

The Spirit of St. Mark's

From the Rector's Desk

'Come to me, all you who are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest...' (Mt 11.28).

Whether we are in paid employment or not, it seems that many of us feel as though we are constantly on the run. The demands seem constant, no matter how hard we are working. How life-giving the words of our Lord become, that in coming to him, we receive rest – God's rest. God invites us midst all the comings and goings of our frenetic existence to receive and to seek our rest in God. God really does have it all in hand anyway! All well and good, I can hear some of you saying, only how I am meant to do this? Is 'resting in God' simply another task I add to the 'to-do' list which is already stretching into 2020?

Well, I hope not! Resting in God is a grace that God longs to give us before it is a task we have to accomplish ourselves. Sure, God's grace invites some response on our part. I wonder if one of the ways in which the Holy Spirit helps us to lean more into God's rest in Christ is by receiving too the gift of Jesus' compassion for us. Jesus' compassion for us in turn helps us to be more compassionate with ourselves. Perhaps one of the reasons we feel under so much pressure is that we can find it all but impossible to live up to the expectations we place on ourselves. Often no one criticizes us as harshly as we ourselves do.

For that reason, I invite you to consider this Fall simply asking Jesus for the grace of his compassion towards you, yourself. Perhaps we

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Special points of interest

- Missional Coaching Project - a pilot programme at St. Mark's
- PWRDF is making a difference in our world.
- Words of thanks
- Multiple programmes and groups are ready to begin this Fall.



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can call it the grace of self-compassion. I wonder what would happen in our lives, if along with our other intentions, we prayed both for ourselves and for one another in these or similar words:

Loving God, Jesus or Spirit (you choose), please help us all to feel safe; please help us all to be peaceful; please help us all to be kind to ourselves; please help us all to accept ourselves as we are and our lives as they are. Amen.

Why not give it a go? Watch for the changes and I'd love to hear how you get on.

A blessed Fall to you all.

Jim+

Put yourself at the top of your to-do list every single day and the rest will fall into place.

Raise Your Voice

All of our choirs will begin rehearsals in September. The Worship Choir begins on September 6th at 7:00 p.m., the Chime Choir on September 20th at 6:30 p.m. and the Children's Choir on September 27th from 4:30 to 5:15 p.m. in the choir room. We are saving a seat for you!

All musicians are welcome; talk to Alison or email her at alison@stmarks.on.ca

Greetings from the Wardens

What a beautiful summer we've had and hopefully everyone has experienced some well deserved rest and family time. Before we know it, school will be back in session and we will be preparing for the Fall season. Time really does fly.

The Wardens are pleased to report to the parishioners that finances were pretty consistent throughout the summer months and we survived these months, paid our bills and the Diocesan apportionment. We have amazing staff that continue to make St. Mark's the flourishing community that it is and we thank them for their dedication and hard work every day! We are truly blessed by the work of Father Tim, John, Christine, Pat, Jody, Lloyd, Debbie, Alison and Rebekah and the countless volunteers who put hours of time into the good work of St. Mark's community.

We also need to take this opportunity to thank Dan and Anne Walker and Elaine and Duane Bower for their work in constructing our new Family Accessible Washroom. Thank you also to those who volunteered time and gave generously to this project. What a gift to be able to provide these facilities to our com-

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munity.

There are so many programmes ready to begin at St. Mark's in the Fall and we hope you will be able to join in. Check out the Alpha programme starting on September 19th, Messy Church, mid-week services, fund-raising activities... Become an active member at St. Mark's, bring your friends and family and see what our community building will do for your journey with Christ. Investing in yourself is time well spent.

Faithfully,

Christine, Vicki, Steve & Neil

Primate's World Relief and Development Fund

As an instrument of faith, PWRDF works in partnership with organizations in Canada and throughout the world to support people-centred development that improves the quality of daily life for vulnerable populations, promotes self-reliance, responds to emergencies and addresses root causes of poverty and injustice. PWRDF's guiding principle is to listen and learn from partners in its development work.

This relief fund has been going on for many years. Canon Munro, a previous Rector at St. Mark's, was a member of the first task force and felt this was such an important organization that he had it included on our weekly offering envelopes. Poverty can affect everyone anywhere and he felt that we could make a difference.

There are many stories about how the PWRDF makes a difference in the world. Talking about the changes that are made in the lives of everyone involved in their work creates an excitement and we pray that you will feel it as well.

Watch for more information about PWRDF in our weekly bulletins, pray for our future and always remember that we do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.

Jim and Betty Kelso

Alpha Series

We are really looking forward to hosting Alpha beginning Wednesday, September 19th at 6.30 p.m. and ending November 28th. It is a marvellous opportunity to reconnect with the St. Mark's community and to ask the bigger questions about life and God that most of us have. We share a meal together, watch a video presentation and chat over coffee and dessert... and we'll have you out of here by 8.30 p.m. Sessions are available at no cost to adults and youth. To register for Alpha for Adults and Alpha for Youth, visit the St. Mark's website. Space is limited.

