



St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Publisher
Church mouse

Volume Number
2014

Issue Number
32

Date
January 2014

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.

CPR/AED/First Aid Class:

Two classes will be offered - one in January and one in February. Watch for sign up sheets once the dates are set.

Prayers Concerns

Please lift the following people up in prayer:

Andrew Lamont
Bruce Martin's family
Virginia Peterson and family
Janet

Upcoming Events

January 5 - Open house at Christ the Shepherd 2 PM

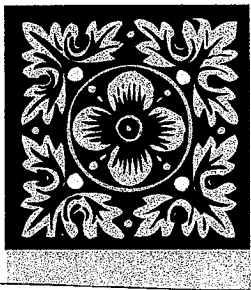
January 8 - Finance meeting 1 PM

January 14 - Council meeting 6 PM

January 11 - Rock and Bowl and Middleburgh Lanes 8-11 PM

January 26 - Annual meeting followed by a potluck lunch. Bring a dish to pass.

Annual reports due to church office by January 15.



St. Mark's Lutheran Church

A Christmas Message

The gospel of Luke 3:4 tells us that Isaiah declared that a man like John the Baptist would come one day as "A voice of one crying in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'"

A woman told a story about the play their church put on one year. She said her young daughter was so excited about her part that they thought she was going to be one of the main characters but she would never tell what part she will play.

The parents were all there and one by one the children took their places. She could see the shepherds fidgeting in one corner, Mary and Joseph stood solemnly behind the manger.

In the back three young wise men waited impatiently. But still her daughter sat quietly and confidently. Then the teacher began: "A long time ago, Mary and Joseph had a baby and they named Him Jesus. She said, "And when Jesus was born, a bright star appeared over the stable." On cue, her daughter got up from her chair, picked up a large tin-foil star, walked behind Mary and Joseph and held the star up high for everyone to see. When the teacher told about the shepherds coming to see the baby the three young shepherds came forward and her daughter jiggled the star up and down excitedly to show them where to come.

When the wise men responded to their cue, her daughter went forward a little to meet them and to lead the way, her face as alight as the real star might have been. The play ended. And on the way home her daughter said, with great satisfaction, "I had the main part!"

"You did?" her mom questioned, wondering why she thought that. "Yes," she said, "**because I showed everybody how to find Jesus!**"

That was the mission of John the Baptist, and that is our mission as well. As we prepare for Christmas we need to set some priorities straight. We need to:

- Make it a priority to acknowledge that Jesus is the main reason we celebrate Christmas.
- We need to take every opportunity we have, to tell others the good news of Jesus birth.
- We need to make it a priority to share with those who are less fortunate. It's only in this way that we will truly prepare for the birth of Christ.

Finally, to prepare people for the coming of the Christ, John the Baptist called for "a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins." That hasn't changed. The Bible still tells us in this Christian age:



St. Mark's Lutheran Church

I Asked God

I asked God for strength that I might achieve. I was made weak, that I might learn to obey.

I asked for health, that I might do greater things. I was given infirmity, that I might do better things.

I asked for riches, that I might be happy. I was given poverty, that I might be wise.

I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men. I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.

I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life. I was given life that I might enjoy all things.

I got nothing that I asked for - but everything that I had hoped for.

Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.

I am, among all men, most richly blessed.

Hall Usage

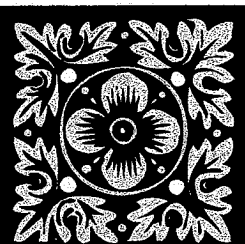
Many groups have asked to use our facility for their meetings. If you happen to be at the church please double check that all lights have been turned off and both doors are locked.

Also please leave the doors going into the sanctuary open for the winter.

"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

To come to Christ now, God expects us to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; to repent of our sins; to confess Jesus as our Lord and Master, and to be baptized for the forgiveness of our sins. Until you have done that, it doesn't matter what else you do, you will never be prepared for the coming Jesus. May this Christmas be filled with lots of cheer and blessings from God the Almighty. Be safe, and be blessed. Merry Christmas and a bright and blessed 2014. Christ is born! Let the whole world rejoice, Alleluia, Alleluia. Amen.

Submitted by,
Pr. Royan Rodney.



St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Committees:

Youth:

Join us for Rock and Bowl at the Middleburgh Lanes Saturday January 11th from 8-11 PM. Cost is \$10.00 which includes shoes and snacks. Meet at the church at 7:45. Sign up sheet is in the hallway.

On December 14th the youth had their Christmas party. We had lots to eat and had a lot of fun playing various games. 9 kids and 5 adults attended.

The youth continue to collect small packs of kool aid to be sent to a platoon overseas. If you would like to donate a box is up by the altar rail.

Property:

Work has begun on shoring up the cellar walls after being damaged by the flood. Volunteers from SALT are assisting with this work.

