



The Parish Post

FEBRUARY 2022

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

www.stmarksharrisburg.org
e-mail: stmarksharrisburg@gmail.com
The Rev. James E. Person, 717-712-8191



"All flesh is like grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord endures forever." That word is the good news that was announced to you. First Peter 1:24,25 (NRSV)

About a week ago, I had a dream, which is nothing new. I dream a lot and tend to remember a lot of what I dream about. This particular dream was about an anvil.

I don't put a lot of stock in dreams, I don't think they are always prophetic and, even though God often communicated, and perhaps still does communicate, with people through dreams, I don't think every dream carries some special message from God. I tend to believe that dreams are mostly influenced by events or experiences of the recent past, and sometimes make no sense at all. That being said, my recent dream wasn't about just any anvil, it was about a small anvil that sits on my workbench in my garage/gym, an anvil that I see almost every day.

What impressed me most about my dream was that, sometime during or shortly after the dream ended, I had the distinct thought that "the anvil is a symbol of strength." Realizing that that strength can be both physical and spiritual, I began to do a little in-depth research (surfing the web!) I found a surprising number of instances of others also seeing the anvil as symbolic of Christian faith. One example is a poem attributed to John Clifford:

The Anvil of God's Word

"Last eve I paused beside the blacksmith's door,
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;
Then looking in, I saw upon the floor,

"Just one," said he, and then with twinkling eye,
'The anvil wears the hammers out, you know.'

MISSION STATEMENT: Nourished by Word and Sacrament, the mission of the members of St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church is to spread God's Word in Jesus Christ through our thoughts, words, and actions, proclaiming God's good news for all to hear and live.

Old hammers, worn with beating years of time.

“How many anvils have you had,’ said I,
‘To wear and batter all these hammers so?’

“And so, I thought, the Anvil of God’s Word
For ages skeptic blows have beat upon;
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The Anvil is unharmed, the hammers gone.”

One of the most interesting examples of the cross as a symbol of faith is the symbol of the African Methodist Episcopal Church the website of Greater St. Paul blacksmith will tell you, ham-



Besides having historical meaning for the AME church AME Church in Morgantown W VA states, “And, as any hammers may wear down, and many a man may lose his life to the exhaustion from the hard work of being a blacksmith, but the Anvil never fails. A [person] only needs to purchase one in his or her entire lifetime, and it continues to last through MANY lifetimes. So it is with God; He cannot be beaten down and He is Eternal. The Anvil represents our beginning and the lasting Strength of our Lord and Savior that never ceases.”

In the verse that opens this message, Peter paints a similar image by saying that **“the word of the Lord endures forever.”** That is an important promise for us to remember in days when a pandemic interrupts the important events of our lives, including worship and fellowship in the church. It is important for us to remember when war is threatened in faraway places that is sure to impact us in some way. It is important for us to remember when illness, financial setbacks, broken relationships, or any other hardship or suffering comes our way. **That word is the good news that was announced to you.**

God’s word brings us the message of salvation by grace through faith, it assures of the commitment of Jesus Christ in going to the cross on our behalf, it tells us of the gift of the Holy Spirit, sent by God to call us to faith and guide and strengthen us in living as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Maybe my dream of that small anvil that sits on my workbench was, in some way, a message from God after all. Regardless, it helps me, and I hope it helps others, to remember that, “though the noise of falling blows [is] heard, The Anvil is unharmed, the hammers gone.”

Your partner in ministry and mission,

Pr. Jim Person

ATTENTION: So we can keep our Data Base up-to-date, if you have changes to your name, address and phone number, you can call or send your updated information to church office.

From Council President

Hello St. Mark's,

I want to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy New Year! Here's hoping that we truly are nearing the end of the emergency portion of the COVID pandemic and will soon be able to start to more fully engage with each other.

We held our first council meeting of the year and I'm excited about some of the discussions that were held. We are trying to be as consistent and transparent as we can and you will note that the minutes of each meeting will be forwarded to the congregation via email blast. If you have not given your email information to either Loraine or Pastor Jim, please do. So much important information is shared via this method. We are hopeful that forwarding these minutes will be helpful. If you have any questions/suggestions, they are welcomed and will be entertained as an agenda action item. If you do not have a way to get information electronically, please call the office and request that information be mailed to you via USPS.

