

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

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Prayer Ministry

You are invited to participate in a new prayer ministry. We meet on Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. in St. Mark's sanctuary. If you are unable to attend and have a prayer request you would like lifted, please contact the church office or feel free to place your written request in the prayer box located in narthex.

Council has adopted a new policy for anyone that wishes to use the fellowship hall for an event. All requests are to be sent to Lisa Bartholomew. She can be reached at 231-9494. She will handle all the arrangements, scheduling, paperwork and payments. This will allow for a one point person contact rather than having too many people involved.

We are still collecting clean deposit cans and bottles. All proceeds are used to pay the mortgage. Please leave your bags in front of the garage door.

Prayers Concerns

Please lift the following people up in prayer:

Prayers for our new pastor

Upcoming Events

Oct 9 - Council meeting 7:00

Oct 14 - Men's prayer breakfast

NET dinners at St. Mark's will resume in January 2018

If you know of anyone that could use an encouragement basket please speak with Janet or Gloria.

If you have articles you would like in the newsletters please put them in Debbie's mailbox.

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Happy Days !!!!!

Birthdays: October

October 1 - Chris Cash
October 6 - Michelle Amendola
October 12 - Kathy Kauffman
October 18 - Jessica Gordon and
Lori Roney
October 20 - John Palmatier
October 26 - John Cronin and
Willard Karsch
October 27 - Nicholas Roney and
Allen Turner
October 28 - Mary Bowman

Anniversaries: October

October 4 - Todd and Lisa
Bartholomew
October 15 - John and Lori Warner
October 25 - Denise and Terry
Minton

*Prayers should be
the key in the
morning and the lock
at night.*

**Did you know St. Mark's offers
the following opportunities for
you and your family to
participate?**

Phoebes - every Monday from 9-2 PM

Youth Sunday School - Held during
the worship service message

Adult Sunday School - Sundays from
9:15 - 10 AM

Prayer Ministry - every Thursday
night beginning at 5:30 PM

After School Program - every day
from 3 - 5:30 PM following school
schedule

Men's Prayer breakfast - second
Saturday of each month

THOSE CHURCH LADIES!!

**The Associate Minister unveiled
the church's new campaign slogan
last Sunday - I Upped My Pledge -
Up Yours.**

**Low Self Esteem Support Group
will meet Thursday at 7 PM. Please
use the back door.**



CHICKEN AND BISCUIT DINNER

St. Mark's
Lutheran Church
Middleburgh, NY

Saturday, October 7, 2017

4:30 PM to 6:00 PM

Prices

Adult - \$8.00

Children - Age 5 To 12 - \$5.00

Age 4 and younger - Free

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Servers for Oct

October 1:

Acolyte - Lisa
Ushers - Deb P./ Marie
Reader - Lori
Greeter - Janet
Prayer - Deb B.
Counter - Carrie

October 8:

Acolyte - Dylan
Ushers - Pat/Dennis
Reader - Marie
Greeter - Deb P.
Prayer - Beth
Counter - Debbie

October 15:

Acolyte - Lisa
Ushers - Jim/Deb
Reader - Sharon
Greeter - Ginny
Prayer - Georgia
Counter - Diane

October 22:

Acolyte - Dylan
Ushers - Sharon/Tom
Reader - Jim
Greeter - Harry
Prayer - Jim
Counter - Carrie

October 29:

Acolyte - Lisa
Ushers - Gene/Chris
Reader - Ginny
Greeter - Maurice
Prayer - Chris
Counter - Debbie

Outrageous Grace

"This is embarrassing," my friend said to me over the phone.

"That's okay," I assured him. "Go ahead. You can tell me."

He sighed. "Well, we found out our little girl shoplifted a book from the church bookstore. We were really surprised because she's a good kid. Anyway, I was wondering whether you would help us out with something."

Frankly, I was relieved the news wasn't more serious. "Sure," I said. "What can I do?"

"We'd like you to represent the church so she can come in and apologize," he replied. "Maybe you could figure out some sort of restitution. We want to use this as a teaching moment."

I agreed to help, but I have to admit I had an even bigger lesson in mind.

The next day, the parents and their eight-year-old daughter walked hesitantly into my office and sat down. The girl was so small, she was almost swallowed up by the chair. Her eyes were downcast; her mood was somber.

After I exchanged some pleasantries with her parents, I sat down on the edge of my desk so I was facing the girl. As gently as I could, I said to her, "Tell me what happened."

She hesitated, her lower lip quivering. "Well," she said as she started to snifle, "I was in the bookstore after a service and I saw a book that I really wanted, but I didn't have any money." Now tears pooled in her eyes and spilled down her cheeks. I handed her a tissue, which she used to dab her eyes before continuing.

