

Get Out of the Boat

by Jeremy Campbell



"Let me get that for you." A simple statement like this seemed to serve as a mantra for me as I began to participate in a quiet ministry through St. Mark's. While I had never thought of myself as being particularly skilled to any great

degree, I felt that God could use me through small everyday acts of service. After trying my hand at a few ministries that involved either working with others or serving small groups of people, I found a place to serve one on one.

Last year, Sandra Thomas introduced me to Jill Beshell and Patty Campbell, both senior citizens and members of St. Mark's. Jill is a minister who had served St. Mark's for over 15 years before her retirement in 2003. Patty is a widow without family members living in this area. I got to know each lady and hear their unique stories, and, on each subsequent visit, I found little things that needed to be done around the home. These minor tasks included walking the dog, cleaning up scuff marks on the walls, changing out air conditioner filters, and replacing a few light bulbs here and there. In addition, Mrs. Campbell lives in a small community of senior citizens and I was introduced to and able to assist a few of the other ladies in that community also.

What might be called a senior citizens' ministry is really just helping others with their needs, whether large or small. St. Mark's has members of all ages. Many who are young and able to run a marathon or climb a ladder to change a light bulb, or drive to a movie with friends. While there are others who are older now and although they did these things in the prime of life, they are unable to do so now. If you feel led to spend time with one or more of our senior members just in conversation or lending a helping hand, please contact Sandra Thomas or myself, Jeremy Campbell. We can hook you up with some great people and you will be a blessing to each other.

True devotion, the kind that is pure and faultless before God the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their difficulties and to keep the world from contaminating us. (James 1:27)

(Jeremy is married to Christy and they have two children, Kent and Ashlyn.)



Jo Hebert

An Encouraging Word From Jo Hebert

I recently started eating sunflower seeds. I've always loved shelled ones on my salad, but after watching my softball-playing daughter acquire the habit of eating the ones in the shell, I wanted to try them. When I put the first one in my mouth, I thought, "how in the world is this done??" I asked May how she learned to put so many in her mouth at once and still distinguish shell from seed. Was this something she was taught? Had she seen a tutorial on eating sunflower seeds? What made her (and clearly millions of other people) willing to work so hard for those kernels? The fascination began (yes, I am easily amused and might have the tendency to overthink things a bit).

After five or so attempts in the last month, May tells me I am still not allowed to eat them around her until I get the spit part down, but I have improved! Most of my shells are nicely split in half, I swallow less shell parts, and spit out far less seeds. I'm actually seeing the fun of it. Who knew? (everyone.)

I never saw a tutorial. I had no similar prior experience from which to draw knowledge. Though I did ask May for instructions, they didn't help. I had to just do it and figure it out.

Over and over in our lives, we are faced with new experiences. Unlike my new venture, which I chose and has no consequence whatsoever in my life, some challenges require our full attention and have a lot hinging on our handling of them. In Joshua 3:4, Joshua's men told the Israelites, who were about to cross the Jordan, "Then you will know which way to go, since you have never been this way before." Their successful crossing required keen attention to instruction.

Our desire for instruction can lead us to read lots of books. Ask a new mom or someone facing a marital problem. We want someone to tell us what to do and when it will get better. Books aren't bad (I recommend lots of them), but there is no substitute for the presence of the Lord on a new path. When we seek Him and His truth with all of our hearts, He can teach us through our time with Him in prayer and scripture how to maneuver our way through the unknown. "He will guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought" (Isaiah 58:11).

If you are in a new spot, first be kind to yourself. You haven't been this way before. You don't have to know what to do. But, remember you have accomplished other impossible feats with the Lord's help. Draw upon His strength that is made perfect in your weakness. You will know what to do as you move forward trusting Him. You can become a studier and an expert of your own spouse, your own child, or your own challenge. And as you go, you will gain confidence—"confidence in God through Christ. Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as if it were coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God" (2 Cor. 3:5).

Anything new requires practice. We might swallow some shells while we are learning. But, keep trying and trusting, and you will find kernels of truth that satisfy more than you expected.

My office is just off the robe room in the main church building. I am available Mon and Wed mornings and some evening hours. You can reach me by phone (601-259-1749) or email (jhebertlpc@comcast.net).



