



St. Mark's Epistle

October 2007

View from the Mountain...

Jesus speaking to his disciples in what we know as **The Sermon on the Mount**: *You are here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You've lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage. Here's another way to put it: You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We're going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don't think I'm going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand. Now that I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand -shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven.*



Matthew 5:13-16 The Message Version of the Bible

"Salt is holy," goes an old saying, because salt is one of those universal essentials of life. We may have to limit our intake due to health reasons, however, we cannot go for long periods of time without the chemical, sodium chloride, in our diet. Salt is a necessary requirement for our bodies to function properly; salt gives flavor and brings out the essence of the food we eat; and salt preserves food.

In Biblical times, there was hardly a food which was not seasoned with salt. Like the writer of the Book of Job, we'd agree: *"Can something tasteless be eaten without salt, or is there any taste in the white of an*

egg?" (Job 6:6) Where I grew up in southwestern Virginia (also known as The South), hams were salt cured, producing that wonderful taste and texture that we know in country ham. For the Hebrews, salt came to symbolize permanence. So much so, that salt was used in a covenant ritual by parties making agreements and treaties, suggesting an unbreakable covenant.

The use of salt became a holy act that permeated all aspects of living, from day-to-day eating habits to invoking hope for blessing and the providential presence of the Holy One. Salt was also used as a portent against evil forces, as it was known for its ability to cleanse and heal the contaminated.

There can, however, be a negative aspect to something good and necessary. Besides being a sign of blessing, salt can be a cursed thing. The ritual of sowing salt into the earth symbolizes evil for the land, as nothing will grow on salted earth. And when salt sits for a long time, it loses its flavor and ceases to properly season and give good taste-so much so that you're better off without it.

With this as a background to Jesus' teaching in what we know as the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus calls those who choose to be his disciples to bring out the God-flavors of this earth and pour out blessing upon God's good creation. We're also called to be the light of the world, living as lighted signs of the enduring covenant of love that God has made with the world. We are called to remember that our good deeds are meant to season others, so that the best is brought out in them. Our actions are not only for our sake, but also for the sake of our neighbors. Jesus tells us that what we

do, what we say, what we take into ourselves and what we expend from our souls reflect on God and each other.

Reflective Questions: How are you bringing out the God-flavors of this earth in your own life, in the life of your family and friends, of this parish? Have you lost your zest...your taste for the things of God? What kind of light shines through you to others? How is God calling you to a life of blessing and greater generosity to others?

~Pastor Ellen



Great Happenings at St. Marks!...

During the month of September we had three events that have added much to the life of our parish:

1. The first is the **new worship service on Sunday mornings** that is centered on our ministry with children and families. On the 9th we reclaimed the upstairs parish hall for the purpose of Christian Formation and fellowship with our celebration of the gifts in honor of James Chenail, with a total attendance of 29, which included special guests, along with children and family members. On the 16th, the attendance at the 9am service was 19 children and parents, who gathered for a vibrant and energetic time of worship and time at learning centers. We also had the adults gathering in another part of the parish house for a lectionary Bible study....and some really good coffee!

Note: Our average attendance has been around 50-59 on Sunday mornings. With the addition of the 9am worship service, the average attendance in worship for the past two Sundays has risen to 79. We'll be tracking the attendance throughout the fall season and will keep you updated.

2. The second is our First service for the **Remembrance of 9/11: Honoring First Responders**, which was held on 10 September. We pleased that members of the Adams

Alert Hose Company, led by Stephen Brown, Adams Fire Chief participated in the service with St. Mark's people and members of the community. At the reception, we had opportunity to share our 9/11 stories with each other, to express our appreciation for the First Responders, and to be planning for next year's service.

3. The third happening was the "**Harvest the Memories: Legacy Stewardship**" Dinner and presentation by John White, Diocesan Missioner for Legacy Stewardship. About 30 people gathered for a covered-dish dinner; to look at memorabilia; to become educated about what legacy stewardship is all about; and to celebrate the ministry of legacy stewardship in our parish. A plaque was presented with the names of those who made financial provision for the parish in their wills and by other means, upon the time of their death. This plaque will be placed in the downstairs parish hall. We also recognized four members of the parish who have agreed to publicly give witness to their planned giving to the parish in the form of a legacy gift: Gladys King, Pat Linscott, Frank and Jean Palano. We had a great time of fellowship and are ready to continue in developing a year-round encompassing stewardship plan for our parish.

Lay Eucharistic Visitor Training...

