



the Lion's Roar

The Monthly Newsletter of St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Basking Ridge, New Jersey

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." (Matthew 2:7-8)

Sometimes the truth comes from the most unlikely of places. King Herod was a wicked, wicked man. He was guilty of the most despicable of crimes against humanity.

And yet, his directive to the magi was spot on.

Go and search diligently for the child.

Was better advice ever given?

It could be the words of angels, or prophets, or sages. It could be the advice of the magi upon their return from the Christ-child.

A little ray of light bursting forth from the darkness.

I think that they are words spoken for us. To us.

We are to search diligently for the child. It's our job.

Where do we find him?

Sometimes within us. Sometimes the search for God takes us no further than closing the eyes and the stilling the mind. We were created in God's Image, and God's Holy Breathe is within us. In our home. In our family. In our most beloved. In the joy and in the excruciating pain of life's experiences.

Sometimes outside of us. In the face of another, who is also created in the image of God. In serving those who are in need. In the sick, the dying, the distressed, the depressed, the hungry, and the lost. In the Holy Scriptures, the Body and the Blood of the Holy Eucharist, the assembled Body of Christ in worship.

We search diligently in the most remarkable of places, and in the most ordinary of places. In the cathedral and in the checkout counter. In the shrine and in the cinema. In the washing of the feet, and in the washing of the dishes.

God is all around us. Within us. Above us, as our shield. Beside us, as our friend. Beneath us, as our rock and foundation.

God is where We begin our journey, where we end our journey, and along the entire route of the path we take.

But, if we aren't diligent, if we aren't searching or looking, we will miss Christ at every turn, at every glance inward, and in every gaze towards the horizon.

Go and search diligently for the child. It's good New Year's advice, from the most unlikely of places.

Warden's Corner

They say times flies when you are having a good time, but I think when you are involved in something wonderful, the feeling is the same. A little over two years ago, when I was asked to serve as Junior Warden, I was hesitant, not knowing all that was involved, but realized that I would be surrounded by a caring and dedicated vestry on this new journey. I had previously served as the Finance Commission Chair and each year of the three years I served there were 2 different (interim) rectors and finally a "permanent" one. The wardens were amazing during that rather unsettling time of transition. I have had the good fortune of serving as warden in a time of stability and growth at St. Mark's under Fr. Rick, an icon of inspirational leadership in action.

We are now in year one of Fr. Rick and the Vestry's 2014 Triennial Vision: "Nourish... your spirit, the hungry, community." And we are very much living this vision.

To start, I am continually overwhelmed with the ongoing generosity of the parishioners in Outreach programs such as preparing and serving meals once a month at the Morristown Soup Kitchen, twice a month at the St. Mark's of Keansburg Soup Kitchen, donating food and money to the Food Bank Network of Somerset County and the Curbing Hunger program and other great Outreach activities such as ASP, one of the many youth programs at St. Mark's which teach our children about helping others without expecting anything in return.

