

A St. Mark's Adventure

St. Mark's is about to embark upon a great adventure. This journey invites us to experience God more deeply and to discover who we are as His children, inviting us onward to share the hope of Jesus with the world around us.

Together, we will venture out on the road of spiritual growth called Life on Mission. It's not a program. It's not merely a class. It is a path—a journey—on which we will encounter Jesus and become more like him.

A large beautiful Life on Mission map will be installed in the overflow section of the St. Mark's sanctuary. This map will serve as both a description of the Life on Mission path as well as the door into the journey. For two Sundays, February 4 and 11, Pastor Sean will teach a two-part series about this new opportunity to grow as disciples of Jesus. So, if your curiosity is piqued, join us in worship and discover what God has in store for your life on mission.



Ash Wednesday Worship February 14 at 7 pm - 'Reconciliation'

Start Lent with Prayer

Join us in prayer during a 12-hour prayer vigil on Ash Wednesday, February 14. Half hour time slots are available between 7 am and 7 pm. A prayer guide will be available. If you are unable to come to church, we encourage you to pray from home or work. Look for the prayer vigil sign-up sheet and prayer guide in the Welcome Center.

Lenten Devotional Available

A prayer devotional has been compiled by the staff for your use during the 40 days of Lent. Pick up a copy in the Welcome Center on Sunday, February 11.

Final Words from the Cross "Side Trip"

Everyone is invited to participate in our Wednesday evening Lenten Bible study of **The Final Words from the Cross** on February 21 through March 28 from 7 - 8:30 pm.

Book review: "Adam Hamilton's book breaks down the last seven sayings of Jesus into individual chapters that focuses on the meaning and application of each one. It's an easy read and you could feel the author's heart throughout each chapter.

"Most of the chapters painted the scene from the Gospels from a particular perspective. For example, chapter two was imagined from the perspective of the thief on the cross to whom Jesus spoke His words. The author does a good job of making each scene come alive and brings depth of meaning to each of Jesus' final sayings."

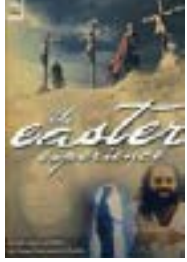
Sign-up on the Connection Card or in the Welcome Center and indicate if you would like a **Final Words from the Cross** book (suggested donation \$10). The deadline to order a book is February 4.

The life and
words of Christ
still have relevance ...

and are worth
meditating on.

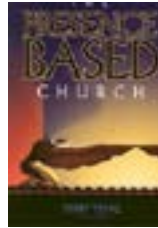
Spring Season of Community Groups

What will God do through Community Groups in 2018? Join us and see! Here are some new study material suggestions (for groups or individuals) as we move into the Spring Season:



The Easter Experience by Kyle Idleman (Right Now Media) - The Easter Experience brings the passion, and resurrection of Jesus to life through dramatic storytelling and challenging teaching done in a highly cinematic style. Through these in-depth teachings, your small group will grow spiritually, bonding with each other as well as with the eternal message of Easter.

Presence Based Church by Terry Teykl (book) - Jesus Christ, the Ark of the New Covenant, is the source of our provision, authority, identity and joy. Grow in your understanding of what it means to be in the Presence of God. How do prayer and worship invite God into the life of our church and into the life of the believer?



Don't forget to cultivate 'In' and 'Out' relationships. We would love to hear stories and ideas about how you set aside time with your group to focus on each other and/or those who don't know Jesus yet. If you would like more information about Community Groups, please call the church office at (717) 653-5493.

Farewell to Jim White and Jill MacKenzie

On Sunday, February 11, we will recognize Jim and Jill for their service at St. Mark's. Jill has served as St. Mark's Director of Equipping Ministries for over 6 years and has been very involved in the Prayer Ministry and Hospitality Ministry. Under Jill's leadership, many vital "behind the scenes" systems have been created and maintained which enable visitors to St. Mark's to not only find a sense of belonging when they walk in our front door, but also to discover their God-given ministry. Jill was also an integral partner in the development of our "Life on Mission" discipleship plan which will provide a clear path for both new and mature Christians to grow as disciples of Jesus.