I am very happy to announce that our virtual viewing audience is growing. Our Christmas Eve noon service had over 1000 views and that was exciting. Our Sunday services and Bible Study classes are also showing an increase in views. More exciting things are planned for the future of our virtual department so stay tuned!

Even though we are still in the throes of COVID and still have to adhere to some restrictions, I feel that because of you, the amazing congregation of St. Mark's, we started 2022 with some wins. We have successfully stayed open thanks to all of you following the suggestions of the task force. These suggestions are not made cavalierly and were difficult to activate again. But thanks to your understanding we are doing well. With God's help and our prayers, we can hope these restrictions will be short lived.

Thank you also for your continued Stewardship to St. Mark's. We gratefully acknowledge those that have never stopped giving and those that have resumed their giving within the last year. We extend an invitation to those who have not given their financial gifts, to acknowledge our many blessings and step forward in faith and thanksgiving and do so. Each and every one of us is vital to the St. Mark's family.

Thank you again for your continued support and I pray that you all stay safe and healthy.

In Christian Love,
Sandy Sherwood, Council President

**Anita Featherman is collecting old used Wooden Sleds
any condition also Women's old Ice Skates. Call her at
(717)469-0840 and she will pick them up**



FEBRUARY

02/01 - Lori Ulrich	02/20 – Roberta Anderson
Carolyn Shadle	02/22 – Logan Fleegal
02/03 – Jenna Spencer	Jackson Fleegal
T. J. Bryan	Monique Brown
02/04 – Karen Smith	02/24 - Edward Shadle
02/08 – Zachary Dullen	Terry Stohler
02/09 – Xavier Webber	Jenny Sustak
02/11 – Griffin Phelan	02/26 - Donna Woodrow
Grace Phelan	02/27 - Matthew Dudek
02/13 - Emma Malette	Matthew Johns
02/16 - Cynthia Lang	02/28 - Paulette Beverly
Kenneth Lang	

If your birthday is in December and we missed it, please let us know. We hope you have a happy birthday anyway.

St. Mark's Book Club

Date	Book	Author	Facilitator
2022			
Feb. 24	Noel Street Richard	Paul Evans	_____
Mar. 24	Where the Crawdads Sing	Delia Owens	_____
Apr. 28	West With Giraffes	Linda Rutledge	_____

Book Club meets at 10:00 AM in the parlor

February 2022 Special Days

Black History Month — February 1-28, 2022

Groundhog Day — February 2, 2022

Boy Scout Sunday — February 8, 2022

Valentine's Day — February 14, 2022

Presidents' Day — February 21, 2022

Transfiguration Sunday — February 27, 2022

*Thank
you*



Dear St. Mark's Family,

Don and Jeanne Flickinger and family would like to thank St Marks Family for their prayerful thoughts, cards, telephone calls, and other expressions of sympathy on the sudden death of Charlie Reddinger (Jeanne's brother-in-law and former member of St. Mark's).

The Family is doing well. We grieve, but not without hope.

Thank you all for your love and prayers.

Blessings and Peace,
The Lingle & Reddinger Families



Greetings from the Church Mouse

Hello everyone at St. Mark's!

Well, I hope you all had a very happy and healthy holiday season. I know I did. I was in my designated spot and watched as Charlie Roberts led the Family Christmas Eve Service here at the church. It was so well attended in person and I heard rumors that we had over 1000 views on our YouTube channel and Facebook page. How special is that. I was wondering if I was seen at the service but I wasn't. Oh well, that's ok.

It did my heart good to see the participation by some of our children as the Christmas story was told and it was good to hear the Spirit and Truth Band. I came back for the evening candlelight service and it was so moving. And the church was decorated so pretty with the Christmas tree and all the poinsettias.

I will continue to sit on my perch and watch over everyone at St. Mark's each and every service. I feel honored to do so.

Until next time, I want to wish everyone a safe and healthy rest of the winter and I'll be seeing you around St. Mark's.

Yours in Christian Love.

The St. Mark's Church Mouse



Hello St. Mark's Family!

I just wanted to take a second to thank everyone who came out for our Take-Out Italian Night Fundraiser in December, your support means so much to the youth group! We've been very busy the past few months! We went to Winter fest, had a Lock-In (and saw the new Spider-Man movie), and lots of meetings!

