

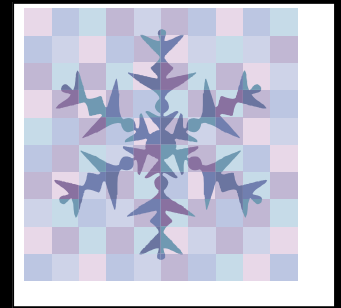
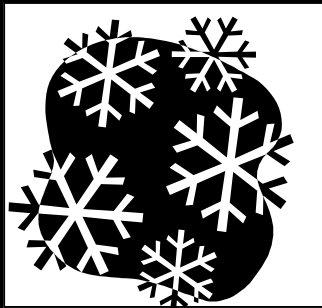
mark my words

ST MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, GASTONIA

january 2011

Inside the Issue:

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ECW Baby Shower
Confirmation Classes
Souper Bowl of Caring
GFN Results



Where Have You Seen God Today?

Most of us know the story of the Ten Commandments from Exodus - or at least we know the movie version - where Moses (Charlton Heston) led the Hebrew slaves out of Egypt to Mt. Sinai, the mountain where God is supposed to live. Moses went up the mountain for 40 days and when he came back he found the people had given up on him and built their own god, a golden calf, to worship. When Moses saw how quickly the people turned away from God after all that had been done for them, he threw down the stone tablets and they broke. Eventually Moses went back up the mountain to ask God what to do now. Moses felt God had every right to give up on the people, but instead God gave Moses another set of commandments to take down to the people. This time when Moses appeared from the mountain, his face was shining. The people could tell that he had been in God's presence and they were afraid God had sent Moses back to punish them. Moses told them not to be afraid. From that day on when the people looked at Moses and saw that glow coming from his face - the glow that reflected God's own glory - they remembered that God was with them and that no matter what, God was not going to leave them.

That's important for us to note. Many people think the God we read about in the Old Testament is nothing but a mean, vengeful tyrant, but that's not even close to true. No, the God of the Old Testament is the same God we learn about in the New Testament—a God who is merciful and forgiving and who is always there.

And that is something for us to consider as well. God is with us each and every day, but sometimes it's not easy to see God in our lives. We don't have a Moses with a face beaming with light to remind us of God's presence. If we don't make the effort to look for God, to listen for God, chances are we're going to end up figuring God is nowhere around. Like children who tune out their parent's voices, when God tries to speak to us, we will be too busy with other things or we just won't pay attention.

Think for a moment about the story of the Transfiguration in the Gospel of Luke where Jesus took a few disciples with him up on a hill, and suddenly they saw Jesus glowing with a brilliant white light. Peter said: "Jesus, how about I build a shelter for us, so we can stay up here for a while." But when Peter said that, a dark cloud came over the hill and a voice said: "This is my Son; listen to him." In other words, while that amazing thing with Jesus was happening, Peter wanted to build a lean-to, but God's answer was to hush up and pay attention - to listen and to look at what was going on.

For many of us that's a hard thing to do - be quiet and just look and listen. Many of us can't survive more than a couple of minutes without the TV or radio providing us with noise. God tells us that if we want to see him, if we want to hear him, we need to spend time being quiet once in a while to give God a chance to get through to us. And we just don't look for God when we need help. The idea is that if we want to see and hear God in our lives, then we can't just get out of bed each morning and sludge through the day by merely going through the motions. No, if we want to see and hear God, we need to make a conscious effort to do that. Otherwise, it's probably not going to happen.

A minister friend shared an idea with me. He said that most every night when he and his wife sit down for dinner, they ask each other: "Where have you seen God today?" I think that's a good question for us all to

(Continued on the next page)



