



The Forward

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[Www.stmarksheboygan.com](http://www.stmarksheboygan.com)

September 2023



Worship and Bible Study Programs in September

- Sunday morning service w/Holy Communion @ 9am
- You can watch a live stream of Sunday's service at Facebook.com/stmarksheboygan.com
- The sermon will be recorded and available after Sunday's service on our website
- Bible study will continue to be held Wednesdays @9am and will start again on Sunday mornings @10am beginning September 17th.
- Sunday School begins on September 10th @10:15am

From The Pastor

"The Lord changed rivers into deserts, and water-springs into thirsty ground, a fruitful land into salt flats, because of the wickedness of those who dwell there."

Rivers turned to deserts, fruitful lands turned to salty wastes: these are not unfamiliar images to us as we live in a climate crisis. Rivers are drying up, and fertile lands are becoming barren. Why is this happening? The psalmist gives a difficult answer: *"because of the wickedness of its inhabitants"* (Ps. 107:34). Because of our unfaithfulness to God. Because we have not loved our neighbor, creation, or ourselves. God's good creation is turned into ruin because of our wickedness.

But neither the psalm nor our story ends here. God meets us in the ruins of death, destruction, and hopelessness. This is the shape of the Incarnation. While creation wallowed in disrepair, Christ took on flesh, dwelt among us, suffered, died, and rose again.

We serve a God who turns deserts to pools of water (Ps 107:35), parched land to springs. These are the familiar images of the Resurrection and restoration that God faithfully brings. For this reason, we praise God. We praise the God who redeems and restores land, makes homes for the hungry and sustains them

with land (Ps 107:36). We praise the God who blesses the needy and raises them out of distress (Ps 107:41). God does these things because of God's steadfast love. Joining with all of creation, we sing God's praises! Yet Christians are called to do more than just simply praise. We are called to participate in God's work here on earth. How might we look to join God's work of restoring the land here and now?

In Christ, Pastor Tyler Werner

September Happenings

Tuesday, September 5th: Outreach Mtg @ 5:30pm
Monday, September 11th: Trustee/Council/BOD/Deacon Mtg @ 5:15pm
Sunday, September 17th: Congregational Fund Mtg @10:15am
Monday, September 18th: Men's Club Dinner @ 6:00pm, mtg to follow
Wednesday, September 20th: R & R Lunch@ Bourbon St. Restaurant, 11:30am
Wednesday, September 27th: Stewardship Mtg @ 10:00am
Daughter's Mtg @ 1:00pm

From The Board

Thank you to all our members who volunteer and give their time to various positions in and around church. However, we do have multiple board positions to fill. Currently, we are looking to fill one position for the Congregational Fund, 1-2 positions for the Board of Deacons, as well as the position of congregational treasurer. Also, would like to add more volunteers for the sound booth, greeting, altar guild and reading. Please contact the church office or the Board of Directors if you have questions or are interested in serving.



Members have seen the mission box in church for years and generously donated their loose change and dollar bills. Have you wondered what the mission is all about? Where the money donated is going to? St Mark started participating in 2018 and sends monthly donations to the English District. According to the district's website, they launched the new model for funding to every English District congregation to specifically and directly support and develop new missions and enhancing existing missions.

The district asks to voluntarily have each baptized member to give one dollar extra per week where they would like to use the gathered dollars for missions outside of local congregations or communities. The

English District will select the missions that will receive these extra dollars in order to quickly meet the needs of missions of both North America and also around the world. The current North American Mission is Concordia Lutheran in Lebanon, PA where \$25,000 is needed to fully fund this new congregation. The current international mission is the Dominican Republic Lutheran Mission in Santiago where they need \$30,000. The next missions are being established and suggestions are welcome and encouraged by each congregation.

A Dollar for Missions is being encouraged so more people outside the Kingdom of God have the opportunity to hear the Good News, more people are baptized and taught, and more congregations planted. The English District encourages and is open to any questions from congregations and their members. They are very grateful and thankful for the support received and look forward to many years of giving to the mission work.

R & R Luncheon

The lunch will be held on September 20th at Bourbon St Restaurant, 11:30am to 1:00pm. Please RSVP to Jim and Cherie Leonhardt. All are welcome to join!

Outreach Committee



The Outreach group made fleece blankets for the homeless and will invite congregation members to make more on September 17th.

Stewardship

Holiness & Perfection

We all have an understanding of perfection. Sometimes, perfection is subjective such as when we say, "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder," or even, "One man's trash is another man's treasure." Differences of opinion is one of the things that makes life interesting.

Other times, perfection is objective. We humans rate things. For instance, 100 is perfection in school tests and stamps. 70 is perfection for coins. 10 is perfection for sports cards, comic books, and lunch boxes. Anything less than these numbers is not perfect.

Holiness also implies perfection. Here, God is the standard. God said, "You shall be holy because

I, the Lord, your God, am holy.” God told this to the Israelites through Moses. St. Peter repeated this mandate in his letter to us Christians.

God is holy in two ways: spiritually and behaviorally. Spiritually, God is holy because he is perfect. There is no sin in God. There is nothing wrong with God. We Christians are that holy because we believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior from sin. Because we believe in Jesus, God forgives us our sins and considers us to be as perfect as he is. Not one single of our sins will follow us to the grave and prevent us from obtaining eternal life.

