



### Disciples of Jesus, Connecting Our Community to Christ

Hello St. Mark,

Welcome! Please visit our website to find our Sunday livestream, worship videos, Sunday bulletins, audio bible, personal devotions, calendars and more.

[Visit our Website](https://stmarkmendon.org)

### *Pastor's Ponderings*



### *Sacrificial Service*

**“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago.” – Ephesians 2:10**

As mentioned in the previous Crossroads, each month of 2025 we will look at the first part

of our mission statement: **Disciples of Jesus**, Connecting our Community to Christ. A disciple of Jesus reflects God in the world. When Jesus talked about discipleship, it was an all-in kind of thing.

Sacrificial service is doing good works even when it's costly, inconvenient, or challenging. Martin Luther made clear that our good works are not for our salvation, but rather for our neighbor. He describes this as the *Two Kinds of Righteousness* (diagram below). We are made right with God by the good works of Jesus (our vertical relationship with God), which we are completely passive. Our good works toward our neighbor does not make us right with God, but rather our rightness with God overflows into our horizontal relationship with our neighbor. We are active in these good works for the benefit of our neighbor, having nothing to do with our salvation.

For example, a cup of cold water can speak volumes. A generous word can be like water on parched land. We love not only with actions, but with words. Consider the powerful messages we can give one another: You are loved. You have value. Your contribution matters. These are words of life that have the potential to make a deep, long-term impact. Listen to Annie Dillard's words in *The Writing Life*, "Similarly, the impulse to keep to yourself what you have learned is not only shameful, it is destructive. Anything you do not give freely and abundantly becomes lost to you. You open your safe and find ashes."

In addition, remember that you are part of the body of Christ. You are not alone. How are you partnering with others to minister in practical ways? Good news that is really good news has practical implications. It matters to people. It makes a difference in their everyday lives. If your life as a disciple is not doing that, how are you reflecting Jesus to people? When Jesus was asked for proof that he was the Messiah, he cited the practical implications of his ministry: **"Jesus told them, 'Go back to John and tell him what you have heard and seen—the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is preaching to the poor.'"** – **Matthew 11:4-5**

Our lives, though likely less miraculous, should reflect the presence of Jesus in practical ways as well. And we cannot do this alone. We need others alongside us to do this. Who can partner with you? Each person will have a unique contribution to make to the whole. Look around to the needs of the community. What would show the presence of God to these particular people? What would be good news to them?

St. Paul wrote to Titus, **"Our people must learn to do good by meeting the urgent needs of others; then they will not be unproductive."** – **Titus 3:14** He also reminded the Galatians the desire of the apostles who sent him out, **"Their only suggestion was that we keep on helping the poor, which I have always been eager to do."** – **Galatians 2:10** We are called to serve the poor in a personal way. This means more than just sending a check. A transactional service like this can make us feel as though we have accomplished something but does little for kingdom impact. Money is money and can help a temporarily poor situation. However, Jesus' concern was not merely helping one change a physical situation. His desire is to impact the spiritual aspect of each person, which includes the physical.

As we interact with the poor, God wants to do work in us as well. We can engage with them as unique individuals made in the image of God, equals to ourselves and our friends and our family. We are to treat them with respect and serve them in ways that will benefit their everyday lives and their growth. Mother Teresa reminds Christ followers, "At the end of life we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we have made, how many great things we have done. We will be judged by 'I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was naked, and you clothed me. I was homeless, and you took me in.'"

Since we have been made right with God (a.k.a. justified), we can begin to see the

injustice in the world around us. Some injustices are more obvious than others. Some injustices we are less sensitive to than others. The question is, as followers of Jesus, what will we do about it? Will we be silent, saying that's just the way it is? Or will we risk speaking out? Either way, there is a cost. Dietrich Bonhoeffer reminds us of this with these two quotes, "Silence in the face of evil is itself evil: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act." And "We are not to simply bandage the wounds of victims beneath the wheels of injustice, we are to drive a spoke into the wheel itself."

These kinds of words can create a fire in one's heart to run out and do something. Yet, we must remember our driving force: compassion. We act not out of anger. We speak not out of frustration. We respond out of compassion and with compassion. We are to be people who care, and out of that care, pray that God will bring about his needed work. Yet cultivating compassion is harder to do than simply taking certain actions or steps. To cultivate compassion, we need to open ourselves up to the pain and the needs of others. That is inherently frightening, threatening to overwhelm us without divine help.

Compassion not only makes us vulnerable to pain, but it puts us face to face with our own sense of inadequacy. We know we are not strong enough, rich enough, smart enough, etc. We are not God; we can only do so much. That's why we bring these needs before him in prayer. We alone cannot bring healing and reconciliation, but we can experience the power of God working through us as we rely on him and listen to his voice and direction.

