



## *The Grapevine* St. Mark's Episcopal Church



July 2025

### A Note from Nancy – July 2025

July 4th is fast approaching. This has always been a very special holiday for me and my family. Yes, it was my mom's birthday so we had more than one reason to celebrate. She was definitely a "fire cracker baby" and loved fire works of any kind. We still laugh about the time my dad got caught with the lighter in his hand when a cop came down our street and everybody else ran away. (He didn't see the car coming.) He got off with a warning but the fireworks continued until there were none left.

This year is the 249th anniversary of that first 4th of July when this nation declared its independence from the King of England and eventually became the United States of America "with liberty and justice for all". As we spend time with family and friends this year, may we take the time to pray that God will help us find ways to preserve our freedoms and way of life.

I offer to you a Litany for Sound Government on Page 821 of the BCP.

O Lord our Governor, bless the leaders of our land, that we may be a people at peace among ourselves and a blessing to other nations of the earth.

*Lord, keep this nation under your care.*

To the President and members of the Cabinet, to Governors of States, Mayors of Cities, and to all in administrative authority, grant wisdom and grace in the exercise of their duties.

*Give grace to your servants, O Lord.*

To Senators and Representatives, and those who make our laws in States, Cities, and Towns, give courage, wisdom, and foresight to provide for the needs of all our people, and to fulfill our obligations in the community of nations.

*Give grace to your servants, O Lord.*

To the Judges and officers of our Courts give understanding and integrity, that human rights may be safeguarded and justice served.

*Give grace to your servants, O Lord.*

And finally, teach our people to rely on your strength and to accept their responsibilities to their fellow citizens, that they may elect trustworthy leaders and make wise decisions for the well-being of our society; that we may serve you faithfully in our generation and honor your holy Name.

*For yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Amen.*

Peace, In Christ,

Mother Nancy

#### St. Mark's Episcopal Church

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

Email: [stmarks@atlanticbbn.net](mailto:stmarks@atlanticbbn.net)

Web site  
[www.saintmarksjohnstown.com](http://www.saintmarksjohnstown.com)

#### Our Staff:

**Priest:** Rev. Nancy L. Threadgill  
**Verger:** Cindy Leap  
**Organist:** Dolly Lopresti  
**Treasurer:** Pam Hysong  
**Secretary:** Joanne McKinley  
**Sexton:** Nikki Forsythe

#### The Vestry:

Senior Warden: Lisa Bell Loncella  
Junior Warden: Michael Teore  
Secretary: Doug Zawiskie  
Treasurer: Pam Hysong

2025

Susan Wertz Kelly  
Michael Teore

2026

Lisa Bell-Loncella  
Richard Burkert  
Tina Grata

2027

Donovan Pendell  
Doug Zawiskie  
Colleen Curry

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

## From the Senior Warden

I've shared this reflection before and apologize for being repetitive. However, as we enter another year in our discernment process, this passage from the prophet Jeremiah is encouraging.

*"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD*      *Jer 29:11.*

It is a familiar passage. The context is relevant to where we are in our discernment process at St. Mark's. It is the tail end of a letter that Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the exiles in Babylon telling them that it would be a while yet before they would leave so they had better "hunker down."

*Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. ... seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.*      *Jer 29:5-7*

Like the exiles in Babylon, we are still in that temporary state here at St. Mark's. It helps if we think of it as permanent. We are blessed to have Mother Nancy with us as Priest-in-Charge. We are blessed to have dedicated worship leaders who can fill in (even at a moment's notice) and lead Morning Prayer when Mother Nancy is not with us. We have a fantastic group of Readers and Greeters who serve at our Sunday Worship. Our Children's Church is growing. Our Calendar Committee has planned social gatherings, special services and take-out dinners for June through December. Make sure to check the schedule later in the *Grapevine*.

The Vestry has been busy, as well. ... So while we are in what might seem like a temporary state, we are moving forward making plans *building houses ... planting gardens [and seeking the] peace and prosperity of the city [where we live]*.