weekly schedule

sundays

HE Rite I - 8:00 am

Prayer Shawl Ministry -
8:30 am Balthis

Breakfast - 9:00 am PH

Nursery & Christian
Formation for All Ages -
9:30 am around the church

HE Rite II - 10:30 am, with
Children's Chapel

EYC/Youth Events as
announced

Daughters of the King - 1st
Sun after church, Balthis

Parish Family Potluck &
Newcomer Fellowship -
1st Sundays 5:00 -6:30 pm

Brotherhood of St. Andrew
2nd Sun 5:30pm w/dinner

Vestry - 3rd Sun after
church, Vestry Room

mondays

AA Meeting 8:00 pm, PH

Covenant Circle 10:30 am
1st Mon

wednesdays

Bible Study - 4:30 pm
Balthis

HE II - 6:00 pm Sanctuary

Handbell Choir - 6:30 pm,
Choir Room

Chancel Choir 7:00 pm
Choir Room

thursdays

Order of St. Luke 1st, 3rd,
& 5th Thurs 7:00 pm

PFLAG Meeting 3rd Thurs
7:00 pm, Balthis



Sunday, January 9, 2011

St. Mark's Annual Meeting and Vestry Elections

**9:00 am Joint Holy Eucharist Service with Baptism
Guest Preacher & Celebrant: The Rev. Thomas Murphy**

followed by Annual Parish Meeting in the Parish Hall

**Juice, coffee and sweet rolls will be available
between the service and the meeting.**

**Nursery will be available & Sunday School classes will be held
during the meeting for children in 7th grade and below**

(continued from Page 1) ask ourselves: "Where have we seen God today? As we look at what's happening in our lives and in the lives of the people around us, where do we see God involved in what's going on? And what are those events saying to us? What is God trying to tell us?"

A central Christian belief is that God did not just make the universe and then go off on vacation. No, God made everything, but has stuck around and remains involved in our lives each and every day. We would easily realize that if only we'd pay attention.

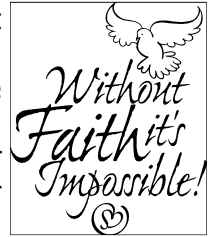
There is an ancient story about a farmer whose horse ran away one day. A week later the horse returned with a whole herd of wild horses from the hills. A few days later, when the farmer's son was attempting to tame one of the wild horses, the horse threw him and he broke his leg. The next week the army marched into town and took away every able-bodied man they could find to work as slaves for the king. But since the farmer's son had a broken leg, they left him with his family. When you hear that story, what do you make of that? Do you just see that as a run of good luck and bad luck mixed together? Or is it possible to see each of those events as the work of God?

In the Book of Numbers, there is a blessing that says: The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

God's face is shining on us each and every day. It all comes down to whether we make the effort to try and see it. Have you seen God today? Because God is there.

Shawn +

January 1st always brings thoughts of “how do I improve in this new year?” It doesn’t matter if I have determined that I am not going to make “resolutions” just to have broken them by January 15th. I still find myself looking at the clean slate that is the new year. The calendar is mostly empty and the world is full of possibilities. I could really change how I operate and do things in a different way going forward, whether my resolve is about weight or exercise (both of which I struggle with constantly) or improving my spiritual life. My biggest stumbling block to spiritual growth is finding time when I won’t “multi-task”. Shawn’s article on the front cover about looking and listening for God with intentionality really struck me. I keep my written prayers posted by the kitchen sink so I can pray while I am doing dishes and loading the dishwasher. About the only time I get true silence is while I am driving the car and I purposely turn off the radio and enjoy and give thanks for God’s creation and my many blessings. But to actually set a time for silence and prayer always makes me feel that there are better ways to use my time. This year I aim to try again to find the space in my life to let God in and to pay attention to what God tries to tell me. I have begun by looking back over what did not go exactly as I planned in the past year and I intend to work to make this year better, with God’s help.



Maybe you have something you would like to improve in your spiritual life. I encourage each and every person in the parish to take time to think about how God works in their daily life and find a spot that needs to be better. It can be a small change or a large one. You might make an effort to have some devotional time with your family or join a group that does some more serious Bible study. Any improvement will show God that you are intentional about responding to the love and caring that God gives to each and every one of us every day.

May 2011 be a blessing to you and all your family and may God shine on you each and every day.

Souper Bowl of Caring



We will again be collecting coins and dollars for the less fortunate in our community on Super Bowl Sunday, February 6 at both services

Come to church ready to help fill our Soup Pots with “Folding Money” for others.

NURSERY NEWS



If you have been down the hall past the kitchen lately, you may have noticed the crowd at the nursery door. We are experiencing our own “baby boom” at St. Mark’s. To help with our youngest members, Julie Christy and other parents recently organized a nursery clean-up and have gotten rid of old toys and replaced items that had worn out. Our Nursery has new booster seats for meals and some new pictures on the walls of children in the parish as they have grown. We look much more inviting and clean.

There is always room for people to help watch over these littlest members. If you would like to volunteer for this wonderful service (it is only about 4 times a year), call Polly at extension 4 and say you will be on the Nursery list. And a huge “Thank You” to all those who currently help take care of the children each Sunday morning.

The ECW Covenant Circle meets at 10:30 the first Monday of the month at Covenant Village for Bible Study. The group is studying Mark. Contact is Mildred Manning (704-864-2974).