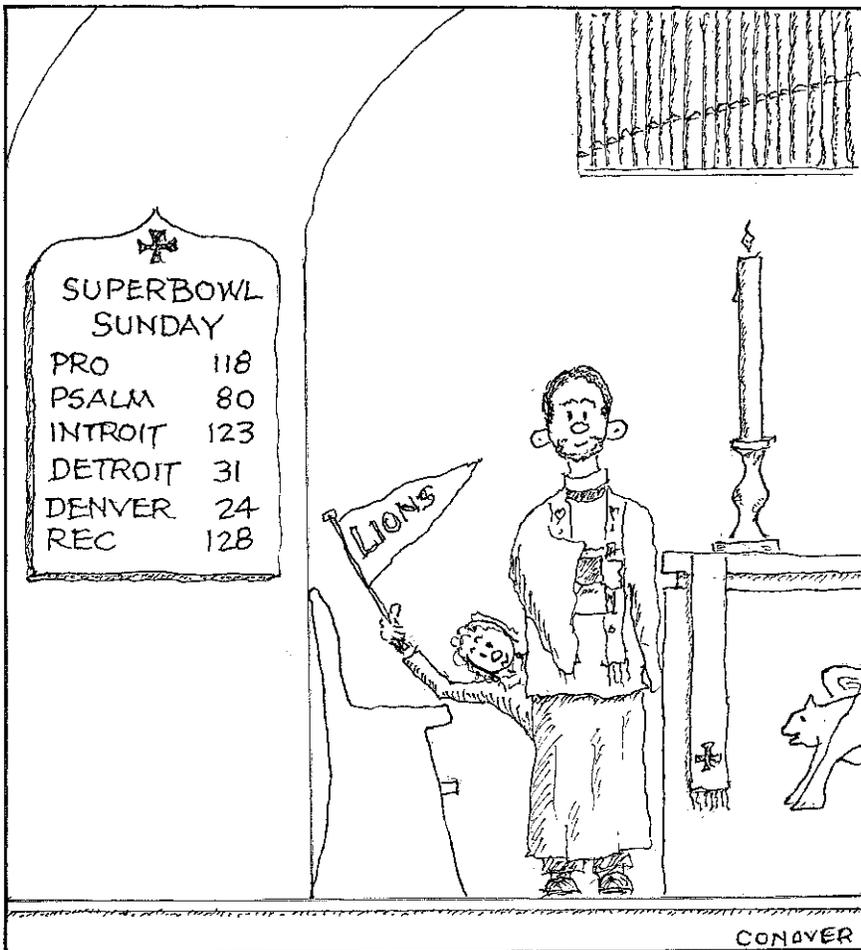
We have grown in membership and have added new and

interesting activities, the latest being Dinner-Church on Sunday's at 5:30pm which ran successfully for six weeks and will start up again in the new year and smARTS, an after school program focused on faith and the arts.

I would like to thank the outgoing vestry members for their outstanding leadership and dedication: Kit McLaughlin – Outreach, Chuck Knill – Stewardship, Boyd McCoane - Membership. To the incoming vestry members: these are big shoes to fill! To the continuing vestry members, it was an honor working with each and every one of you. You are all inspiring. And to Jim Martucci, thank you for your insights and I know you will lead the vestry safely and confidently in 2015. And thank you Ann Millan for all the work you do as Parish Administrator and John Lyga - Sunday School Director, Jackie Taylor – J2A, Bill Corson – Music Director, Lois Buesser – Organist, Doug Post – Recording Treasurer and Buck Kirch – Treasurer. All treasures.

I would also like to especially thank

LAUGHTER IN THE PEWS



We are proud of the symbol of our Patron Saint and will always support it – sometimes even to the point of foolishness.

Warden's Corner—Continued

all the parishioners who do all their good works more or less behind the scenes – the Altar Guild, Choir, Bell Choir, Sunday School teachers, Coffee Hour hosts and Carol DeCoste, St. Mark's website, weekly food bank deliveries, and the list goes on and on. And, thanks and good luck to Bill Barkhorn and his family who recently moved away.

Just an added note... even with all of the outstanding work of the vestry members and many parishioners, we are still seeking people to help as Coffee Hour hosts and Sunday School teachers. Please sign up!

While our expenses continue to increase, primarily building maintenance, so have our pledges year over year thanks to all of you. And while we have limited our fundraising events this year, much appreciation goes to the significant financial contributions made from the semi-annual Rummage Sale lead by Annabelle Wilmer, Harry Woods and Kit McLaughlan, and the music event formerly known as September Song (LONJ) produced by the Bill and Luran Corson. Thanks to all of you and your crews for making these events so successful year after year. Your hard work and dedication is invaluable.

