



## Nurture and Outreach

The spring session of our biannual Newcomer's class will begin on February 15 and run for six Sundays, ending on March 22. The class will be led by one of our pastors and is designed for members/visitors who are new to St. Mark's. However, it is beneficial for anyone who desires to learn more about Methodism. I have been a Methodist for 38 years, and during each session I have attended, I have learned many new things about our denomination, such as....Who was John Wesley and what was his impact on our beliefs? How did the historical events of Wesley's time effect his decisions in beginning the early church? What is Wesley's guide to interpreting scripture? What is the United Methodist Conference and what is its relationship with our local church? What is the difference in a deacon and an elder? Why do Methodist ministers move around so much? .... Just to name a few.

The class will meet at 9:30 in the library, room 111 of the Wesley Center (the building located to the left of the front of the sanctuary.) Coffee and donuts will be provided. If you are interested in the class but are unable to attend all sessions, just come when you can. All are invited and encouraged to come and learn more about our Methodist faith.



Jo Hebert

## An Encouraging Word From Jo Hebert

I have worn glasses since I was 12 and contacts since age 15 in order to see well at a distance. I still think it is amazing that vision can be corrected, and, like many of you, I am grateful I don't have to look at the world through blurry eyes. A few years ago, though, I began to notice an unwelcome change: Presbyopia. Even though my close-up vision is still fine without contacts, my over-40 eyes won't allow me to see well up-close when my contacts are in.

In 2013, I saw my regular eye doctor's new partner, just to get in quickly for my yearly exam. To my surprise, she said my vision had changed dramatically since my last appointment, moving me up an entire point in both eyes. This had never happened. Plus, she said my optic nerve was enlarged, and I would need a glaucoma test (which I didn't do). When I got my new contacts, my close-up vision was much worse, starting me on a quest to find the right kind of lenses. I was never happy with them that year; so when I made my next appointment with my regular eye doctor, I asked for extra time, because I was going to be a high-maintenance patient. I had a lot of questions.

Thankfully, the doctor and his assistant were both very patient, and I left with all my questions answered. It turns out my optic nerve was fine and, here's the kicker... his partner had put me in the wrong prescription the year before. It had actually not jumped at all. The WRONG PRESCRIPTION by a FULL POINT. (All we visually-challenged people know that's a big deal). And I had gone over a year that way, believing what I was told without asking for another exam. But, this time I left with a plan. (I am now wearing mono-vision lenses and loving them...for anyone interested in the outcome). I am sure my family is growing tired of listening to me exclaim, "I can see!!" I just can't get over it. Every experience seems a little richer because I can see clearly.

Sometimes we take a detour in life, either on our own or led by another, and end up with the wrong prescription. Maybe in hopes of an easier route or a quicker fix, we fail to meet with the One who knows us and loves us and is "intimately acquainted with all our ways" (Psalm 139). Even though a part of us knows we aren't seeing properly, we let ourselves think this is as good as it gets. Believing the times of clarity are behind us, we settle for dim and blurry. We squint through our days thinking this is the way it has to be.

But what if it isn't? What if our vision can be corrected? We might benefit from an appointment with our loving Savior—with extra time. He doesn't even mind if we are high-maintenance. He will be patient as we present to him all of our worries, concerns, and questions. He never grows weary of us and His understanding is unsearchable! (Isaiah 40:28-29) And after we lay everything out, we can invite his examination: "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts. See if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:24-24).

Even with the right prescription (JESUS), we can still have presbyopia...as well as loss, suffering, anxiety, and pain. Even with corrected vision and a heart obedient to God, we encounter dark periods. For those times, I love the Message version of 1 Corinthians 13:12 which speaks of eternity: "We don't yet see things clearly. We're squinting in a fog, peering through a mist. But it won't be long before the weather clears and the sun shines bright! We'll see it all then, see it all as clearly as God sees us, knowing him directly just as he knows us!"

And, we'll all be shouting, "I can see!"