"So I put the book under my coat and took it," she blurted out, almost as if she wanted to expel the words as fast as she could so they wouldn't linger. "I knew it was wrong. I knew I shouldn't do it, but I did it. And I'm sorry. I'll never do it again. Honest."

She was so contrite that it broke my heart. "I'm glad you're willing to admit what you did and say you're sorry," I told her. "That's very brave, and it's the right thing to do."

She nodded slightly.

"But," I continued, "what do you think an appropriate punishment would be?"

She shrugged her shoulders. I knew from her parents that she had already thrown out the book to hide the evidence. I paused for a moment, then said, "I understand the book cost five dollars. I think it would be fair if you paid the bookstore five dollars, plus three times that amount, which would make the total twenty dollars. Do you think that would be fair?"

"Yes," she murmured, though I could see fear — almost panic — in her eyes. Her mind was whirring. *Where was she going to come up with twenty dollars?* That's a mountain of money for a little kid. She didn't have the five dollars to buy the book in the first place, and suddenly her debt had spiraled completely out of sight.

At that moment, I got up and walked behind my desk. Sitting down, I pulled open the top drawer. The little girl's eyes narrowed. She couldn't figure out what I was doing. I pulled out my checkbook, picked up a pen, and wrote a check from my personal account for the full amount that she owed. I tore off the check and held it in my hand. Her mouth dropped open.

"I know there's no way you can pay the penalty that you deserve," I told her. "So I'm going to pay it for you. Do you know why I'd do that?"

Bewildered, she shook her head.

"Because I love you," I told her. "Because I care about you. Because you're important to me. And please remember this: that's how Jesus feels about you too. Except even *more*."

With that, I handed her the check, which she grabbed and clutched to her heart. She simply blossomed with a look of absolute relief and joy and wonder. She was almost giddy with gratitude. The same little girl who had slinked into the office under the weight of shame now left lighthearted and skipping.

I don't know how God ultimately used that teaching moment in her life. But I do know this: once a person, even at a young age, experiences a taste of the kind of grace offered by Christ, it leaves an indelible mark on the soul. Who could resist being attracted by the forgiveness and unmerited favor extended by Jesus?

This is one of the greatest dimensions of the unexpected adventure. The message we convey isn't based on condemnation or shame. We're not offering people a life sentence of hard labor to try to somehow make themselves worthy of heaven. Instead, we have the privilege of telling people how

they can find complete forgiveness as a free gift that was purchased when Jesus died as our substitute to pay for all of our wrongdoing — past, present, and future.

“Grace means there’s nothing we can do to make God love us more,” writes Philip Yancey in his classic book *What’s So Amazing About Grace?* “And grace means there’s nothing we can do to make God love us less. . . . Grace means that God already loves us as much as an infinite God can possibly love.”

NALC News

North American Lutheran Church

September 2017

NALC Disaster Response working to assist those hurt by hurricanes

Hurricane Harvey made landfall on Aug. 25, devastating millions on the Gulf Coast of Texas. NALC Disaster Response and NALC congregations have been providing emergency relief ever since.

After touring from Corpus Christi to Houston, Mary Bates, NALC Disaster Coordinator, assessed the need for donation centers and volunteer team housing.

"Some of our church buildings have damage, some of our pastors' homes are damaged, and many of our congregational families' homes are destroyed. Your help is needed," Mary Bates said. "NALC

congregations have addressed the needs of the congregational members impacted, and we are now reaching out to the larger community. Please continue to send your support."

Nine truckloads of water, flood buckets with cleaning supplies, rakes, shovels, garden hoses, more than 1,000 hygiene kits, 500 layettes/baby items, 2,000 quilts and Bibles, school supplies, and pet food have been delivered to families in need from Corpus Christi to Beaumont by NALC Disaster Response.

Peace Lutheran Church in Clifton, Texas, was a staging area for donations that are much needed by those on the Gulf Coast.



Volunteers at the NALC Disaster Warehouse in Caldwell, Ohio, load flood buckets, cleaning supplies, bottled water, and many other emergency supplies for delivery to Texas for Hurricane Harvey relief.

The NALC's South Texas Mission District is now transitioning to long-term recovery. The same distribution centers and disaster volunteer team housing used for mudding out homes will now be used to schedule donations of building supplies (especially flooring) and volunteers to rebuild homes. See the NALC website for more information on how to volunteer or send tangible items.

Volunteer teams will be needed throughout the next year and devastated families will need help for a number of years.

The first disaster volunteer team — from St. John Lutheran Church in Boerne, Texas — gutted and

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repaired the home of Pastor Mike Gabby in Portland, Texas. His church, St. Stephen Lutheran Church in Portland, was flooded when flashing on the roof was ripped off.

