For the last number of months Saint Mark’s adult forum on Sunday mornings has been reading The Book of Acts—“Part Two” of Luke’s gospel chronicling the evolution and struggle of the early church.

As this concludes in mid-January, our spiritual formation will continue as we explore the Episcopal Church’s participation in The Jesus Movement as outlined by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry.

Through a series of eclectic material, both online and in print, we will continue our conversation on what it means “to be the church in the world”. Hopefully many people will join us as we construct the “building blocks” of discipleship together.


Our presiding bishop has asked that we introduce this engaging journey with these words:

*I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.* – Ephesians 3:17-19

Today I believe our vocation is to live as the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement. But how can we together grow more deeply with Jesus Christ at the center of our lives, so we can bear witness to his way of love in and for the world?

The deep roots of our Christian tradition may offer just such a path. For centuries, monastic communities have shaped their lives around rhythms and disciplines for following Jesus together. Such a pattern is known as a “Rule of Life.” The framework you now hold – The Way of Love: Practices for Jesus-Centered Life – outlines a Rule for the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement.

It is designed to be spare and spacious, so that individuals, ministry groups, congregations, and networks can flesh it out in unique ways and build a church-wide treasure trove of stories and resources. There is no specific order you need to follow. If you already keep a Rule or spiritual disciplines, you might reflect and discover how that path intersects with this one. By entering into reflection, discernment and commitment around the practices of Turn - Learn - Pray - Worship - Bless - Go - Rest, I pray we will grow as communities following the loving, liberating, life-giving way of Jesus. His way has the power to change each of our lives and to change this world.

Your brother in the Way of Jesus,

+Michael
The Most Reverend Michael B. Curry, Primate and Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church

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eConnect:
Follow information about the Episcopal Churches participation in The Jesus Movement and The Way of Love visit: https://www.episcopalchurch.org/way-of-love-materials
I recently moved across town from Dublin to Minerva Park. This means that I have spent the past few months sorting, wrapping, packing, lifting, loading, moving, unloading, unpacking, arranging, and many other such –ing words. All this, along with raising our 2 year-old son, has led to a lot of chaos in our life at home. Chaos, however, is not unique to moving. Chaos is a part of everyday life for most (if not all) of you reading this, especially during this holiday season. As all of this has been going on, I have been reflecting on how to find God in the midst of chaos.

Specifically, I have been thinking about the story of Elijah meeting God at Mount Horeb (1 Kings 19:11-13) where Elijah is told that the LORD is about to pass by, and a great wind, an earthquake, and a fire pass before the cave, but the LORD was not in any of them. Then there was a sound of sheer silence. Only then did Elijah go to the entrance of the cave. Life seems to be one great wind/earthquake/fire after another, but where is the sheer silence?

The answer is that, sometimes, we have to create that silence. Life doesn’t always work in our favor and provide silent moments for us. Even when it does, we often fill that silence with other things. Our society would have us believe that every single second of our lives must be “productive” otherwise we are failing. In order to find God amidst the Chaos of our lives, we need to make the time to encounter that sheer silence.

How, you ask? Start small. A group of teenagers were just confirmed a few weeks ago, and part of their preparation was to come up with an answer to this question. I tasked them all with taking on some sort of spiritual discipline that they would do every day. Many of them chose to do something simple, like saying grace before every meal or saying a prayer every time they brushed their teeth. We, too, can start simply. Even better, we have at hand a wonderful resource to help us: the Book of Common Prayer.

As many of you are aware, the Daily Office offers Morning and Evening Prayer as wonderful ways to begin and close the day. Those services, though, can be a bit lengthy (especially if you do all the readings) and can be complicated to navigate (again, especially if you do all the readings). There are certainly apps out there that make them easier to navigate, but some of us simply can’t jump into setting aside that much time every day. The Daily Office, however, also offers much shorter and easier to navigate services. From Compline, which can be done in less than ten minutes, to Daily Devotions for Individual and Families, which can be done in about a minute, there are options for daily prayer for any amount of time you can commit.