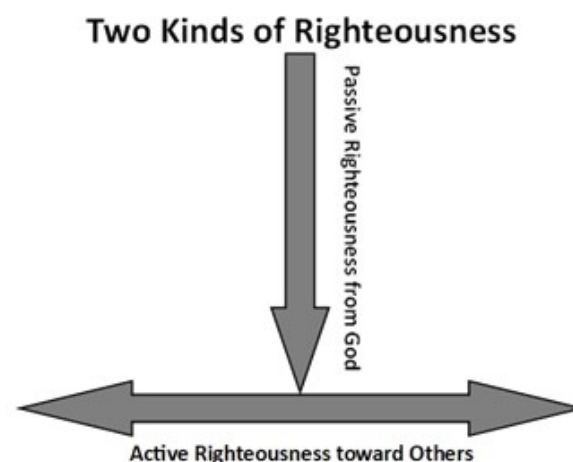
As C.S. Lewis explained, "To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything and your heart will be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact you must give it to no one, not even an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements. Lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket, safe, dark, motionless, airless, it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable. To love is to be vulnerable."

**Scripture to study: Matthew 9:36-38; Matthew 14:14; Matthew 15:32; Matthew 20:34; 1 Peter 3:8-9.**

As I write on each topic, I encourage you to meet with one, two, or three other people. Discipleship is not an individual endeavor. Use the articles for discussion, read and study the scripture together, and encourage each other in your walk. The result will be transformation – not of ourselves only – but of others and the whole community around us.

A fellow disciple of Jesus,

*Pastor Brad Urlaub*



## From Council

*The year's at the spring,  
And day's at the morn;  
Morning's at seven;  
The hill-side's dew-pearled;  
The lark's on the wing;  
The snail's on the thorn;  
God's in his Heaven --  
All's right with the world!*



When spring arrives, the words above from Robert Browning's poem *Pippa's Song* always come to mind. After the cold and what some may consider the bleakness of winter, we enter a time of rejuvenation – spring. As plants come to life and gardens and fields are readied for planting, we are reminded that we are the stewards of the earth and the environment that God has entrusted to us. A steward has the responsibility of caring for whatever is entrusted into his or her care. With respect to the earth, God tells us of this expectation in Genesis 2:15 where it is stated, "Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it."

In addition to spring reminding us of our responsibility as stewards of the earth, the special days of Mother's Day in May and Father's Day in June remind us that the Christian home is also a place of stewardship – stewardship of family. As we care for and nurture family members, of any age, we serve as good stewards of the family God entrusted to us.

As we take care of our yards, gardens and families, remember that the church property and church family also need the attention of good stewards. Let's remember to pray for each other and to help in times of need. There are always opportunities at church to show your stewardship – either on an individual basis or as a family or a group of friends working on a project. Remember to look for sign-up sheets in the fellowship hall or respond to needs expressed in the bulletin or Crossroads. Soon there may be sign-up sheets for weeding the gardens, mowing, Pizza booth, general property clean-up. Please check for sign-up sheets to see if your talents match the needs for which help is being sought. Let us each put our God-given talents to serve Him as good stewards of all that He has given to us.

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace..." **1 Peter 4:10** ESV

With this in mind, at council we took the Mendon/Honeoye Falls demographics into consideration and brainstormed about opportunities for outreach. The ideas will be discussed and assessed. More information is forthcoming.

We also discussed the Unite Leadership Collective and how either the group or their methods could be used by St. Mark. A leadership class (for which a sign-up has been available) is scheduled to begin Tuesday, May 6.

## Ladies Aid



Your copy should address 3 key questions: Who am I writing for (audience)? Why should they care (benefit)? What do I want them to do (call-to-action)?

Create a great offer by adding words like "free," "personalized," "complimentary," or "customized." A sense of urgency often helps readers take action, so consider inserting phrases like "for a limited time only" or "only 7 remaining!"

## *With Gratitude*

### *Heartfelt thanks to:*

- all who helped during the Lenten dinners, and for providing service (both inside and outside the church) during and in preparation for the Holy Week worship opportunities.
- the Laube and Blythe families for spearheading the Easter breakfast.
- the Stream Team for helping St. Mark reach others, and home bound members, with the Good News of our risen Christ.
- all for voting to have the church power washed. The buildings glistened for Easter.
- all who provide service to the Lord through your efforts at St. Mark on a regular and continual basis.

## *Legacy Planning Workshop*

Pinnacle Lutheran Church will be holding a workshop presented by Thrivent Financial the morning of Saturday, May 3, entitled "Legacy Planning—Remembering family, church and charity." Topics will include a brief intro to Thrivent Financial, strategic giving now (such as the use of Qualified Charitable Donations, gifting highly appreciated stock, etc.), and finally strategies to gift to those causes closest to your heart in conjunction with providing a strong legacy to your loved ones while simultaneously minimizing the impact of taxes. This is strictly an educational seminar. Financial products will not be sold at this meeting. Further details, including registration information, will be coming soon. Contact Barbara McHenry at 260-5913 with questions.



