



St. Mark's Lutheran Church

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From Pastor Rodney

See Pastor's report.

E-mail: Pastorrodney@midtel.net

Pastor now has office hours Tuesday through Friday from 9-1. Please call ahead in case he had to leave.

New website

Our new webpage is up and running. Check it out. It is awesome! Thank you Angela. The address is www.stmarkslutheranmiddleburgh.com

Looking for new members!

If you would like to become a member of St. Mark's Lutheran Church please speak with Pastor Rodney.

The next confirmation class will be starting in September. Pastor will be contacting parents to set up a meeting soon. Any questions see Pastor.

Prayers Concerns

Please lift the following people up in prayer:

Shyann

Brenda

Ginny

Amy

Upcoming Events

Aug 12 - Council meeting 6 PM

Aug 16 - Youth meeting 6:30 - 8:30

Every Thursday 6:00 - Prayer meeting in sanctuary

Bottle and Can Drive

We will be collecting clean bottles and cans as a way to offset our mortgage expense. Please bring your bottles and cans Sunday mornings **ONLY** and leave them in the garage.

Voice of the Martyrs

I just returned from attending the NALC convocation in Charleston, S.C, where we met under the theme, "Standing with... to withstand." How do we stand with our brothers and sisters around the world that is being persecuted everyday for their faith? Their only crime is that they love the Lord Jesus Christ and will do anything to defend his name. They will not allow the government to stop them from praising the Lord, or family or friends. Jesus comes first, and they will rather be beaten, or go to prison or even die if necessary to defend the gospel of Jesus.

Often times their sacrifices are not known by anyone but their family and today we are called, to listen to their voice and pray for them, that someday everyone will be free to worship the lord, Jesus Christ. These are some stories of the voice of the martyrs that I hope as we listen to it, we will make time to pray for them. (Adapted from the voice of the martyrs website)

In 2012, Wenxi Li, a book store worker in Beijing, traveled to Shanxi province to help local Christians there open a new book store in the capital city of Taiyuan. But police raided the new business, Enyu Bookstore, and confiscated hundreds of books that Wenxi had brought with him from Beijing.

According to the South China Morning Post, one security worker allegedly shouted at Wenxi and his co-workers, "Don't you dare bring Christian culture here. This is our turf."

On Dec. 19, 2012, Wenxi was asked to come to a police station to retrieve the \$6,000 worth of books that police had seized. But when he arrived at the police station, he was immediately arrested and sent to prison. Police

were quoted as saying Wenxi was denied bail because of the seriousness of his "crime."

His wife, Cai Hong Li, said police told her that her husband was arrested because he was involved in an "illegal business." However, Cai Hong said the bookstore had a legal license to operate and that her husband was not involved with managing the business. He was "just sent to find a rental place for a new store," Cai Hong said.

Since her husband's arrest, Cai Hong said she and her two children have received harassment from anonymous sources. She added that she fears for her children's safety.

While in prison awaiting trial, Wenxi led three people to Christ. His family is planning to appeal his case.

Content but in Need of Prayer - May 2014

VOM partners visited Wenxi Li's wife in early 2014. Cai Hong Li said she is content that God is using a bad situation for His good purposes, even though the family has faced a lot of hardship as a result of her husband's imprisonment. "I don't think my husband being in prison is a miserable thing," she said. She said she needs nothing but prayer from her brothers and sisters. "Prayer is the most precious thing," she said.

Wife and Family Visited Husband

The wife of Wenxi Li reported that she and her family were able to visit with her husband in January 2014 in the central China prison where he is confined. He has been sentenced to two years in prison for his involvement with the Enyu Bookstore, a Christian book store in Taiyuan. His wife said that he is doing well and is excited because several more prisoners have become Christians. Pray that God will continue to use Wenxi Li during his prison sentence.

On July 1, 2009, Pakistani police arrested Imran Ghafur in Punjab province after Muslims accused him of burning pages of the Quran. While cleaning his brother's retail shop, Imran removed the trash he had collected, intending

to burn some of it. While burning the trash, pages of an Islamic book flew into the fire and burned. Imran's neighbor, Haji Liaqat, saw the burned pages of the Islamic book and alerted other Muslims in the area. "Haji Liaqat saw the burned pages, and he aggressively told all resident people and travelers that Imran burnt the pages of a Quran also," a VOM contact said. "He was telling everybody that Imran Ghafur is burning the Quran ... he should be killed."