St. Stephen members generously arranged for volunteer housing and a donations center in the midst of a community with no power and no utilities.

Mary Bates then met with Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Victoria, Texas, an LCMC congregation that we are partnering with in an area devastated by hurricane force winds.

Pastor Bryce Formwalt of St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, an LCMC congregation in New Braunfels, Texas, worked with Mary Bates to arrange for volunteer housing and a donations center, to be used by both LCMC and NALC volunteer teams.

While traveling to Rosenberg, Texas, Mary Bates and Pastor Mike Giese of Peace Lutheran Church in Rosenberg got into rising flood waters from the Brazos River. After nearly five hours, they made it into Rosenberg, which was also flooded.

A donations center and volunteer housing have been established at Peace Lutheran Church in Rosenberg. The first recipients were the members of Oromo Evangelical Church, an NALC congregation in Houston. Pastor Kamiso Boru's



Flooding in Rosenberg, Texas, caused by rains from Hurricane Harvey.



Cindy Gember of St. James Lutheran Church in Greenfield, Ind., working with donations at disaster response warehouse in Ingleside, Texas.

home was destroyed as were the homes of several members of the congregation.

In the midst of the storm and the storm recovery, we are at work spreading the Gospel. When Pastor Gabby asked Mary Bates why she was sending quilts to an area with 100-degree heat, Mary responded that Bibles and beautiful quilts made by the Women of the NALC and others provide comfort and hope for families who have lost everything.

Several days later, Pastor Gabby said that for each Bible and quilt handed out, there were lots of tears of joy. Recipients know that NALC congregations care and experienced the presence of Jesus that is always with us.

Hurricane Irma

Hurricane Irma has left a 400-mile-wide path of destruction across Florida and the southern states. Thankfully, NALC congregations are again reaching out to our brothers and sisters in the south, providing prayers and support.

The first truckload of cleaning supplies, flood buckets, water, and many other items was sent to Florida from the Carolinas Mission District.

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NALC Disaster Response volunteers pray with those who have lost so much from Hurricane Harvey. Spiritual care including prayer and the gift of a Bible are among the gifts that NALC Disaster Response is able to give to those affected by disasters.

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Your help and prayers are needed as NALC Disaster Response begins the process of response and recovery in the Sonshine, Mid-South, and Carolinas Mission Districts.

Pastor George Johnson of Shepherd of the Woods Lutheran Church in Jacksonville has offered their church to be a staging area. Mary Bates will be assessing the need and identifying ways to help as the water recedes throughout the state.

Information on how to assemble flood buckets and other disaster kits is available on the NALC website. Donations of gift cards, cleaning supplies, flood buckets, mops, brooms, garden rakes, garden hoses, and other items may be sent to the NALC Disaster Warehouse; 810 Main Street; Caldwell, OH 43724.

Watch the NALC website for information on locations that can receive tangible supplies and volunteer teams. For more information on how you can help, go to the website or contact Mary Bates at disasterresponse@thenalc.org or 740-509-1132.

Monetary donations may be given online at www.thenalc.org or sent to NALC Disaster Response; 2299 Palmer Drive, Suite 220; New Brighton, MN 55112-2202.

International Relief Efforts

Lutheran World Relief and Water Mission are responding to damage caused by Hurricane Irma on Caribbean islands. LWR and Water Mission are both NALC Recognized Ministries.

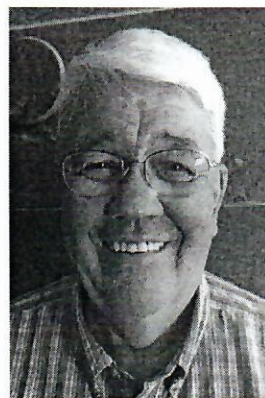
Gifts to Lutheran World Relief may be given online at lwr.org or sent to Lutheran World Relief; P.O. Box 17061; Baltimore, MD 21297-1061.

Gifts to Water Mission may be given online at watermission.org or sent to: Water Mission; P.O. Box 71489; North Charleston, SC 29415.

Nestingen hosts online text study

The Rev. Dr. James Nestingen hosts a weekly streaming-video study of the lectionary Scripture readings called Cross Talk.

The online text study is geared to pastors and offers insights for preaching, but lay people may also enjoy listening to Dr. Nestingen's insights on the Scriptures.



James Nestingen

Dr. Nestingen is a widely respected Lutheran theologian and NALC pastor who has been a featured speaker at recent NALC Convocations.

The Cross Talk study meets live on Tuesdays at 2 p.m. ET. Recordings of the live sessions are also made available to all participants.

Cross Talk is sponsored by St. Paul Lutheran Seminary. You may sign up for the Cross Talk study at the seminary website: www.semlc.org.