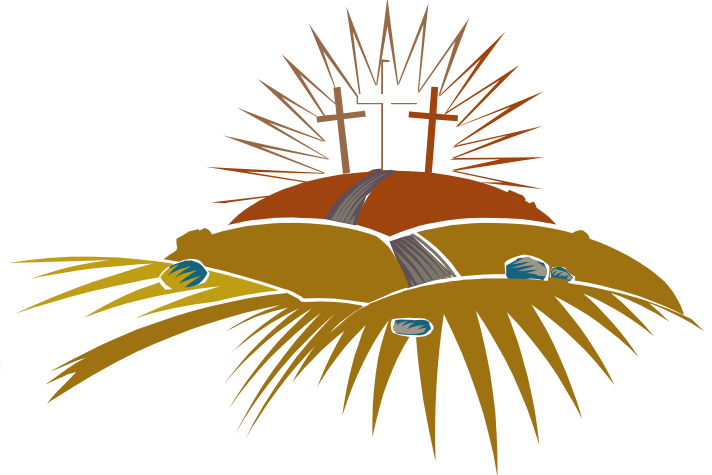


REMARKS

Volume 51
Number 3

March 2015



LENT

Many world religions use the image of the tree of life when depicting their central beliefs and values. For Christians, that tree of life is the cross. Our theme for these Lenten services focuses on the biblical use of the tree of life. Each week a biblical passage and a hymn cast some light on the cross of Christ as that image. The weekly repetition of Psalm 1 helps us memorize this important Jewish and Christian song.

LENTEN WORSHIP

SCHEDULE - WEDNESDAYS

12:15PM & 7:00PM

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March

“ GROWING DISCIPLES - MAKING CHRIST KNOWN ”



PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Family and Friends:

If you attended our Ash Wednesday service several weeks ago, you will recall the extended confession of sins that the service includes. The idea, of course, is that Lent is a time of repentance and so we begin the season by acknowledging all the ways we fall short of God's expectations of us. Of all the sins we confess, this year it was the confession of our "self-indulgent ways and appetites" that made me cringe. If I were to filter my days through this confession, I'm not sure there would be much left. It seems that in almost everything I do, I fall victim to a self-indulgent appetite.

For example, the sale of Girl Scout cookies always seems to coincide with the Lenten season (why do they do that!?) and Easter candy appears on the grocery store shelves right around the same time as Ash Wednesday. It's as if these marketers knew that trying to refrain from self-indulgent ways will only increase the likelihood of giving in—of "bingeing" on things like sugar to which recent reports say our bodies can become physically addicted. Yes, I have already eaten a whole box of Girl Scout cookies by myself.

Or, during the recent snow and ice, Ian and I discovered that our outside faucet was leaking. For about a full day before we could call the plumber, the flow of water was constant. How much clean water do we pour down the drain? How much healthy food sits rotting in our refrigerators?



Why is self-indulgence such a problem? It's not because God doesn't want us to be good to our bodies, but rather because it is part of our sinful human nature—because we go overboard. Martin Luther defined sin as the human being "curved in upon him/herself." Our self-indulgence is a sign that we are curved in upon ourselves, and when we can't see past our own needs (though really they're more like "wants"), there's no way we can be open to the needs of others. Many times, we don't even realize we are being negligent of others.

Lent is a time marked by Jesus' journey toward the cross—the cross by which God showed love for the *world*. Perhaps this season can become a time when we curb our self-indulgent appetites just a tad, so that the world comes closer to knowing the love shown on the cross. It's a constant pull, between getting what we think we need and resisting the urge. We will not always succeed, but we *will* become more aware of our need for God's grace, and the gift of that grace given to and for the world.