Saint Mark's United Methodist Church
 400 Grant's Ferry Road
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Saint Mark's United Methodist Church

Phone: 601-992-2131

Church Staff:

- Warren Coile, Senior Pastorx103
- Jeff Nesbit, Teaching Pastorx105
- Sandra Thomas, Minister of Worship & Musicx104
- Martha Hand, Director of Nurture/Outreachx102
- Karie Sue McCaleb, Pastor to Children & Familiesx109
- Jeanne Chapman, Youth Directorx113
- Jim Readell, Church Facilities Manager.....x112
- Delores Seward, Administrative Assistantx101
- Martha Toombs, Business Office.....x106
- Corrine Carpenter, Preschool Officex110
- Darlene BakerMusic assistant/pianist
- Jason BoydMusic assistant/organist
- Robert GhostonCustodian
- Dennis O'NealMedia 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

meet. greet. eat.

Join us in welcoming to St. Mark's our new pastor, Warren Coile and his wife, Linus.

Wednesday, July 16 at 5pm

The cost to eat catfish for you is \$5 per person with a \$20 max per family

You can come meet and greet **EVEN** if you don't plan to eat.

IF YOU ARE GOING TO EAT, PLEASE RSVP TO THE CHURCH OFFICE.

601-992-2131

delores@saintmarksum.org
 St. Mark's UMC on Facebook



the BEACON

Shining Christ's light into the community



July 2014 • Number 94



Jeff Nesbit

"For freedom Christ has set us free..."

- Galatians 5:1

Nothing can stop a Christian who realizes his or her freedom in Jesus. Nothing and no one can steal your freedom (Galatians 2:4-5).

In the month of July, we celebrate our country winning her freedom. I want us to celebrate the freedom we have in Jesus even more. It's not something you will gain one day in the future. You are already free. *"For freedom Christ has set us free..."*. Notice the "past tense". You have been rescued! You're position before the Father is won. Live out practically who you are positionally! Don't cage yourself in behind guilt, sin, or the approval of others any longer. Jesus took your place in the "cage". Jump out. Live.

A pastor tells the story of vacationing in the Galapagos Islands. Google it. It's amazing. Sea lions literally lay down on the beach with you. He was in the habitat of all sorts of animals living "uncaged" before his very eyes. He was face to face with a mammoth marine iguana; he walked the beach with hundreds of barking sea lions, floated above manta rays as they swam along the ocean floor, and saw pelicans circle in the air before dive-bombing full speed into the ocean, coming up with breakfast!

He returned home with his family and they took a trip to the zoo. He noticed something. In comparison to the Galapagos Islands, the zoo was too safe. Too predictable. 400 pound gorillas were behind protective plexiglas windows and birds were locked in cages. He had this thought: *"I wonder if churches do to people what zoos do to animals."*

I wonder what protective plexiglas we might be putting ourselves behind and don't even know it? We were not saved to protect ourselves but to promote Christ (Ephesians 2:8-10). Are you trapped behind something? Maybe the cage you have been living in has become comfortable and safe. It's all you've ever known. Take a risk. Jump "out" because you are "in" Christ! You are free in Him.

I love what Billy Graham's grandson, Tullian Tchividjian, discovered about Christian liberty, by God's amazing grace, during the darkest time in his life. He said this: *"Jesus was strong for me, I was free to be weak; because Jesus won for me, I was free to lose; because Jesus was someone; I was free to be no one; because Jesus was extraordinary, I was free to be ordinary; because Jesus succeeded for me, I was free to fail."* *

You're turn: Fill in the blank today: because Jesus _____, I am free to/of _____.

"For freedom Christ has set us free...". Become who you are "in Christ". Free. There is no more cage.

* Tullian Tchividjian's book: "Jesus + Nothing = Everything", page 24

Stars of Completeness



On July 4, 1960, the 50-star flag of the United States was unfurled for the first time in Philadelphia. Hawaii had only been admitted to the Union the year before. We have now had more than fifty years of fifty stars. By the way, do you know what the old 49-star flag said to the new 50-star flag? Nothing. It just waved.

Fifty states and fifty stars – gives some folks a sense of completeness. But when the Declaration of Independence was signed 238 years ago, its words described a beginning and not an end. It was, in a sense, a declaration of *incompleteness*. Thomas Jefferson wrote, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness."

The pursuit of happiness... seems like that one is never complete.