However you choose to do it, I hope you find a way to start creating space to encounter the sheer silence in which you can encounter the LORD. Start small and work your way up, if you have to. Whatever you do, I pray that you find, and are found by, God in the midst of Chaos.
As usual, December has been a very busy month for the choirs and music staff at Saint Mark’s. Our annual Festival of Advent Lessons and Carols on December 2 was a tremendous success, and both choirs sang beautifully for the occasion. The Canterbury Choir impressively sang two difficult anthems by Judy Hunnicutt and Craig Phillips, while the Saint Mark’s Choir provided wonderfully varied music spanning more than 400 years by Ola Gjeilo, Francisco Guerrero, Gustav Holst, Ian Kellam, Robert Lehman, and Paul Manz. Lessons and Carols remains one of the great highlights of the year at Saint Mark’s, and this year’s service was particularly wonderful in every respect. Thank you to everyone who made the evening so special. Special thanks go to Tyler Robertson for his superb playing at the organ and to Joanne Drew, Julie Moll, and their team of hospitality volunteers for organizing such a wonderful reception following the service.

Another December highlight was the caroling event by the Canterbury Choir as part of the Tremont Center’s annual Christmas by the Clock celebration. The kids represented Saint Mark’s very well while adding some Christmas mirth to the event. I was very impressed by how well they sang throughout the 90-minute event.

At the time of this writing, both choirs are busy fine tuning their preparations for Christmas Eve services. The Canterbury Choir is brimming with excitement to lead the annual pageant service, for which they will sing anthems by Robert Leaf, Jean Philippe Rameau, Audrey Snyder, and Ralph Vaughan Williams. For the 11 p.m. service, the Saint Mark’s Choir will sing beautiful music by Benjamin Britten, Harold Darke, Grayston Ives, Giovanni Bernardino Nanino, John Rutter, and Robert Wexler. The service will be a liturgical and musical tour de force, including plainchant, Anglican chant, beloved carols, soaring descants, beautiful anthems, stirring organ music, and incense. Don’t miss either of these special services!

There is much to anticipate in the New Year, but I’ll highlight just a couple of our upcoming events here:

**A Service of Light in the Taizé Tradition on January 6**
On Sunday, January 7, at 5 p.m., Saint Mark’s will present a special evening service with music from the Taizé tradition for the Feast of the Epiphany. For those who are unfamiliar with services in the Taizé tradition, the music consists of short, repeated melodies that are led by a cantor and instrument(s) and sung by everyone. The melodies are easy to learn, and repetition provides a frame for meditation on the divine. Taizé services also include an important visual element, with the presence of one or more icons illuminated by numerous candles. The contemplative style of Taizé is a wonderful way to begin the season of Epiphany.

**Ohio State University Symphonic Choir Concert on January 27**
Saint Mark’s will host a special concert by the OSU Symphonic Choir on Sunday, January 27, at 4 p.m. Members of this outstanding collegiate ensemble include our organist, Tyler Robertson, and our bass section leader, Jacob Conrad. Admission is free. Donations will be accepted in support of the Organ Completion Fund. Please join us, and invite some friends!
OUTREACH NEWS
The Outreach Ministry meets on the second Sunday of the month in the Canterbury Center right after church. We would love to have anyone join us. Our agenda reviews our current projects and proposes future plans, so you will be “in the loop!” A visit does not imply a commitment in terms of volunteering, but we would hope you might help us spread the word about the work we are asked to do in the world.

Our goal is to attend to international, national, regional, and local projects. Locally, we hope to be helping hands, feet on the ground. We do not wish to be the proverbial Lady Bountiful, but joined together to bring hope in the form of food, housing, and encouragement. That, in turn, inspires us. Contact Marilyn Smith or Pat Iams if you would like more information.

ST JOHN’S TOWN STREET DINNER
Four times a year Saint Mark’s prepares and serves dinner to the neighborhood of St. John’s Town Street. The next dinner is Wednesday, January 30th. We are in need of volunteers for one or both shifts. Shift 1 is from 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. These folks are in charge of table setting and food preparation. Shift 2 runs from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. This shift is charged with serving and clean up. This is a wonderful way for families to volunteer together! We have jobs for all ages! If you are interested in helping there is a sign up sheet on the Outreach kiosk in the Parish Hall.