Lenten Blessings,
Pastor Emily



MARCH 2015

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Morning Prayer 8:30-9:15 AM Sunday School 9:30-10:15AM Traditional Worship 10:30 AM	2 10:00 AM Women's Book Grp. 10:30 AM Prayer Shawl Group 6:00 PM Carolina Clowns 7:00 PM "Four Books, One Story" online 7:00 PM AA Meeting	3 Staff Meeting 10:15 AM 6:45 PM Discipleship 3.0 Room in the Inn	4 St. Mark's Seniors 10:00 AM 12:15 PM Service 6:00 PM Handbells 6:00 PM Lenten Supper 7:00 PM Choir 7:00 PM Lenten Service 7:00PM Centering Prayer	5 11:30 PM St. Mark's Soup Kitchen 6:00 PM Theology on Tap	6 Men's Breakfast 7:00 AM Showmars, 7th & Pecan	7
8 DAYLIGHT SAVING Morning Prayer 8:30-9:15 AM 9:00 AM Rise and Shine Breakfast Sunday School 9:30-10:15AM Traditional Worship 10:30 AM	9 10:00 Women's Book Grp. 6:30 PM Exec. Mtg. 7:00 PM "Four Books, One Story" online 7:00 PM Council Mtg. 7:00 PM AA Meeting 7:00 PM Trichotillomania	10 Staff Meeting 10:15 AM 6:45 PM Discipleship 3.0 Room in the Inn	11 10:00 AM Love Circle 12:15 PM Service 6:00 PM Handbells 6:00 PM Lenten Supper 7:00 PM Choir 7:00 PM Lenten Service 7:00 PM Centering Prayer	12 11:30 PM St. Mark's Soup Kitchen Theology on Tap 6:00 PM	13  Men's Breakfast 7:00 AM	14
15 Morning Prayer 8:30-9:15 AM 9:00 AM Rise and Shine Breakfast Sunday School 9:30-10:15AM Traditional Worship 10:30 AM	16 10:00 AM Women's Book Group 7:00 PM Committee Mtg. 7:00 PM "Four Books, One Story" online 7:00 PM AA	17 Staff Meeting 10:15 AM 6:45 PM Discipleship 3.0 Room in the Inn 7:00 PM Christian Edu	18 12:15 PM Service 6:00 PM Handbells 6:00 PM Lenten Supper 7:00 pm Choir 7:00 PM Lenten Service 7:00 PM Centering Prayer	19 11:30 PM St. Mark's Soup Kitchen Theology on Tap 6:00 PM	20 Men's Breakfast 7:00 AM Showmars, 7th & Pecan	21
22 Morning Prayer 8:30-9:15 AM 9:00 AM Rise and Shine Breakfast Sunday School 9:30-10:15AM Traditional Worship 10:30 AM 12:00 PM Library Mtg.	23 10:00 AM Women's Book Grp 7:00 PM "Four Books, One Story" online 7:00 PM AA Meeting	24 Staff Meeting 10:15 AM 6:45 PM Discipleship 3.0 Room in the Inn	25 12:15 PM Service 6:00 PM Handbells 6:00 PM Lenten Supper 7:00 PM Choir 7:00 PM Lenten Service 7:00 PM Centering Prayer	26 11:30 PM St. Mark's Soup Kitchen Theology on Tap 6:00 PM	27  Men's Breakfast 7:00am Showmars, 7th & Pecan	28
29 Morning Prayer 8:30-9:15 AM 9:00 AM Rise and Shine Breakfast Sunday School 9:30-10:15AM Traditional Worship 10:30 AM	30 10:00 AM Women's Book Group 7:00 PM "Four Books, One Story" online 7:00 PM AA Meeting	31 Staff Meeting 10:15 AM 6:45 PM Discipleship 3.0 Room in the Inn	MARCH 8TH DAYLIGHT SAVINGS	MARCH 17TH ST. PATRICK'S DAY	MARCH 20TH SPRING BEGINS	





*"A Friend loves
AT ALL TIMES."*
Stephen Ministry
Is Here For You



Christ Caring; Stephen Ministry

After a long Epiphany season we are ready for the next season in our church year: Lent. And so we begin our journey of walking with the suffering Christ.

On this journey we are reminded of the good times that Christ enjoyed with his parents as he grew from birth to the precocious twelve year old who impressed others with his biblical knowledge and understanding. We are reminded of his ministry when he brought healing to many in distress. And the times with his disciples that must have included seaside barbeques. And now we are reminded of his suffering in many of the same ways that we suffer. It is no wonder that he knows how to comfort us when he has suffered as we have suffered – and more.

Stephen Ministry attempts to be “Christ in our presence” and to bring Christ’s comfort to folks in our congregation and in our community. Who exactly can benefit from Stephen Ministry?

