

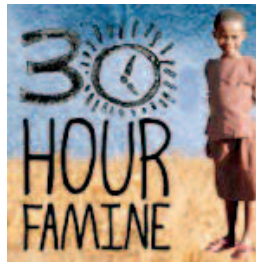
Calendar of Events

APRIL

- April 1 – Easter Monday (office closed)
- April 2 – SPR meeting
- April 11 – Abigail Circle, Relay for Life fundraiser
- April 14 – Missions Fair
- April 16 – Tabitha Circle, Ruth Circle
- April 17 – Trendsetter luncheon
- April 20 – 30 hour famine
- April 21 – 30 hour famine
- April 25 – Confirmation dinner & rehearsal,
Trendsetters to Musical Extravaganza @
Ag Museum
- April 28 – Confirmation Sunday
- April 29 – Garage Sale set up]
- April 30 – Garage Sale set up, Trendsetters to
Millsaps for lecture

MAY

- May 1 – Garage Sale set up
- May 2 – Garage Sale set up
- May 3 – Youth Auction/Early bird garage sale
- May 4 – Youth Garage sale
- May 6 – Stewpot
- May 7 – Stewpot
- May 8 – Stewpot, Last Wednesday night of
semester
- May 9 – Stewpot, Abigail Circle, Preschool graduation
- May 10 – Stewpot
- May 11 – Ladies Brunch
- May 19 – Graduate brunch, Graduate recognition,
Finance meeting
- May 21 – Tabitha circle, Ruth circle
- May 27 – Memorial Day



FEED YOUR 5,000

by Madeline Cook (St. Mark's 8th grader)

I can't recall the last time I slept on the hard ground with no shelter, or went a week without eating. But to **925 million** people all around the world, a week without shelter or food is ordinary, and malnutrition is the miserable standard. Every **thirteen seconds**, somewhere around the world, a child dies from completely preventable causes.... hunger and poverty. You see, it's not just the constant pain and weariness that lack of food deprives millions of; it's robbing them of an immune system, strength to try to put food on the table, bone growth, and their chance of living. But when did we last worry about the 925 million who are starving? I mean, they're continents away, and out of sight, out of mind, right? Who cares if each day last year **20,000** children under the age of 5 died, and who cares if nearly 250 school buses of children will die **every day** this year from hunger related illnesses? Who cares? I do. You do. As followers of Christ we are called to share our food with the hungry and feed His lambs (Isaiah 58:7, John 21:15). Jesus fed the five thousand. Now it's our turn.

Every year thousands of teenagers from around the globe come together through **World Vision's 30 Hour Famine** to help feed the hungry. The 30 Hour Famine is an event where youth are challenged to fast for thirty hours to raise money and awareness to the plague of world hunger while engaging in games, service projects, Bible studies and activities that open our eyes to the world we so often forget. It's amazing how thirty hours can change your whole perspective. Prior to participating in the Famine I was completely oblivious to much of the hardship and struggle that people go through daily. It's a shame that I am supposed to be the hands and feet of Jesus and I didn't even give these suffering human beings a second thought. We often doubt God's presence with us, when it's evident that we are blessed beyond our comprehension. Sometimes, we still find it hard to thank God everyday and believe He's always there.

Being a part of the 30 Hour Famine gives participants a small taste of being truly hungry and being trapped in the cycle of poverty. St. Mark's Youth participated in the Famine for the first time last year and we raised a total of \$2554.88 dollars for World Vision. This year we have an ambitious goal of **\$5000**, to truly "feed our five thousand" (5,000 children for one day) and share the love of Christ by "giving to the least of these" (Matthew 25:24). Our famine is set for **April 20-21** and we need your help. Please prayerfully consider supporting our youth and this event with your prayers and finances. Thanks to government grants, your financial donation has **four** times the impact! All donations are tax deductible.

We are so blessed and yet may be overwhelmed with the enormity of world hunger. But we can save lives and do our part by bringing to Jesus what we have. Remember the boy with his lunch? Feed Your 5,000!

United Methodist Women's Brunch with Tablesapces

On Saturday, May 11, the three circles of St. Mark's United Methodist Women will sponsor a brunch with tablesapces in the CLC at 10:00 am. Tickets are \$10 each and may be purchased from any UMW member or through the church office.