CATCH COURT
On Thursday, December 13th, we took lunch and visited Catch Court. Thanks to Nara Iams, Barb Keyes, Sue Barna, and Dianne Hartney for preparing the food. 40 women were present. Hannah, one of the Counselors, handed back letters to women who had written them in 2017, identifying their hopes for personal change in 2018. Most were pleased with the progress they had made toward their goals. Barb and I wondered whether the rest of us might want to follow their lead, identifying goals in terms of physical, spiritual, and emotional change! A previous CATCH participant came in from the jail to have the opportunity to choose to re-enter the probation program once again. Surprisingly, despite the encouragement of her peers, she adamantly refused! Drugs or a perceived relationship are usually the reason. Another participant, who has been in the program for 18+ months stood before Judge Herbert to answer her parole violation of having a relationship with a "Stay Away" man. She had lied when asked about the violation. Judge Herbert sent her to jail for 7 days, explaining that it was for her safety. Discussion about the "fairness" of the consequences ensued between the women and the judge. He listens, but is firm and kind. The next CATCH Court visit will be on January 10th. If you are interested in making food on that morning or going to Court, please contact the office (614-486-9452 or OfficeManager@SaintMarksColumbus.org).

THE GIVING TREE
Thanks so much to all of the parishioners who donated over 150 gifts of toys and clothing to the Christmas Shop so that children of NNEMAP recipients could have gifts to open on Christmas morning. Saint Mark’s is one of 14 participating Columbus area churches that made it possible to make the 1,054 children that were registered to experience a happy holiday. Again, thank you for your generosity, Jill Hinton.

COOKIE WALK
A huge thank you goes out to all bakers and buyers from this past Cookie Walk. The selection of cookies was awesome, filling four tables. Buyers were treated to all types of cookies and candy. $717.50 was collected to support the women in the CATCH Court program. This will go a long way to helping defray the cost of having records expunged, household goods for those getting their own home, or much needed clothing for job interviews. As always Saint Mark’s willingly supports the who need our help. Thank you for your generosity!
We celebrate the following births:
Chase O., son of Carla and Glenn O., was born November 7, 2018.
Jeremiah W., son of Sara and Erik W., was born December 12, 2018.

We welcome the following children into the Body of Christ through baptism:
Chase O., and cousins Rylie K. and Alexander V. God bless all of these children.

We celebrate recent new members:
Noretta Weese who joins us from Riverside United Methodist Church. Welcome, Noretta!

FROM THE PARISH REGISTER is a new printed project to enhance communication among parishioners. It comes from a long standing tradition in the Church of England where certain public records were officially recorded in the great ledgers of their parish church. You can sign up for weekly email updates about Saint Mark’s on our website www.saintmarks columbus.org, click on “Join Our Mailing List.”

A Service of LIGHT
In the Taizé tradition

Celebrate the First Sunday after Epiphany: Baptism of Our Lord and the spread of the Good News of Jesus Christ into the world with a Taizé Service of Light. This beautiful and moving liturgy comes to us with music from the Taizé Community in France and prayers from the Anglican tradition.

See the Chancel and Choir filled with almost one hundred candles illuminating icons of Jesus and the Blessed Virgin Mary. A cantor and flutist will help transport the congregation into “the mysterium” of ancient liturgy and experience more nearly the presence of God.

January 6, 2019  5 p.m. The Choir

“Come, our long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
From our sins and fears release us, let us find our rest in thee.
Born thy people to deliver, born a child, and yet a king,
Born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.”

Charles Wesley, 1745
2019 PRAYER RETREAT

Be Still and Know that I am God.
– Psalm 46:10

Saint Mark’s will host a prayer retreat March 8 - 10, the first weekend of Lent. The retreat will be devoted to the practice of “contemplative prayer.” Thomas Merton has described centering prayer as a method of meditation used by Christians that places a strong emphasis on interior silence. The goal of the retreat is to create a space for structured prayer and reflection where we may also gain knowledge about the practice to bring back to our regular church life.

The retreat will feature insights from four speakers who help us to investigate the broad range of options in a contemplative prayer practice. Speakers include:

- The Rev. Karl Stevens, an Episcopal priest and artist
- The Rev. Jane Gerdsen, Missioner for Fresh Expressions and Praxis Communities of the Diocese of Southern Ohio.
- Episcopal Oblate, Suzanne Olmstead, the co-founder of the worldwide organization “Lay Cistercians,” which, among other things, does spiritual work with hospice patients.
- And finally, we will meet Fabricia Duell, a contemplative artist and certified spiritual director.

In addition to the speakers, we will have ample time to pray, and to discuss the role of prayer in Episcopal life and in our own personal lives. The experience promises to be an enriching and rewarding one.