Servers for Jan

January 5:

Acolyte - Morgan/Brianna
Ushers - Jeremy/Kobe
Reader - Ted L.
Greeter - Jessie
Prayer - Gene
Counter - Deb

January 12:

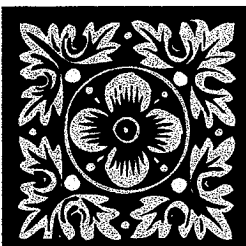
Acolyte - Mary/Logan
Ushers - Marie/Gene
Reader - Nanette
Greeter - Janet
Prayer - Beth
Counter - Diane

January 19:

Acolyte - Kaleb/Jenna
Ushers - Deb/Breanna
Reader - Ethel
Greeter - Deb
Prayer - Georgia
Counter - Carrie

January 26:

Acolyte - Hannah/Gabby
Ushers - Austin/Cody
Reader - Sharon N.
Greeter - Ginny
Prayer - Chris
Counter - Deb



St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Happy Days !!!!!

Birthdays: January

January 4 - Brenda Varella
January 5 - Tom Nesbitt
January 13 - Ted Palmatier
January 18 - Ted Langenbahn and
Morgan Gordon
January 20 - Lisa Bartholomew
January 21 - Breanna Palmatier
January 22 - Pastor Rodney
January 24 - Patti Turner

**Wishing
everyone a
Happy New
Year!**

Anniversaries: January

January 2 - Carolyn and Gene
Wyckoff
Dennis and Carrie Foland
January 8 - Beth and Chris Cash
January 17 - Sharon and Tom Nesbitt

Upcoming Youth Events:

January 11 - Rock and Bowl at
Middleburgh Lanes 9-11 PM. Meet at
church at 8:45 PM.

See flyers in the hallway for more
details and sign up for 2014 activities.

Annual meeting:

**Sunday January 26
following worship
service. Bring a dish
to pass.**

A Word from the Treasurer:

Well, it's that time of year again when Sharon Nesbitt will tell us our 2014 envelopes are in the back of the church. I thought I would take a few minutes for a refresher course – if you are getting older like me and need it or you are new to the church – as to what happens to the gifts you place in all those envelopes.

Starting in the front of the box is a pledge card. Some churches use these cards to set their upcoming budgets. However we don't – but feel free to complete it and place it in the offering plate.

The next envelope is an *Initial* offering envelope. Gifts received are used to offset the costs of the offering envelopes which are \$160.

The gold envelopes are for general giving. These funds are used to support the church. All expenses of the church under our general operating budget come from these gifts. These expenses include Pastor's salary, health insurance, social security, housing and travel expense sexton salary, insurance and utilities for the church, committee expenses and our 10% tithe for benevolence.

The envelope with the orange top is marked *Building Fund*. These gifts are placed in a separate account and are used for major repairs to the church building such as repairing the slate roof.

The envelope with the blue top is marked *Vision Fund(AKA mortgage fund)*. These gifts are placed in a separate account to pay the mortgage for the new addition. This is \$1046/month.

Disbursed through various months are other special envelopes. Ash Wednesday, Lenten offering, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday envelopes are used to support various missionaries as decided each year by council.

Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas envelopes are used for our general giving.

If you do not get a 2014 box of envelopes and would like one please see Sharon Nesbitt.

As always if you have a question please feel free to ask me.

In Christ,

Debbie Palmatier
Treasurer

Lutheran World Relief to address urgent needs for thousands affected by typhoon

Super Typhoon Haiyan struck the Philippines on the morning of Nov. 8 as one of the world's most powerful storms on record to make landfall. The Category 5 typhoon made landfall near Leyte Province in Eastern Visayas Region causing massive destruction and loss of life. The storm hit with wind gusts up to 235 mph, nearly 16 inches of rainfall, and waves up to 45 feet in some areas.

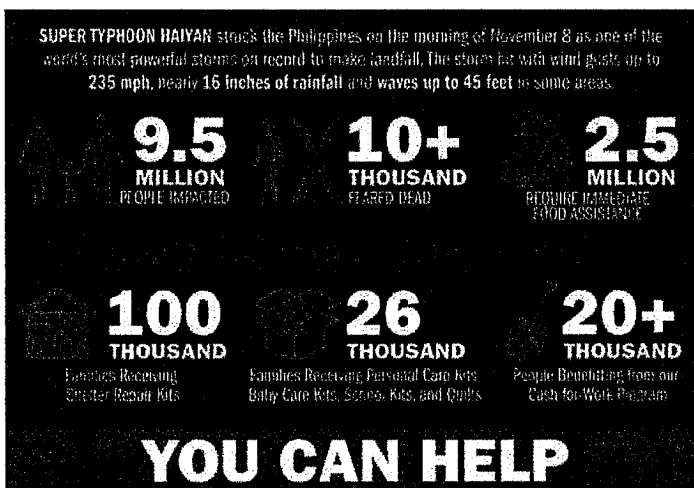
As the extent of the massive damage from Typhoon Haiyan becomes clear, Lutheran World Relief announced on Nov. 11 that it had mobilized an immediate shipment of relief items to the Philippines and began making preparations to address immediate needs of shelter repair and debris removal.