Jim has served as an Assistant Custodian - sharing his handy-man skills in many areas including the porch of the ministry center and several other improvement projects. The seeds planted by Jill and Jim's ministry will grow among us for years to come. Their presence, inspiring faith, and love will be dearly missed.

Please join us for refreshments in Fellowship Hall between 10 - 11 am as we show our appreciation and wish them well in their move to Texas. You are encouraged to bring a thank you or best wishes card for Jill & Jim and place it in the special basket.

STAFF

Senior Pastor - Rev. Timothy J. Smith
(717) 653-5493 ext. 223
tsmith@connectstmarks.com

Associate Pastor - Sean Rajnic
(717) 682-0653
srajnic@me.com

Visitation Pastor - Rev. Dr. David Pierce
(717) 371-1725
pierced228@gmail.com

Director of Children's Ministry - Laura Ligo
laura@connectstmarks.com

Dir. of Youth & Young Adults - Jimmy Law
(814) 528-4493
jlaw@connectstmarks.com

Faith Factory Learning Center Director - Patti Shearer (717) 653-8201
faithfactory@connectstmarks.com

Director of Prayer & Equipping Ministries - Jill MacKenzie (717) 413-3547
jillmckn@comcast.net

Church Administrator - Rob Stoner
rob@connectstmarks.com

Administrative Assistant - Sarah Clarke
sclarke@connectstmarks.com

Finance Clerk - Janice Schell
(717) 653-5493 ext. 225
finance@connectstmarks.com

Church Secretary - Kim Wargo
kwargo@connectstmarks.com

Lay Pastor Coordinator - Sylvia Stark
(717) 341-2654
sylviagrace44@gmail.com

Director of Contemporary Worship & Assistant Custodian - Bobby Wehner
(717) 742-8461
bobbywehner@gmail.com

Custodian - Sherrie Gilbert
(717) 669-1931
sherrisacredspace@hotmail.com

Part-time Custodian - Mark Laukhuff

Organist - Lois Stites
loisstites@gmail.com

Chancel Choir Director - Michael Kohler
bwaynut@comcast.net

Sunday Custodial Coordinator - Bob Miller

Recap from Congregational Dinner Meeting

Those who attended the January 7 meeting and dinner heard the news that our 2017 financial deficit decreased from a November 19 projected \$31,474 to a final deficit of \$3,309. The gap was closed by three factors:

- a. the Capital Campaign funds redirected to the General Fund were \$16,000 higher than projected
- b. Giving over the last 6 weeks of the year exceeded projections by \$10,000
- c. anticipated expenses (over that same period) were \$5,400 lower than projected.

Copies of the 2018 Summary Budget were presented as part of the Annual Charge Conference booklets showing a 2018 budget of \$631,917 (compared to actual 2017 expenses of \$717,923). Copies of the booklet are available in the kiosk in the elevator lobby of the Sanctuary. If you would like it sent to you electronically or a hard copy mailed to you, please contact the church office.

While various factors came into play in the creation of the new budget, the primary savings occurred in the area of staffing and staff benefits which decreased \$84,882. The position of Equipping Director has been eliminated and the Church Administrator has agreed to partial retirement in 2017. Another part of the savings is our change in health care from Capital Blue Cross to Aetna (similar benefits at a reduced rate).

Chicken Cordon Bleu Dinner on February 4

St. Mark's will be serving a delicious chicken cordon bleu dinner on Sunday, February 4 from 11 am - 12:30 pm. **(Please note that this is the first Sunday of the month.)** The dinner will also include oven-roasted red potatoes, a vegetable, applesauce, rolls & butter, dessert and beverages.