Since St. Mark's Church is sometimes referred to as the church with the solar panels, I would also like to thank Jeff Hooper who for the last eight months has almost singlehandedly project managed the repair of the church's solar panel infrastructure. Completion of the installation and testing of the additional replacement part is planned for February. For more information on the project status and objectives, or to learn more about the benefits of solar panels, please contact Jeff Hooper. I'm sure he would be glad to share his insights.

In closing, it has been a privilege serving as warden for the past two years. It was quite a wonderful journey.

Namaste (the divine light in me honors the divine light in each and every one of you),

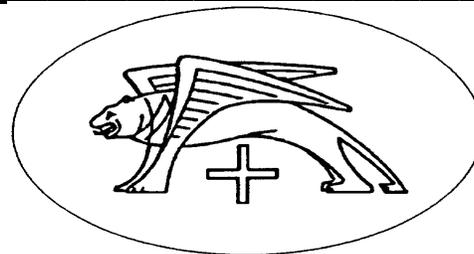
Teri Passarello
Senior Warden

St. Mark's Water Bottles & T-Shirts are Available

Everyone needs a new water bottle, right?

For \$10 you can add a red- logo St. Mark's bottle to your collection. We also have new t-shirts for sale, also \$10.

They are available in the office or at coffee hour.



2015 Vestry

Rector

The Rev. Richard M. C. Morley

Senior Warden

Jim Martucci 604-2256*

Junior Warden

Dawn Knill 630-9116*

Grounds

Kevin Larner 766-1218

Buildings

Martha Winter 953-2009

Outreach

Jan Williams 696-8480*

Finance

Martha Heiner 224-7045

Stewardship

Jenny Phillips 630-0807*

Christian Education/Youth Ministry

Ashley Balavoine 973-549-2327

Communications/Evangelism

Christine Thoma 542-9421*

Fellowship

Anne Post 766-6621

Membership

Chris Marshall 350-3371

* New members to be sworn in 1/11/15

Non-Vestry Positions:

Warden Emeritus

Teri Passarello 696-0375

Treasurer

Buck Kirch 647-3566

Recording Treasurer

Doug Post 766-6621

Sunday School Superintendent

John Lyga 766-5880

J2A Activities Coordinator

Jackie Taylor 221-0378

ST. MARK'S FINANCE COMMISSION
 Finance Report as of November 30, 2014

Represented below is a summary of St. Mark's operating income statement
November 30, Year-to-Date

| | <u>Actual</u> | <u>Budget</u> | <u>Variance</u> |
|----------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Pledges | 242,127 | 252,900 | - 10,773 |
| All Other Donations | 86,552 | 97,744 | -11,192 |
| Operating Income | 328,679 | 350,644 | - 21,965 |
| Operating Expenses | 357,110 | 351,585 | -5,525 |
| Net Operating Income | - \$ 28,431 | - \$ 941 | - \$ 27,490 |

Operating income for November is below budget expectations . Pledge donations were well under the budget expectation, although the Nov. 30 deposit is not reflected here. Our Building Use Donations area continues to fall short of the budget expectation at year end due to changes in commitment by current users.

Operating expenses for year-to date 2014 exceeded budget expectations. We have paid for approximately \$3000 in improvements in energy efficiency offered through a grant program, which should yield significant cost savings in 2015 and each year thereafter.

Net operating income for November 2014 is significantly under budget.

Finance Commission Chair: Martha Heiner

Youth Group Activities

Below is a summary of activities that the teens have been busy with this quarter. Thanks to the parents who get their kids to class each Sunday at 9am, to the leaders who prepare for and teach the lessons, and to the youth for their participation. A special thanks, also, to the congregation for their support of the youth events.

Rite 13 (7th and 8th graders)

Under the leadership of Michelle and Jim Martucci (sometimes assisted by Katie Williams and Bernie Jewson) this group has had a busy start to their second year in Rite 13.