Everybody benefits from Stephen Ministry. Those receiving care from Stephen Ministers benefit because they receive prayer and support throughout the crisis they face. Stephen Ministers benefit through the spiritual growth they experience when being involved in meaningful ministry to others. Our pastors benefit because caring ministry is a primary need and more people will receive care. Most of all *you* benefit from the knowledge that special care is available to you should you need it.

In addition, you have a place where you can refer a friend, neighbor, coworker, relative, or anyone else you know who is going through a difficult time so that they can receive special care when they need it most. Stephen Ministry makes St. Mark’s a much more caring place. Moreover, St. Mark’s is a place where Christ is caring.

During this Lenten journey together, may we experience once again our personal journey with the suffering Christ, and each in our own way extend Christ’s love to others—especially through the ministry of our Stephen Ministers.

Contact numbers are: Either Pastor Emily or Pastor Peter at 704-375-9185. Or you may contact Stephen Leader: Sarah Ingle at 704-529-6656.

Christian Education Highlights

As a team, we have accepted the budgetary challenges and have come up with some creative solutions that we hope will work well with our congregation as we are now and as we grow. First, we are looking into starting Godly Play with our elementary school Sunday School program. You can go to their website at www.godlyplay.org and learn more about the program. Once in place, the on-going costs are nominal. For our Confirmation program, the banquet held the night before Confirmation will be hosted by the families of the 6th and 7th graders in the Confirmation program as well as the Christian Ed team. It will take on a covered-dish style event with the same elegant service as in the past. Alex has scaled back some of the expenses of the Confirmation retreat without sacrificing content. The high school Sunday School class is very well attended and seems to be going well. No changes are planned at this time. Our adult programs will now include an on-line study accessible through the St. Mark's website. We hope this will reach those who are not able to attend any of the other offerings on Sunday or during the week. While the Bibles and Breakfast class has disbanded, the Adult Forum has taken on a new life with outstanding attendance. There is always room for more folks to join them!! The Agape class has become a little smaller and tighter, but is still graciously providing a solid Bible Study on Sunday mornings. The Parenting and Faith Development class is still going strong. Often times Alex overlaps the lessons with the high school classes, offering the opportunity for family discussions at home.

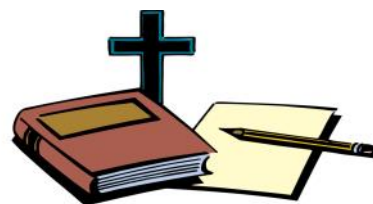
This year's VBS program will be Under Construction, by Habitat for Humanity July 13-16. It will only be 4 days to reduce the cost. We are so excited to offer this wonderful program. You will see more about it very soon. There are so many ways you can help us make this the best VBS yet!! Look for "New Construction" in the Narthex in mid-April!!

The Library is in a holding pattern for now and Stephen Ministry will continue to be supported by Christian Ed.

Do you want to join the Christian Education Team?? Do you have an idea that might help us be better stewards of our resources? Please feel free to contact anyone on the team!!

Blessings abound,
Laura Van Landingham
540.247.2843

Shelley Mobley
Gretchen Dodge
Marty Schwartz
Tim Berly
Kellie Chapman - Council Liaison
Pastor Emily



**CHRISTIAN
EDUCATION**

AROUND ST. MARK'S

SOCIAL MINISTRY

We are in the midst of Lent and with it comes our Lenten boxes and this year's recipient of our donations – **NeighborCare Project**. We supported them last year with our Lenten donation when they were first getting started and we were so impressed with what they are doing we wanted to support them again this year – double our efforts!

Until **NeighborCare** was formed, no agency in Mecklenburg County had been responsible for taking in homeless children when their mother was hospitalized. Some mothers had refused necessary hospital stay for fear of what would happen with their children. That changed thanks to a partnership between some local charities and Novant Health Presbyterian Medical Center. It appears to be the first of it's kind in the country!

Under this program, children are temporarily placed with a trained caregiver, then returned to their mother upon her discharge from the hospital. Caregivers are licensed, trained in childcare and subject to thorough background checks.

If you were not in church the couple of weeks in February when the boxes were passed out after the services, you can pick up a box and letter explaining this year's recipient from the table in the narthex near the entrance to the sanctuary or simply write a check to St. Mark's with **NeighborCare Project** on the memo line. If your children would like their own box, please feel free to take one for them. We ALL need to remember Jesus' journey to the cross.