The cost of the family-style meal is \$10 for adults, \$3 for children 4 - 11, and children 3 and under are free. Please call [Janet Lehman](tel:7176534189) at (717) 653-4189 if you are bringing a group of 8 or more.

Free Pulled Pork BBQ Meal

A free dinner will be served on Sunday, February 18 from 4 - 5 pm. The meal will include pulled pork barbecues, macaroni & cheese, a vegetable, dessert, and beverage. People attending the dinner are asked to call the church office at (717) 653-5493 by 4 pm Thursday, February 15 to make reservations.

To volunteer to help or donate a dessert for the dinner, please contact [Janet Lehman](tel:7176534189) at (717) 653-4189. Your help and support with the free community dinners is much appreciated!

Easter Egg Sale

Ladies from the church are gathering again this year to make and sell chocolate Easter eggs and other Easter candy as a fundraiser for the General Fund. Last year's sale was a big success and the ladies would like to expand this opportunity by asking each of you to collect Easter candy orders from your friends and family. Order sheets are available in the Welcome Center and are due by March 4. You can pick-up your orders on Palm Sunday, March 25 in Fellowship Hall. Thanks for your support. Contact [Deb Rupp](tel:7172787202) at (717) 278-7202 for more info.

Volunteers Wanted

Lots of help is needed on Saturday, February 3 to make about 375 chicken cordon bleus; wash and cut potatoes; and set the tables. If interested in helping, please come to the fellowship hall at 8 am on Saturday, Feb. 3. Since we will be preparing foods for the Sunday Dinner, please keep in mind that no jewelry except plain wedding bands should be worn and hairnets (provided) or hats are necessary.

Five of our regular servers are not available to help with this dinner. Therefore, we need volunteers to help serve February's family-style dinner on Sunday, February 4. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Janet Lehman at (717) 653-4189.



FAITH FACTORY NEWS

Love is in the air at Faith Factory! Valentine's are being made and lessons on God's amazing love are leading the discussions! It is certainly a fun time in the school year, and not only the children get excited to see what is in their valentine boxes! What teacher doesn't love chocolate? January brought lots of interesting days with all the snow and ice! The teachers had a fun inservice day on MLK day, and the Advisory Board served an amazing lunch to them! Faith Factory will be hosting an interesting training event for educators later this month; our halls will be filled with teachers taking tours of our school and learning more about the STARS program.



4 A big change this month occurred in our S. June class. Sarah Manning has been filling in since Alannah resigned, and Danielle Truett will be taking over the class as lead teacher! We have loved having Sarah back with us, and we wish her the very best as she pursues her education! You may remember Danielle (Jody's daughter) from years past, when she worked with us. She has been teaching Special Education for the past 4 years and is joining the S. June Smith team! We can't wait to begin working side by side with Danielle again!

Faith Factory is having an open house for traditional preschool on Feb. 10 (snow date of Feb. 17) from 10 am - 12 pm to begin registrations for next school year. It is hard to believe we will start our 17th year in September! If you are interested in hearing more about our preschool, contact [Patti Shearer](#) at (717) 653-8201.

February Mission of the Month

Rainbow's End Youth Services on Fairview Street in Mount Joy is the mission of the month. Visit www.reys.org to learn more about REYS. On Saturday, March 10 REYS will host it's annual fundraising banquet with keynote speaker comedian Gordon Douglas. This ticketed event will be held at Kraybill Mennonite School. Contact Rob Stoner if you are interested in attending. You can also support REYS by using a specially-marked giving envelope, texting 'reys' to 30131 or visiting www.connectstmarks.com/online-giving.

Reach Update

This year's Reach Christmas Party All Nighter was a blast! We had a great time starting our night off with worship thanks to the talented Meghan Brenneman, with an incredible lesson from Aria and Aliya Rajnic. We had so much fun with our White Elephant Gift Exchange - the hot ticket item was a dancing reindeer speaker that the Witmer family was able to snag at the last second!

