28 from 6:00PM – 8:00PM. There will be a potluck dinner each night beginning at 5:00PM. We are in need of volunteers to make this event happen. If you are interested, please contact Marian Person or Tracey Swetnam.

## GRACE IS A GIFT

When we work an eight-hour day and receive eight hours' pay for our efforts, that is a WAGE.

When we compete with an opponent and receive a trophy for our superior performance, that is a PRIZE.

When we receive something in recognition for our service or achievement, that is an AWARD.

But when we can earn no wage, can win no prize and deserve no award — yet we receive such a gift — that is unmerited favor. That is undeserved kindness. That is GRACE.

## HOW TO PRAY

Pray where you are. God is present everywhere and ready to listen.

Pray, when possible, in a quiet place where you can be alone. It is good to fix your mind deliberately on God, apart from confusing distractions.

Pray to God simply and naturally, as to a friend. Tell him what is on your mind. Get help from the prayers of others.

Pray, remembering the good things God has done for you. Give thanks for all your blessings.

Pray for God's forgiveness for the unworthy things you may have done. He is near to a humble and contrite heart.

Pray especially for those things that will make your life more Christlike.

Pray for others, remembering the help they need for the situations they confront.

Pray for the world in its need, and for God to guide you toward ways you can help.

Pray that God's will be done in you. His purposes are deeper and wiser than our own.

Pray, and then allow God to answer your prayer.

## LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD TWENTY-SECOND ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

On Thursday June 11 through Saturday June 13 the annual assembly was held at Messiah College, Grantham. Zara Bennett and Cal Smith served as our congregation's delegates. Pastor Person was also a voting member of the assembly as well as April Trout who is a Synod Council Member.

The following summarizes the activities and business of the sessions:

- Election of Synod Council Members, Synod Treasurer, Gettysburg Seminary Board, and Other Committees.
- Approved Synod Budget for 2010
- Memorials/Resolutions adopted:
  - Staff Salary Guidelines For 2010
  - Proposed Social Statement on Human Sexuality
  - Require Super Majority (two-thirds) for changes of church policy
  - Further coordination of Lutheran Disaster Response efforts
  - Support of Strategy for peace-making in Israel/Palestine conflict
  - Ushering in fullness of leadership potential for diverse peoples
  - Approved Care of Creation/encourage efforts to reduce waste 10%

Additionally, there were three worship services, and several bible studies and forums. A highlight was the Ordination of one 2009 seminary graduate and the Installation of Synod Staff service on Friday evening.

As delegates, we found the experience most interesting and uplifting. Meeting many members of Synod Staff, Clergy, and lay delegates during the sessions provided invaluable insights and associations. Registered attendees totaled 798. We thank the congregation for sending us and wish to encourage you, if you haven't already attended the assembly, to seriously consider volunteering for this valuable experience sometime in the future.

Zara Bennett & Cal Smith

### Treasurer's Report Summary May 2009

	<b>RECEIPTS</b>		<b>EXPENDITURES</b>
	<b><u>May 09</u></b>		<b><u>May 09</u></b>
Operating	\$22,197	Operating	\$21,035
Benevolence	<u>2,483</u>	Benevolence	<u>2,287</u>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>24,680</b>		<b>23,322</b>
Hunger	202	Hunger	180
Building Fund	610	Building Fund	0
Memorial Fund	125	Memorial Fund	0
Designated Funds	5,865 (1)	Designated Funds	7,281 (2)
Nursery Sch payroll	<u>4,790</u>	Nursery Sch payroll	<u>4,902</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$36,272</b>		<b>\$35,685</b>

(1) Receipts include: Nursery School Scholarships \$76; Youth \$200; Mission Partner \$248; Carillon Fund \$1,979; Evangelism Outreach \$75; Seasonal Flowers \$216; Communion Cups \$31; Bible Study Books \$300; Youth Trips \$2,667; and Senators Tickets \$72.

(2) Expenditures include: Mellinger (Seminararian) \$338; Seasonal Flowers \$835; Food Bank \$361; CCU \$ 311; Discretionary Fund (D Fd) \$700; Misc. (Assembly Registration) \$555; Carillon Fund \$ 3,498; and Bible Study Books \$ 683.