## *Elections*

In June there will be elections for the following church council officers: Treasurer, Financial

Secretary, Secretary, Chairperson of Evangelism. Terms of church council positions are 2 years, and an individual can be reelected for a second consecutive term. For any position that is not filled by election, there is a mechanism for appointment to fill a vacant position.



## *Mendon Firemen's Carnival*



*Mendon Firemen's Carnival – watch for sign-up sheets to work the Pizza Booth*

Thursday May 29, opens at 5:30pm, Fireworks at 9:30pm

Friday May 30, opens at 5:30pm

Saturday May 31, opens at 11:30am, Parade at 6:45pm

See Vicki Laube for details or to answer questions

## *Crossroads Reminder*

The next edition of the newsletter will be a June/July newsletter. Please submit all information for June and July by the May 19 deadline.

## *Eastern District Events*

### *NEW SERVANT EVENT CAMP at Pioneer on the Lake*

Come share your skills and talents as we serve God and those around us! This camp week, June 13-19, will allow you to work together in the beautiful surroundings of Pioneer on the Lake, enjoy the beach and camp activities in the evening, and close each day with fellowship and inspiring campfire devotions and song! Visit here to find out more:

<https://pioneeronthelake.com/servant-event-camp>

### *Holy Land Tour*

Dr. Charles and Susan Whited of **First Trinity (Tonawanda, NY)** invite you to join them for a **10-day tour of the Holy Land**, UPDATE: The departure date has been changed to October 20, 2025. We will visit Jesus' birthplace in Bethlehem, take a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee, walk the path Jesus took from the Garden of Gethsemane to the dungeon in Caiaphas' house, travel the Via Delarosa (way of the cross) through Jerusalem, and so much more. It is the spiritual adventure of a lifetime. For information call (716-835-2220) or email Pastor Chuck at [cwhited@firsttrinity.com](mailto:cwhited@firsttrinity.com).



# May Celebrations



## WEDDING

Mike & Kathie Monnat 5/7  
Joe Mynio & Georgette Peterson 5/25

## BAPTISMAL BIRTHDAYS

Gail Maffett 5/1  
Ruth Meyers 5/8  
Kristen Waterstram-Rich 5/30

Kayla Lasher 5/4  
Bob Shraeder 5/18  
Deb Bolcko 5/19  
Sharon Fiaschetti 5/20  
Mary Reimers 5/25  
Brittany (Lillie) Clancy 5/27  
Ilse Rueckmann 5/30  
Mike Miller 5/31

# May Calendars

May 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4 8am Worship 10:30am Sunday School	5 Bulletin Items Due	6 5:45pm Discipleship Leadership Class	7	8 7am Choir Practice 9am Pastor's Circuit Meeting	9	10 11am Ladies Aid
11 8am Worship 10:30am Sunday School	12 Bulletin Items Due	13 5:45pm Discipleship Leadership Class	14	15 7am Choir Practice	16	17 
18 8am Worship 10:30am Sunday School	19 Crossroads & Bulletin Items Due 9:30am Elders	20	21	22 7am Choir Practice	23	24
25 8am Worship 10:30am Sunday School	26 Bulletin Items Due 	27 5:45pm Discipleship Leadership Class	28	29 7am Choir Practice	30	31

2025 Server Calendar

	May 4	May 11	May 18	May 25	June 1
Elder	John Lehning & Ted Velt	Guenter Heiss & John Lehning	Chuck Bannister & Ted Velt	Guenter Heiss & Ted Velt	Chuck Bannister & John Lehning
Ushers	Scott & Kathy Stranford	Chuck Bannister & Peter Lehning	Guenter & Margaret Heiss	Margaret Heiss & Sally Hacker	Scott & Kathy Stranford
Greeter	Kristen Waterstram-Rich	Barb Done	Georgette Peterson	Gary Weisensel	Sally Hacker
Altar Care	Margaret Heiss	Sharon Fiaschetti	Barb Done	Marlene Hampson	Barb Done
Office Help	May 2 Marlene Hampson	May 9 Barb Mitchell	May 16 Sharon Fiaschetti	May 23 Marlene Hampson	May 30 Barb Mitchell
Scripture Readings	Acts 9:1-22 Revelation 5 (1-7) 8-14 John 21:1-19	Acts 20:17-35 Rev. 7:9-17 John 10:22-33	Acts 11:1-18 Rev. 21:1-7 John 16:12-22	Acts 16:9-15 Rev. 21:9-14, 21-27 John 16:23-33	Acts 1:12-26 Rev. 22:1-6 (7-11) 12-20 John 17:20-26



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