- WHAT:** Lay Eucharistic Visitor Training
- WHEN:** Saturday, October 6, 2007
- WHERE:** Diocesan House, Springfield, MA.
- TIME:** 9:30 am -2:30 pm
- BRING:** Bag lunch

For further information or to register, please contact: The Rev. Ann Wood at ann@gracechurchamherst.org or by phone at 413-665-8478. Please also contact Pastor Ellen if you would like to register for this training.

Special Note:

This is the last issue of the *St. Mark's Epistle* you will

receive via US Mail, unless you return the enclosed

post card requesting a hard copy. In the future

***The Epistle* will be available on-line at:**

www.stmarksadams.org

Requested Recipes...submitted by Dot Leary & Nancy Lilly

Ester's Coffee Cake

Preheat oven: 375

1/3 c. shortening

3/4 c. sugar

1/2 tsp. salt

2 c. flour

2 1/2 tsp. baking powder

3/4 c. milk

1 tsp. vanilla

1 egg, unbeaten

(optional, fruit)

Cream shortening, sugar and salt together. Sift dry ingredients and add alternately with milk, unbeaten egg, & vanilla. Add to creamed ingredients. Spread batter in a greased 9x13 pan. If desired put streusel on and bake at 375 for 45 minutes. Dust with powdered sugar, optional.

Streusel

3 c. flour

3/4 C sugar

2 sticks butter, melted

Cinnamon

3/4 c. sugar

Combine, tossing with a fork. Add cinnamon.

Nancy's Graham Cracker Delight

24 graham cracker squares

1/2 lb. Butter

1 cup brown sugar

1 cup finely chopped walnuts

Line a large cookie sheet with crackers. Put butter in a small pan and bring to a boil, add brown sugar. Bring to a second boil, and boil gently for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Pour butter/sugar mixture over the crackers. Sprinkle chopped nuts on top. Bake in a pre-heated 350

degree oven for 10 minutes. Remove from oven and let set for 3 minutes. Left gently and transfer to waxed paper until cooled completely...about 10 minutes.

ENJOY!

Safe Church Training for Workers with Children & Youth...

WHEN: Tuesday, November 6, 2007

WHERE: Church of the Atonement
36 Court St, Westfield

TIME: 6 - 10 pm

TRAINER: Rev. Canon Sarah Shoftstall

This training is for people who work with children and youth, NOT for clergy or other church employees. The registration fee is \$25 per person. Dinner is provided. To register, please fill in the form below and mail to Paula Tonelli, Diocese of Western Massachusetts, 37 Chestnut St., Springfield, MA 01103. Please include a check for \$25.00 per person, made payable to the Diocese of Western Massachusetts.

All registrations and fees are due October 25th.

Safe Church Training
November 6, 2007
Church of the Atonement, Westfield

Name as you would like it to appear on Name Tag:

Name of Church, City

Email and/or Phone Number

Mark this date!

Saturday Nov 17 at St. John's Williamstown, with the Rev. William Betit, Trainer. More information to follow in the weekly service bulletins and November's *St. Mark's Epistle*.

Diocesan Convention: October 26 - 27...

For one hundred and six years, Episcopalians throughout the five western counties of the Commonwealth have gathered to discern God's call to mission as the Diocese of Western Massachusetts. This year, we can rejoice with our new church development work underway in Southwick; and be renewed in thanksgiving, purpose and missionary zeal - as we continue in our second century.

Delegates from St. Mark's are:

JoAnn Gagne and Fred Nicholaev.

Alternates are: Amanda and Joann Delisle.

Dinner & a Movie...

Come one and all!!!! FREE!!!

Dinner and a Movie at St. Mark's Theatre

(Parish Hall, upstairs)

WHEN: Sunday, October 21, 2007

TIME: 5:00pm Children's Film: Bob the Tomato and Larry the Cucumber present an episode of "Veggie Tales" while we gather for a shared covered dish dinner.

6:00pm Feature Film: "*A Night at the Museum*"

(Popcorn provided during the feature film)

BRING: A covered dish to share.

Legacy Stewardship Dinner...

On Sunday, September 16th, the Stewardship Mission Team sponsored a covered dish dinner to honor those from the past who have remembered St. Mark's with legacy gifts. The dinner was a great success. There were 30 people present, and we enjoyed some of the wonderful cooking St. Mark's is noted for. After dinner we introduced four of our current members who have included St. Mark's in their legacy plans: Pat Linscott, Gladys King, Jean and Frank Palano. These gifts can be used to replenish the funds we are withdrawing from our investments at this time.

