



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

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID PERMIT 27

DATED MATERIAL NOVEMBER 1, 2015

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



November 2015 • Number 110

Looking for an Opportunity to Serve...?

St. Mark's missions have been on the move in 2015. Our congregation has packaged over 20,000 meals for Stop Hunger Now! with 200 volunteers participating. We had over 75 units of blood donated so our members are covered by Mississippi Blood Services until March 2016. Volunteers have served for six weeks this year at the Stewpot Food Pantry. A new mission collaboration with Stewpot is the Lunch Line, where both our adult members and our youth have served.

Grace Place has regular St. Mark's volunteers and the congregation as a whole donated 177 pairs of socks in "Sock It to Grace Place February."

Our folks participated in two Habitat builds, one in Rankin County and the Methodist build with fellow Methodist churches. We sent members to Honduras with the Salt & Light ministry. In February, we participated in the College of Prayer. We have an active Kairos prison ministry. And all of this does not even include the projects our Sunday School classes and Youth groups do.

Now it is coming to the Advent Season and we have the opportunity to do even more!

Coats are being collected for our needy Rankin County residents. They can be dropped off at the church office or at the Women with Faith Sunday School classroom in the Wesley building.

We will have **Angel Trees** for 75 Rankin County children. Each child will receive a toy and an article of clothing. Their tree will go up November 15 and gifts will need to be brought to the church by December 6. In addition, we will have a **Stockings for Seniors** beginning November 1 and finishing up November 22. Each stocking will be filled with small items to make their lives a little easier.

Please donate to these wonderful mission projects as part of your Advent celebration.

"He who closes his ear to the cry of the poor will himself cry out and not be heard." PROVERBS 21:3



Jo Hebert

An Encouraging Word From Jo Hebert

My ninth-grade daughter just went through a hitting slump during her softball season. This one was short, but it was frustrating to her; and it revived that little voice in her head that says things like, "you don't know what you're doing" and "you'll never be as good as you want to be." And even, maybe deep in there somewhere: "You should just quit." Never mind the accomplishments she has made, the fun she is having, and the potential in front of her. In moments of defeat, it's hard to see the good stuff.

It was a short slump because, after she scowled a little while, she got back up. And when she got back up, my husband took her to the batting cage to help her tweak her swing. She reminded herself that she is a fast learner and knows how to play softball. At her dad's suggestion, she practiced adding a step to her slow-pitch swing to give her more power. Two days later, she went 5 for 8 in play-off games, and the coach said, "May's back!"

That won't be her last slump. She might even have another one before this article is printed. As long as she keeps playing softball, she will have to learn to deal with defeat and the tendency to criticize and doubt herself. But, if she keeps getting back up, she will learn lessons that will serve her well in every area of her whole life.

I have an amazing job. I get to accompany people through some serious slumps...courageous people who keep retooling and putting one foot in front of the other. Some learn quickly, grow deeply, and experience insight and change at a rapid rate. Others have steeper hills to climb, more obstacles to negotiate; and the slumps are longer. Sometimes, we have to peer very closely and purposefully to find good in their circumstances. We watch earnestly for buds of joy to water together. And, we celebrate any appearance of hope while we wait.

But, sometimes the waiting is long. The husband doesn't change. The mother doesn't understand. The job doesn't come. The grieving still aches. What then?

I have great admiration for people who just keep getting up, re-tooling, and looking for the next step. There's a difference between just settling on a joyless life (which seems a lot like quitting to me), and continuing to yearn and search for hope, even when you see none (which sounds like faith to me). The Bible tells us "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). The Message version says it this way (read it twice; it's great): "The fundamental fact of existence is that this trust in God, this faith, is the firm foundation under everything that makes life worth living. It's our handle on what we can't see."

Even with faith, we don't have assurance that our circumstances will work out like we desire. We do not stand on the solid rock of smooth circumstances, but on the solid rock of Christ... who truly loves us, and whose ways are higher than ours. He will be faithful to draw near to us when we draw near to Him, though sometimes His touch is not immediately felt. He delights in our every attempt, even feeble ones, to seek Him in the darkness.

When we are clouded by defeat and can't see the good stuff, He is our Father who helps us get back up and then lovingly accompanies us to "tweak our swing." His Word will help remind us of the truth so that we can get back in the batter's box with more power...His power.

Jo is a Licensed Professional Counselor at St. Mark's. You can reach her by phone (601-259-1749) or email (jhebertlpc@comcast.net).

Grief Workshop—Journey to Healing

Are you grieving the death of a family member or friend? Join us for GriefShare: Surviving the Holidays on **Thursday October 29th from 10:00 am-noon**

OR

Thursday October 29th from 6:30 – 8:30 pm
And a 13-week Journey to Healing from Nov. 5th- Feb 18th Thursdays 10 am-noon

All sessions will meet in the WWF SS Room
\$5 for Surviving the Holidays, \$20 for all of the sessions

For more information, or to register, contact Merriam Smiley 601-452-0861
or merriamsmiley2201@comcast.net

You can also register online at saintmarksum.org

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 Readel, 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



ATTENTION! College Students (Parents of College Students) & HS Seniors!