In addition to delicious food served on uniquely displayed settings, participants will enjoy a dramatic monologue on the life of Ruth, written and performed by Rita Sweatt. Rita is a guest soloist and speaker for many women's conferences. She began speaking to ladies at church meetings and retreats in 2001.

Due to growing demand, Rita now limits her speaking and performing engagements to 60 events a year and the members of Tabitha, Ruth, and Abigail Circles are delighted to offer this experience to the ladies of St. Mark's and the community.



Saint Mark's United Methodist Church
 400 Grant's Ferry Road
 Brandon, MS 39047

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Saint Mark's United Methodist Church

Phone: 601-992-2131

Church Staff:

- Rob Gill, Senior Pastorx103
- Jeff Nesbit, Teaching Pastorx105
- Sandra Thomas, Minister of Worship & Musicx104
- Gary Cazier, Director of Nurture/Outreachx109
- Jeanne Chapman, Youth Director601-992-9554
- Jim Readell, Church Facilities Manager601-506-4714
- Delores Seward, Administrative Assistantx101
- Martha Toombs, Business Officex106
- Corrine Carpenter, Preschool Officex110
- Darlene BakerPianist
- Jason BoydOrganist
- Drew Herring11th Hour Worship Leader
- Robert GhostonCustodian

Check the church website or Sunday bulletin for times of events and further information. See the bulletin for all on the caring list.

Worship is each Sunday at 8:20, 10:45 and 11:00 a.m.; Sunday School is at 9:30 a.m.

www.saintmarksum.org



GARAGE SALE

Sat., May 4
 7 am - Noon
 St. Mark's CLC & Youth Building

LIVE AUCTION/Garage Sale Fundraiser!

Friday, May 3 - 7:00 PM - St. Mark's CLC
Admission: \$5.00

(includes early admission to garage sale ~ doors open at 6:45 pm)
 All proceeds support St. Mark's Youth!
 Please Note: cash and checks ONLY.

We need your donations! This is a great opportunity to clean out closets, garages and attics! Please share your "treasures" with others! We are accepting consignment quality donations through Wed., May 1. To arrange a drop off to the new pods, please contact Jeanne at jeanne@saintmarksum.org.



the BEACON

Shining Christ's light into the community



April 2013 • Number 80



And Jesus came and said to them, “*All authority in heaven and earth has been given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples of all 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. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*” (MATTHEW 28:18-20)

Sometimes churches will ask the question, “*If we ceased to exist as a local body of Christ followers in this specific community, would people even know it?*”

The disciples of Christ in the above passage were *relentless* in the mission of Christ (making disciples); and therefore, the specific communities in which they traveled and the world in which they lived were extremely impacted for the Name of our Risen King.

In other words, people knew they existed and knew Christ was alive!

We want to be a *gathering* of people who corporately worship Christ and a people who *scatter* on mission for the sake of Christ; so much to the point, that if we ever ceased to exist, people would be deeply impacted by our absence.

On Sunday, April 14th, Saint Mark's will present a Mission Fair in the Christian Learning Center to demonstrate all the ways we can begin making disciples in our local body and around our community....even to the nations!!

The Mission Fair will begin at 9:00am and end at 10:45am before the 11th Hour Worship service. There will be booths set up with point people who will help us all discover the ways the Holy Spirit wants to breath His life throughout Rankin county and beyond!

Jesus said, “*As the Father has sent Me, even so I am sending you.*” And when He said this, He breathed on them and said to them, “*Receive the Holy Spirit.*” (John 20:21).

The Holy Spirit wants to work through families, singles, and all sorts of groups...this will be great for families to bring their kids to so they can learn how to be on mission together. Small groups, circles, and Sunday school classes can take part in this so that they can find out what local or global mission they can adopt and invest in.

Perhaps you will sense the Father's leading at a booth and you will respond like Isaiah...
“*Here am I! Send me.*” (Isaiah 6:8).

Let's pray ahead of time for this Mission Fair and come expecting for Jesus to send us somewhere to make disciples and proclaim His fame!

Jeff

Rob's Remarks



Invited. It is a good word. It means someone thought of you and wanted to include you. It means you have something to offer and are a potential contributor to an experience yet to be known. Webster's dictionary suggests that “invited” means to allure or entice.

When I invite someone to my home for dinner or to spend time with my family, I think about how their presence will add to my life or my family's life and perhaps the reciprocal dynamic will be fulfilled as well. Friendship bonds are formed often and the invitation is extended again and again. A relationship is formed that in many cases has lasted for years even when we have moved away to another community.