We then heard from John White, missionary for Legacy Stewardship at the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts, our guest speaker. John's speech was very information and especially enjoyable because he spoke from the heart, mentioning personal experiences and thoughts about legacy giving. He also gave instances where these gifts had made a positive impact on parishes.

We closed by presenting Rev. Ellen with a plaque which is headed:

St. Mark's Legacy Stewardship Lions

The names of our legacy givers are on the plaque. Stop by the Parish House and check it out...it's hanging on the wall in the Guild Room.

A big thank you to everyone who helped make this event a success.

~JoAnn Gagne

Lectionary Bible Study Group...

The Lectionary Bible Study group will meet in the Parish House on Sundays at 9:35 am for coffee and study of that day's lectionary readings. We plan on

meeting for approximately 40 minutes following the new *Seasons of the Spirit Family Service*. The goal of the group is to further our understanding of scripture, enhance that Sunday's lessons and worship service. This is an on-going discussion group and there is no commitment to a certain number of meetings. Show up when you can and when the Spirit moves you. **All are welcome!** Please (BYOB) bring your own Bible!

~Fred Nicholaev

Girl's Nite Out...

The next Girl's Nite Out is planned for Thursday, November 8, at the Parish House, St. Mark's. We have contacted Jeannie's Place about catering the event and got a wonderful price of \$15 pp, that's the good news! The bad news is that we will have to do the set-up and clean-up ourselves. Since Girl's Nite out was supposed to keep us out of the kitchen, we need to hear from you about this event before we book it. Please let Terry Molleur (743-3052) or Karen DeOrdio (662-8061) know what you think by October 15th.

Something to Think About...

I knelt to pray, but not for long,
I had too much to do.
I had to hurry and get to work,
For bills would soon be due.
So I knelt and said a hurried prayer,
And jumped up off my knees,
My Christian duty was now done,
My soul could rest at ease.
All day long I had no time
To spread a word of cheer.
No time to speak of Christ to friends,
They'd laugh at me I'd fear.
No time, no time, too much to do,
That was my constant cry,
No time to give to souls in need
But at last the time, the time to die.
I went before the Lord,
I came, I stood with downcast eyes.
For in his hands God held a book;
It was the book of life.
God looked into his book and said
"Your name I cannot find.
I once was going to write it down...



But never found the time"
*A Note from the Senior
Warden...*

Fall is just starting to arrive here in the Berkshires. As I am writing this, it is still quite warm and humid outside, which is fine with me. Anybody who knows me, knows that the warmer and more humid it is, the better I like it. But, change is inevitable. The temperature is being forecast to be more seasonable in a few days. The leaves on the trees are starting to change, all my wood is stacked and we received our annual letter from our oil company detailing this year's pricing schedule. All sure signs that fall is here and winter will soon make its presence known.

Most people consider fall to be the time of year when we settle back into familiar routines, get comfortable, and wait for whatever Old Man Winter decides to dish out. It's certainly a time of rebirth and renewal.

Contrary to most people's logic and opinion, I've always found fall to be just the opposite. Most of my significant, positive life changes have occurred in the fall: I was born in the fall, school always starts in the fall, my family moved from New Bedford to East Longmeadow in the fall, after college, I found work and moved to the Berkshires in the fall, I got married in the fall, I ended by 35 year hiatus from the Episcopal Church and from God in the fall! For me, fall represents change, growth, rededication, and renewal.

This fall is no different. Here at Sr. Mark's we are witnessing a rebirth, renewal, and sure signs that the seed we have planted and are continuing to plant, are starting to grow. On Sunday, September 9, we started a new schedule of three services. We resumed our traditional 8 am service with Rite I we moved our Rite II service from 10 am to 10:30 am in order to accommodate our new "*Seasons of the Spirit: A Family Style Service of Worship*" and Christian Formation time. Our newly refurbished Sunday School has been formally dedicated and is up and running. Hopefully, by the time you read this, all of our equipment for the Sunday School will have arrived and been set up. The first Family Style Service was held in our newly refurbished

space. It was a wonderful, service with lots of joy, happiness, and participation by the children. This service promises to be a real hit!!

We also planted a new seed and started what will be an annual event: s Service of Remembrance for 9/11 victim and honoring first responders past and present. First Responders (EMT's, Police, Fire Fighters) and selectmen from Adams, Cheshire and Savoy, along with the general public were invited to attend. We were very pleased with the response to this outreach into the community and know that this event will continue to grow over the coming years.