PASSION 2016 – January 2-4, 2016 – Phillips Arena ~ Atlanta, GA Cost: \$150 + food
Cost includes: conference, 2 nights hotel lodging, transportation and lunch Sunday

Worship leaders: Chris Tomlin, Crowder, Matt Redman, Christy Nockles, Kristian Stanfill, Brett Youker
Speakers: Louie Giglio, John Piper, Christine Caine, and Ravi Zacharias
Lodging: Omni Hotel (ATL) **Transportation:** rental van

A \$50 non-refundable deposit is due by Dec. 1 to reserve your spot! We will be having a fundraiser to offset the costs! Partial scholarships are available.

Space is limited! Don't delay! YOU DO NOT want to miss this life-changing experience!

For more info or to register, please contact Jeanne!



Jeff Nesbit

"...and you will be hated by all for My names sake." - Matthew 10:22

A man named "Raji" was a member of an extremist Hindu group that targeted Christians. He despised a young Christian preacher named "Suta". Suta would visit Raji's village continually to share the gospel of Jesus. One day, Raji told Suta, "We don't want to hear about your Jesus," and then he and others beat Suta and left him

for dead in a deep pit. Later, Raji could not shake what he had done. He was moved to go and rescue Suta from the pit. In this true story, the Holy Spirit used Suta's devotion to eventually lead Raji, a persecutor of Christians, to embrace Christ.*

I want to call us to embrace our persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ during the month of November. During Sundays in November, churches are praying for the persecuted on what is known as "International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church."

Suta says, "I am a simple man and without prayer, I am nothing." I can not help but think that our God used prayers to save Suta and Raji. How do you pray for the persecuted? Open your bible to a passage in Psalms or Colossians or Hebrews or any book of the bible, and pray those verses for them. If Psalm 23, pray each verse in Psalm 23 for our persecuted faith family. Google "International Day of Prayer for the persecuted church" and you will find people that you can pray for and many other ways to be involved.

I really want to urge us to do this. Why? Not only for them, but for you and for me. You will need prayers for being persecuted soon if you are living each day to magnify the worth of Jesus. I will too. We'll need each other's prayers. "Indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted (2 Timothy 3:12)."

None of us seek persecution. We seek Jesus. That means we will be hated on account of Christ. However, we must remember this: we are loved by the Father of Christ. We are empowered by His Holy Spirit. That will keep us faithful and with that, our love for Jesus will bring all kinds of evil against us as a church. When it does, let's thank people for blessing us: "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on My account (Matthew 5:11)."

Let's thank God the Father for men and woman, boys and girls all around the world, even in our own nation, and in our own local church at Saint Mark's, who love Jesus so much that they consider it a "blessing" to be hated for His Name sake. Perhaps the Holy Spirit of God will use moments of our persecution to bring a persecutor, like Raji, to embrace Christ...

*Find out more about Suta and Raji at: <http://www.persecution.com/idop>

Break Out into Laughter



Warren Coile

When the apostle Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 9:7 that "God loves a cheerful giver," the word he uses in the original Greek is that God loves a giver who is *hilaros*. We get our word "hilarious" from *hilaros*. So he is saying that what God loves is someone who gives with spontaneous joy and hilarity. Laughter.

When was the last time you laughed when you dropped some cash into the Salvation Army kettle around Christmas time? Or filled out your pledge card to the church? If not, maybe you need to look for the level of giving that will tip you over into hilarity. A good start would be to focus on the joy God feels, or the joy of one sinner who repents, as a result of our generosity.

Some of you may have heard about Patrick Johnson of BancorpSouth Investment Services. He discovered that his greatest joy did not come from managing portfolios. One time he wrote a check for an air conditioning unit for a local homeless shelter. He started praying and thinking about the immense joy that God was feeling about that A/C unit. He thought about the joy of the homeless men as they took shelter from the Mississippi heat and humidity. Then he started thinking about the joy those men would feel as they gave their lives to Jesus, maybe for the first time. And as he was praying he began to laugh. He was actually so overwhelmed with joy that he began to laugh. Because of one gift that would bring joy to God, the men he would never know, and himself.

Hilarious stewardship – Count It All JOY! As we commit ourselves to extravagant generosity, we discover that God really is able to provide us with "every blessing in abundance." As we share our time, our talent, and our treasure, we discover that we are "enriched in every way" when "we share abundantly in every good work." When we give we are filled with "the surpassing grace of God." As we make sacrifices for the sake of Christ, his church, and others, we see that it is not the money making us happy, but the generosity.

Who knows? We might just break out into laughter.

Warren



Karie Sue McCaleb

Children's Corner



JOIN US FOR OUR WEEKLY MINISTRIES!
SUNDAY WORSHIP 8:20,
10:45, AND 11TH HOUR
CHILDREN'S CHURCH,
SUNDAY SCHOOL AND
WEDNESDAY NIGHTS!

