

*The Grapevine*  
St. Mark's Episcopal Church



December 2011



*This Advent season as we hear again  
the words  
of the prophet Isaiah,  
may we prepare our  
hearts and minds  
to make room for Him.*

**St. Mark's Episcopal Church**

335 Locust Street  
Johnstown, PA 15901  
814-535-6797

Email:  
stmarks@atlanticcbbn.net  
Web site  
www.stmarksjohnstownpa.org

**Our Staff:**

**Priest:** Rev. Martin Wright

**Organist:** Dolly Lopresti

**Bell Choir:** Annis Rogers

**Treasurer:**

**Secretary:** Joanne McKinley

**Sexton:** Nikki Forsythe

**The Vestry:**

Senior Warden: Pamela Hysong  
Junior Warden: Todd Wagner

**2012**

Greg Lilly  
Todd Wagner  
Lucie Whittle  
Lorraine Zitnay

**2013**

Richard Burkert  
Cynthia Greig  
Jack Herbein  
Pam Hysong

**2014**

Lisa Bell-Loncella  
Jay Follansbee  
Bill Horner  
Pam Mayer

*Please remember  
St. Mark's Church in your will.*

From The Rector's Desk



When you read this, we will be well into Advent, racing headlong into Christmas. It does seem like that sometimes, with all the activities, preparations and excitement of the season. Then, it's here and gone before we know it. The whole season vanishes like a dream. It's not a dream, though. What we celebrate is very real, but it took me a very long time to truly appreciate just how incredible the story of Christmas really is.

Have you looked upon the baby, lying peacefully in the feeding trough, and beheld the Lord of heaven and earth, the creator of the cosmos? Paul tells us in his letter to the church in Philippi that Jesus set aside the prerogatives of Godhood and humbled himself to become like us. He humbled himself. Actually, he exhibited the humility that is as much a part of his nature as is his omniscience or omnipotence. How is it that a being that knows all and is all powerful should be humble? I don't know, but it is the one attribute of God that we should best be able to emulate. Yet it often seems to be the one that gives us the most trouble.

Being humble is bound up in serving others, which seems to take on a special emphasis during the holiday season. However, serving people for *their* sake or for the love of *them* can be a problem, as noted by Oswald Chambers in My Utmost for His Highest (February 23). We will find ourselves soon unable to sustain such work. We can only sustain it when we serve them for Jesus' sake and the love of him.

I must confront this struggle in myself. How much harder my work becomes as I allow my motives to become mixed and my focus to shift from the Lord. I sometimes feel like a drowning man, thrashing the water with all my strength, desperately trying to stay afloat. And yet, another motive within me urges me to relax and surrender myself to the waves.

If I focus on *myself*, *my* strength, *my* hurts, *my* needs, *my* disappointments, *my* desires, *my* gifts, I will never achieve what God desires of me, I will find nothing sufficient, I will drown. All that I do must be done for Him, in Him, through Him. I must exercise the gifts He has given me as He empowers me to do so.

During this holiday season, I hope you will take time to slow down and look upon the baby in the manger. Consider the gifts He has given you and how you can use them to serve Him. May we each follow the example of His humility to serve others for His sake and in so doing make a difference not only this Christmas season, but for all eternity.

Fr. Marty



### **2011 Weekly Altar Flowers & Monthly Altar Candles**

Donation price is \$30 a Sunday for flowers and \$8 a month for candles. Please contact Joanne in the Parish Office or Doris Horner with your requests.

#### **We have openings for the following dates:**

12/11(1), 12/18 (2).

Openings for all Sundays in 2012.



#### **Remember Today In Your Prayers:**

Cindy Leap, John Conrad, Edward Ajay, James Hargreaves, Clara Bell, Brett, Helen Leap.

#### **Family and Friends Serving Our Country:**

Jason Medsger, Clint Cable, Justin Erdley, Chad McLaren, Michael Custer, Jeff Bright, Ryan Bracken, Dan Kell, Valerie Hantke, Gary Hogman, Joseph & Adam Wright.