Our newly updated web site was published and is available for viewing at www.stmarksadams.org. The September issue of *St. Mark's Epistle* is there as well as calendars, schedules, pages describing what we do, who we are, and links to other important and entertaining sites. We are continually adding and changing things around on the site. Check our website often! Soon we will be adding a calendar that will allow us to add items "on the fly." This will help keep everybody up to date.

The visioning process for the church will undergo changes this fall. The process will be handed over to 3 or 4 individuals who will work on coming up with a vision statement. This will be the distillation of what the vestry and congregation has been actively involved with throughout the summer. Hopefully, by our Annual Meeting in January, 2008, "Vision Team" will have a working, if not complete, Vision Statement that will be our guiding light for the next several years.

The Stewardship Committee is working hard on developing a new style of stewardship that will be a year round program incorporating not just money, but stewardship of our lives, our buildings, our environment and our community. This committee is also hard at work on developing a 5 year plan so that we will better be able to plan for our future. We are growing. We are rededicating. We are renewing. We are witnessing the growth and spirit that only the Holy Spirit can provide. And you thought that planting, rebirth and renewal only happens in the spring.

God Bless,
Fred Nicholaev
Senior Warden



No Experience Necessary!
Training Provided! Great Benefits!

Liturgical Ministry:

Altar Guild
 Lay Eucharistic Ministers (LEM)
 Lay Readers (LR)
 Lay Eucharistic Visitors (LEVites)

Contact:

Pastor Ellen, Priest-in-Charge
 Chris Emerson, Director of Altar Guild
 Fred Nicholaev, Sr. Warden

Music Ministry:

Do you play an instrument?
 Would you like to sing in the choir?
 Would you like to help start a children's choir?

Contact:

Pastor Ellen
 Mike Molleur, Music Committee Chair

Hospitality Ministry:

Would you like to be a Greeter?
 Would you like to assist with a newcomer ministry?
 Would you be interested in assisting with setting up for
 special events (receptions, dinners)?
 Would you like to help with Coffee Hour on Sundays?

Contact:

Fred Nicolaev, Sr. Warden

Communications Ministry:

Help with advertising?
 Writing press releases to secular and diocesan papers?

Contact:

Fred Nicolaev, Sr. Warden
 Jo Ann Delisle

Outreach Ministry:

Would you like to help with our missions outreach?
 . Do you have used postage stamps that you could donate
 to the Leprosy Medical Mission?
 Would you like to participate in the Northern Berkshires
 CROP Walk?

Contact:

Nancy Main, Outreach Chair
 Barbara Fiske, Stamp ministry

Spiritual Formations Ministry:

Would you like to assist with Sunday School?
 Would you like to lead a study group?
 Would you like to work with youth?
 Would you like to work on special events, such as a
 retreat, meditation practices
 Would you like to know more about Servant Leadership?

Contact:

Pastor Ellen

Buildings & Grounds:

Would you like to volunteer to help with projects for the
 church buildings and grounds, including the rectory?

Contact:

Frank Palano, Jr. Warden

Congregational Care:

Would you like to be a participant in the Prayer Chain?
 Would you like to be involved with our Prayer Shawl
 ministry?

Contact:

Terry Molleur, Chair. Congregational Care
 Barbara Fiske, Knit & Stitch Prayer Ministry

Get in touch with the contact persons directly by phone e-mail, or leave a message at the Parish Office:

Telephone: 413-743-0947

E-mail: stmarksadams@verizon.net

or

rectorstmarks@verizon.net

My Faith Journey...

It started out for me at a very young age while attending Catholic grammar school in Adams I became an altar boy and had to learn the prayers in Latin. I had no clue what I was saying because these prayers were never translated for us, but being on the altar (and close to the "action") did give me a good feeling of closeness with my Creator.

I attended Mass faithfully through public high school and even during my four years of military duty whenever possible. However, after I returned home from the service and had started my family, I realized that there were issues of doctrine that I no longer found to be acceptable to my faith life. This is what eventually brought me, in 1970, to St. Mark's Church (a place of worship that had been right under my nose all my life as I was born and brought up in this neighborhood).

I started attending Rite I and fell in love with the service and the language. Somehow, I don't remember just how, I joined the choir and started attending Rite II services. This led me to where I am now, on the altar almost every Sunday, pushing the buttons on the Gulbransen Digital Hymnal and occasionally playing the harmonica (a form of prayer for me).

