

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

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**PLEASE READ PAGE 2
FOR IMPORTANT
INFORMATION FROM
PASTOR DAVE ABOUT
WORSHIP SERVICE
UPDATE !!!**

Upcoming Events

Sun., June 13 – 7:00 p.m. – MCS Baccalaureate
at Middleburgh Methodist Church

Mon., June 21st – 5:30 p.m. –
Church Council Mtg.

Thought for the Day:

Is prayer your steering wheel or your
spare tire?

- Pr. Dave Houck

Prayer List

Family of Jackie (Grippen) Clark
Family of Marjorie Becker
Family of Orlando
Family of Coleen Peterson

Diana, Ronnie, & Elizabeth
Everette Foland

Rob

Harry Amendola

Joshua

Marlene Towne

Sheila Jackson

Gary McCoy

Kevin Neary

Don Marshall

Dennis Palmatier

Nathan Schafroth

Holli Cook

Margaret Tompkins

Pastor DeBartolo

Kimberly Birsén



Manwich
Rice/Noodle Side Dishes

Worship Service Updates-June 2021

Christian Community Church of Faith and St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Greetings, Brothers and Sisters in Christ. With the release of the updated CDC guidelines and their acceptance by the State of New York and its agencies, I would like to implement the following changes to our gatherings for worship and social activities.

Everyone who is fully vaccinated (fully vaccinated is defined as fourteen days after receiving all of the required vaccine) are not required to wear facial coverings, but may continue to as they feel necessary or comfortable with. Those who are not fully vaccinated are required to wear facial coverings when moving about and when they cannot maintain the recommended physical distancing (6 feet from others - except those of the same household or when singing). With the practice and experience we have had for the past 12 months, each person/family will be responsible for accomplishing the physical distance requirements as necessary (taping off of pew rows will be discontinued).

Beginning in June, the Communion elements will be offered in two ways. For those who wish to come forward to the altar area to receive, I and my assistants will wear facial coverings and gloves. We will hand to each person a cube of bread and an individual cup of juice or wine (the common loaf and common cup will only be used during the liturgy). For those not yet comfortable with coming forward, we will continue to offer the individual chalices with the elements in them as we have been doing. We will ask that those coming forward maintain some physical distancing to respect others coming forward. Moving forward, we will continue to celebrate Holy Communion on the first Sunday of each month.

Beginning in June we will return to using the hymnals and Bibles in the pews/seats. The research has indicated that the transmission rate of the virus from inanimate objects is very low and that it appears to only survive for a maximum of 72 hours on this medium. Cleaning and disinfecting will continue even though there will be approximately 167 hours between when these books are used.

We are planning on the reinstitution of our social hours after worship. Again, this appears very doable while honoring safety and health guidelines as set forth. More information will be given as we finalize the plans/guidelines necessary to accomplish this time together.

I pray that each of us will do our part in honoring the guidelines on which these changes are based, as we implement them into our personal and social activities. The health agencies have made these changes based on the monitoring of and the statistics that are still collected daily. It has been a long journey for all of us in arriving to this point. We still have progress to make, but with the cooperation of everyone we can approach the day when what we consider to be "normal" may return for all of us.

As always, feel free to reach out to me or a member of our board/trustees with any questions or concerns.

In God We Trust / Love and Prayers, Pastor Dave



The circumstances of this past year placed the voices of our St. Mark's choir on hold; however, they were not silenced permanently. On Thursday, May 20, we warmed up our vocal chords and blessed all who were at Ethel Cater's graveside service with one of our favorite songs, "Go Now In Peace". It was so wonderful to once again hear the beautiful 4-part harmonies singing together.

Thank you, St. Mark's choir, for taking the time to sing this message of peace and comfort to the family and friends of our "Little" Ethel. We will truly miss this remarkable lady with her special laugh.

