

**ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL AND REMINDERS / UPDATES**

**April 22, 2026**

From DAILY GUIDEPOSTS 2018: Erika Bentsen

*We also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance... – ROMANS 5:3*

“Adversity does not build character; it reveals it,” American novelist James Lane Allen is credited with saying.

I wondered if that was true. Didn't adversity make us stretch beyond ourselves, so we would get to a better place?

My body strained. Muscles complained. Four weeks after disk-replacement surgery in my spine, I was okayed by the doctor to start exercising again. After several months of forced inactivity due to injuries, stretching was my number one priority for getting my mobility back. “Reach a little farther than you're comfortable with and then hold it for thirty seconds,” the physical therapist instructed. “It's as simple as that.”

My muscles trembled as I held on. Finally, time was up. I got up and walked around. Immediately, I felt freer. The stiffness that had locked up my movement had been reduced.

Maybe that's why God is always right there, just out of our reach. It's so we have to stretch beyond ourselves toward Him.

It's not only good for my muscle tone, but it's good for my spirit too.

*Lord, please help me stay the course and remember I am gaining strength in difficult times.*

*Help me grow as I stretch out to You. – ERIKA BENTSEN*

**Prayer:** *Let us pray: Almighty God, with a grateful heart and devoted mind, I lift up my praise and thanksgiving to You for the gift of new life and everlasting peace. Give me strength to stretch towards You in my spiritual journey of this life. When I am complacent and stagnant, renew me and push me. When I have taken the wrong path and am lost, guide me back to walk in Your footsteps and grow in me the ability to trust always in You, through Your Son, Jesus Christ, in whose name I pray. Amen.*

**Weekly Schedule:**

**Office Hours:** Mon-Fri 9:00am to 12:00noon

**Preschool:** Mon-Fri 8:30am to 4:00pm

**Wednesday, April 22**

*Earth Day & Administrative Professional Appreciation Day*

5:00pm – Family Visitation for Phyllis Tasto at Kenworthy Funeral Home

6:00pm – Memorial Service for Phyllis Tasto at Kenworthy Funeral Home

**Thursday, April 23**

9:00am to 12noon – Quilting Group

9:30am – ~~Choir Practice~~ **NO CHOIR PRACTICE**

**Friday, April 24**

*Arbor Day*

11:00am – Bible Study

**Saturday, April 25**

5:30pm – Spoken Worship – 4<sup>th</sup> Weekend of Easter

**Sunday, April 26**

9:00am – Traditional Worship – 4<sup>th</sup> Weekend of Easter

Bells Rehearsal

PAL Team C Serves at HACC

**Thursday, April 30**

7:00am to 7:00pm – UPMC Central Penn Blood Bank Blood Drive

9:00am to 12noon – Quilting Group

9:30am – Choir Practice

**Friday, May 1**

*May Day*

11:00am – Bible Study

**Sunday Worship Leaders**

**CPIC:** Karen Feeser **Lector:** Karen Feeser

**Communion Assistants:** Karen Feeser | Jeff Kindschuh

**Altar Care:** Sunday Morning Volunteers



**Prayer List:** We ask that you keep all our shut-ins and those needing special help in your daily prayers. We will keep the shut-ins on the list indefinitely and those needing extra prayers will be removed after one month unless we're told otherwise. To add a name to the prayer list please write it on the list on the narthex brass stand or call the office. This week keep in your prayers: *Dora, Bryce Adamson, Shannon Allen, Family & Friends of Karen Amoss' Mother, Daniel Ard, Kim Bartell, Donna Bell, Becky Bingel, Robert Bingel, Judy Bolin, Katherine Borsella, Nancy Brady, Patrick Brady, Susan Bucher-Laughman, Lucas Cherry, Frances Claybaugh, Susan Coleman, Lois & George Cornell, Pastor David DeLong, Lisa Dickensheets, Diane Duffy, Robin Eline, Tarek Elnaggar, Jean Eshbach, Landon Evans, Dennis Fahey, Nancy Fahey, James Farver, Don Feeser, Abigail Fett, Nancy Gill, Vickie Gouker, Dane Graham, Bob Groft, Sandy Hart, Debby Hartlaub, Chase Henry & Family, Carrie Hernden, Peg Hippensteel, Family & Friends of Catherine Hollingsworth, Blaise Humes, Michael Humes, Martha Howells, Donna Jones, Kathy Jones, David Kaufman, Debbie Kellenbenz, Craig King, Keith Klunk, Shawn Klunk, Kelly Koontz, Norma Kreidler, Winchester Kuhn, Allen Kuhns, Jo Kuhns, Russell Laughman, Laurie Leppo, Ronnie Lippy, Naura Luqman, Carol McDermitt-Humes, Merita Moore, Andrew Moul, Leah Moul, Linda Mummert, Merle Mummert, Nancy Mummert, Pam Mummert, James Murphy, Wayne Noel, Susan O'Brien, Kelly Perdue, Jessica "Rose" Pulliano, Bill Reese, Family & Friends of Betty, Danny, & Tina Rich, Mary Riley, Carl Sandruck, David Sandruck, Lucus Schneider, Cecelia Sell, Bob Shue, Luanne Slusser, Denise Smith, Pr. Jerry Smith, JoAnn Smith, Joyce Smith, Ron Smith, Sarah Smith, Jody Spellman, Family & Friends of Jamie Stahl, Jamie Stalb, Dennis Staub, Monica Staub, Stephanie Stauffer, Family & Friends of Phyllis Tasto, Matt Test, Dawn Tice, Jennie Tome, George Tracy, Allison Trump, Ed Wagaman, Gloria Wagaman, Jody Walter, Naomi Warren, Barb Watson, Ron Wentz, Rebecca Wisotzkey*

**St. Mark's Monthly Offering for Designated Needs** gives us an opportunity as a congregation to support specific domestic and international needs which are pre-determined by our Council each year. April's offering benefits **Itete Hospital of the Konde Diocese**. Of the various partners who support Konde Diocese, through the work of our Konde Medical Needs Committee, we, as the Lower Susquehanna Synod, are the only partner providing ongoing support for the Itete Hospital. As the Itete Hospital in the Konde Diocese of Tanzania grows in its capacity to care for people as a District Designated Hospital, their needs grow. To contribute to this month's designated need, please mail in your donations or place them in our collection plates, specifying "Itete Hospital" or "April Designated Giving" on your check or the *Other* line of your offering envelope. Donations made on the *Other* line that have no written designation will automatically be given to that month's ministry fund. Thanks for your support.