God is also holy behaviorally. God takes care of us while we are still living here in this world. Things do go badly in our lives. We get sick and will eventually die.

But that is because we remain sinners all of our lives. And, “the wages of sin is death.” God is a just God and punishes sin here in this world, but again, by faith, our sins will not follow us beyond the grave.

Yet God does want us to be holy in our behavior towards others. We do that as good stewards of the blessings that God has blessed us with so that we are able to be a blessing to others whom we see could use our help so that they could live better lives. But do our good works need to be as perfect as God's good works? Does it matter?

On the one hand, our good works can never be perfect. Dr. Martin Luther said that even our good works are tainted with sin. He said that so that we never begin to imagine that we deserve eternal life because we are doing such good works. Only our faith in Jesus Christ makes us deserving of eternal life.

On the other hand, just because our good works are not and cannot be perfect should not discourage us from doing as much good as we are able. A professor at the seminary said, “Good works are good because the worker is good. In other words, because we are holy and perfect in the sight of God because of our faith in Jesus Christ, God considers our good works to be holy and perfect. God is happy that we are good stewards and are trying to do something good for others; after all, that is what God called us to be doing as his servants. God shows his love for people through our love for people.

You are a holy people. Act holy as much and as well as you are able. Be a good steward of God's many blessings on you.

Parish Nurse News

Hi from your Parish Nurse!

Last month I started to discuss the relaxation response and how relaxation helps your physical and mental health. I want to continue this discussion this month finishing how relaxation helps your body and mind as well as ways you can relax.

The last three ways relaxation is good for your physical and mental health are: **7) Having better blood sugar control.** Did you know that stress hormones can make your blood sugar rise? If you have diabetes, the effort it takes to manage your blood sugars may increase your stress. Relaxation can assist you in getting a handle on your blood sugar (though it cannot take the place of medicine). **8) You sleep better.** At times you might not be able to doze off even when you are worn out. This “tired but wired” state is a

sign you're still in "flight or fight mode". Relaxation techniques such as deep breathing can help turn on your relaxation response and can be used to treat insomnia. 9) **Your Immune System Works Better.** Long lasting stress makes it more difficult for your body to combat infections. Yet, deep relaxation can assist your immune system to recover. Did you know that your immune function naturally decreases over time?

Some people unwind while they garden, cook, read, pray, or meditate. You can also explore relaxation techniques such as: deep breathing, Yoga, Tai Chi, progressive muscle relaxation, massage, and biofeedback.

You could try the Benson Method which was created by Herbert Benson, MD, the heart doctor who first described the relaxation response. Here is what you do:

Sit down, making sure you are comfortable.

Close your eyes.

Gradually relax all your muscles. Starting at your feet and working your way up your body.

Breathe through your nose.

Pay attention to your breath.

Do this for about 20 minutes. Then sit quietly with your eyes closed for a few minutes.

Finally, here are several relaxation techniques that only take a few minutes that you can try: **1) Shoulder Shrugs.** Raise your shoulders as if you are trying to touch your ears with them. Breathe in while doing this. Feel the muscles in your neck and shoulders tense. Next, all at once, let your shoulders drop while breathing out. Feel the tension leaving your neck and shoulder muscles. Repeat this several times, inhaling on the shrug and exhaling on the release. Keep your jaw relaxed as you do these. **2) Your relaxation place.** Begin with a few deep breaths. With your eyes closed, take a moment to create in your mind's eye a perfect place to relax. It can be any place you like, such as the mountains, beach, lake, prairie, or park. See yourself comfortably enjoying this place. Once you have created this place, you can go to this place for 15 seconds or so whenever you feel the need to relax. **3) The Four S's.** First, **smile** and make your eyes sparkle. Then take a deep breath. As you let it out, let your jaw hang **slack**, shoulders **sag**, and forehead **smooth** out. Do it again. Four S's= smile, slack and sag, and smooth. From: webmd.com, www.k-state.edu

Grief Share will be held September 6th - November 29th, 10-11:30am. The cost is \$20 for the workbook which will be returned when you complete the classes. Call Carolyn for questions or to register.



It's Back!!! The Men's Club will be hosting their famous **Potato Pancake Supper on Sunday, November 12th. Mark your calendars and watch the announcements for updates.**

WE WILL BE CLOSED



Happy Birthday to You!

Carol Schaefer Sept 5

Peggy Bulkow Sept 6

Heather Conlon Sept 6

Terrence Methfessel Sept 7

Jessica Fritz Sept 12

Judy Schmidt Sept 13

Robbie Sass Sept 14

Kathy Becker Sept 16

Ryan Coons Sept 16

James Bath Sept 17

Shirley Markham Sept 17

Connie Thimmig Sept 19

Zachary Falkenberg Sept 24

Jeff Falk Sept 29

Happy Anniversary!

Ryan & Brianna Coons Sept 1 (5)

James & Nancy Rank Sept 3 (57)

Tom & Nancy Kroll Sept 4 (58)

Bill & Pan Langley Sept 22 (16)

Dan & Carol Carriveau Sept 25 (47)

Todd & Connie Thimmig Sept 26 (31)

Dave & Brenda Hartman Sept 27 (9)