**Please Continue To Remember In Your Personal Prayers:** Lois Bender, Liz Hysong, Joy Brehm, Dorothy Veale, Jack & Carroll Green, Regina Hoover, John Michyna, Bernice Ketterer, Marjorie Ajay, Gloria Coulson, Betty McGrath, Allie Ireland, Louis Hoffer, Sue Kelly, Polly Sledd, Maggie Lesosky, Deneen & Blanche Brant, Stanley Gimza, John Fry, Mary Hider, Vivian Marple, Joan & Bill Berresford, Phyllis Miller, Ethel Thomas, Gordon Gladden, Catherine Woods, Joy Howard, Dave Maxwell, Linda Russell, Msgr. Orbanek, Jeff Gates, Hal Trevenen, Connie Derzack, Carole Caroff, Tim Whitford, Bob Armstrong, Keith Barkley, Peter Keitsock, Jeff Nelson, Bill Eidenire, Kelly Plowchin, Frankie Weaver, Agnes Swarney, Shawn McKinley, Ignacio Panebianco, the McKiersan Family, Tres Kelly & Scott Joe, & Baby Gocella, George Quinn, June & Travis Kania, the Kellerhouse Family, and the Autumn Danchanko Family.





*Happy December Anniversary!*

*Bob & Sharon Howarth  
December 2nd*

*Gerald & Jane Strillmatter  
December 15th*

*Happy December Birthday*



<i>Name</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Date</i>
<i>Penn Whitlow</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>Amy Whitlow</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Jim Russell</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>Brian Gunnlaugson</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Lucie Whittle</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>Regina Hoover</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Connor Rager</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Andrew Rudnik</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Rachelmae Pulliam</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Baby Jesus</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Shawn Rager</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>Penn Whitlow (Happy 18th)</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Katy Shaffer</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>Sam Buchan</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Bill Pulliam</i>	<i>13</i>		

If we have forgotten your Birthday or Anniversary, please let us know. Call the office with your Information (535-6797) or e mail us at [stmarks@atlanticbbn.net](mailto:stmarks@atlanticbbn.net).

Thanks, Joanne



## BIBLE STUDY

**When:** Every Tuesday  
**Time:** 9:00 AM  
**Where:** Sorella-Sorella Espresso  
828 Diamond Boulevard

(across from the Westmont Middle School)

Our Bible Study has moved to a new date, time, and location. Each week we study the upcoming Gospel Lesson.

Please take time from your busy schedule to join us.

For more information, please contact Lucie Whittle, 535-6601

### *Finance Meeting*

**To Be Announced**

### *Vestry Meeting*

**Sunday, December 11th  
After the 10:00 am Service**

### *Youth Ministry Band*

The extra collection for the Second Sunday of the month will benefit the needs of the newly formed Youth Ministry Band.

### ***Fuel & Snow Removal***

During the winter months, we are faced with high heating bills as well as costs for snow removal. The extra collection for the Third Sunday of the month (Dec. 18th) will go towards those costs.

### ***Pastoral Care***

All families of the church are encouraged to donate one dollar on the fourth Sunday of each month (Dec. 25th) for our Pastoral Care. Please be sure to mark your donation separately for Pastoral Care.

Soup & Study  
at the home of John & Annis Rogers  
6 – 8 pm

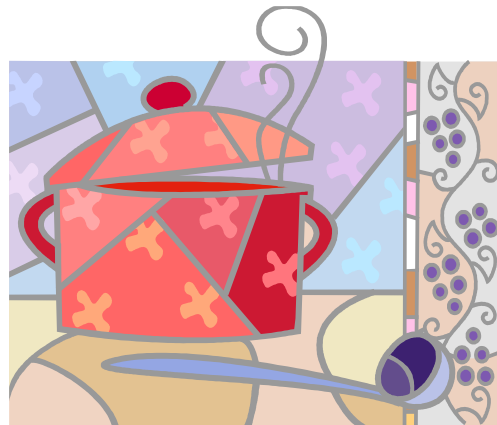
Tuesday December 13th

Tuesday December 20th

Join us for an evening of delicious homemade soup or other light fare and lively discussion in our home. We usually read two chapters and meet every other week to talk about what we've read. We take turns providing a simple meal.

