

## You Took My Parking Space at Church

By Gary Cazier

*This was sent to me by my cousin. I received it almost a month ago and have been unable to get it out of my mind. Hopefully, it will have the same effect on you. This should wake us up.*

One day, a man went to visit a church. He got there early, parked his car and got out. Another car pulled up near the driver got out and said, "I always park there! You took my place!" The visitor went inside for Sunday School, found an empty seat and sat down. A young lady from the church approached him and stated, "That's my seat! You took my place!" The visitor was somewhat distressed by this rude welcome, but said nothing.

After Sunday School, the visitor went into the sanctuary and sat down. Another member walked up to him and said, "That's where I always sit! You took my place!" The visitor was even more troubled by this treatment, but still said nothing.

Later as the congregation was praying for Christ to dwell among them, the visitor stood up, and his appearance began to change. Horrible scars became visible on his hands and on his sandaled feet. Someone from the congregation noticed him and called out, "What happened to you?"

The visitor replied, as his hat became a crown of thorns, and a tear fell from his eye, "I took your place!"

Think of this the next time someone sits in your place at church!

### Because We Believe – May 8

6:00 p.m. - Sanctuary

(Dinner - 5:00 p.m. CLC)

11th Hour Praise Team and Sanctuary Choir

A musical affirmation of our faith. In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul wrote as being "of first importance" that Christ died for our sins, was buried, rose on the third day, and appeared again to His followers. As we continue to celebrate the risen Christ throughout these 50 days of Easter, let us continue to know that Jesus is alive. The musical is a mix of hymns, gospel music, and contemporary rhythms.

#### Because we believe....

We are who we are.

We do what we do.

We live in Christlike ways.

We reach out to all in need.

Utilizing the talents of traditional service and 11th hour musicians, let us all together share the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all the world...because we believe.

## What is First Place 4 Health?

FP4H is a Christ-centered Bible Study group with emphasis on losing or maintaining your weight in a healthy, God-honoring manner. We strive to learn to live balanced lives-Spiritually, Mentally, Emotionally, and Physically.

#### ■ When are the meetings?

We will start a new session on May 15 in the Wesley Center. We meet for 12 weeks each session. Meetings start at 5:30 p.m. and end at 7:00 p.m.

#### ■ Do both men and women attend the meetings?

At this time, we have no men's group. We will start one at anytime, if someone is willing to lead. Help in starting it is available from Mike Connerly, MS State Networking Leader.

#### ■ What is the cost?

The only purchase necessary is The Members' Kit. This is a one-time purchase and includes the books and DVDs needed to participate fully in the program. The Kit is \$80.00 on the First Place 4 Health website (firstplace4health.com).

#### ■ Are there recurring costs?

The cost of each session is \$20 and this includes a new Bible Study for each 12 weeks. Bible Study books will be available at the first meeting and may be purchased at that time.

### 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



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 Pastor .....x103
- Jeff Nesbit, Teaching Pastor .....x105
- Sandra Thomas, Minister of Worship & Music .....x104
- Gary Cazier, Director of Nurture/Outreach .....x109
- Jeanne Chapman, Youth Director .....601-992-9554
- Jim Readell, Church Facilities Manager .....601-506-4714
- Delores Seward, Administrative Assistant .....x101
- Martha Toombs, Business Office .....x106
- Corrine Carpenter, Preschool Office .....x110
- Darlene Baker .....Pianist
- Jason Boyd .....Organist
- Drew Herring .....11th Hour Worship Leader
- Robert Ghoston .....Custodian

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](http://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](mailto:jeanne@saintmarksum.org).**



# the BEACON

*Shining Christ's light into the community*



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“...where they were *sitting*.” (Acts 2:2)

The church of Jesus Christ needs “movers and shakers”. The world is changing at a fast pace. We are a “mobile” world...some people are even shaving, eating, and reading while driving! I’m guilty, how about you?

According to one webpage, mobile devices are now reaching the farthest corners of the world. It was projected back in the 2011, that about 5 billion mobile phones would be in service in a world with 7 billion people.