Please help us support these children and their mothers in their time of need.

**LOVE CIRCLE
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2015
LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM, 10:00am**

Come in and feel the warmth of the Love Circle. Join us for our next Bible study and meeting on Wednesday, March 11 at 10:00.

**ST. MARK'S SENIOR MINISTRY
PROGRAM AND LUNCH
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2015 @ 10:00am**

Alice Blackwelder made two trips to China in the 1980's to demonstrate her painting and visit with other artists. She will share her experiences with them and her impressions of China as it struggled with cultural and economic reforms.

In contrast to the dynamic modern country we know today, China was just emerging from a planned economy to a mixed open market environment. Under Deng Xiaoping, this transition was known as "Socialism with Chinese characteristics."

Everyone is invited to hear Alice's recollections. You won't want to miss this interesting, informative program.

Please place your reservations for lunch with Fay Fisher, 704-376-1357.



March 2015

Sunday, March 8: Lunch at the Stevensons' house

We will carpool to the Stevensons' following the 10:30 worship service for lunch and fellowship. Parents can pick up their children there at 3:00 pm or at St. Mark's at 3:30 pm. Please RSVP to Alex.

Tuesday, March 17: Youth Serve at Room in the Inn

Youth will help perform all functions for Room in the Inn. Come to the kitchen at 5:30 pm, and pickup will be at 7:45 pm.

Sunday, March 22: Youth Sunday Preparations

Youth will meet for lunch and to begin preparations for Youth Sunday. Pickup will be at 2:00 pm.

Saturday, March 28: Hornets Faith & Family Day

Participants will enjoy a concert by Christian bands Chris August and Love and the Outcome before watching the Hornets play the Atlanta Hawks. Details will be sent to participants and their parents.

If you have any questions, please email Alex at dymalexenglish@gmail.com

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Alta Eger	March 2nd
Kellie Chapman	March 3rd
Jessica Chamness	March 4th
Virginia Edahl	March 4th
Cliff Edahl	March 5th
Whitney Goodson	March 6th
Clint Bollinger	March 7th
Emily Usinger	March 7th
Shelley Lower	March 11th
Donn Toney	March 11th
Lee George	March 12th
Katelyn Chapman	March 13th
Cyndi Cox	March 15th
Neil Dixon	March 18th
Bill Lockrow	March 18th
Shelley Sehorn	March 20th
Sandra Engelhard	March 22nd
Deanna Weckerle	March 23rd
James Conner	March 24th

Gail Chapman	March 25th
Keith Lindberg	March 25th
Madden Weckerle	March 25th
Robert Johnson	March 26th
Jackie Harms	March 28th
Laura Van Landingham	March 28th
Olivia Grant	March 30th
Evan Wenzel	March 30th
James Basinger, Jr.	March 31st



We celebrate with the following disciples of St. Mark's as they remember their baptism this month:

Cliff Edahl, Jr.	March 10th
Benny Cox	March 11th
Claire Lippert	March 11th
Jacob Wenzel	March 11th
Carol Goodall	March 13th
Alan Harms	March 15th
Virginia Stackel	March 17th
Katie Williams	March 17th
Louis Guentert	March 18th
Sam Temple	March 18th
Lois Todd	March 18th
Chloe Newsome	March 25th
Marc Ginns	March 28th
Thomas Connor	March 29th