During our Gingerbread House competition, the creativity of the youth came out in unique ways - from the traditional gingerbread house to scenes of disaster. The winning house was created by Megan, Collin, Kenshi, and Son, who created a classic gingerbread house with all the trimmings.

The rest of the night was filled with games at Church of God in Lancaster (special thanks to Tim Bistline for opening his church's gym for us), Sardines, and of course the annual walk to the Mount Joy Diner. Thank you to all the volunteers who made this event possible, and to the student leaders, Aria, Aliya, Sophie, Collin, and Sean, who worked hard to plan this awesome All Nighter!

Art Sundays

Aspire will be open on February 11 and 25 for all types of artists from 6 - 9 pm. Painters, knitters, poets, musicians, etc. are encouraged to bring your project and supplies. Contact [Sherrie Gilbert](#) at (717) 669-1931 with any questions.



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Frank Kerlin
- 2 James White
- 3 Patricia Miller
- 4 Amy Karr
- 5 Marge Yeich
Kathy Wilfong
- 6 Arlene Diller
Mary Rost
- 7 Janet Lehman
Debra Sarbaugh
Michelle Kennedy
- 8 Albert Newlin
Melissa Billman
- 9 Bill Emenheiser
Scott Hoxie
- 10 Betty Ruhl
Don Gibbons
Emma Duralja
- 11 Mason Pavelik
- 12 Greg Stuck
Chris Ivey
- 13 Mary Loraw
Marshall Cramer
Clarissa Arntz
- 14 Linda Varner
Jason Loraw
- 15 Debra Beach
- 16 Alex Snyder
Christina Haines
Darryl Shank
- 17 Nancy Reymer
Jeff Hostetter
- 18 Robert Miller
- 20 Nancy Jo Newlin
Bob Huff
Rachel DeNune
- 21 Doris Wickenheiser
- 22 Don Rineer
Rosie Williams
Kirk Landis

- 23 Ann Reuter
Joanne Warrick
Jennifer Ruch
- 24 EvAnn Rempala
- 26 Marjorie Maninger
- 27 Christine Colvin
- 28 Aliya Rajnic
- 29 Janet Knepp

SPECIAL BIRTHDAYS

- Mary Rost - 65
- Marge Yeich - 75
- Ann Reuter - 92
- Bill Emenheiser - 95
- Arlene Diller - 97



FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Albert & Nancy Jo Newlin
- 21 Glenn & Becky Peifer
- 25 Herbert & Madeline Tshudy
- 29 Tyson & Kimbra Bomberger

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

- Glenn & Becky Peifer - 55
- Albert & Nancy Jo Newlin - 60

ALTAR FLOWERS

The following dates are available to sponsor altar flowers: February 18, March 11 & 18, and April 22. The cost is \$35. Contact [Marge Yeich](mailto:MargeYeich@connectstmarks.com) at (717) 492-0606 to sign-up.

Men's Ministry

All men are invited to attend Men's Ministry on Tuesday, February 6 at 6:30 pm at Aspire. The guys will also meet at Gus's Restaurant on Saturday, February 17 at 8 am for breakfast and fellowship. Contact Jeff Selph at (717) 928-4545 for more information.

Thursday Morning Bible Study

A new Bible study is starting on Thursday, January 4 from 9:30 - 11:30 am in Room 102. In **The "Red Letter" Words** participants will study the words spoken by Jesus to believers as written in the four gospels. Contact Jean Ann Harter at (717) 892-3003 or Sylvia Stark at (717) 341-2654 for more information.