See information about the **ECW January Dinner Meeting and Baby Shower** for With Friends on the next page.

CPC's Miles of Pennies Collection:

We have added another \$209.00 to our current mile. Other money is being counted to be sent in soon. Be sure to bring your loose change to church and put it in either the buckets the children pass or in the large container by the door. Miles of Pennies money is used for children's printed materials around the world.



Our Daughters of the King Chapter

is currently supporting one of the Diocese of Western North Carolina seminarians, Liz Tester, who attends Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria. They support her with prayers and encouragement during the school year and with special offerings from their resources. Please keep Liz in your prayers.

Toiletry Items for "As One" Ministries

continue to be collected by the Daughters of the King. As you travel and shop this holiday season, pick up soap, shampoo, lotion, etc to give. Questions, contact Nancy Brewbaker.

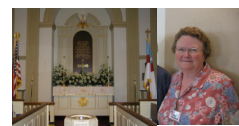


St. Mark's will host the families from IHN

(the Interfaith Hospitality Network) the week beginning January 16. Help is needed for set up and clean up as well as for meals and to spend the night with our guests. Please make time to check the sign-up board near the main entrance and volunteer.

Carol Hoerning steps down as Altar Guild Director this month.

It is with deep gratitude and loads of praise that the parish will honor her many years of service in this silent and, often, hidden ministry. Carol has been working at the altar since she was a teenager many years ago in New York. Take time in January to tell her and all the members of the Altar Guild "Thank you" for their service.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

meets at 8:30 am Sundays just before breakfast and Sunday School in the Balthis Room to make prayer shawls for those in need. Prayers are woven into each shawl to "wrap" the person in prayer. To date the group has blessed and given away 18 prayer shawls to parishioners and friends or family members. If you have someone who would benefit from having a prayer shawl, contact Nancy Brewbaker.

Christ School, a 8-12 boys boarding and day school in Asheville, will have their winter open house on January 14, 2011. Call 1-800-422-3212, ext 106 for more information.

The Columbarium Committee is looking for volunteers. If you would like to be part of this group, contact Jim Carriel at 704-866-7298, 704-866-4446, or Carriel@carolina.rr.com.



Did you somehow miss out on having your picture taken for the **new Parish Directory**? Contact Debbie Scarborough (debbie@debbiecarpenter.com) for how to be included.

Have you taken **Purificators** home to wash? Please get those back to the Sacristy as soon as possible. The Altar Guild is missing a large number of them.

The church received a gift in December

of \$22,079.00 from the estate of Howard T. Phillips, a long time member of the parish who passed away last year. The money is to be used for future repairs or needs for the organ. We are very thankful for this commitment to the future needs of our parish.



Anyone interested in information about setting up this type of legacy for the church should speak to Tom Mecca or any member of the Endowment Board.

Many thanks to the parents who helped make our first Children's Pageant a wonderful success. Directing 28 children, many of whom are not sure about leaving their parents or facing that audience, is a task in itself and our efforts came off without a hitch. Thank you to everyone who shared their wonderful children with the entire parish. It was a joyous celebration of the Nativity Story.





“With Friends” Baby Shower hosted by St. Mark’s Episcopal Church Women

**A Chili Supper and Baby Shower at the
New “With Friends” Maternity Home
2098 Keith Drive, just off Modena Street**

Tuesday, January 25, 6:30 pm

The maternity home will serve homeless young women and their babies by providing shelter, parenting skills, job training, and general counseling. The program joins the emergency shelter for teenagers and transitional living program for young men already offered by With Friends.

The Baby Shower Wish List includes baby furniture (high chairs, play pens, swings, walkers, tubs), supplies (pampers, wipes, formula, baby food, infant towels, and wash cloths), and of course, lots of cute baby clothes or toys for newborn to 24 months.

If you plan to attend, RSVP to Kenna Watts at 704-864-6199 or by email to kennawatts@aol.com. If you cannot come but wish to offer a baby gift, contact Kenna or Tuga Adams, or bring your gift by the church on any January Sunday to be picked up there.

PLEDGE Sunday

Pledge cards were due in November and the finance committee would like to finalize the 2011 budget with all information. If you have not filled in and returned your card, please do so as soon as possible. You must send in a marked card if you want envelopes ordered to use for your offering. Contact the Church office if you have questions.