That has multiple implications: for politics, for education, for economies, for civil society, for news and information. I would add, even for the church. Many believe “mobile” devices are “changing the world”. Mobile media devices are at the hub of the global information society.

Maybe so, but I would say that the Triune God has been moving before the world even thought about becoming “mobile” and through His church, Jesus is “changing the world”. The God of the bible is mobile. Genesis 1:1 tells us that the Spirit of God was “hovering” over the face of the waters at creation. Jesus tells us in Revelation 22:20, “*Surely I am coming soon.*” In Exodus, the Israelites kept up with the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night. He was always ahead of them, leading them to the Promise Land. He led David besides still waters and in paths of righteousness in Psalm 23. Jesus descended at Christmas. Moved towards the Cross and out of the Tomb. He then ascended 40 days after Easter to be at the right hand of His glorious Father. 50 days after His ascension, the Holy Spirit descended. The Triune God of the Bible seems to be “mobile”...even at Saint Mark’s. He is moving in and through His local body in Brandon, MS!

So, what does that mean for us? How do we keep up with the world, or even, God? I want to propose that we don’t speed up or move more. I propose we move less and sit more.

Acts 2:1-2 is my biblical reason for saying that: “*When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from Heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.*”

Sitting doing what? *Praying their heart and soul out to God the Father*, for 10 days straight until the Holy Spirit descended! Acts 1:14: “... **devoting themselves to prayer...**” Sure, we can be “mobile” prayer people...praying “on the go”. Yes, we need to move and get things done. But what if *we sat down, prayed the Scriptures for at least 10 minutes a day for 10 days straight sometime in May.* I’d like to see God move through a united church who sits and prays. The church in Acts, with the power of the Holy Spirit, moved through Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and eventually to the ends of the earth with the Gospel of Jesus.

But it all started because **they sat praying.**

<http://cima.ned.org/publications/news-go-how-mobile-devices-are-changing-worlds-information-ecosystem>

Jeff

## Rob’s Remarks



Her name was Susanna. She was the mother of John and Charles Wesley. Maybe you have heard of them but you may not be as familiar with her. She gave birth to 19 children, nine died as infants. She suffered many difficulties during her life not the least of which was a husband who was less than stable as a provider for the family and actually abandoned her and the children for a year. Twice her house burned down and her children were sent to live with nearby families. And yet in her journey, Susanna’s faith in God made an impact on two of her youngest children, John and Charles. Her devotion to God and her practice of faith influenced her sons in their formative years which led to them hearing God’s call and began a spiritual renewal in England that marked Christian history ever since. We Methodists owe admiration to Susanna Wesley.

Mothers are to be honored the second Sunday in May. I do not know how you plan to honor and/or remember your mother. Some of you may not have received the spiritual influence from your mother like John and Charles did. In spite of that, the Scripture calls for us to honor them. Fredrick Buechner in his book, *Whistling in the Dark*, offers this word: “Our mothers, like our fathers, are to be honored as the Good Book says. But if Jesus is to be our guide then honoring them doesn’t mean either idealizing them or idolizing them. It means both seeing them as they are and what they are not. It means the best way to repay them is to love God and our neighbor as faithfully and selflessly as at their best they have tried to love us. It means that we are to take care their needs until the end of their journey”.

Mother’s Day stirs up emotions in us. Some of them are joyful, others not so much. We didn’t get to choose them but we can choose to love them as they were and are. I hope you will continue to find the grace to forgive them for their shortcomings and failures as well as affirm them and give thanks for the gifts you have received from their efforts.

I urge you to think of a way to honor and remember your mother this month even if she has gone to be with the Lord. Your witness to her honors God. I am grateful for Phyllis. She has encouraged me from the time I was a little boy. She told me often how proud she was of me. She disciplined me with consistency and spoke the truth when it mattered most. She still does that today. I have watched Currie do the same with our sons. Those gifts bear fruit. The conflict and the heartache that it entails at times bears witness to the source of love: God in Christ.

Join us this week in worship in the mother church, the Bride of Christ.