February Schedule Donuts - Darryl Wittle

- 4 Donuts and coffee
- 11 Elaine Kuhn, Bob Miller
- 18 Marge Rineer, Carol Gockley
- 25 Adam Kitchen, Liz Sarbaugh

Setup

- Judy Libhart
- Sylvia Stark
- Scott Libhart
- Deb Rupp

Jen's Garden Ministry

In my early 20's, I realized that every child did not have what I had growing up: feeling safe, loved and cared for; plenty of food, warm clothing, a good education; lots of time for play; and Christian upbringing. I began to look for ways to be in the lives of children around me. I started babysitting; became a Big Sister (eventually adopting my Little Sister); and signed up to sponsor a Compassion child. My first child was Fita, a little 5 year old Indonesian girl who stole my heart.

A few years later, Fita wrote and asked me to pray that her little brother would get a sponsor. I prayed right away, but felt odd. Why should I pray for him to get a sponsor when I could sponsor him? I decided to ask God what He wanted me to do. The next day, I called Compassion and told them I wanted to sponsor Fita's brother, Bintang. They told me I could not sponsor him because he had been enrolled in the UK department of Compassion and was not available in the USA. I was a little bummed as I got off the phone, but simply said, "Lord, its in your hands now. If you want me to sponsor him, I still will. And if not, you have a better plan for him." Three days later, I received all of Bintang's information and a photo. Wow - the Lord worked fast!!!

I wanted to make sure there was enough money each month to keep the sponsorships going and to take care of my own family. I didn't want to let any of these children down - and my desire to sponsor more children was growing. I had to think of a way to earn a little more money and raise the funds needed. I grew and sold flowers (both perennials and annuals) for many years and had slowly expanded my garden include vegetables. Each Spring, Summer and Fall I grow and sell veggies, herbs and flowers to friends to help me support these wonderful children. I also now have a little girl named Sathya in India, Mary in China, Ricardo in Haiti and a female adult Missionary-in-Training in India named Ransai.

6 The garden is a ton of work but I don't want to stop. I want to continue to use it to keep up the children I have committed to. I would also love to see it be used to help children right here in my own community, such as Faith Factory families. In order to do this, I need some help from a few people with the same passion and vision I have to see children have a better life and a better future; one free of poverty and a bright future as well as one full of the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ.

I am looking for helpers in the garden (digging, weeding, planting, watering etc.) as well as people who would like to purchase fresh veggies, herbs and flowers on a weekly, bi-weekly or monthly basis through the summer. I would love to hear from you if you feel God is nudging you towards helping me! I could use the most help on weekends in April, May and June. Please contact me for more details: [Jennifer Ruch](mailto:Jennifer.Ruch@compassion.org) (717) 201-3640. Thanks so much!



717.653.5493

Prayer Meeting

Gather with others spending time in prayer on Tuesday, Feb. 13 at 9 am in the Prayer Room.

Prayer Community of Mount Joy

You are invited to join community members in lifting up prayer concerns on Wednesday, Feb. 7 at 6:30 pm at Aspire. We welcome any new members to keep this ministry active in 2018.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

St. Mark's Prayer Shawl Ministry invites you to join them on Thursday, February 15 at 6:30 pm to knit or crochet a prayer shawl. For more information, contact [Myrl Sherk](mailto:Myrl.Sherk@stmark.org) at (717) 653-5133.

Note from James Labala in Liberia, Africa

Thanks to the St. Mark's UMC for your support. I appreciate it deeply. May the Lord continue to bless each of you for your generosity.

We are doing well. I am very busy preparing for annual conference as new conference secretary. Please keep us in your prayers. We are also inaugurating a new government in Liberia tomorrow. We need all the prayers we can get as the new president was actually elected as a result of civil disobedience on the part of the people.

Happy new year to all of you and blessings in immeasurable boundary!