St. Mark's is taking Operation Christmas Child donations now!

The 3rd Annual Packing Party will be Saturday, November 14th

9am in the CLC.

Things to donate: Standard shoe boxes! New small toys, clothes, school supplies, hard candies, & toiletries. Please deliver items to Asbury Hall before November 14th.

THANK YOU

To all our volunteers, donations and youth helpers who made our Fall Fest 2015 the best one yet:

THANK YOU!

This ministry to our community was a success because of you!

Join us for **St. Mark's Annual CHILDREN'S SABBATH**
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH * 10:45 SERVICE

Snacks with Santa
Family Christmas Program
December 6th
CLC 5-7pm

DC4K
DivorceCare for Kids

Surviving the Holidays 4 Kids
To provide a safe place for the children of separation and divorce, ages 5-12, to understand that their holidays may be different now, but it's okay.

Tuesday, November 17 from 6:30-8:30
In the Asbury Building of St. Mark's UMC

- \$5 registration fee
- Registration deadline is November 10
- Call or email Karie Sue McCaleb for more info:
kariesue@saintmarksum.org or 601-992-2131, ext 109

Driven
ST. MARK'S YOUTH MINISTRY

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

merge
bringing students and god together

Dinner, Games & Life Groups
SUNDAYS ~ 5:00 - 7:30 pm (free dinner @ 5:30)
For students in grades 6 - 12

Once Upon a Murder

Thank you to everyone who made this such a fantastic evening! We are so blessed!



Saturday, Nov. 14 8 pm
The Filling Station

Seeking the face of Jesus
Intimate ~ Intentional ~ Intense

DRIVEN FUEL
FILLING STATION

High octane for your soul midweek!
Wednesdays ~ 5:30 - 7:00 pm

A midweek worship experience for students!
Note: No FUEL Wed., Nov. 25

PARENT PITCREW

Sun., Nov. 15 ~ 5:30-7:30
Eating ~ Encouraging ~ Equipping
Please RSVP thru 11/11

2016 SUMMER CAMPS!
The "Do NOT MISS" events of summer 2016!
\$50 non-refundable deposit secures your spot!

| Middle School | High School |
|---|---|
| Global Youth Camps | Big Stuff |
| Shocco Springs Talladega, AL June 20-24 \$285 | Boardwalk Beach Resort Panama City Beach, FL July 11-15 \$385 |

Trendsetters Adults Over 50



Rev. Sandra Thomas

Trendsetters

November 18
Noon
Covered Dish Lunch

Join in some dancing fun as Betty Mabry and Jim Frechette pull out their dancing shoes and demonstrate some ballroom dancing techniques. Be ready to take part in some of it as well

--
you never know when a dance lesson will come in handy.
More on that in 2016.

Bring a dish to share and \$2. The church will provide drinks!!!

Thanksgiving Senior Meal Box Mission

As the holiday season approaches, we begin to consider the joys of love for our family, friends, church family and the community. For several years, St. Mark's has extended our love to low income senior citizens by providing a box of food for Thanksgiving. In 2014, we provided 75 seniors a Thanksgiving box filled with an assortment of canned vegetables, grits, rice, a small turkey breast, rolls, rice, etc. This is enough to feed 1-2 people and requires minimal preparation.

There is a special joy that comes from sharing the Lord's love by providing to people in need. The seniors, most of whom have medical issues and are struggling on a daily basis, are thankful for the love and thoughtfulness each year. For these recipients, this Thanksgiving meal is their only Thanksgiving dinner.

The Women With Faith Sunday School class has coordinated and sponsored this mission for the past few years with your help through donations and volunteers. We plan to provide 75 boxes again this year. Donations can be made through your Sunday School class or with your check made payable to St. Mark's with "Thanksgiving Senior Meal Mission" on the memo line. Also, the November Communion Rail Offering will be used to support this mission. Please join us in sharing the blessings of our Lord.



Martha Hand

From the Director of Nurture and Outreach

Memorials to St. Mark's

During our 42 year history, St. Mark's has received many monetary donations in memory of loved ones who have gone on to their heavenly home. These donations have been used to further the ministries of our church, and what a blessing that has been!

To assure the names of all those who have been memorialized will continue to be known to all, from now on the names of the loved one will be engraved on a memorial plaque which will be placed in a prominent place in the church. We want to discontinue putting names on other objects, such as pieces of furniture, individual plaques, etc. These objects get moved or lost over time during renovations or building programs, but the official memorial plaque will remain permanent at St. Mark's. In the future, memorial donations may be earmarked for certain ministries, but only the name of the loved one will be engraved on the plaque.

In our memorial records, we have gone back as far as 2012 to gather the names for the new plaque. Each year on All Saints' Day, we will present the names that have been engraved during the past year. We hope this new memorial policy will avoid loved ones' names getting lost, and will be a permanent blessing to their family.