MARCH SERVICE BLOCKS ST. MARK'S MEMBERS SERVING THIS MONTH

<p>USHERS: Tom Sehorn, Benny Cox, Tim Berly, Karen Covington, Bill Usinger, Dominic Andujar, Ainsley Stevenson</p>	
<p>ACOLYTES/CRUCIFERS: <u>March 1st:</u> C: Marshall Payne A: Ainsley Stevenson A: Erin Wall <u>March 8th:</u> C: Dawn Schwartz A: Ainsley Stevenson <u>March 15th:</u> A: Shelley Ferner</p>	<p>ACOLYTES/CRUCIFERS CON'T. <u>March 22nd:</u> C: Betsy Wenzel A: Virginia Ginns <u>March 29th:</u> C: Emily Usinger A: Dawn Schwartz A: Lauren Dunlap</p>
<p>CHILDREN'S CHURCH: <u>March 1st:</u> Emily Foley <u>March 8th:</u> Shelley Mobley <u>March 15th:</u> Christine Kuznia <u>March 22nd:</u> Brandi Dotson <u>March 29th:</u> Lori Zubrod</p>	<p>NURSERY: <u>March 1st:</u> Gretchen Payne <u>March 8th:</u> Amanda Platt & Janet Evans <u>March 15th:</u> Flint & Emily Foley <u>March 22nd:</u> Open <u>March 29th:</u> Christine Kuznia & Ryan & Jule wilt</p>
<p>GREETERS: <u>March 1st:</u> Judy Cox, Gene & Marie Anne Daniels <u>March 8th:</u> Neil & Charlotte Dixon, Brandi Dotson <u>March 15th:</u> Eileen Dunlap, Gretchen Dodge <u>March 22nd:</u> James & Sarah East, Bonnie Eckerd <u>March 29th:</u> Jackie Ellington, Sandra Englehard</p>	<p><i>Thank you everyone for your faithful service!</i></p>
<p>LECTORS: <u>March 1st:</u> Ian Hartner <u>March 8th:</u> Bonnie Eckerd <u>March 15th:</u> Anne Conner <u>March 22nd:</u> Andrew Dixon <u>March 29th:</u> Marty Schwartz</p>	<p>TABULATORS: <u>March 1st & 8th:</u> David & Nancy Kutscher, Steve McCall, Dianne Thomas <u>March 15th, 22nd & 29th:</u> Barbara Baker, Cliff Edahl, Susan League</p>
<p>PRAYER ASSISTANTS: <u>March 1st:</u> Larry Dagenhart <u>March 8th:</u> Anne Crotty <u>March 15th:</u> Youth <u>March 22nd:</u> Ernie Marion <u>March 29th:</u> Larry Lippert</p>	<p>SOUND SYSTEM: <u>March 1st:</u> Tom Sehorn <u>March 8th:</u> Kevin Feezor <u>March 15th:</u> Tom Sehorn <u>March 22nd:</u> Seth Parrish <u>March 29th:</u> Ernie Marion</p>
<p>COMMUNION ASSISTANTS: <u>March 1st:</u> Kevin Feezor, Charles Lakeman, Anne Crotty, Marc Ginns <u>March 8th:</u> Neil Dixon, Lowell Englehard, Janice Miller, Anne Conner <u>March 15th:</u> Mike Doyne, Sarah Ingle, Donn toney, Vicki Holtz-Longshaw</p>	<p>COMMUNION ASSISTANTS CON'D <u>March 22nd:</u> Jay Jacob, Barbara Baker, Kellie Chapman, Bonnie Eckerd <u>March 29th:</u> Doug Milheim, Carolyn Usinger, Eric & Beverly Timm</p>

MEMORIAL AND HONOR GIFTS

There are many ways to offer gifts in memory of our brothers and sisters in Christ who are now part of the Church triumphant, and in honor of those for whose lives with us now we are grateful. Following is a list of such gifts received as of February 20, 2015.

Fund Designation

In Memory of Edward Marz

Ben & Faye Blankenship

Gifts & Memorials

In Memory of Linda Simon

Carolyn Hughes

Debt Reduction

In Memory of Eleanor Purpur

Charlotte Area Lutheran Men

Gifts & Memorials

In Memory of Boyce Campbell

Joyce Campbell

Soup Kitchen

In Memory of James & Evelyn Smith

Doug & Lynn Sanders

Gifts & Memorials

In Honor of Larry & Sarah Dagenhart

Ron & Betsy Wenzel

Debt Reduction

In Honor of Jeanne Donohoe 90th Birthday

Karen Covington

Soup Kitchen

In Honor of Louis Guentert

David & Nancy Kutscher

Debt Reduction



ST MARK'S Lutheran Church

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Website: www.saintmarkscharlotte.org

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Mr. Les Ackerman X226
Director of Music Ministry/Organist
lackerman2@aol.com

Mr. Alex English X224
Director of Youth Ministry
dymalexenglish@gmail.com

Ministers
All the disciples / members of St. Mark's



APRIL REMARKS

The deadline for the April
ReMarks is noon on March 20th.
Pictures, articles, and suggestions are
WELCOME! Please submit to
stmarksekca1001@gmail.com