They volunteered to sell refreshments at September Song, to assist in Sunday School classrooms, helped plant at the local VA greenhouse, worked at the Fall clean up, and one member has joined the Bell Choir. They made a variety of banana breads to sell at Coffee Hour and used the proceeds to purchase a farm animal for a third world family, plus made a donation to the Smile Train organization.

Many Crèche volunteers came from this class. They received compliments for their great roles as Usher, Banner Carrier, Head Angel, Readers, Presenters, and members of the Youth Choir.

This class will have their first lock-in at the church on March 6th.

J2A (9th and 10th graders)

The J2A group has entered the preparatory year for Confirmation. You'll see these teens take on additional roles at church: in the Sunday School classrooms, during church Services, and in the community. Their leaders: Patti Pierson, Jan Williams and Dave Taylor, along with Fr. Rick, are guiding them through this process.

The teens continued their mum sale in the Fall. They also volunteered during September Song and in the Crèche Service, baked breads and hosted a coffee hour. Many of them are well known faces at the Keansburg Community Center. During a recent class they packed over 100 bags of weekend meals for our local Foodbank.

They are planning a visit to Trinity Cathedral in January

January Birthdays



| | |
|------|--|
| 1/1 | Molly Williams |
| 1/3 | Carleigh Matthews Lance Marshall |
| 1/4 | Linda Saccone Robert Schmidt Laura Taylor |
| 1/6 | Lauren Saccone Ryan Hargy Andrew Hargy |
| 1/9 | Christopher Hale |
| 1/10 | Francis Sanchez |
| 1/11 | Norm Graff Nancy Wojnar Kathleen Kendall |
| 1/17 | Lauren Keenan Bill Vallario |
| 1/19 | Webb Winter Ally Vallario |
| 1/20 | Katie Lyga |
| 1/21 | Gordon Ahalt |
| 1/22 | Julie Corson |
| 1/23 | Robby Bigini Claire Buesser Dev Ittycheria Alisa Larner |
| 1/25 | Evelyn Bigini |
| 1/26 | Jeremy Richardson |
| 1/27 | Libby West |
| 1/28 | Dottie Dauernheim |
| 1/30 | Larry Rose Miyako Urbas |
| 1/31 | Tommy Morrell |

Fellowship News for January 2015

How about a little Q & A about St. Mark's Community Hall and the building surrounding it.

1. Where are the bathrooms? (Want a tour? Ask me anytime)
 - a. Two bathrooms are at the top of the "link" stairway.
 - b. One bathroom is at the downstairs level, in the Sunday school hallway
 - c. Two bathrooms are located behind the kitchen (access from the hallway)
 - d. Two bathrooms are on the lower level at the back end of the hallway, past the Sunday School classrooms and Bryan's Room (near the Library)
2. Where are the Sunday School classrooms?
Downstairs from the "Link" – follow the hallway
3. Where is the "Heritage Room" and what is it for?
 - a. It is a small reception/meeting room with couches and chairs, overlooking the garden. Access it from the hallway at the back of the Community Room.
 - b. Meetings or classes may be held there. Sometimes the Bloodmobile uses it when our Community Room is not available.
4. We have a Library. Do you know where it is?
Follow the lower level hallway past the Sunday School classrooms, past Bryan's Room and into the back hallway. See the Library door on your left.

I would be happy to take you on a tour of the hall and surrounding building any time during coffee hour. If you have any other questions about the St. Mark's halls or classrooms, feel free to ask me or any other Vestry member.

Anne Post, Fellowship Chair. annesandrapost@gmail.com 908-766-6621

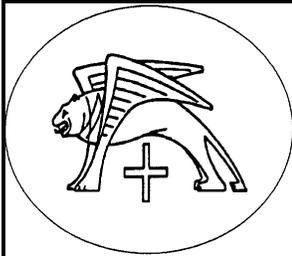
and an overnight Retreat in February. All activities are preparing them for Confirmation this Spring.