Grateful for You

We are blessed with an extraordinary ministry team and a bench of wardens here at St. Mark's. I am so grateful for their dedication and commitment to our life. Please take the time to let them know how much you value what they offer and please continue to uphold each of them in prayer.

Jim

Refugee Sponsorship Programme

Last Fall, St. Mark's agreed to be the sponsoring parish for a second refugee family being sponsored by the Diocese of Huron with the understanding that the monthly living expenses would be covered by a group of Iraqi friends. The members of this family (husband, wife, daughter – age 6, and grandmother) are from Iraq. They sought refuge in Jordan after witnessing and being threatened with violence. They have passed all the screening and security protocols and are waiting for exit visas and travel documents. We anticipate that this might happen in the next few months.

Thanks to the generosity of Cindy Kennedy, the household items (that had not yet been donated or promised) were donated from her father's estate. Thanks also go to Susan and Sheri McIntyre who are storing all these items. Any last minute items needed will be requested through announcements when we know the family's arrival date.

A sincere thank you to the parishioners of St. Mark's for your enthusiastic response and offers of help.

Mieke Schroeder

Missional Coaching Project

St. Mark's has been chosen to participate in a pilot programme called *The Missional Coaching Project*. Small teams will be working with other parishes at a workshop on September 22nd to explore how we can organise our life, and communicate and engage our neighbourhood in ways which connect better with where people are at. It is a huge gift to us and will help us enormously in allowing God to shape our ministry and mission at St. Mark's. Please pray for our teams and their leaders: Sharon Bliss, Christine Fournier and Dan Walker.

Accessible and Family Washroom

We now have a fully accessible washroom. My heartfelt thanks to all those who have been involved in overseeing the project, particularly Duane and Elaine Bower and Dan and Anne Walker, and to an anonymous donor who has generously supported the work. It will be a wonderful (and necessary) upgrade to our superb facilities.

Jim

Health Council

The Health Council is organizing three health related presentations for this year.

Aging Gracefully - mid October

Join us for a discussion about the geriatric services in our region and some tips on how to navigate this growing and complex system. Consumers and caregivers welcome! We are looking forward to sharing stories and learning from each other. Erin Stirling, Specialized Geriatric Services Clinician from Community Addiction and Mental Health Services of Haldimand Norfolk (CAMHS), will be presenting. More details will be provided.

The other two topics that are being planned include, scams and how to protect yourself, and everybody forgets things - how do you know when to be concerned.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

The prayer shawl group has a new meeting date, the second Thursday of each month at 1:00 p.m. They are always looking for new members to join the group, especially those who would like to learn how to knit or crochet. This is a very important ministry; those who receive a prayer shawl treasure their gift from St. Mark's.

Parish Visitors

The Parish Visitors meet regularly once a month to identify those who may need a friendly visit or phone call and those who require a pastoral visit. Please do not hesitate to let Christine, Tim, John or Debbie know if you would like a visit.

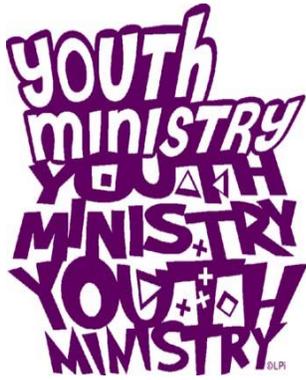
On a personal note, on behalf of Fred and I, thank you for your condolences in the passing of Fred's mom Valeria. Even though she was a member of St. Joseph's, she attended all of our children's milestones at St. Mark's and viewed it as her 'other' church.

I will be retiring from my full time position at Hamilton Health Sciences at the end of September. I am excited to be able to spend more time at St. Mark's in my role as Parish Nurse.

Debbie Belowitz

**WHO CARES IF WE'RE
GETTING OLDER?**





Rock Solid Youth

Starting on Friday, September 14th at 7:00 p.m. following Messy Church, our first Rock Solid youth meeting will take place for anyone in grade 7 and up. We will meet every 2nd Friday of the month following Messy Church from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. and on Sundays from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

We will be hosting a Youth Alpha Series beginning on Wednesday, September 19th at 6:30 p.m. and it will run until the end of November. Please check out St. Mark's website for more details on these events and to register for Alpha Youth.

Be yourself, accept yourself, value yourself, forgive yourself, bless yourself, express yourself, trust yourself, love yourself.

Ministry Faire

Our annual Ministry Faire takes place after the 9 and 10:30 services on Sunday, September 16th. It is a marvelous opportunity to see firsthand just how much God is accomplishing through us at St. Mark's and of course to sign up for any ministry you have a particular interest in. Our thanks to the Christian Generosity Team for their initiative.