Rob



# Children's Corner



June 9-13

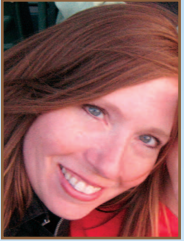


## Graduate Sunday ~ May 19

**Brunch @ 9:30**  
**Recognition @ all 3 services**

We want to celebrate and honor all high school and college graduates of the class of 2013. Please contact Jeanne if you are graduating.

## Jeanne's 2 Sense



Jeanne Chapman

jeanne@saintmarksum.org

*"For everything, absolutely everything, above and below, visible and invisible, rank after rank after rank of angels—everything got started in Him and finds its purpose in Him. He was there before any of it came into existence and holds it all together right up to this moment."* - Col. 1:16-17 (MSG)

As I write this our nation is in shock, mourning and fighting feelings of anxiety and fear due to the bombings at the Boston Marathon. Images are burned into our minds of bombs exploding and the chaos and gruesome aftermath. Times like these can make us feel that life is spinning out of control. But it doesn't have to be a literal bomb to make us feel that our lives are falling apart. Single words can erupt and change our lives forever. Divorce. Cancer. Failed. Fired. Death. But there is Hope. His name is Jesus. Paul reminds us that Jesus holds ALL things together. All things. That includes you and me. We may feel we are losing control and falling apart, but we must be reminded that Jesus is holding us together.

When tragedies strike we often take assessment of our lives. We hug our loved ones a little tighter and can begin to question what our purpose is on this planet. If you are seeking your purpose, please reread verse 16 above. If you are seeking your purpose in anything or anyone other than Jesus you will not find it. Everything, and everyone, finds its purpose in Him. Look to Jesus. He gives us purpose and He holds us together - regardless of what is happening to us, around us or even because of us.

As another school year ends and another summer dawns, you are invited to join us as we seek our purpose (JESUS) and grow in Him. ~ g.

## Youth News

**merge**  
bringing students and God together



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

### MAY Schedule

- 5 - Special Feature
- 12 - NO MERGE (Mother's Day)
- 19 - FINAL MERGE of the School year
- 26 - NO MERGE (Memorial Day)

SUMMER PREVIEW

Sun., May 19 @ MERGE

Don't miss this night as we preview the Blockbuster Summer that is planned with you in mind!

There will be compelling storylines, fascinating characters, plot twists, comedy, action and adventure and the greatest love story ever shared!

Grab your popcorn and big box candy and get your ticket! You won't want to miss a moment!

## School's Out LOCK-OUT! 12 insane hours of fun!

You will need:  
socks,  
swimsuit, beach  
towel, flashlight  
and  
adventurous  
attitude!

Thurs., May 23  
7 pm - 7 am  
Cost: \$20

We will be locked OUT of the youth building ALL night! Join us for a night of fun, friends, food, adventure, and surprises! Register through Sunday, May 19th on the Youth Bulletin Board!

## COMING SOON!

### "A BLOCKBUSTER SUMMER"

#### MISSIONFEST @ Millsaps College

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

June 2 - 6, 2013 Cost: \$200 (\$75 is due ASAP!) (For current 6th -12th graders!)

\* Parent/Participant meeting Sunday, May 5 @ 4:00 pm!

#### 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 5/1) (current 9th - 12th graders)

Middle School: June 26 - 30 ~ Cost: \$250 (\$270 after 5/1) (current 6th - 8th graders)

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



# Trendsetters **Adults Over 50**

## May Events



## Trendsetters ready to "play ball" or at least watch it!

We can support the MISSISSIPPI BRAVES in the comfort of the Rankin County Suite (Thanks to Larry Swales). We'll watch a great game and have fellowship in air conditioned comfort or sit in the stands in front of the Suite. Usual food for games will be available to purchase including sundaes on the ice cream cart. We'll leave the church at 6:15 p.m. and return after the game (about 10:00 p.m.). It's always a fun time. Sign up in the church office.

**Riggs Manor Ramblers** sang at the Wednesday, April 17, covered dish noon luncheon. They sang favorite hymns and invited Trendsetters to sing along with favorites like "How Great Thou Art." They also entertained with songs that director, Laura Higgins, chose for our enjoyment. Riggs Manor is the Methodist Retirement Home located in Raymond, MS.



## MISSION NEWS

### St. Mark's Mission Fair