Imran and his father were severely beaten before police arrested Imran. Following the arrest, news of the incident spread throughout the city, and angry Muslims threw stones at the police station where Imran was being held. "Give the death sentence to him who disgraces the Holy Quran, and hang him who disgraces the Holy Quran," the Muslims said. "Christians are dogs; Imran is a dog," they shouted.

On July 2, 2009, Imran was moved to a jail. "The situation is very tense in Hajwari town, where the Christian families live," the VOM contact said. "Haji Liaqat and his friends are saying that they will not allow Imran's family to live in the colony or run their business."

Imran and his family have been managing businesses in the area and are actively involved with other Christians in the area.

Singing Songs at Midnight

In March 2012, Imran Ghafur's family told us how Imran spends his time in prison. At midnight, Imran prays and sings spiritual songs. Sometimes Muslim prisoners join him and ask him to pray for them. Imran also spends a lot of time in prayer and Bible reading. He is anxious to be released so he can "do missionary work for Jesus."

Please pray for his family, who seemed to be feeling particularly low last month.

Thank You for Your Prayers

On Thursday, May 26, 2011, Imran's brother, Naveed, visited Imran in jail. Naveed told Imran many people were praying for him and he asked Imran what message he wanted to give VOM and other prayer partners.

Imran had tears of joy in his eyes. He said, "I am thankful to Lord for this help. I wish that I could personally meet and thank you, but I am in jail. I cannot do that, but I promise, the day I come out of this prison, surely I will thank you for this love and prayers."

Imran said he is using his time in prison to study God's Word. "I am happy the Lord wants to use me for his Kingdom."

You can go to the voice of the Martyrs website and read many more stories like this, and take time out to write a letter and encourage these brave Christian soldiers.

In Paul's letter to the Romans, Paul said, " Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.

We have all been there we get so overwhelmed with life and everything that is going on, that sometimes we do not know, how to pray or what to pray for. Today I want us to be thankful for the life that God has given to us, a free life, life to serve him without fear of persecution. So many people all over the world dream of the day when they can be in the house of the Lord to worship, they long to go but cant, we have the freedom to come and we don't, why?

We come because it's the place where God wants us to be, we come because God is here.

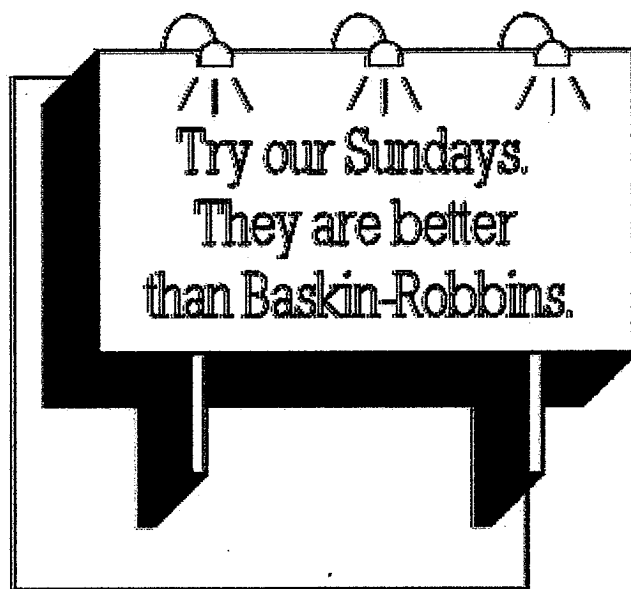
Paul said, if God is for us, who can be against us, who will separate us from the love of Christ, can hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword, no in all these things we are more than conquerors.

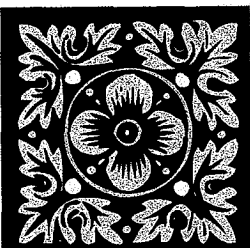
For I am convinced that neither life nor death, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth nor anything else in creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in

Christ Jesus.