During these past 37 years, I have spent much time learning about what it takes - both momentarily and through my time and talent - to support the church, its buildings, and all the activities I am currently on my third or fourth "tour" on the Vestry (not sure which!). Every year around this time, we are asked to search our hearts and souls and come up with a pledge that we as

couples or individuals are obliged, as Christians, to give back to God.

The Bible tells us that tithing (returning 10% of our income to our Creator) is the goal we should strive to attain. My wife and I had been blessed to attain this goal around the time I retired in 1999. As we planned for my retirement, we anguished over "what do we do now about our pledge?" We decided to take a leap of faith and not cut our pledge. In 2002, there were circumstances that arose that caused us to reduce our pledge by a few dollars...a decision that didn't come lightly and we worked over the next few years to increase our pledge to the former amount.

When Terry retired last December, we again had the "pledge discussion". This time the decision was much more difficult but we decided, again, not to reduce our pledge...we could always cut it later if it didn't work out. Well, it's been nine months and so far so good!

I don't know what the future holds for us, but we are committed to doing all we can to keep St. Mark's going, and I am very excited about how the future looks. I just can't imagine how it would be if St. Mark's Church was no longer here for me on Sunday mornings.

**All things come of Thee, O Lord, and of Thine own
have we given Thee. Amen**

Faithfully,
~Mike Molleur



St. Mark's Youth Group is once again taking part in "Operation Christmas Child" - shoe box project. Last year with your help and support we were able to send 30 gift-filled shoe boxes to support this mission.

Operation Christmas Child brings joy and hope to children in desperate situations around the world through gift-filled shoe boxes and the Good News of God's love. This program of Samaritan's Purse provides an opportunity for people of all ages to be involved in a simple, hands-on mission project while focusing on the true meaning of Christmas—Jesus Christ.

More information on this project will be available soon.

~Joann Delisle

Vestry Hi-Lites...

The Vestry is working on a "vision" for St. Mark's and had a retreat on Sep 22nd to distill ideas. A small core group led by Sr. Warden Fred Nicholaev will continue the process.

The Sunday School furnishings are due to arrive any time and hopefully will be fully installed and ready for use by the end of the month.

Our Service of Remembrance for 9/11 was well-attended, and we plan to make it an annual event.

We are still using money from our investments to cover monthly expenses, but are working on ways to increase stewardship within the parish.

Frank Palano is working on getting a bid from L. P. Adams for the handicap ramp...an ongoing concern and project.

This is the last *Epistle* that will be routinely mailed out to parishioners, due to rising postal and other costs. (See notice within this newsletter.)

~Karen DeOrdio, Clerk

Stewardship Mission Team Report...

Now that the Legacy Dinner is behind us we turn our attention to the pledge drive, our budget and our one and three year plans for the future of St Marks. It has been mentioned that we should just stop and smell the roses since things are going pretty well right now, but you know, life goes on in the parish just as it does for us at home. You must plan so you are ready when "whatever" comes along in the future.

Our plan for the future will not to be carved in stone. It is like a road map. We set our destination, map out our route and off we go. There may be detours along the way, We may have to change course or we may not even be able to reach our destination. That is why we will review our plans each year and after assessing our progress we will decide if we are on track or if we need to change either our route, our destination or maybe even both.

Imagine trying to pick a route and a destination for a group of people, without input from those people who will be traveling. That is the responsibility that has been placed on the Stewardship Team. No one seems to want to say where they want to go but we are expected to lay out the route and get you there.

Quite a responsibility!

It isn't that we are not up to the task. After all, we get to name the destination and we're free to choose the route. If someone doesn't like, it then I am sure we will finally get some suggestions.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church

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Parish email: stmarksadams@verizon.net

Rector's email: rectorstmarks@verizon.net

Ministers and Staff

The Rt. Reverend Gordon P. Scruton, Bishop of the Diocese of Western MA

The Reverend R. Ellen White, Priest-in-Charge

Mrs. Norma G. L'Ecuyer, Secretary

Mr. Luke Celentano, Sexton

Vestry & Officers:

Fred Nicholaev, Sr. Warden

Frank Palano, Jr. Warden

Karen DeOrdio, Clerk

Carol Tetlow, Treasurer

JoAnn Gagne, Assistant Treasurer
Meta Cardin
Amanda Delisle
Jo Ann Delisle
George Dimitropolis
Christine Emerson
Brian Johnson
Michael Molleur
Theresa Molleur
Michele Pause
Sylvia Lefebvre

All members of the Congregation!!!