Our theme for the LYF year, "Pause" seems to be going well. Each meeting, we are focusing on a different aspect of the pause- when to take them, why we take them, why they are helpful, how to make the best use of them. Even with COVID, we are finding ways to be flexible and keep each other safe during these times, all while spending fellowship time together. Our meeting times sometimes shift, as we have to cut our traditional dinner with our meeting, so we have no unmasked time, but I am very thankful for a group that is understanding and cares so much about each other, even if we have to make small sacrifices! Looking forward, we have meetings every month and a busy spring schedule! Our Jr. High Retreat In A Day Event, which will be written and run with the help of our Sr. High, is April 2nd! We have ALiVE in April as well, the Jr High Synod Retreat that was postponed from last fall. We are also planning for our SHYA Retreat in May! SHYA stands for Sr. High & Young Adults Retreat and it is May 20th-22nd.

Looking forward to a great spring! Our Schedule for the next few months is below! Follow us on Instagram @lyfstmarks for regular updates and photos!

LYF February Schedule

6th - LYF Meeting

20th - LYF Jr Meeting & LYF Meeting

LYF March Schedule

13th - LYF Meeting

27th - LYF Jr Meeting & LYF Meeting

LYF April Schedule

2nd - LYF Jr High & Family Ministry Retreat In A Day

10th - LYF Jr Meeting & LYF Meeting

22nd-24th - ALiVE Lower Susquehanna Synod Jr High Retreat

Kellen Michalowski (he/him/his)

Director Of Youth & Family Ministry

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Harrisburg PA

Email: lyfstmarks@gmail.com

Chris Bair is collecting newspapers for the Bird Sanctuary

God's Love in Action

I am often asked what I like about Romania. My first response is always, “the people”, followed by “the food!” I’d like to share with you the most recent example.

As you may recall, wading through the ocean of red tape to obtain a temporary residence permit in Romania is daunting. My initial experience prior to the pandemic resulted in 14 trips to the immigration office alone in București. This time may be easier since I relocated to the capitol of a small rural province. After several attempts to national, regional and local offices, it was determined that I had to return to București to continue the processing of proving my existence. Pastor Onisim picked me up at 8:00 AM and we began our trek to downtown București. One of the chiefs in the financial administration office was able to find me in his system, and that was a joyful sign to start our journey. The next stops were to go to the appropriate offices to obtain national medical coverage.

Our next planned stops had to be postponed because the regional Biserica Pentecostală president was waiting for our arrival, and he was pressured for time. His secretary immediately prioritized our documents and made calls to ensure the next steps were followed appropriately. By this time, the postponed stops were already waiting for us for two hours past their scheduled departure time from their respective regional and national offices. AND THEY WAITED FOR ME! I was in awe at their empathy and desire to help me obtain the necessary documents for immigration. To make things more complicated for these ladies, they had to rearrange their transportation home because of a bus strike. Pr. Onisim graciously offered them both rides home. The added hour or so to our journey was miniscule compared to what was accomplished that day. The fellowship and laughter in Romanian and English conversations were heartwarming. This was another “God Moment” that supports my calling to relational ministry.

Not by coincidence, the lesson I prepared for that week was about the Greatest Commandment, as a follow-up to the 10 commandments the week prior. What a beautiful expression of God’s love that blessed me last week!

P.S. – The national office signed the documents and transmitted them to the Romanian government for approval. After they are stamped, I should receive a copy to take to the Ministry of Immigration. Please pray that I receive final approval before my tourist visa expires in late February!

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and, love your neighbor as yourself. (Luke 10:27 NIV)

Peace,

Ruth

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2022



We love our church!

St. Mark's Church Council

President	Sandy Sherwood
Vice President	Tom Graham
Secretary	Rebekah Varga
Treasurer	Calvin Smith
Financial Secretary	Mary Sultzaberger
Council Members	Pastor Jim Person
	Chris Bair
	Deb Banks
	Paulette Beverly
	Emmor Boslet
	Stephanie Carl
	Dave Featherman
	Loraine Mariner
	Susan Shultz
	Jay Snyder
Minister of Music	Joyce Van Nieuwkuyk
Administrative Assistant	Loraine Mariner
Youth/Family Ministry	Kellen Michalowski
Sexton	Donald Young
Nursery School Dir.	



**"The heart-shaped communion wafers
were a nice touch for Valentine's Day."**