Jesus is a love that we can trust to deliver us from all evil and make our way to heaven a sure thing. Let us pray for all Christian martyrs all over the world, and let us pray for those who can come and don't. I close with a personal invitation to all of you to come out to church on September 21 at 10:30 Am where we will celebrate Back-to-church-Sunday. It's a Sunday where we will commit ourselves to invite as many people as we possibly can to come out to church. There will be a meal served following the service. God bless you all and don't forget to **PRAY!**

—
Submitted by,
Pastor.





St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Servers for August

August 3:

Acolyte - Morgan/Brianna
Ushers - Jeremy/Kobe
Reader - Deb P.
Greeter - Jessica
Prayer - Georgia
Counter - Carrie

August 10:

Acolyte - Hannah
Ushers - Dennis/Diane
Reader - Ted L.
Greeter - Ginny
Prayer - Beth
Counter - Deb P.

August 17:

Acolyte - Logan
Ushers - Dean/Lori
Reader - Michelle N.
Greeter - Harry
Prayer - Gene
Counter - Diane

August 24:

Acolyte - Mary
Ushers - Marie/Ryan
Reader - Jim
Greeter - Maurice
Prayer - Ginny
Counter - Carrie

August 31:

Acolyte - Breanna
Ushers - Chris/Gene
Reader - Ginny
Greeter - Pat
Prayer - Chris
Counter - Deb P.





St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Happy Days !!!!!

Birthdays: August

Aug 8 - John Warner III
Aug 9 - Vanessa Gordon
Aug 12 - Amanda Przychodny
Aug 15 - Christopher Crapser
Aug 19 - Jeremy Gordon
Aug 22 - Dennis Foland and
 Georgia Van Dyke
Aug 23 - Kelsey Roney

Anniversaries: August

Aug 9 - Teena and Butch Przychodny
Aug 22 - Cheryl and Virgil Cater
 Dennis and Diane France
 Lori and Dean Roney

Prayer Ministry

You are invited to participate in a new prayer ministry being led by Pastor Rodney. We meet on Thursdays at 6:00 p.m. in St. Mark's sanctuary. If you are unable to attend and have a prayer request you would like lifted, please contact Pastor or feel free to place your written request in the prayer box located in the Narthex. Let's make St. Mark's a praying church where we can bring our joys and concerns to God.

Sharing Special Gifts at Summer Worship

Summer is finally here and the St. Mark's choir is on their summer break for the months of July, August and part of September. We are looking for people to share their gifts and talents, such as a reading, a poem, music (vocal and/or instrumental), etc. during these upcoming months. If God leads you to bless the congregation by serving Him in this way, please contact Cheryl or Carolyn to sign-up for a Sunday worship service.

Clothing Closet Needs:

Men's jeans
Men's t-shirts
Small children's clothing

Church Yard Sale ?????

We are looking for someone to head up a possible church yard on August 16th during the Town of Middleburgh Yard Sale Day. If you are interested please see Diane France. Proceeds will be used for the mortgage.

6 month snapshot of 2014 finances

Income (that can be used for general expenses)	\$34,817.00
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Expenses (general purposes only)	\$40,170.00
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Balance as of June 30, 2014.....	(\$5,353.00)
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6 months of 2014 Mortgage

Mortgage envelopes	\$ 4907.50
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Mortgage Payments	\$ 6276.00
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Balance as of June 30, 2014.....	(\$1368.50)
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From the Treasurer: WHAT IF

In my many years as treasurer, I have often told the council and the finance committee that if every person that calls St. Mark's "their church" filled every envelope in their box we would not have any financial problems.

So.... I finally decided rather than keep saying this I would set out to prove it.

I analyzed the 4 Sundays in January 2014 based on "actual" giving per envelope VS "projected" giving (if everyone gave every Sunday if you are in the pew or not). I took into account those people that give monthly rather than weekly.

Based on my analysis I have found my statement to be true.

I share with you the results:

Actual giving: \$3772.00

Projected giving: \$4684.00

Difference: \$912.00 x 12 months =\$10,944.00

Our deficit at the end of 2013 was (\$9733.00)

As was discussed at the annual meeting, if we continue down this road in 3 years we will have depleted all the savings and stock funds we currently have.

And then what do we do????????????????