

Winter 2015  
Volume 3, Issue 2

# Saints & Sinners

A newsletter for the family and friends of St. Mark's Lutheran Church

## Pastor's Message

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.*

*He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."*

*Luke 4: 18-19*



St. Mark's Lutheran  
Church's Pastor:

Rev. Steve Hoffard, MDiv

Cell: 519-276-8393

**Church contact:**

Phone:  
613-542-7134

Church e-mail:

[stmarkslutherankingstonon@gmail.com](mailto:stmarkslutherankingstonon@gmail.com)



[www.facebook.com/StMarksLutheranChurchKingstonON](http://www.facebook.com/StMarksLutheranChurchKingstonON)

On the web at:

[stmarkslutherankingston.org](http://stmarkslutherankingston.org)

**Advent** is known as the church season of **hopeful waiting**. As I sat down to write this advent devotional I did so with news of the Islamic Centre in Kingston having been vandalized the night before their Annual International Bazaar.

It is a wonderful joy filled event in which members of the Centre open their doors, inviting all Kingstonians to join them. I was sickened that ignorant fear based hate attempted to snuff out that joy.

Just a week prior, I had been at the Islamic Centre and joined our Muslim brothers and sisters, for their Friday prayer service. We prayed together. Then we gathered as part of the Interfaith Group, "One Earth Many Faiths" to look at climate change and care of creation from a Muslim perspective. The ability to find ways to pray and work together had filled me with hope,

the same hope I carry each advent as we prepare to welcome Christ in to our midst.

With news of the vandalism my initial thought was, "how can we possibly welcome the Christ child into such a broken and hate filled world." Then various faith groups started to contact the Islamic centre, with visits, phone calls and emails offering assistance, prayers, and public witness of solidarity. The Islamic Society expressed appreciation for our support, and then immediately started talking about Poverty, and in particular child poverty and how this might be an issue that we could come together as faith communities in Kingston to work on together.

Indeed a light is coming into the world, and darkness shall not overcome it.

*Pastor Steve*

## Book Club Reading Adventures for the following months:

### January - Tattoos on the Heart by Gregory Boyle

Tattoos of the Heart is a series of parables about kinship and redemption from pastor, activist, and renowned speaker, Father Gregory Boyle.

For twenty years, Father Gregory Boyle has run Homeboy Industries, a gang-intervention program located in the Boyle Heights neighborhood of Los Angeles—also known as the gang capital of the world. In Tattoos on the Heart, he has distilled his experience working in the ghetto into a breathtaking series of parables inspired by faith.

### February - Gone Girl by Gillian Flynn

On a warm summer morning in North Carthage, Missouri, it is Nick and Amy Dunne's fifth wedding anniversary. Presents are being wrapped and reservations are being made when Nick's clever and beautiful wife disappears from their rented McMansion on the Mississippi River. Husband-of-the-Year Nick isn't doing himself any favors with cringe-worthy daydreams about the slope and . . .

Here's a poem that reminds me of our mission as Christians

I am a weed, I come to heal  
The poor scarred earth, each wound  
and weal.  
So silently I spread my root  
Full well before I start to shoot.

I rise up from a muddy trench  
Despite the rubbish, filth and stench  
And then defend the woodland glades  
With leaves as sharp as razor blades.

I raise my hordes of airborne seeds  
And train them up for daring deeds  
To implement the plot I've planned  
To bind down every grain of sand,

To capture from the sun and rain  
The power to fill the world again.  
We are the weeds: we really mean  
To wrap the whole wide world in green.

By : Martin Paul  
Submitted by Ana Hageman

As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:  
"A voice of one calling in the wilderness,  
'Prepare the way for the Lord,  
make straight paths for him.

Luke 3:4

Ever feel Jesus has been kidnapped  
by the Christian Right?

# Saving Jesus

a 12 session small group dvd-based exploration  
of Jesus Christ for the third millennium  
Featuring leading religious voices of our day

- John Bell
- Marcus Borg
- Rita Nakashima Brock
- Walter Brueggemann
- John Cobb
- John Dominic Crossan
- James Forbes
- Matthew Fox
- Lloyd Geering
- Hans Küng
- Amy-Jill Levine
- Bill Nelson
- Rebecca Ann Parker
- Stephen Patterson
- Helen Prejean
- Tex Sample
- Bernard Brandon Scott
- Luther Smith
- John Shelby Spong
- Jim & Jean Strathdee
- Emilie Townes

sessions begin soon  
Jan 14th, 2015

where: ST. MARK'S  
when: WEDNESDAYS 10:30 AM  
contact: stax.hoffard@gmail.com

www.livingthequestions.com

**Music Lovers' House Tour  
Luncheon Hosted by St.  
Marks ?**

**!! We need you !!**

We need to know we will once again hosting the lunch for the House Tour next May. We received a lot of good feedback on our lunch and we can once again host a successful lunch again if we take it on. We require volunteers to help make this event a success. Please contact Elaine as soon as possible if you are able to help her with activity.