Rev. Dr. James Z. Labala

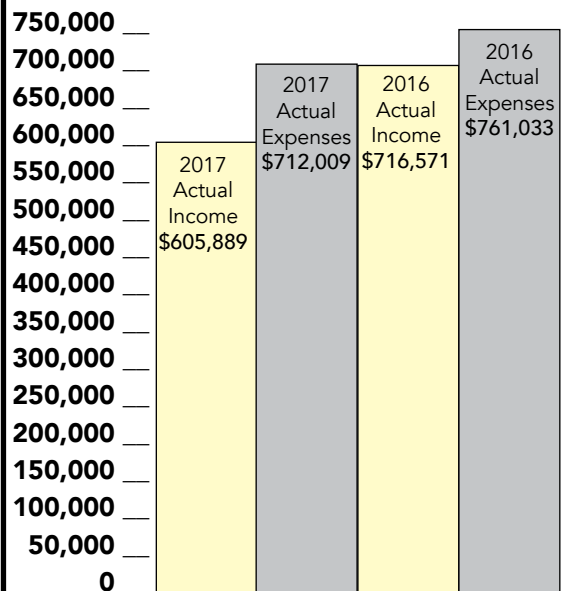
GIVING REPORT

YEAR 2017 GIVING REPORT

January 1 - December, 2017 Last Year

General Fund	Y.T.D.	Y.T.D.
Actual Income	\$ 605,889	\$ 716,571
Budget Needed	\$ 778,174	\$ 805,433
Actual Expenses	\$ 712,009	\$ 761,033
Building Fund (45 E Main/Trustee Projects Loan)		
Actual Income	\$ 14,285	\$ 19,678
Budget Needed	\$ 14,145	\$ 14,145
<i>Loan Balance = 96,527</i>		
Capital Campaign		
Actual Giving	\$ 79,041	\$ 222,963
Capital Campaign (Deferred to General Fund)		
Actual Deferred	\$ 102,810	
Mission Giving		
Dec. Mission of the Month -		
James Labala	\$ 1,086	\$ 2,282
Total Mission Giving	\$ 32,250	\$ 25,362
St. Mark's Emergency Fund		
Actual Income	\$ 12,094	\$ 18,375
Actual Expenses	\$ 13,555	\$ 15,201
Special Offerings		
Actual Income	\$ 26,707	\$ 19,911
TOTAL GIVING	\$873,076	\$1,022,860

GENERAL FUND SUMMARY



Consider Online Giving in 2018

Online Giving is available by credit card, debit card, or automatic withdrawal from a bank account. Visit www.connectstmarks.com, click on About Us, Giving, then Online Giving. Log in or Give as a Guest. If you have any questions, contact [Janice Schell](mailto:Janice.Schell@connectstmarks.com) at (717) 653-5493 ext. 225.

Giving Statements

Statements can be printed anytime at www.connectstmarks.com. Log in to My St. Mark's Connection. (If you don't have a password, click on Are You New, Create an Account and a password will be emailed to you.) Once you are logged in, scroll down the page to your personal information and click on Giving. Choose a date range. Click print.

Trustees Corner

In 2014 a 5-year report of Trustee's projects, from 2009 through 2013 was provided. A new report covering 2014 through 2017 will be finished and available to each of you shortly. Copies of the prior report will also be available to those who would like it.

Endowments

Watch for a report on St. Mark's Endowment Policy and Legacy Bequests as a regular feature beginning with the next issue of the Link.

www.connectstmarks.com

St. Mark's
United Methodist Church
37 East Main Street
Mount Joy, PA 17552

(717) 653-5493

www.connectstmarks.com
info@connectstmarks.com

For questions or to submit
information contact:

Sarah Clarke

sclarke@connectstmarks.com

or Kim Wargo

kwargo@connectstmarks.com

The deadline for the next
newsletter is

FEBRUARY 15

The deadline for the E-note,
weekly bulletin and video
announcements is two weeks
before the publication date.
Announcements normally run no
more than two/three weeks.

info@connectstmarks.com



37 East Main Street, Mount Joy, PA 17552

Non-Profit Org
US POSTAGE
PAID
Elizabethtown,
PA 17022
Permit No. 51

Return Service Requested



meeting needs, touching lives, changing the world