Paul reminds the early Christians in Corinth that

*The God who said, "Out of darkness the light shall shine!" is the same God who made his light shine in our hearts, to bring us the knowledge of God's glory shining in the face of Christ. Yet we who have this spiritual treasure are like common clay pots, in order to show that the supreme power belongs to God, not to us.*      *2 Corinthians 4:6-7*

We use clay pots to store things. We store our treasure (shiny little gold pieces). We store bright light – our spiritual treasure. If we cut holes in the pot that light will shine through. What treasures do we at St. Mark's hold in our clay pots? Might we cut holes in the pots and allow the light to shine forth? The more it shines, the warmer, and brighter it becomes. The more it shines on others, touching them, they too feel the light and are empowered to work together to create an environment where we can grow gardens and build programs and attract new parishioners and do the work that we are called to do.

Blessings,

*Lisa*

**Sharing Christ's love unconditionally  
through transformational worship and service.**

## *From the Discernment Committee*

As we reported last month, the Discernment Committees of St. Mark's and St. Francis have been working with the Diocese on discernment of a potential candidate for the shared priest-in-charge position and were awaiting news from Canon Kim Karashin of her meeting with the candidate. She met with him a few weeks ago and he asked for some time to reflect on his discernment with us. Unfortunately, we received word from Canon Kim on Monday, June 30, that the candidate decided to withdraw from consideration. She and Bishop Ketlen plan to meet this week to discuss the matter and, even though they do not currently have any next steps to offer us, Canon Kim will let us know if there is anything to share with us after their meeting. So, while we are "back to square one," Canon Kim reminded us that, while she knows this is disappointing, ...there is always reason and room for hope. With God, there's always a "what's next".

We will continue to update everyone as we discover more information from the Diocese. Meanwhile we ask your continued prayers for the Discernment Committees of St. Francis-in-the-Fields and St. Mark's. Please do not hesitate to contact either Richard Burkert ([rburkert89@outlook.com](mailto:rburkert89@outlook.com)) or Colleen Curry ([potsie1008@hotmail.com](mailto:potsie1008@hotmail.com)) if you have any questions or concerns.

Our Discernment Committee members are Richard Burkert and Colleen Curry (Co-Chairs,) Lisa Bell-Loncella, Kitty Batrus, Cindy Leap, Catherine Anne McCloskey and Doug Zawiskie.

The following links provide more information about our efforts to search for and call a new priest.

St. Mark's Website:

<https://saintmarksjohnstown.com/shared-priest-in-charge-search/>

St. Francis Website:

<https://www.saintfrancisinthefields.org/our-search-for-a-new-priest>

Diocese/Grace Happens: Search for Priest to Serve in Johnstown and Somerset – Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh ([episcopalpgh.org](http://episcopalpgh.org))

Richard Burkert & Colleen Curry

St. Mark's Discernment Committee Co-Chairs

## Prayers for our Search

### Prayer for Guidance during our Discernment Process

*Gracious and loving God, you teach us that things happen in your time. As we continue to wait for clergy candidates, encourage us, the people of St. Francis in the Fields and St. Mark's Episcopal Churches, to grow steadfastly in our ministries to love and serve our neighbors by sharing the Good News in Jesus Christ.*

*Guided by the Holy Spirit, we open our hearts and minds to new opportunities and ideas, following where you lead — knowing that Jesus Christ walks with us each step of the way. As this discernment period evolves, empower the members of our Vestries and Discernment Committees to share their thoughts openly and honestly; to respect the opinions of others; and to encourage humility, patience, and joy. Finally, instill in us a glorious vision of the future: one where we are united in love and ministry in fulfilling the mission of our baptismal vows; through our savior Jesus Christ. Amen.*

### Prayer for a New Priest

*Almighty God, the giver of all good gifts, we humbly ask you to supply your grace to all priests who are called to the ministry of your peoples. Fill them with the Holy Spirit, the truth of your doctrine, and clothe them with piety so that they may faithfully serve where they are called. Open their hearts to the possibility and consideration of a new path whereby they may serve you. We beseech you to guide to us, the pastor you would have shepherd your people at St. Francis in the Fields and St. Mark's. Open the hearts of these parish families to acceptance of your choice for us, so that together, we may increase our faith, devotion, and obedience, and be prepared to readily do the good works you have planned for us to do. We ask these things in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.*

## From the Calendar & Hospitality Committee

The Calendar & Hospitality Committee met Thursday, May 22 to plan for the coming months. Some exciting events are planned, but many hands are needed for them to be successful. We're hoping to have several pot-luck dinners following the service throughout the fall. Thank you to all the Coffee Hour hosts. The Fellowship has been wonderful!! For our take-out dinners and bake the sale, we need one or two people to coordinate each and then helpers and donations. When planning we tried to schedule only one event each month so we won't wear ourselves out. Here is a tentative list:

- Christmas in July on Sunday — July 20
- August Pulled Pork Picnic — August 16
  - Heidi and Sam Buchan have agreed to coordinate
- Pot luck with the Annual Parish Meeting , September 28
- October Bake Sale— October 4
  - We need a coordinator
- Special Coffee hour for the Bishop's visit—October 6
- Fall Cleanup (9/13, rain date 9/27)
- November Halupki Harvest Dinner— November 22
  - Sam and Heidi Buchan and Doug Zawiskie
- Pot Luck and Greening of the Church the 4th Sunday of Advent—December 21



**The service begins at 9:00 starting Sunday, July 6**

### What's Happening July through December

#### July

- 4th of July
- Saturday's Kitchen (7/19)
- Christmas in July (7/20)

#### August

- Sips, Savories & Sweets at St. Francis (8/1)
- Pulled Pork Picnic Lunch (8/16)

#### September:

- Saturday's Kitchen (9/6)
- Annual Parish Meeting (9/28)
- Fall Cleanup (9/13, rain date 9/27)

#### October:

- Blessing of the Animals & Bake Sale(10/4)
- Bishop's Visitation (10/5)

#### November

- Diocesan Convention (11/15)
- Calendar Committee Meeting (11/18)
- Halupki Harvest Dinner (11/22)
- Thanksgiving (11/27)

#### December

- Advent Quiet Day (12/6)
- Greening of the Church (12/21)
- Blue Christmas (12/21)
- Christmas Eve Services (12/24, 6PM)
- Lessons & Carols (1/4)

## CHRISTMAS IN JULY



Please join us on July 20th at the 9:00 am Service as we celebrate “Christmas In July”.

The Church will be decorated for Christmas. Coffee Hour will be reminiscent of our Christmases Past.

If you have time to bake cookies for Coffee Hour, please contact Tina Grata at [mtgrata@yahoo.com](mailto:mtgrata@yahoo.com) or 814-410-4253!

We will also have a preview of jewelry on sale in the Church Hall. Nothing will be priced more than \$5.00.

**\* NOTE: we will be collecting shampoo and body wash products during the Month of July for the residents of McCullough House.**

## Readers and Greeters – July, August & September 2025

| <b>Sunday</b> | <b>Readers</b>                    | <b>Greeters &amp; Ushers</b>  |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| June 29       | Donovan Pendell & Doug Zawiskie   | Tina Grata & Joann Lacko      |
| July 6        | Lisa Bell-Loncella & Donna Corosi | Melisa Babalonis & Aiden      |
| July 13       | Richard Burkert & Tina Grata      | Jane & Gerry Strittmatter     |
| July 20       | Pam Hysong & Colleen Curry        | Sam & Heidi Buchan            |
| July 27       | Joann Lacko & Doug Zawiskie       | Amy & Penn Whitlow            |
| August 3      | Donna Corosi & Lisa Bell-Loncella | Melisa Babalonis & Aiden      |
| August 10     | Richard Burkert & Donovan Pendell | Jane & Gerry Strittmatter     |
| August 17     | Lisa Bell-Loncella & Tina Grata   | Sam & Heidi Buchan            |
| August 24     | Pam Hysong & Doug Zawiskie        | Richard Burkert & Joann Lacko |
| August 31     | Donna Corosi & Colleen Curry      | Tina Grata & Joann Lacko      |
| September 7   | Joann Lacko & Donovan Pendell     | Melisa Babalonis & Aiden      |
| September 14  | Richard Burkert & Tina Grata      | Jane & Gerry Strittmatter     |
| September 21  | Pam Hysong & Lisa Bell-Loncella   | Sam & Heidi Buchan            |
| September 28  | Donna Corosi & Colleen Curry      | Richard Burkert & Joann Lacko |
| October 5     | Joann Lacko & Doug Zawiskie       | Melisa Babalonis & Aiden      |

If you are unable to read or usher on the day you are scheduled, please find a substitute or let Mother Nancy know so a sub can be found in a timely manner. Thank you.