Many Thanks

Where to begin? I am always completely overwhelmed by the generosity of our parish family when they are asked to contribute funds, soft supplies and volunteer assistance.

Thank you to all who helped fund our Northland Gardens *Good Neighbour Appeal* for energy snacks, sunscreen and backpacks throughout July and August. Many thanks to those who contributed supplies and monetary donations toward our V.B.S. Wish List. Thank you, also, to the Summer Sunday School volunteers for your amazing efforts with our children and to the many volunteers who gave their time and energy to support our V.B.S. *Shipwrecked* programme. Thanks also to parishioners from the 9:00 and 10:30 a.m. services for considering to continue or join our volunteer Messy Church team.

Thanks also for the prayers of our congregations, as our Wardens with Tim, our Parish Council, Worship Committee, Family Service Committee, Messy Church Team and Sunday School Teachers look towards enriching our services to meet the needs of all St. Mark's members while encouraging new growth with open arms.

Pat McMillan

Messy Church

Our 4th year for Messy Church begins on Friday, September 14th from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. with the exciting theme *The Creation Story: All Things Bright and Beautiful*.

Our church doors are open to all for an engaging, informal worship format with a rather messy/fun mix of crafts, family games, Bible storytelling, music, and a family dinner. What a joy it is to offer an alternative form of worship at St. Mark's on the second Friday of each month - same time, same place!

Our annual Messy Church Volunteer meeting will take place in St. Mark's Hall on Thursday, August 30th from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. Please join us to share fresh ideas for the coming year.

Sunday School at St. Mark's

Summer Sunday School sessions will continue until Sunday, September 3rd. Regular Sunday School classes will begin on Sunday, September 9th which is our traditional *Welcome Back* Sunday School registration and parish family barbeque (rain or shine!!!).

We have a wonderful curriculum in place with exciting messages from Jesus that children can easily adapt to their own life experiences. We're asking St. Mark's adult family members to please encourage your children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews, neighbourhood children and others in Gr.K-6 to share friendship and fun through lively music and worship activities every Sunday morning beginning at 10:30 in Munro Hall.

Our children are our future!

We currently need one more teacher to assist with the K-1 Sunday School class on a staggered basis at 10:30. Please speak with Pat McMillan if you are interested in this position. A Sunday School Teacher's meeting will be held Thursday, September 6th from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. in the lounge.

Plans are in progress for a lively Family Service on Sunday, September 16th beginning at 10:30 a.m. Please join us as our young people from St. Mark's have the opportunity to experience an hour of worship with their whole church family!

Parish Barbeque

We'd love to have you join us for worship on Sunday, September 9th and then stay for a parish barbeque following the service.

There will be hamburgers and hot dogs with all the trimmings, veggies for dipping, watermelon, cold drinks, tea and coffee and plenty of lively conversation.

Parish Newsletters

In an effort to reduce paper and photocopying costs, we are encouraging members to subscribe to our online newsletter rather than receiving a paper copy. If you would like to receive an online newsletter, please go to our church website at www.stmarks.on.ca and click on the subscribe button on the Home Page, fill out the form, check 'Newsletter' and click subscribe. You will receive an email to confirm your request.

Calling All Knitters

Greetings to all of our wonderful knitters! We need your help. Do you have balls of yarn that are not big enough to make a large knitted item? Why not put them to good use and knit mittens, hats or scarves to keep someone warm in the winter.

These items are always in great demand for the Christmas Basket programme. Boxes will soon be available to collect your knitted items.

Thank you for using your talent to keep someone warm this winter.

Holly Jolly Faire

Holly Jolly Faire is fast approaching, especially now that it has a new date - Saturday, November 10th. Mark it on your calendar!

It is our largest community event and we want to include as many parishioners as we can. Not only is it a very successful fundraiser, it's a time when we can give back to our community in so many ways – food and cash to the Brantford Food Bank, 10% of the profits to the Stedman Hospice, items to the Brantford Christmas Basket Programme and the Holly Jolly Elves deliver gifts to some very special people.

We can always use new elves, so if you are available to set-up, participate on the day or clean-up we could use your help. We hope we can also depend on our parish to supply baked goods, preserves, items for the Penny Table or Silent Auction, knitted, crocheted and sewn gifts or craft items that will provide ideal shopping for our community. Please watch the upcoming bulletins for more details and ideas on how you can help!

The Holly Jolly Committee 2018

Christmas Baskets 2018

That magical time of year is creeping up very quickly and we will be putting on a push for your help to fill the very large basket by the Information Table with colouring books and crayons. Thank you to everyone who has added to the basket throughout the year, but there is always room for more.

Around the end of October, large boxes will be provided to collect donations of new and gently-used toys. This is a good opportunity to teach our children about the needs of others and how we can help those who are less fortunate.

The good people of St. Mark's have generously helped with the Christmas Basket programme in the past and your continued support will put smiles on many little faces.