*Jo is a Licensed Professional Counselor at St. Mark's. She has flexible hours in the morning and evening. You can reach her by phone (601-259-1749) or email (jhebertlpc@comcast.net).*

## VALENTINES DATE NITE

5-9pm c/c  
all kids invited!



**Kids all ages will have fun with crafts, games, dinner & a movie while parents enjoy a DATE NITE OUT February 14th 5:00-9:00pm RSVP BY FEB 11**



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

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 ORGANIZATION  
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DATED MATERIAL FEBRUARY 1 2015

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

### Saint Mark's United Methodist Church

Phone: 601-992-2131

**Church Staff:**

- Warren Coile, Senior Pastor .....x103
- Jeff Nesbit, Teaching Pastor .....x105
- Sandra Thomas, Minister of Worship & Music .....x104
- Martha Hand, Director of Nurture/Outreach .....x102
- Karie Sue McCaleb, Pastor to Children & Families .....x109
- Jeanne Chapman, Youth Director .....x113
- Jim Readell, Church Facilities Manager.....x112
- Delores Seward, Administrative Assistant .....x101
- Martha Toombs, Business Office.....x106
- Corrine Carpenter, Preschool Office .....x110
- Darlene Baker .....Music assistant/pianist
- Jason Boyd .....Music assistant/organist
- Robert Ghoston .....Custodian
- Dennis O'Neal .....Media Director
- Ed Chapman.....Media Assistant

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)



DivorceCare is a 13-week biblically-based divorce recovery group for those going through separation or divorce. And, new classes are **STARTING SOON!**

Classes will run **every Thursday from February 5<sup>th</sup> to April 23<sup>rd</sup> from 6:15-8:30**

In the Wesley Center

(Participants may join anytime during the 13 weeks.)

Fee is \$20 (partial scholarships available).  
 Childcare is provided if pre-arranged.

Register for DivorceCare through the church website or by contacting Jo Hebert at 601-259-1749 or [jhebertlpc@comcast.net](mailto:jhebertlpc@comcast.net)



# the BEACON

*Shining Christ's light into the community*



February 2015 • Number 101



*"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."*

- Philippians 1:2

As we continue to move into this new year, by God's amazing grace, I want to ask our Holy God to make five things real in our lives from the book of Philippians. *Will you join me?*

Jeff Nesbit

1. Lord, help us to partner in gospel truth together and even with other local churches: advancing it, defending it, and living worthy of it (1:5,12,16,27).

2. Father, help our pastors and teachers (for all ages) to speak the Word boldly and to preach Christ fearlessly (1:14,18,28).

3. Loving, Triune God, give Saint Mark's the mind of Christ for 2015: in your Holy Spirit, let us do nothing from selfish gain, but in humility, count each faith family member and each guest as more significant than ourselves: seeing Jesus who humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a Cross (2:1-9,20-21).

4. God, you have highly exalted your Son and given Him the Name that is above every name. See that Saint Mark's highly exalts Him with You and that at the Name of Jesus, every knee that comes through the doors, bows to Him and that every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. To Your glory, Father (2:9-11).

5. Father, help us to risk our life for Christ, count everything as a loss in order to gain Christ, to forget the days last year that we lived paying little attention to Christ, to strain forward for the prize of Christ, to rejoice in Christ, to have the peace of Christ, to think of Christ, to be content because of Christ, to do all things through the strength of Christ, and to have every need met in the glorious riches of Christ. To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen (2:30; 3:7-8,13-14; 4:4,7,8-9,11-13,19-20).

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, Saint Mark's (4:23).

## True Test



It was the final examination for an introductory English course at the local university. Like many such freshman courses, it was designed to weed out new students, with over 700 students in the class! The examination was two hours long, and exam booklets were provided. The professor was very strict and told the class that any exam that was not on his desk in exactly two hours would not be accepted and the student would fail.

Thirty minutes after the exam started, a student came rushing in and asked the professor for an exam booklet. "You're not going to have time to finish this," the professor stated sarcastically as he handed the student a booklet. "Yes, I will," replied the student. He then took a seat and began writing.