The retreat will be held at the beautiful Transfiguration Spirituality Center (Episcopal) in Cincinnati, beginning with arrival at 11 a.m. on Friday, March 8 and ending after Eucharist and breakfast on Sunday, March 10. Each participant will be housed in their own single room in the facility’s newly renovated Beth-Anna building. All meals are prepared with locally grown, fresh ingredients including free trade coffee, snacks and tea throughout the day. The building features a peaceful ambiance appointed with shared baths, a full kitchen and dining room, a large living room with a working fireplace. The entire facility, including its gardens and labyrinth, is conducive to spiritual reflection and awareness of God. Here one can really feel the “peace which passes all understanding.”

Please bring a notebook and pen with you to the retreat.
To register, please contact Dot Yeager, seniorwarden@saintmarkscolumbus.org.

Cost is $200 per person, which covers two night’s lodging, speaker stipends and all meals. Checks may be made out to Saint Mark’s, Lent Retreat, and payment is requested at time of registration, on or before January 31, 2019.
Space is limited. For more information about the center, see their website at: https://ctretreats.org/index.php
There will be a review of how to use the Automatic Electronic Defibrillator (AED) in church. January 6th after the 10:30 a.m. service in the Fellowship Hall with Roman Skoracki. All ushers, vestry members, vergers, and servers are encouraged to come as well as anyone interested in how to use an AED during a medical emergency.

Deadline for the February 2019 Epistle is January 17
Please submit all news, photos and articles to Melanie in the parish office by 12 noon on Monday, January 17 via email if possible: officemanager@saintmarks columbus.org. Volunteers will fold the February EPISTLE on Thursday, January 20 at 10:00 a.m. in the Canterbury Center. No experience is necessary, all are welcome! Please join us if you can!

Saint Mark’s Member Care
Saint Mark’s Member Care ministry provides meals to parishioners who are in need of some help due to illness, recovery, or other situations. If you or someone you know could use some help with meals, please speak to Michele Johnson. We have a team of parishioners who are happy to serve in this way.

We also have a New Baby ministry which provides a welcoming rose and muffins to families with a new baby in the house. If you know of a family with a new baby, please contact the office (614-486-9452 or OfficeManager@SaintMarksColumbus.org) with this information. In addition, if you are interested in helping with either meals or the new baby ministry, please speak to Michele Johnson or Robbie Hurley.

Parents Night Out
Thank you Lukas S. for volunteering your Saturday evening in order to give Saint Mark’s parents a chance to have a night off!

Saint Mark’s has a very active group of 14 Stephen Ministers: Jodi Hess, Andi Waller, Phil Glandon, Barb Wiseman, Craig Zimpher, Craig Tuthill, Lou Lenz, Martha Belury, Dan Morton, Roberta Morton, Karen Gebhart, Sam Slee, Jackie Nicol, Joanne Drew, who provide visits to members who are struggling with illness, grief, loss of a job, or any of a variety of difficulties in life. Our Stephen Ministers and Stephen Leaders meet twice a month in small groups to support each other in this ministry as well as meeting regularly with their care receivers. We recently welcomed 4 new Stephen Ministers who were commissioned during a Sunday morning church service. We also enjoyed a social get together with each other in November. If you are interested in knowing more about the Stephen Ministry program please talk with one of our Stephen Leaders or with Paul or Christopher. Saint Mark’s is very fortunate to have such dedicated and caring parishioners for this ministry.

Welcome Knitters (and other Needlework Enthusiasts)
The Saint Mark’s Knitting Circle meets the first and third Thursday of each month in members’ homes. We meet from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM to work on prayer shawls, baptism blankets and lap blankets for church members and others in need. We are also knitting scarves, hats, and other warm apparel to distribute to the community in the fall and winter. We welcome knitters of all ability levels including beginners! Anyone who is interested in this ministry, please contact the office (614-486-9452 or OfficeManager@SaintMarksColumbus.org) for further information.
Thank you to the members of the Saint Mark’s Flower Guild for organizing this event!
Birthdays are not included in Saint Mark’s online version of this publication to ensure privacy of our parishioners.

**YOUTH**

There will be a training for all youth (grades 6-12) interested in becoming acolytes in early 2019. Details will be announced soon! Please contact the office for more information (614-486-9452 or OfficeManager@SaintMarksColumbus.org)

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**God Moment #39**

**The Future Of Our Church**

On a Sunday not long ago, after completing my usher’s job gathering collection plates, I noticed three young ladies in the very first pew. Each was intently following and singing a song from the hymnal. I was quite struck with how the girls looked while singing: serious and focused.