## Saturday's Kitchen

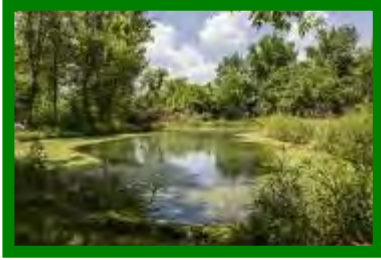
**St. Mark's will be serving at Saturday's Kitchen July 19th from 10:30 to 12:30.**

**We are in need of at least 6 volunteers to help assemble dinners and serve.**

**Please call Kitty Batrus**







St. Michael's of the Valley, Ligonier and St. Francis in the Fields, Somerset have partnered to launch an official chapter of [Holy Hikes](#) in the Diocese, known as Holy Hikes of Southwestern Pennsylvania. We piloted a series of hikes in 2024, as a way to test how the ministry would go and to understand how congregations might collaborate. After a successful initial season, we are ready to launch the ministry diocesan-wide.

The hiking season runs from May to October and the hikes take place in the morning on the third Saturday of each month. We will start the hikes at 10 a.m., but some of the team will be there about 15 minutes early to welcome hikers. If the weather is forecast to be hot, we may move the start time to 9:00 a.m. Please look for announcements on Facebook from the diocese.

The hiking schedule for 2025 is:

**Saturday, July 19, 2025 - 10:00 am**

[Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve](#) (Latrobe) - Multiple trails making a loop - 1.5 miles easy (young family friendly)

**Saturday, August 16, 2025 - 10:00 am**

[Johnstown Flood National Memorial](#) - Carriage Road Nature Trail - 1.15 miles - easy - with an optional 0.10 mile trail to the South Abutment and a 0.34 mile trail with lots of steps to the bottom of the dam (more difficult)

**Saturday, September 20, 2025 - 10:00 am**

[Indian Creek Valley Trail](#) - Melcroft to Indian Head section - 2.75 miles - easy

**Saturday, October 18, 2025 - 10:00 am**

Ohiopyle State Park - [Meadow Run Trail](#) - 2.9 miles - easy

During the hike, we hold a service of Holy Communion, stopping along the trail to read the scripture and say the prayers, while sharing the Eucharist at the end of the hike or at another appropriate setting along the trail. It's a lovely way to have a worship service!

If you or your congregation are interested in participating we invite you to join us for one of our hikes over the summer to see how we do them and learn more about how we determine which trails to use.

In addition, we believe this is an important opportunity for members of the Diocese to invite friends, family, and neighbors – especially those who might not want to attend a Sunday morning service – to something a bit different. We have found it's a wonderful way to build community beyond our four walls. If you are interested in participating, please contact our ministry team member [Katie Ong](#). You can also find information about upcoming hikes in the "Events" section of the [St. Francis website](#) and on its [Facebook page](#), as well as on [St. Michael's Holy Hikes webpage](#) and its [Facebook page](#).



## Happenings at St. Francis in the Fields

Our brothers and sisters at St. Francis in the Fields in Somerset several events coming up in the next two months.

### Parish Potluck & Bocchia on the Lawn

On **Sunday, July 20<sup>th</sup>** stay after the worship service (11:30AM) for a Parish Potluck . The Potluck will be followed by Bocchia ball games on the lawn. No prior experience with Bocchia is needed.

### Sips, Savories & Sweets

Join in the fun on **Friday, August 1<sup>st</sup> (6pm)** as we enjoy our annual Sips, Savories Sweets on the garden patio. A sign-up sheet will be on the Parish Hall bulletin board. Reverend Arnie MacFarland will once again provide the musical entertainment for the evening. The rain date is August 8<sup>th</sup>.

For more information about either of these events email:

[stfrancis.somerset@gmail.com](mailto:stfrancis.somerset@gmail.com)



For those who are not aware, our diocese produces a monthly e-letter titled *Grace Happens*. If you are not already a subscriber go to <https://www.episcopalpgh.org/resources/grace-happens/> and you will be redirected to the sign up page.



St. Mark's Episcopal Church  
335 Locust Street  
Johnstown, Pa. 15901



## ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL

Well, these months are just flying by and we are starting to see an increase in the Families coming to us for help. The cost of food is high, utilities are high, and families are struggling to keep their pets.