In the Tug of War of Life

There are times when our lives can feel like a tug of war. Sometimes we are trying to pull in one direction and we feel a resistance trying to hold us back, tugging against us. We pull and we strain, sometimes making progress and sometimes losing ground as we struggle to achieve what we are striving for. This is when discernment is very important. We need to discern if we are being held back by the evil one who doesn't want to see us succeed and to make us give in and give up out of hopelessness. The other possibility is that God is trying to get us to slow down and reevaluate what it is we are trying to accomplish, whether it is God's will for our lives or not. There are also times when we are not the ones doing the pulling, sometimes we feel like we are the rope in this tug of war. We are being pulled in different directions for different purposes, beliefs, ideologies, philosophies, or even theologies. Have you ever felt like you were a rope with many different ends like the spokes on a wheel, being pulled in so many different directions at the same time so that the stress on you felt overwhelming. So many needs, so many wants, so many requests to join a cause, a group, or to get on board someone's bandwagon, so to speak. This seems to be very prevalent in our world today, and with so many differing beliefs, ideologies, philosophies, and theologies. How does one begin to sort it all out? Where does one find the strength so that they will not break or be torn apart by all of the pressure?

The Answer: GOD!

Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. We pray for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. This can only be done through us when we surrender to God's precepts, God's teachings, God's will for our lives. In order to discern God's will in our tug of wars we must test all things to see if they are of God. Testing all things means that one must know how to "examine the Scriptures." Rather than accept every teaching, discerning Christians diligently study the Scriptures. Then they know what the Bible says and, therefore, can "test all things and hold fast to what is true." I can attest that occasionally or superficially reading Scripture does not work. We cannot skim through the Bible and then hope to fully understand or get to the heart of what we need to know and live by.

I have studied many different trades and fields in my life and have acquired knowledge that has enabled me to succeed and prosper in this life, based on the world's standards. It was when I felt that I was the rope in a tug of war between right and wrong, between good and evil, between selfish and selfless, that I began to seek to strengthen my will so that it coincides more with God's will. I began to earnestly, seriously, diligently study the word of God so that I might be able to discern God's will for the decisions and actions that I would make and take in this life; to realize that there are others who may not have had the opportunities that I have had; to realize that others may have experienced different tug of wars than I did or that they may have given in and gave up when all seemed hopeless to them.

Psalms 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet, And a light to my path. We must let its light shine on the teachings and doctrines of the day; the Bible alone is the standard by which all truth must be judged.

May the Spirit of Truth give us strength so that we are strong enough to endure the times of trial and tug of wars that test us each day. May we bring hope and encouragement to others so that they too may discern what they need to endure their tug of wars as well. May we be in the Word and ask God in prayer, through His Son Jesus Christ, for the advocate, the helper, to bring a deeper understanding of the Scriptures to each of us so that we will truly discern God's will for our lives each day.

In God We Trust / Love and Prayers, Pastor Dave and Melody

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Servers for June

June 6th:

Reader – Lori
Prayer – Ron
Ushers – Dean / Lori (For Communion)
Counter – Carrie

June 13th:

Reader – Alyssa
Prayer – Carolyn
Counter – Deb P.

June 20th:

Reader – Marie
Prayer – Deb B.
Counter – Diane

June 27th:

Reader – Sharon N.
Prayer – Cheryl
Counter – Carrie

Joshua Summer Lunch and Backpack Program

Now that COVID restrictions have been somewhat lifted, Joshua Project is going to be able to hold their summer lunch program as well as their backpack program this year. If you are interested in volunteering to help in either or both of the Joshua programs, please contact Carrie Foland for more information.

June Birthdays:

| | |
|-------------------|---------|
| Melody Houck | June 5 |
| Bill Pierce | June 9 |
| Peggi Muenier | June 11 |
| Vicki Chichester | June 24 |
| Trudy Shaul | June 25 |
| Denise Minton | June 25 |
| Nannette Amendola | June 30 |

June Anniversaries:

| | |
|----------------------|---------|
| Vern / Lorrie Gordon | June 22 |
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HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!



MIDDLEBURGH CENTRAL SCHOOL

CLASS of 2021

BACCALAUREATE SERVICE

SUNDAY, JUNE 13th - 7:00 P.M.

**at Middleburgh United Methodist Church
(281 Main Street)**

Please join us in giving thanks to God and honoring
our graduates.

(COVID Gathering Restrictions Will Be Observed)