God Moments are experiences when God’s presence is evident. They are spontaneous. They require no planning. They require no asking. You cannot will them to happen. They do require that you be prepared. They will cause you to say: “Thank you.”

The surest way to know a God Moment has happened is that you will be smiling.
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Preacher:
Paul St. Germain
8:00 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite I
9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite II with Canterbury Choir
11:30 AM Fellowship Hour
12:00 PM Youth Group
5:00 PM A Service of Light in the Taizé Tradition
8:00 PM AA Groups

Christopher C. Richardson
8:00 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite I
9:30 AM Adult Formation
9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite II with Saint Mark’s Choir
10:30 AM Sunday School
11:30 AM Fellowship Hour
11:30 AM Outreach Meeting
12:00 PM Youth Group
8:00 PM AA Groups

Please visit http:// for the most up-to-date calendar, as changes occur often!
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| 20   | Preacher: Paul St. Germain  
8:00 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite I  
9:30 AM Adult Formation  
9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal  
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite II with Saint Mark's Choir  
10:30 AM Sunday School  
1:30 PM Fellowship Hour  
12:00 PM Youth Group  
2:00 PM Eagle Scout Court of Honor for CW H.  
8:00 PM AA Groups |
| 21   | Rector's Day Off  
8:00 AM Jr Explorer Club  
9:00 AM Al-Anon  
10:30 AM Saint Mark's Staff Meeting and Lunch |
| 22   | 8:00 AM Jr Explorer Club  
9:30 AM Al-Anon  
10:30 AM Saint Mark's Staff Meeting and Lunch |
| 23   | 8:00 AM Jr Explorer Club  
12:00 PM Noonday Eucharist  
4:30 PM Canterbury Choir Rehearsal  
5:00 PM Stephen Ministry Meeting  
5:30 PM Wednesday Evenings at St. Mark's  
7:00 PM Stephen Minister Care Meeting |
| 24   | 8:00 AM Jr Explorer Club  
9:00 AM Stephen Ministry Meeting  
6:15 PM AA  
7:30 PM Saint Mark's Choir Rehearsal  
8:00 PM AA |
| 25   | Associate Rector's Day Off  
8:00 AM Jr Explorer Club  
1:00 PM Choir Volleyball  
8:00 PM AA Groups |
| 26   | 9:30 AM OA  
12:00 PM Altar & Flower Guild Set-Up |
| 27   | Preacher: Christopher C. Richardson  
8:00 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite I  
9:30 AM Adult Formation  
9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal  
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite II with Saint Mark's Choir  
10:30 AM Sunday School  
11:30 AM Fellowship Hour  
12:00 PM Youth Group  
4:00 PM Ohio State University Symphonic Choir  
8:00 PM AA Groups |
| 28   | Rector's Day Off  
8:00 AM Jr Explorer Club  
9:30 AM Al-Anon  
7:30 PM Saint Mark's Monday Night Book Group |
| 29   | 8:00 AM Jr Explorer Club  
9:30 AM Al-Anon  
10:30 AM Saint Mark's Staff Meeting and Lunch |
| 30   | 8:00 AM Jr Explorer Club  
9:30 AM Al-Anon  
10:30 AM Saint Mark's Staff Meeting and Lunch |
| 31   | 8:00 AM Jr Explorer Club  
12:00 PM Noonday Eucharist  
4:30 PM Canterbury Choir Rehearsal  
5:30 PM Wednesday Evenings at St. Mark's  
7:00 PM Stephen Minister Care Meeting  
7:30 PM Mark's Men |

Please visit [http://SaintMarksColumbus.org/calendar/](http://SaintMarksColumbus.org/calendar/) for the most up-to-date calendar, as changes occur often!
Part of the Diocese of Southern Ohio, Saint Mark’s held its first worship service in 1951 in a converted Methodist church in Grandview. Ground was broken in 1953 for the Parish Hall (now the Education Building) where services were held until the current Nave and Sanctuary was completed in 1958. Office space in an adjacent building was purchased in 1989. Major renovations of the entire facility occurred in 2004 and 2008 creating a campus today that empowers Christ’s ministry within and beyond our parish.