We are fortunate to have the following donors: James & Carol Bezek, Carol Harp, Bill & Cathy Sampson, Barbara Yerger, Valerie Kasper, Diana Mock, Pamela Vescovi, John & Betty Gritzer, Dennis & Carol Loushe, Tim Cicotello, Theresa Kosaber, Lou & Carol Schaffer, Heidi Lanzendorfer (Cinnamon's Closet), Donna Rzasa, John & Sharon Flick, Marion Gaydos, Annett Kristofco, Chris & Delbert Hess, Wendy Arcurio, Elizabeth Shearman, Helen Petruska, Pam Vescovi, and Helen Petruska. Many Thanks for your generous support of our Animal Welfare Ministry!

During the month of June we were able to assist 122 Families. (10 new families).

We were able to help feed:      150 Dogs and      28 Puppies  
   504 Cats and      111 Kittens

### Totals for the month of June were:

|       |          |         |         |                     |
|-------|----------|---------|---------|---------------------|
| Dogs: | Dry food | 623 lbs | 0 Cans  | Puppy Dry: 102 lbs  |
| Cats: | Dry food | 726 lbs | 60 Cans | Kitten Dry: 254 lbs |

### Total for January thru June:

|      |          |           |
|------|----------|-----------|
| Dogs | Dry Food | 4,802 lbs |
| Cats | Dry Food | 9,254 lbs |

A special "thank you" to our volunteers.

Pet Food Dates for July: July 10th (10:00 am to 1:30 pm)

Pet Food Dates for August: August 14th (10:00 am to 1:30 pm)

*Cynthia Greig, Joanne McKinley*

## *Animal Welfare Ministry*

The First Collection of the Month will be for our Animal Welfare Ministry.



### ***Missions***

All families of the church are encouraged to donate one dollar on the Third Sunday of each month (July 20) for Missions.

Please mark your donation separately for Missions.

### ***Pastoral Care***

All families of the church are encouraged to donate one dollar on the fourth Sunday (July 27) of each month for Pastoral Care.

Please mark your donation separately for Pastoral Care.

## **BUILDING FUND CAMPAIGN**

Please support our "Building Fund" which is the 2nd Collection of the Month. We are taking care of several projects at this time. Your support is gratefully appreciated.



### **2025 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 with your request.

July: 7/13 (1)  
August: 8/3(1), 8/31 (1),  
September: 9/7 (1), 9/21 (1)  
October: 10/5 (1), 10/19 (1), 10/26 (2)  
November: 11/2 (1), 11/9 (1), 11/16 (2), 11/23 (1), 11/30 (1)  
December: 12/8 (1), 12/22 (1), 12/29 (2)



### ***Vestry Meeting***

July 17th  
6:30 PM  
In Person (or Zoom)


### **No Regular Finance Meeting**

For July  
Unless Needed

## **DONATE ONLINE**

Pay your pledge or donate to our special collections online using PayPal or a Credit Card. Go to the Donate page of our website to make your donation:

<https://saintmarksjohnstown.com/give-to-support-st-marks-and-its-ministries/>

| SUNDAY   | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY   | FRIDAY  | SATURDAY   |
|--|--------|---------|-----------|--|---|--|
| JULY   |        |         |           |  |   |  |
|  |        | 1       | 2         | 3  | 4 <div>  </div> INDEPENDENCE DAY | 5  |
| 6 <div>             9:00 AM<br/>             Holy Eucharist Rt II<br/>             Church &amp; Zoom           </div>  | 7      | 8       | 9         | 10 <div>             PET FOOD PANTRY<br/>             10:00 AM TO 2:00 PM           </div> | 11  | 12   |
| 13 <div>             9:00 AM<br/>             Holy Eucharist Rt II<br/>             Church &amp; Zoom           </div>   | 14     | 15      | 16        | 17 <div>             Vestry Meeting           </div>                                       | 18  | 19 <div>             Saturday's Kitchen<br/>             10:00 to 12:00           </div> |
| 20 <div>             9:00 AM<br/>             Holy Eucharist Rt II<br/>             Church &amp; Zoom<br/><br/>             CHRISTMAS IN JULY           </div> | 21     | 22      | 23        | 24   | 25  | 26   |
| 27 <div>             9:00 AM<br/>             Holy Eucharist Rt I<br/>             Church &amp; Zoom           </div>  | 28     | 29      | 30        | 31   |   |  |