Transitions In Our Parish Family

Transfer In: Ann Camp, from Trinity, Spruce Pine, NC

Transfer Out: Walt and Dotty Moser to St. Peter’s, Fernandina Beach, Florida

Deaths: Mary Allen, widow of the Rev. Charles Allen, former rector, in Virginia

Marge Blumenhorst, mother of Ann Brown, in St. Louis



Confirmation and Bishop’s Visitation

Confirmation/Inquirer’s Classes are meeting Sunday evenings through January and early February between 5:00 and 7:00 pm. These classes are for any adult or young person over the age of 12 interested in learning more about the Episcopal Church and in becoming a member of St. Mark’s. If you would like to be part of the Confirmation/Inquirer’s Classes, contact the Church Office or speak to Fr. Shawn as soon as possible.

Bishop Porter Taylor will make his regular visitation to St. Mark’s on Sunday, February 13 for Eucharist and Confirmation. He will also teach the Adult Sunday School that morning as well.

Education for Ministry (EfM)



EfM is a 4-year theological education study program designed by the University of the South in Sewanee for lay formation. "Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you..." (Matthew 28:18-20). This is an early admonition for Christian education, based in the tradition of the synagogue in which Jesus participated as both teacher and learner. The early Church was very concerned with providing education to its people and the *Didache* ("Teaching of the Twelve Apostles", circa 100 CE) and other documents from the early Church give testimony to this. First in the monasteries and later, during the Middle Ages, in universities the Church demonstrated a concern with learning, scholarship, and education for adults. EfM began in that world of scholarship with the belief that truth is more important than ignorance, enlightenment more Christ-like than darkness, and education a vital part of the journey of God's people.

St. Mark's would like to form an Education for Ministry group to begin this in-depth study of scripture, Church history, and theology as a way for Christians to look at all they do as ministry within the Body of Christ. Each EfM group must have at least 6 people and we have several who are interested in beginning this study. Our hope is to have a fully committed group to begin in January. If you are interested in more information, contact either Fr. Shawn or Pete Brake at 704-862-0709.

Gastonia Faith Network Results: Collaborative Efforts for our Community

- **Undies Sunday** found almost 3000 articles of underwear and socks donated for those in need in our community. This is the 5th year for this collaborative project.



- **Coats for Kids:** Between 10 and 15 churches and several other organizations contributed over 600 coats, plus gloves, scarves, hats and hoodies. Bou Dry Cleaners cleaned the donated items and United Way with the help of Ashbrook High ROTC helped distribute the coats to schools before children left for the winter break. This was only the 2nd year for the Coats for Kids Project so great work.



January Schedule of Lay Servers

Vestry Person Responsible for January Lock-Up: Ernie Adcock

January 2, 2011

2nd Sunday in Christmas *(Jan. 16 continued)*

Layreaders: 8:00 Ed Hoerning, Vicki Caudill; 10:30 Ann Ward, Dale Ward (C)

Ushers: Jim and Mary Carter Butt, Mike Stanley

Acolytes: Stewart Butt, Duncan Queen

Greeters: Blaine and Cookie Rudisill

Breakfast Coordinator: No Breakfast

Nursery: Richard and Anna Carnser

Coffee Hour: Liz Domenico and Debbie Scarborough

Children's Chapel: Not held due to Family Service

Breakfast Coordinator: Jim Redd

Nursery: Merryland Cleveland and Amy Hueitt

Coffee Hour: Anne Carriel and Vicky Burns

Children's Chapel: John Anderson, Marcia and Ethan Thrower

January 9, 2011

1st Sunday in Epiphany

9:00 Joint Service followed by Annual Meeting

Layreaders: Fred Hadfield, Jeff Bozarth, Paul Johnstone (C)

Ushers: Steve and Trisha Campbell, Greg Dills

Acolytes: Austin Biles, Alex Campbell, Ally Adams

Greeters: Mary and Vernon Vaughn

Breakfast Coordinator: Continental Breakfast

Nursery: Chris Christy and Candy Grooms

Coffee Hour: Mary Butt and Jean Eaddy

Children's Chapel: Polly and Jim Redd, Emma Grey Taylor

January 23, 2011

3rd Sunday in Epiphany

Layreaders 8:00 Jeff Bozarth, Judy Maloney; 10:30 Claude Hueitt, Ann Jordan, Russ Tiller (C)