But maybe we could work toward a little more perfection by adding some more "stars" to the Star Spangled Banner. Perhaps the first could be equality: we are *created* equal. Being created requires a divine Creator. Psalm 8 sings about us being made "a little lower than God" and "crowned with glory and honor." That is who we are according to Scripture. Because we are created in the image of God, we have the capacity to reach out in love and compassion to accept one another as the Lord has accepted us.

As we celebrate the Fourth of July, we could think of a new star of liberty and the freedom we have as Christians. The original signers of the Declaration of Independence wanted to escape the tyranny of the king of England. The tyrant we need to escape today is something else – human sinfulness. In John 8, Jesus tells us about this need for freedom when he said, "Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin." It's his declaration of our incompleteness, but there is a way to wholeness. "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples," he counsels, "and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." When we follow him, we gain a whole new way of living in completeness.

Each of us needs forgiveness. Each of us needs independence from slavery to sin. The good news is that we have true liberty when we put our trust in Christ and follow him in faith.

Adding these stars of equality and freedom is sure to make a strange looking 52-star flag. But completeness and perfection will not be captured by a flag but by a relationship with the God who created us and set us free. We will always declare our incompleteness until we are one with the One Lord. This is a union that will ultimately take place beyond the stars... and the stripes.

Warren

Children's Corner



Karie Sue McCaleb

What a fun summer our kids are having! We had an amazing VBS Wilderness Escape last month. I want to thank every volunteer, and most especially our VBS Chairs Lee Anne Robinson and Betsy Hamrick for their hard work, time, energy, and faithfulness for us to have the BEST VBS yet! Each night, 150 kids and adults

learned about all the ways God guides and provides for us, through the story of Moses and the Israelites as we wandered the wilderness together. We had a special fundraiser during our VBS week, gathering funds for Blair Batson Children's Hospital. We are excited that our children's ministry raised \$675 over the week! We are already looking forward to another awesome VBS for 2015, God is good!

Don't forget the awesome things going on Tuesday nights in July!



ST. MARK'S KIDS

summer schedule

*** JULY ***

Tue. July 1: KNO Movie Nite in CLC
Tue. July 8: Game Nite in CLC
 Tue. July 15: Skate Party @ Pearl
TUE. JULY 22: DINNER & MOVIE
*** PLANES 2 & CHICK FIL A**
Tue. July 28: Splash Nite @ CLC

Sign up NOW for Tuesday Kids Night Out!

kariesue@saintmarksum.org

WE NEED SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS LIKE YOU!

BE A PART

OF THE AWESOME WAYS GOD

IS BLESSING OUR KIDS AT ST MARKS.

YOUTH News

GAME! ON!

SUMMER 2014

Jeanne Chapman, Youth Director
jeanne@saintmarksum.org



July 11 & 12 in Louisville, MS
 Cost: \$40

We will spend Friday serving the Louisville community & helping them rebuild. We will then spend the night at Lake Tiak-O'Khata and enjoy the lake activities on Saturday. **Deadline to sign up is June 30.**



White water rafting on the Ocoee!

Labor Day Weekend
 Aug. 30 - Sept. 1
 (Sat. - Mon)
 Cost: \$115

Cost includes: 2 nights lodging, 5 meals, rafting on the Middle Ocoee, activities, & transportation. (Lodging & meals at Ocoee Retreat Center.)

\$50 deposit is due July 1!

COLLEGE STUDENTS INVITED!
 Families welcome! (Must be 12 to raft!)

High School

LIFT

ELEVATE YOUR FAITH

Midweek student-led Bible study and fellowship, rotating locations on select Thursday nights from 7 - 9 pm thru July.

- 7/10 @ the Montgomery's home
- 7/17 @ the Jones' home *
- 7/24 @ the Brackens' home *
- 7/31 @ the Stringer's home

* Bring Swim Stuff!

Middle School poolside

Midweek Scriptures & Swimming on select Wednesdays from 1 - 4 @ Millcreek Pool

July dates: 9, 16, & 30

Transportation can be provided. Contact Jeanne for more info.

Who's the best Gamer?



featuring the **GAME TRUCK!**

Friday, July 18 ~ 7 - 10 pm
@ St. Mark's ~ \$5

Video Games, Basketball, Ping Pong, Pool, Food

Sign up required by July 16.



Who: MS Girls

What: Slumber Party!

When: Fri., Aug. 1 - Aug. 2
 8 pm - 8 am

Where: the Hub

Why: to have fun, watch movies, swim, talk, make crafts, paint fingernails, eat, laugh, sleep & more!