YAC (11th grade and older)

The oldest youth group meets twice each month. During class they review the day's Gospel lesson. They share activities they have experienced since the last class, fulfilling their selected roles under Vestry leadership as they prepare for adulthood - assisting with Christian Education, Fellowship, Buildings, Grounds, etc. They have lately been competing in Bible Trivia.

Thanks to Nancy Opremcak who met with this class one Sunday morning to speak about the Bryan's Dream organization. At their next class the teens made two blankets to donate. Some members of the class have also provided a positive and valuable impact at church events, including Vacation Bible School, September Song, the Advent Brunch and Crèche Service.

They are looking forward to an overnight Pilgrimage trip to Philadelphia in February. They will use the proceeds of their successful SOUP SALE to offset some of the costs of this trip. Thanks to all who assisted with the sale and those who purchased soup!



January 2015

St. Mark's Episcopal Church

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|-----------------------------|---|---|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 8am Rite I 10am Rite II | 5 | 6 <i>Feast of the Epiphany</i> Holly Manor Service 10:45 | 7 Chapel @ 9am Keansburg Soup Kitchen | 8 Ridge Oak Service 10:00 Fellowship Village Service 10 | 9 <i>Vestry Retreat</i> | 10 <i>Vestry Retreat</i> |
| 11 8am Rite I 10am Rite II <i>Healing Service Annual Parish Meeting</i> | 12 | 13 | 14 Chapel @ 9am | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 8am Rite I 10am Rite II <i>Acappella Group "Cohesion" at 10am</i> | 19 Vestry Meeting | 20 | 21 Chapel @ 9am Keansburg Soup Kitchen | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 8am Rite I 10am Rite II <i>Healing Service</i> | 26 | 27 | 28 Chapel @ 9am | 29 | 30 | 31 |

THE LION'S ROAR

January

| Date | Lay readers | Acolytes | Ushers |
|------------------|--|--------------------|--------------|
| 1/4/2015 | <i>Second Sunday after Christmas</i> | | |
| 8:00 a.m. (HC) | L&Ch Jeff Hooper | | John Wojnar |
| | | | |
| 10:00 a.m. (HC) | L&Ch Emie Williams | Katie Williams | Bruce Walker |
| | P&Ch Roger Conover | John Mooney | Glenn West |
| | LR 2 Ryan Gogerty | Sean Gogerty | |
| | | Warren Phillips | |
| 1/11/2015 | <i>First Sunday after the Epiphany - 10:00A.M. - Healing Service</i> | | |
| 8:00 a.m. (HC) | L&Ch Mary Urbas | | Harry Woods |
| | | | |
| 10:00 a.m. (HC) | L&Ch Jeanne Wyatt | Martin Hale | Norm Graff |
| | P&Ch Christian Luongo | Chris Hale | Larry Rose |
| | LR 2 Libby West | Jeremy Richardson | |
| | | Julia West | |
| | | | |
| 1/18/2015 | <i>Second Sunday after the Epiphany</i> | | |
| 8:00 a.m. (HC) | L&Ch Boyd McKoane | | Tom DeFeo |
| | | | |
| 10:00 a.m. (HC) | L&Ch Chuck Knill | Erin Taylor | |
| | P&Ch Dawn Knill | Laura Taylor | Jim Martucci |
| | LR 2 Nick Sant Foster | Katie Williams | Rich Thoma |
| | | Natura Sant Foster | |
| | | | |
| 01/25/15 | <i>Third Sunday after the Epiphany - 10:00A.M. - Healing Service</i> | | |
| 8:00 a.m. (HC) | L&Ch Jackie Kahle | | Boyd McKoane |
| | | | |
| 10:00 a.m. (HC) | L&Ch Bill Schmidt | Brandon Pierson | Martin Hale |
| | P&Ch Marylea Schmidt | Rob Pierson | Tim Opremcak |
| | LR 2 Peter Gilbert | Liam Thoma | |
| | | Spencer Thoma | |
| | | | |