Think about the moments in your life when an invitation you accepted made a difference. Maybe it was to join a civic club or a service fraternity or sorority. Maybe it was to join a Bible Study and through that one invitation your life began to have a depth that you had not known before. I was invited to be part of a theater community when I was a younger pastor on the Gulf Coast. I had not had any involvement in theater since I was in high school, but with some encouragement and support of my congregation, I stepped out on the stage. It was great fun and I met people I would have never known otherwise. The same thing happened in Meridian just before I moved here. I accepted an invitation to try something new.

Jesus invited people to follow him on his journey. We would have never heard of people like Simon Peter or even Judas Iscariot had they not accepted his invitation. Nor would we have a Methodist story had John Wesley not accepted Jesus' invitation through the Holy Spirit to follow his way.

How is your life an invitation to others? How is your witness an invitation to encourage others to join us here in our congregation to discover the unique gifts and graces of forty years of ministry? Have you invited anyone to worship in the past year? Have you invited anyone to a small group, to a Second Saturday Mission Event, to “Merge” or to a Sunday School Class in the past month? Easter Sunday we handed out a flyer that listed several events and opportunities for people you know who may or may not have a relationship with Jesus through a church to come and see who we are. So I am asking you now to begin praying that God will give you the desire to invite someone to an experience among us. Give God the chance through our church to help a person or family experience what you did when you decided to accept your invitation.

Joyfully,
Rob

Children's Corner



June 9-13



Jo Hebert

An Encouraging Word From Jo Hebert

Last month, I introduced myself to those of you who might not have known I am a counselor at St. Mark's. In the future, I hope to provide some practical helps in this column—tips on parenting, handling anxiety, as well as everyday encouragement. This month, I want to share with you a special opportunity coming to Saint Mark's this fall.

When two people enter into a marriage with united hopes and dreams, neither plans nor expects it to end in divorce. But, we all know that about half of married couples do divorce, and many of these are left disappointed, overwhelmed, and perhaps devastated. At this stage, they need to know that there is hope and it will get better. What better place than Christ's church to provide that hope? Because of Pastor Rob's and others' desire to reach out to this population, planning is now ongoing to begin a Divorce Care recovery

group at St. Mark's this fall.

Merriam Smilley, Suzanne Gural, and I are in the planning stages, and we would like to enlist the help of those who feel called to this ministry. We will be following the DivorceCare curriculum...a 13 week course that uses DVDs and small group discussion to help both separated and divorced people. We plan to meet on Thursday nights from August to November.

How can you help? First, when you are reminded about divorce, pray for this ministry...that God would call those in need and that He would provide all the leaders needed to help those He calls to our group. Next, we are looking for small group leaders (particularly, but not exclusively, men) who: 1) are spiritually mature, 2) have a passion for divorce recovery ministry, and 2) if divorced, have healed from the circumstances that led to the

break-up of their marriage. If you fit that description or want to recommend someone, you may contact me, Merriam, or Suzanne. If you know you would like to help in some capacity but don't want to be a small group leader, we will also be needing people to pray, help with publicity, set-up, and greet. So, if you have an interest, there is room for you.

You will hear more about DivorceCare as we get closer to August. Keep in mind those you know that might need to hear practical tips, encouragement, and the hope of Jesus Christ.

I am a Licensed Professional Counselor at St. Mark's. If you would like to schedule an appt or have questions about DivorceCare, you can reach me at 601-259-1749 or jhebertlpc@comcast.net.

Jeanne's 2 Sense



Jeanne Chapman

jeanne@saintmarksum.org

"Don't look for shortcuts to God. The market is flooded with surefire, easygoing formulas for a successful life that can be practiced in your spare time. Don't fall for that stuff, even though crowds of people do. The way to life—to God!—is vigorous and requires total attention." — LUKE 7:14 (MSG)

We all look for shortcuts, don't we? While driving, in long division, in recipes. Sometimes shortcuts work. Sometimes they are affective. But there are some areas of life where shortcuts just don't measure up and aren't even possible. Like trying to take a shortcut in losing weight or getting that beach body. If we want the results we have to put in the time, sweat, energy and effort. We must be disciplined. Going once to the gym isn't enough. Skipping dessert once a year isn't going to make the difference. No, it takes so much more.