Thank you and  
Blessed Christmas,  
Elaine Agarand

---

Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Luke 2 : 10 - 14



ADVENT

It's here again, the advent of glitz and glitter. Stacks and stacks of toys, rows and rows of decorations – and that's just the hardware store. In the middle of November I stood at a counter in the township office next to a fully decorated Christmas tree. What, I wondered, were we celebrating?

Light in the darkness, parties and concerts, gifts and parades, families and friends: a festive end to the calendar year. Nothing wrong with that. Would we do it if we didn't enjoy it, if it didn't mean something to us? There just aren't enough days to squeeze it all in.

Then there's that OTHER Christmas, the one that starts about the time the one I've just described is winding down. This one features a homeless couple and their tiny child, a family who will soon become refugees fleeing a political tyrant. The birth of the child is what we are celebrating. A long-foretold arrival, someone many people were waiting for: the Messiah, the anointed one, who would bring peace and freedom to the poor and oppressed.

Even in the Bible, maybe especially in the Bible, things don't always turn out the way people think they should. The child did not grow up to be a conquering hero who could overthrow the occupying troops. Far from it. Yet here we are, two thousand years later, still celebrating his birth.

The coming of Jesus of Nazareth did not bring an end to poverty and persecution, but it renewed peoples' hope and created community. Did the kingdom of God arrive overnight? Not exactly.

Then what is it each year that brings us back to the baby in the manger?

Could it be our own hopes for peace and goodwill, our need for sharing and community?

What are we looking forward to in the weeks before Christmas?

Where do we hope to be led in the year to come?

During Advent, may we take time to reflect on questions like these. May we find here and there a few moments of peace and quiet. May we not be too distracted by the shiny stuff.

A Happy Christmas season to everyone, Jane

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. Luke 2:6,7

## Narrative Lectionary - Season of Advent and Epiphany

December 7	<b>Esther</b> Second Sunday of Advent	<b>Esther 4:1-17</b> For such a time as this, Esther was made queen. <i>(Matt 5:13-16)</i>
December 14	<b>Light to the Nations</b> Third Sunday of Advent	<b>Isaiah 42:1-9</b> Through the Spirit, God's servant will be a light to the nations, bringing justice and release to prisoners. <i>(Matt 12:15-2)</i>
December 21	<b>Jesus as Immanuel</b> Fourth Sunday of Advent	<b>Matthew 1:18-25</b> Announcement of Jesus' birth to Joseph; Jesus will be Immanuel <i>(Psalm 23:1-4, or 23:4)</i>
December 24	<b>Birth of Jesus</b> Christmas Eve	<b>Luke 2:1-14, [15-20]</b> Birth of Jesus <i>(Psalm 96:10-13)</i>
December 25	<b>Shepherds Visit</b> Christmas Day	<b>Luke 2:8-20</b> Shepherds visit the infant Jesus. <i>(Psalm 95:6-7)</i>
December 28	<b>Magi Visit</b> First Sunday of Christmas	<b>Matthew 2:1-12</b> The Magi visit the infant Jesus <i>(Psalm 96:10-13)</i>
January 4	<b>Flight to Egypt</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Christmas	<b>Matthew 2:13-23</b> Flight into Egypt, massacre of the innocents, the return to Nazareth <i>(Psalm 11:1-3)</i>
January 11	<b>Jesus' Baptism: Matthew</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday after Epiphany	<b>Matthew 3:1-17</b> John the Baptist, Jesus is baptized to fulfill all righteousness <i>(Psalm 2:7-8)</i>
January 18	<b>Tempted in the Wilderness</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany	<b>Matthew 4:1-17</b> Jesus tempted in the wilderness <i>(Psalm 91:9-12)</i>
January 25	<b>Beatitudes</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany	<b>Matthew 5:1-20</b> Beatitudes, salt of the earth, let your light shine <i>(Psalm 1:1-3)</i>
February 1	<b>Treasure in Heaven</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany	<b>Matthew 6:7-21</b> Lord's prayer, treasure in heaven <i>and/or Matt 6:25-34, Lilies of the field (Psalm 20:7)</i>
February 8	<b>Feeding 5,000</b> 5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany	<b>Matthew 14:13-33</b> Feeding the 5,000, walking on the sea <i>(Psalm 95:1-5)</i>
February 15	<b>Bearing the Cross</b> Transfiguration	<b>Matthew 16:24--17:8</b> Passion prediction, bearing the cross, Transfiguration <i>(Psalm 41:7-10)</i>

Deadline for next newsletter is January 26, 2015. Send materials pgkuhlmann@yahoo.ca.

### St Mark's Lutheran Church

1263 Victoria St.  
Kingston, ON  
K7L 3Y9



### Your Name Here

Please let us know if you would like to receive a newsletter. Print or Email copies available.

Just let us know!