After the two hours were up, the professor called for the exams, and the students filed up and handed them in. All except the late student, who continued writing. One-half hour later, he came up to the professor who was sitting at his desk preparing for his next class. He attempted to put his exam on the stack of exam booklets already there.

"No, you don't, I'm not going to accept that. It's late."

The student looked incredulous and angry. "Do you know WHO I am?"

"No, as a matter of fact I don't," replied the professor with an air of sarcasm in his voice.

"DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?" the student asked again.

"No, and I don't care," replied the professor with an air of superiority. "Good," replied the student, who quickly lifted the stack of completed exams, stuffed his in the middle, and walked out of the room.

How often do we do something like that with our relationship to God: knowing we haven't been prompt in our response to his call, thinking we can cram all our "stuff" into the middle of the pile, thinking, quite mistakenly, that he won't remember our names? Or we think we can bury our sins in the collective stack of humanity's sin and believe that we can get away with what we know to be wrong. Or what about this – our sins, shortcomings and failures aren't so bad because someone else's are worse.

It's high time that we admit, along with the prophet Isaiah, that we are individuals of unclean lips and we come from a people of unclean lips. The ashes of Lent are a sign to remind us that, without God's grace, all we are is unclaimed dust. We can repent by acknowledging our sins and, rather than trying to hide them in the middle of the stack, we print our names in bold block letters and lay them right on top.

We need to be reminded just how far God would go to make sure we all have a chance at a passing grade. Not that God grades on a curve, or dismisses our sloth, or looks the other way as the exam that is our lives is marked with red. We are given A's because the red comes from the sacrifice of Christ for us. It is Christ's life that washes away all of the red ink. It is a gift to be accepted with the understanding that we are to live as gifted children. We grow into what we've been given: new life in Christ.

So how will we respond with our lives? What will be the offering of our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service and our witness?

Bro. Warren

## Save the Date!

ANNUAL YOUTH

GARAGE  
SALE

COMING MAY 1 & 2  
WATCH FOR MORE DETAILS!

# Children's Corner



Karie Sue McCaleb

WE NEED SUNDAY SCHOOL  
TEACHERS LIKE YOU!

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BE  
**A PART**  
OF THE AWESOME WAYS GOD

---

IS BLESSING OUR KIDS  
AT ST MARKS.

If you would like to be a teacher or a substitute for our Sunday School classes, **we need your help!** Contact [kariesue@saintmarksum.org](mailto:kariesue@saintmarksum.org) for info.



## Mark your calendars:

- March 9-13 Spring Break
- April 4th: Easter Egg Hunt
- May 6th: Last Wednesday Nite
- Summer Tuesdays back Jun. 2
- VBS June 14-18th

**Joins us Wednesdays!**  
6:00-6:50 Preschool Cherubs  
through 5th Grade  
Bible Study & Choir  
6:00-7:00 PATH 345 Sport and  
Study for 3rd-4th-5th grade in CLC

**Mark your calendars!**  
**St. Mark's VBS**  
**Holy Land Adventure Returns**  
**June 14th - 18th, 2015**

# YOUTH News

Jeanne Chapman, Director of Youth Ministries  
jeanne@saintmarksum.org



**merge**  
bringing students and god together

Dinner ~ Games ~ Devo ~ Life Groups  
SUNDAYS ~ 6:00 - 8:00 pm  
For students in grades 6 - 12

## FEBRUARY SCHEDULE:

- 1 - Super Bowl Party!
- 8 - "Insider's View: Fast Food"
- 15 - "Insider's View: Sea Stroll"
- 22 - "Insider's View: Mountain Morph"



Super Bowl Party!  
Feb. 1  
5 pm

Last names A-L bring salty  
Last names M-Z bring sweet  
Wings & Drinks provided

Free ~ Sign up is required!