Our current readings are from *The Wisdom of Jesus, Transforming Heart and Mind – A New Perspective on Christ and His Message* by Cynthia Bourgeault.

Contact Annis Rogers 539 – 2295  
shaman@atlanticbb.net





## **Pastoral Care**

Thank you for continuing to support St. Mark's Food Pantry. Your assistance every month, whether it be monetary or food items truly makes a difference to those families less fortunate than us.

As quickly as your donations come in, they are distributed to those in need.

Your monetary donations go towards purchasing food items for the hungry. Gift cards in any denomination to Randy's BiLo, Ideal Market, Giant Eagle or Dollar General are always welcome.

During the month of November, through your generosity, we were able to help **10 Families** with **Grocery Store Gift Cards** and **2 bags of groceries** to each of those families.

Also:

In cooperation with the Salvation Army in December, we will be collecting donations of new toys, warm hats and gloves for children in our area. Your donations will bring blessings at Christmas to children in need. There is a drop off box in the Church Hall.

May God Bless you during this most Holy Season of Advent.

*Amy Whitlow*



## CHRISTMAS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Dec. 4th 5:30 pm Festival of the Nativity, First Presbyterian Church

Dec. 11th 10:00 am Blessing of the Baby Jesus (bring your Nativity Jesus to be blessed)

Dec. 18th 10:00 am Carols and Lessons  
Potluck Lunch  
Greening of the Church

5:30 pm St. Mark's Christmas Party at Hoss's

Dec. 24th 5:30 pm Contemporary Service with the Youth Ministry Band and visit from St. Nicholas. **No Incense!** Refreshments in the Church hall after service.

10:30 pm Musical Selection.  
11:00 pm Midnight Service with Incense.  
Refreshments in the Church Hall after service.

Dec. 25th **NO 7:30 AM SERVICE**

9:00 am Holy Eucharist. No Music. No Coffee Hour.

Dec. 31st CELEBRATE JOHNSTOWN

(MORE INFORMATION TO FOLLOW)

Jan. 1, 2012 **NO 7:30 AM SERVICE**

10:00 am Holy Eucharist



## GREENING OF THE CHURCH

CAROLS & LESSONS

POTLUCK DINNER

SUNDAY, December 12th

There will be a sign up sheet in the Parish Hall for our Potluck Dinner, or you can call Joanne at the office and let her know how many are attending and what “potluck” item you are bringing.

### ECW Christmas Party

When: Sunday December 18th

Where: Hoss's Steak House

Time: 5:30 pm

Cost: Meals vary from \$8.99 to \$26.99  
Plus 18% gratuity

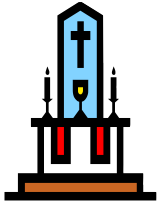
(You may choose from the menu)

Includes entrees, soup, salad bar, dessert, beverage



There is a sign up sheet in the Church Hall or you can call Joanne at the office.

Deadline for Sign Up is December 12th.



## Calling All Altar Guild Ladies

Where did the year go! It will soon be Christmas and I will be calling on all of you to help with the preparations for Christmas Eve.

Our Christmas Flowers will be delivered around 9:00 am on Friday December 23rd. There is so much to do but if everyone can help, the day will go fast. I know that I can always count on every one of you.

PS: The coffee and tea pots will be on, along with cookies!

*Doris*



## CHRISTMAS COOKIES FOR SATURDAY'S KITCHEN

We are asking for donations of Christmas Cookies for the Saturday's Kitchen Christmas Party. If you have time and would like to make it a "Merry Christmas" for those less fortunate, please donate a few dozen of those scrumptious cookies.

Deadline is December 18th. Please drop your cookies off at the Church Hall. (Mark for Saturday's Kitchen Christmas Party).

Thank you and God Bless You!

*Angie Herbein*