Our relationship with God is the same way. Most of us say we want to be closer to Christ. That we want to grow in our love for Him and to be more like Him. We know it requires work to make it happen. We know we must pray, study the Bible, memorize scripture, worship corporately and individually, serve, surrender, confess, witness. But we may be tempted to try shortcuts that don't exist. It takes discipline. It takes time, energy and effort. There is no shortcut. "The way to life - to God! - is vigorous and requires total attention." If you've been looking for a shortcut to a deeper relationship with Christ - stop looking and start a routine of spiritual disciplines. Don't let this world distract you or tempt you that your relationship with God can be grown with whatever is left over. This is the challenge for our confirmands of the Class of 2013 and to each of us as well. Jesus did not look for a shortcut and neither should we. ~ g.

Youth News

Sundays ~ 5:00 -7:30 pm
Dinner ~ Worship ~ Life Groups
All students grades 6 - 12

APRIL Schedule

- 7 - Now Showing: "E.T."
- 14 - Now Showing: "School of Rock"
- 21 - NO MERGE (30 Hr Famine)
- 28 - Garage Sale Set up



7PM THURSDAY • APRIL 4

@ Broadmoor Baptist Church
Madison, MS * Cost: \$20
Limited tickets

FUEL

High octane for your soul midweek!

Wednesdays ~ 5:30 - 7:00 pm

Fellowship and graded Bible studies for middle school and high school students.
(Join us for **5th Block** before FUEL every Wed. from 3:30 - 5:00!)

Plan to join us for 30 Hours that will change your life and bring hope to the hungry.

APRIL 20-21, 2013

(Sat. - Sun.)



Contact Jeanne for more info! Be sure to read Madeline's article in this issue!



April 28 @ 10:45 service



StMarksRezYouth

COMING SOON!

"A BLOCKBUSTER SUMMER"

MISSIONFEST @ Millsaps College

Join us for a week of worship, service, fellowship and friendship!

June 2 - 6, 2013 Cost: \$175 through 4/1 (\$200 after)
(For current 6th -12th graders!)

SURGE @ Lake Junaluska, NC

Join us for a week of Bible study, worship, fellowship, & white water rafting!

High School: June 21 - 27 ~ Cost: \$305 (\$325 after 4/1) (current 9th - 12th graders)
Middle School: June 26 - 30 ~ Cost: \$250 (\$270 after 4/1) (current 6th - 8th graders)

To register for any trip, submit your \$75 non-refundable deposit to Jeanne.

Trendsetters **Adults Over 50**

April Events

On **Wednesday, April 17** at noon, the Riggs Manor Ramblers will entertain the Trendsetters at a covered dish luncheon in the Christian Life Center. The Ramblers are residents of Riggs Manor Retirement Community in Raymond. Riggs Manor is a part of the Methodist connectional system through Methodist Senior Services. The cost is \$2.00 a person and bring a dish to share with our guests.

On **Tuesday, April 30**, Felder Rushing and Robin Mather will present an unusual

program, "You Say You Want a (Food) Revolution?" at Millsaps College. Fed up with food recalls, food poisoning reports and the rest of the industrial food system? Let gardening expert Felder Rushing and food writer Robin Mather tell you how to eat better for less. Mather, senior associate editor at the Mother Earth News Magazine, will discuss the whole food and other movements. Former food editor for the Clarion-Ledger, Mather is author of "The Feast Nearby". Horticulturist and

hands-on "dirt" gardener Rushing is a newspaper columnist, radio host, author of 16 gardening books, and lecturer. His down-home approach is rife with anecdotes and tips for all kinds of gardeners, regardless of skill.

The bus will leave St. Mark's at 4:45 p.m. and return about 9:00 p.m. The cost of the program will be \$8.00. We will have dinner at Piccadilly before the program, (Dutch treat.)

MISSION NEWS



In March was Clean Up the Rez



**The next
Second Saturday
will be April 13.**

St. Mark's to Have Missions Fair!

"And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." – ACTS 1:8 NLT

The Local and Global Missions Committees will be hosting a Missions Fair on Sunday, April 14 from 9:00-10:45 AM in the CLC. Representatives of the church's missions projects will be on hand to share with you all of the exciting events planned for this year. Whether your interest is local or global, there is a project for you! And whether your talents are great or small, there is a project that needs your support! Come be a part of St. Mark's missions initiative, and find a place for you and your family to serve. Coffee and light refreshments will be served, and the fellowship will surely be blessed.

"Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."
– JAMES 2:17 NIV