**5th BLOCK**

Wednesday's 3:30-5:00 @ the Hub



the Mississippi Conference of The United Methodist Church | The POWER of We

# the GATHERING

## CHANG E

February 27 - March 1, 2015 featuring

WILL RAMBO Communicator  
AMENA BROWN Spoken Word Artist  
REMOTE KONTROL Dance Entertainers  
BISHOP SWANSON Communicator  
STEVE FEE Worship Leader

## D-NOW WEEKEND!

Feb. 27 - March 1  
Main Sessions @ Christ Church  
For all students grades 6-12

Worship ~ Small Groups ~ Friends ~ Teaching ~ Laughter ~ Fun ~ Food ~ Host Homes ~ Life Change!

Cost: \$55 (scholarships are available)  
Friends Welcome!

Deadline to register is Sun., Feb. 15th!

**NOTE: HOST HOMES NEEDED!**  
Please contact Jeanne for more information or to volunteer!

### FUEL

High octane for your soul midweek!

Wednesdays ~ 5:30 - 7:00 pm



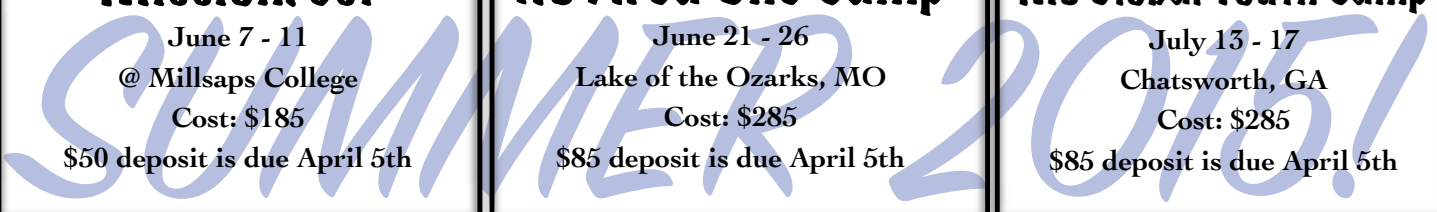
Dive into God's Word in separate Bible studies for middle school and high school students!

Note: Wed., Feb. 18th is Ash Wednesday Service

Grades 6 - 12  
**MissionFest**  
June 7 - 11  
@ Millsaps College  
Cost: \$185  
\$50 deposit is due April 5th

Grades 9 - 12  
**HS Area One Camp**  
June 21 - 26  
Lake of the Ozarks, MO  
Cost: \$285  
\$85 deposit is due April 5th

Grades 6 - 8  
**MS Global Youth Camp**  
July 13 - 17  
Chatsworth, GA  
Cost: \$285  
\$85 deposit is due April 5th





Kevin Costner Octavia Spencer

**black or white**  
There's more to family than what you see.



# Trendsetters are ready for 2015

**Tuesday, February 10, (lunch and a movie)**

**Lunch at Georgia Blue then the movie - "Black or White."**

**Leave church at 10:45 a.m.**

(Pay on your own for lunch and movie - if you can't do both, meet us for lunch or movie.)

**"Black or White"** is the story of a grandfather, (Kevin Costner), who is suddenly left to care for his beloved granddaughter. When the little girl's paternal grandmother (Octavia Spencer) seeks custody, a legal battle ensues that forces the families to confront their true feelings on race, forgiveness and understanding. Anchored by an all-star cast and based on real events, the movie is a look at two seemingly different worlds, in which nothing is as simple as black or white.

## Thursday, February 26 - 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. - "Lion King"

There is still 1 ticket for "Lion King" at the price of \$150 that includes ticket, charter bus, lunch at the Peabody.

### COMING SOON

## Tuesday, March 10 - Bowling and Burgers -

Enjoy a couple of games of bowling and have lunch at Burgers and Blues.



## Thursday, March 19 - A Day in Leland 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

**"Birthplace of Kermit the Frog Museum" "Rainbow Connection Bridge"**

**"Highway 61 Blues Museum" "James 'Son' Thomas" Grave**

**Leland Blues Murals**



**Lunch at  
Connie's  
Kitchen**



**Trendsetters Christmas trip - save the dates**  
**Monday, November 30 - Friday, December 4, 2015**  
**San Antonio and Fredericksburg, Texas**