Calvin Smith  
Treasurer

## NEWS ADVISORY: ST. MARK'S TEENS "WILL STARVE FOR FOOD" FOR CHILDREN WORLDWIDE.

**WHO:** Local teens & youth groups will participate in World Vision's **30 Hour Famine** - getting a real taste of hunger to help feed and care for children living in extreme poverty around the world. They join half a million teens nationwide aiming to raise more than \$12 million to fight world hunger.

**WHAT:** Now in its 18th year, World Vision's 30 Hour Famine raises awareness and money to fight hunger both overseas and in the United States. During the 30 hours, teens "will starve for food" - the theme for this year's Famine — by going without food (consuming only liquids) for 30 hours to experience what the poorest children and families face every day. They also perform hands-on community service projects during the weekend in order to make a difference in their own community as well.

**WHEN:** Friday, July 24 and Saturday, July 25, 2009.

**WHERE:** Service Projects throughout the area include:  
 Helping our local food pantry  
 Raising money for needy families

### LOCAL CONTACT: CASI FREY - 540-1520

Additional information about the 30 Hour Famine can be found at [www.30hourfamine.org](http://www.30hourfamine.org)

#### Background:

More than half a million teens nationwide will participate in the 30 Hour Famine this year. Last year, \$12 million was raised, contributing to World Vision's response in countries worldwide where famine, conflict, and other crises make children vulnerable to hunger and preventable disease.

#### About World Vision:

World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to helping children and their communities worldwide reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty. World Vision the world's poor regardless of a person's religion, race, ethnicity, or gender. For more information, visit [www.worldvision.org](http://www.worldvision.org).

## ST. MARK'S NURSERY SCHOOL announces "ADOPT A STUDENT" PROGRAM

No, we're not giving you the opportunity to take one of our Nursery School students home, but we are giving you the opportunity to do something almost as important for them. Due to recent changes in state tax laws (reduction of EITC business tax credits, for one), our Nursery School will not be receiving some very important funding that it has received the last several years. Without this funding, we may have to reduce the amount of available scholarships. Some of our families rely heavily on these scholarships to be able to enroll their children in the top quality Christian learning environment we provide, especially in these uncertain economic times.

You can help by "Adopting" a student who attends, or would like to attend our school. We do our best to keep our tuition as reasonable as possible while still providing a quality program. Currently, tuition for two and three year olds is \$80 per month and for four year olds, \$102 per month. You may not get to know your "adopted" student personally (financial aid information is confidential) but your help would give you the joy of knowing that a child is able to attend a Christian Nursery School program thanks to your help.

If you are not able to provide full tuition for a student, be assured that any contribution you make will be a blessing in that it, along with others like it, will be used to help a family that may need partial tuition assistance. If you would like to contribute to this program, please call the Nursery School at 671-4855, use the "Nursery School" line on your yellow envelope, or place a contribution in the offering plate clearly marked "Nursery School".

Thank you for your support of this important ministry of St. Mark's,  
 Pr. Jim

**ST. MARK'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
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 Harrisburg, PA 17109

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## THE PARISH POST



## THE PARISH POST July 2009

### St. Mark's Church Council

<b>President</b>	James Carl
<b>Vice President</b>	Charles Reddinger
<b>Secretary</b>	Lisa Hand
<b>Treasurer</b>	Calvin Smith
<b>Financial Secretary</b>	Rita Trovalli
<b>Council Members</b>	Zara Bennett
	Greg Bennick
	Reuel Deppen
	Melissa McLaughlin
	Pastor Jim Person
	Molly Stanton
	Mary Sultzaberger
	Tracey Swetnam
	Lori Ulrich
	Donald Young
<b>Organist Emeritus</b>	Betty Briner
<b>Minister of Music</b>	Joyce Van Nieuwkuyk
<b>Church Secretary</b>	Kim DiPaolo
<b>Youth Director</b>	Jesse Woodrow