Bring: swim stuff, sleeping bag, pillow, and a great attitude!

RSVP through July 27th

summerge

Sunday Night Youth Group
 Select Sundays thru summer
 6 pm - 8 pm

Bible study, snacks, fellowship, fun!

July 13 - "Battleship" w/ Life-Size Battleship Game!

July 20 - "Clue" w/ Live Clue Game!

July 27 - Scavenger Hunt!



One Spot Available! Contact Jeanne!

MS Student Life Camp ~ July 21-25 ~ Birmingham, AL
 For all students 6 - 8th grades
 Samford University ~ Cost: \$300

Trendsetters **Adults Over 50**



Sandra Thomas

July Trendsetter Events

It's July, and it's hot!!!! We've had rain and sun and humidity and rain and sun and humidity, etc. etc. etc. So, the Trendsetters are going to stay inside this month. BUT, that doesn't mean we aren't doing something. It just means we will be in air conditioning. And while we are inside, if you have ever thought about joining us, this is a great time to do it. Anyone, 50 and over, is welcome to our activities and we have a slew of them scheduled for the year. If you haven't stopped by the office to check out the Trendsetter book, come see what we have or call the church office and talk to me. I'll be glad to talk to you about our activities.

July 9 – LUNCH and MUSIC WITH OUR PASTOR, Rev. Warren Coile

Now, this is more than just your everyday covered dish lunch, not only will you get to eat and talk with our pastor, you will also be blessed by his singing. Yes, Warren will sing some songs, tell some stories and let you get to know him in a smaller setting. Rev. Coile's wife, Linus, will also join us for lunch. So bring a friend and a covered dish to share with the group. The church will provide tea and coffee.



July 29 – Lunch and a Movie



This is always a fun outing. Join us for lunch at Jo's Diner in the Dogwood Mall area and then we will go up the road to see a movie. The bus will leave the church at 11am and we will return after the show. We will pick the show as we find out what is playing at that time. Whatever it is, we will have a good time. If you

work, and can only join us for lunch, meet us at Jo's Diner. The more the merrier!

THERE IS STILL ROOM.... SHOPPING, THE MOSCOW BALLET COMPANY and HOLY LAND EXPERIENCE – November 20-21

Our overnight Christmas trip to Birmingham and LaGrange is going to be great. You can SHOP SHOP SHOP till you DROP DROP DROP at "The Summit" Mall in Birmingham. Afterwards you will have the opportunity to get a bit of culture as we enjoy the Moscow Ballet's internationally renowned performance of "The Nutcracker." And if that is not enough, we will go to Explorations in Antiquity. Now, you might say, what is that? Well, you will be awed by experiencing the Holy Land in the United States. We will walk and eat in surroundings as it would have been in Jesus' day. We will take a charter bus. The cost is \$250 and pays for transportation, lodging and breakfast, Ballet tickets, Holy Land ticket and lunch. Sign up now, since we are taking the big bus, we now have room for 20 more people.



Martha Hand

From the Director of Nurture and Outreach

New Class is Thriving!

It's official the name of our new young adult class is **Faithbook**. This is a great group of vibrant, eager young adults who are getting to know one another, forming strong relationships, and really bonding as a class. This effort has been blessed from the beginning. The Encouragers' class agreed to share their room so a wall could be built to create a new classroom, the first meeting on Easter Sunday was almost full, willing class members have stepped up to assume leadership duties, and a willing and excited teaching team has agreed to rotate the teaching duties for this class for one year. Wow! The Holy Spirit has been present throughout the process! The team has decided to begin teaching from the book *Making Sense of the Bible*, by Adam Hamilton. This is a very thought provoking study which will provide many opportunities for meaningful discussion. We have a few empty chairs, so if you are a young adult (single, married, or in a relationship) and are looking for a small group, come and join us!



The Faithbook Class: Seated from left to right –Pam Everitt, Lauren Crenshaw, Beth Martin, Erin Thompson, Elizabeth Lockett; Standing left to right – Cari Clarkson, Chuck Crenshaw, Clark Hollingsworth, Josh Martin, Zack Lockett, Chris Barrett, Katie Williams; Not pictured –Ben/Heather Bryan, Bob Beam, Will Everitt, Michael/Amber French, Sam Gural, Jay/Hannah Hogg, Megan Kendrick, Carter Thompson.