Ushers: Bill and Price Thrower, Alan Jolley

Acolytes: Coralie Watts, Duncan Queen, Sophia Varriale

Greeters: Will and Marcia Thrower

Breakfast Coordinator: Dale Ward

Nursery: Brenda and Dan Gilbert

Coffee Hour: Brenda Gilbert and Wendela Corriea

Children's Chapel: Christi and Sophi Jolley, Travis Feezell

January 16, 2011

2nd Sunday in Epiphany

Layreaders: 8:00 Liz Willett, Pat Townsend; 10:30 Jay Barnes, Brenda Gilbert, David Burns (C)

Ushers: Brock and Emelyne Wellons, Lloyd White

Acolytes: Bess Cleveland, Reynolds Lyon, Mary Lyon

Greeters: Walter and Judy Hobbs

January 30, 2011

4th Sunday in Epiphany

Layreaders: 8:00 Ed Hoerning, Mary Stamey; 10:30 Pete Brake, Joe Saunders, Wendela Corriea (C)

Ushers: Alex and Terri Williamson, Don Miller

Acolytes: Elizabeth Vaughn, Clay Williamson, Ally Adams

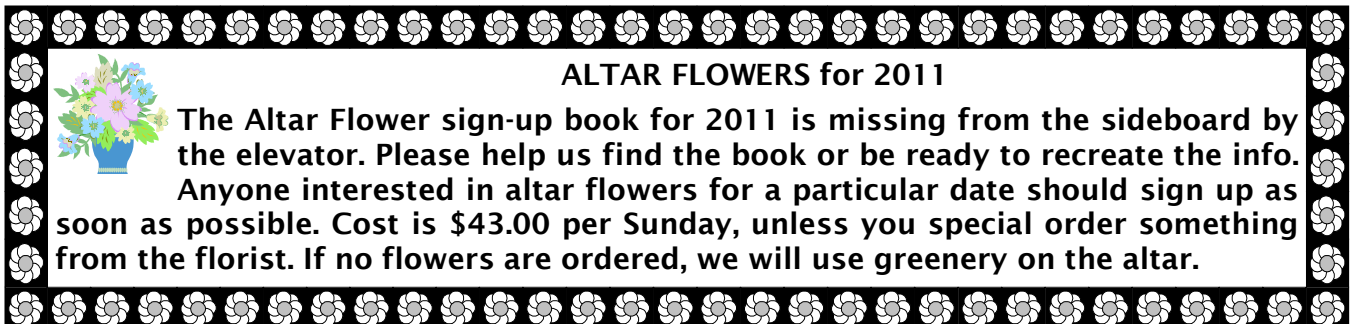
Greeters: Anne and Jim Carriel

Breakfast Coordinator: Greg Dills

Nursery: Julie Christy and Mary Vaughn


Coffee Hour: Pat Miller and Tina Queen

Children's Chapel: Rebecca and Beau Adams, Tom Mecca



ALTAR FLOWERS for 2011

The Altar Flower sign-up book for 2011 is missing from the sideboard by the elevator. Please help us find the book or be ready to recreate the info. Anyone interested in altar flowers for a particular date should sign up as soon as possible. Cost is \$43.00 per Sunday, unless you special order something from the florist. If no flowers are ordered, we will use greenery on the altar.



We are St. Mark's –A Christ Centered Church

• Touching Lives • Transforming Hearts • Teaching God's Word

mark my words

ST MARKS EPISCOPAL CHURCH
258 WEST FRANKLIN BLVD.
GASTONIA, NORTH CAROLINA 28052
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

The Diocese of W North Carolina

The Rt. Rev. G. Porter Taylor, Bishop

St. Mark's, Gastonia

The Rev. Shawn L. Griffith, Rector

The Rev. G. Patterson Cheshire, Deacon

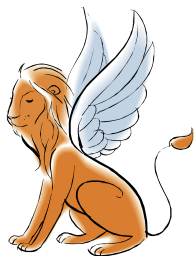
Mrs. Julia Bozarth, Director of Music

Mrs. Polly G. Redd, Director of Christian
Formation

Mrs. Trish Anderson, Business
Administrator

Mrs. Jean R. Eaddy, Church
Office Administrator

Mr. Lee Scott, Sexton



Vestry Leadership

Anne Carriel, Senior Warden

Ernie Adcock, Building & Grounds

John Anderson, Pastoral Care

Jay Barnes, Worship

David Burns, Christian Formation

Fred Hadfield, Stewardship

Mike Janik, Outreach

Kevin Knight, Junior Warden, Youth

Richard Martinez, Congregational Development

Debbie Scarborough, Communications

John Watts, Finance

Cathy Young, Parish Life

www.stmarksgastonia.org