LWR staff in the Philippines are currently in northern Cebu, and have visited some of the storm-affected areas to begin assessing needs.

The hardest hit areas remain difficult to reach, cut off by landslides, flooding, fallen trees, downed power lines and damaged roads. Communication is limited, and power is down through the affected areas. Due to these challenges, the full extent of the damage may not be known for some time.

Officials estimate that the death toll will exceed 10,000 in the city of Tacloban alone. Officials have yet to reach four other affected islands to assess damage and casualties, said Joanne Fairley, LWR's director for Asia and Middle East programs. "The devastation is similar to what we saw in 2004 with the tsunami," Fairley said. "As more information becomes available, it's becoming clear that the full impact of this storm is much worse than anything the Philippines has seen before."

LWR is making immediate plans to assist at least 100,000 families in northern Cebu and western Leyte with shelter repair kits. LWR will also administer a cash-for-work program in northern Cebu and western Leyte, providing more than 20,000 people with the opportunity to earn money through short-term work assignments clearing



Lutheran World Relief
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. LASTING PROMISE.

lwr.org/haiyan | [@LuthWorldRelief](https://twitter.com/LuthWorldRelief)

Source: Christianity Today

debris from public spaces. LWR successfully implemented similar programs in the Philippines after 2012's Typhoon Bopha.

LWR also began making preparations to immediately send four shipping containers filled with more than \$800,000 worth of LWR Quilts, Personal Care Kits, Baby Care Kits, and School Kits from its warehouses in the United States to meet urgent needs.

In addition to these programs, LWR will support government agencies and other relief agencies by offering training on international humanitarian standards.

LWR is accepting donations for this emergency and seeks to raise an initial \$2.5 million to respond to urgent needs. You may give online at www.lwr.org or call 800-597-5972. Gifts may be sent by mail to:

Lutheran World Relief
P.O. Box 17061
Baltimore, MD 21297-1061.

Please indicate "Philippines Typhoon" on your check. To learn more about donating Quilts and Kits, please visit www.lwr.org.

Puppy Size

Danielle keeps repeating it over and over again. We've been back to this animal shelter at least 5 times. It has been weeks now since we started all of this the mother told the volunteer.

**What is it she keeps asking for? The volunteer asked.
Puppy size! Replied the mother.**

Well we have plenty of puppies, if that's what she's looking for. I know – we have seen most of them, the mom said in frustration.

Just then Danielle came walking into the office. Well, did you find one? asked her mom. No not this time Danielle said with sadness in her voice. Can we come back next weekend?

The two women looked at each other, shook their heads and laughed. You never know when we will get more dogs. Unfortunately, there's always a supply, the volunteer said.

Danielle took her mother by the hand and headed to the door. Don't worry, I'll find one this weekend, she said.

Over the next few days both Mom and Dad had long conversations with her. They both felt she was being too particular. It's this weekend or we are not looking anymore, Dad said in frustration. We don't want to hear anything about puppy size either, Mom said.

Sure enough, they were the first ones in the shelter on Saturday morning. By now Danielle knew her way around, so she ran right for the section that housed the small dogs.

Tired of the routine, Mom sat in the small waiting room at the end of the first row of cages. There was an observation window so you could see the animals during times when visitors weren't permitted.

Danielle walked slowly from cage to cage kneeling periodically to take a closer look. One by one the dogs were brought out and she held each one.

One by one she said – sorry but you're not the one.

It was the last cage on the last day in search of the perfect pup. The volunteer opened the cage door and the child carefully picked up the dog and held it closely. This time she took a little longer.

Mom, that's it! I found the right puppy! He's the one! I know it! She screamed with joy. It's the puppy size!

But it's the same size as all the other puppies you held over the last few weeks Mom said.

No not size....the sighs. When I held him in my arms, he sighed, she said.

Don't you remember? When I asked you one day what love is, you told me love depends on the sighs of your heart. The more you love, the bigger the sigh!

The two women looked at each other for a moment. Mom didn't know whether to laugh or cry. As she stooped down to hug the child, she did a little of both.

Mom, every time you hold me, I sigh. When you and Daddy come home from work and hug each other, you both sigh. I knew I would find the right puppy if it sighed when I held it in my arms, she said. Then, holding the puppy up close to her face, she said, Mom, he loves me. I heard the sighs of his heart!

Close your eyes for a moment and think about the love that makes you sigh. I not only find it in the arms of my loved ones, but in the caress of a sunset, the kiss of the moonlight and the gentle brush of cool air on a hot day.

They are the sighs of God. Take the time to stop and listen; you will be surprised at what you hear.

"Life is not measured by the breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away."