**In Memorial:** A white rose was placed in the chancel last weekend in memory of a beloved church member. It is with deep regret we have to announce the passing of one of our members, Phyllis Tasto, who entered the everlasting promise found in the living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. A memorial service is planned tonight, **April 22<sup>nd</sup>**, for 6:00pm, following a 5:00pm visitation time, at Kenworthy Funeral Home. Please keep Phyllis's family and friends in your prayers.

**NEED SPONSOR THIS WEEK Altar Flowers:** We have one open vase this coming weekend and are in need of a sponsor. If you're able to dedicate this vase, please contact Joni before Friday so that your dedication can be included in the handout. We also have many other vases available this spring and summer. If you can dedicate an open vase, please fill out the flower book in the narthex or contact Joni (717-637-8904 or [offcoor129@gmail.com](mailto:offcoor129@gmail.com)).

**Oink!** Thank you to all who brought back piggy banks for God's Global Barnyard. Together, we raised **\$920!!** This week, the Sunday School will select animals and other necessities to help lift communities from the cycle of poverty.

**Blood Drive:** Our next UPMC Blood Drive is next week on **April 30<sup>th</sup>**. To register to donate blood and help save lives, go to [717giveblood.org](http://717giveblood.org) and click on "Donate Now."

**Eat Out and Enjoy Some Fellowship:** We invite you to join us at Susie's Mexican Grill on **May 5<sup>th</sup>** at 1:00pm for lunch and a good time. Sign up in the narthex. Hope to see you there!

**Fellowship Hosts Needed:** We need more volunteers to continue our monthly fellowship times on the first Sunday of each month. Treats, supplies, and coffee are provided by the church – we just need someone to set it all out and clean up after. Please help us keep this tradition going – sign up on the narthex bulletin board if you can help.

**Honoring Our Heroes:** This event is coming up soon! We hope and pray for another successful event on **May 17<sup>th</sup>**. Please join us for activities, fire trucks, police cars, displays, and music, beginning at 5:00pm. All St. Mark activities are free of charge, and food trucks will be present to sell refreshments. Please spread the word to anyone who may want to attend or have a table display – vendor applications are due **May 1<sup>st</sup>**. For more information, contact Amy or Abby Shermeyer at [amyshermeyer@gmail.com](mailto:amyshermeyer@gmail.com) | 717-630-9486.

**Pentecost Geraniums:** Pentecost is coming, and once again we hope to beautify our church gardens while memorializing and honoring loved ones, past and present. To dedicate geraniums, please use the form found in April's newsletter, pick up one from the narthex shelf, or contact the office. Geraniums are \$6.50, and the deadline to submit dedications is **May 4<sup>th</sup>**. To volunteer to help with the planting, call the church office (717-637-8904).

**2026-2027 Preschool Registration:** The preschool has a few openings left in the **T/TH 3-year-old class** and in the **4-year-old afternoon class. The M/W 3-year-old class and 4-year-old AM class are both full.** Registration is first-come-first-serve. Go to [stmarkpreschoolhanover.weebly.com](http://stmarkpreschoolhanover.weebly.com)

**From Heroes Committee:** "Need people to assist in setting up the performance areas. We have chairs and tents to put up. Melinda will be grateful for any assistance and she will supervise. She can't hoist the tents, so you need to have a little strength. Chairs are a bit easier. I believe we have the Young Marines for setup as well but just covering our bases. See Melinda if you can assist in any way for the performances. It is a great musical program." – *Melinda Elnaggar*

**I Like Pie!!** Calling all pie lovers. Please join us for "Pentecost Pie Sunday" where we'll share slices of pie we bring in (homemade or storebought) on **May 24<sup>th</sup>** following worship.

**PAL at St. Mark:** Last month, our church's Provide-A-Lunch team served nearly 100 people a hot lunch at HACC. But it all starts with buying food. Please consider donating to our "PAL Supplies" fund to help us purchase the ingredients we need to serve lunch at HACC. To contribute **directly to St. Mark's PAL efforts**, please note "**PAL SUPPLIES**" (specify "supplies" so your donation is directed to the right place) on your offering envelope. If you'd like to help out with serving, contact Shellene Griffin.

**Music Sunday May 3<sup>rd</sup>:** "Please help us celebrate music in our church and the choirs who lead the congregation each week in music, worship and fellowship. We hope to be an additional layer of the liturgy and scriptures for each week. We are not just window dressing, but an integral part of the spiritual life at St. Mark. We are St. Mark's choirs and leaders. Thank you for the comments and smiles. We are blessed to be able to present this program and welcome anyone interested in joining us. TrebleBells and Trinity Choir are always looking to grow our ranks. If you are interested, please let any of us know. Bells meet usually Sundays after Worship (also through the summer if available) and choir meets on Thursday mornings during the choir season (only one still works) but if you are not available in the morning we can talk. If you play an instrument, please let us know. We would like to have everyone involved in some way." – *Melinda Elnaggar*

**Mother's Day Worship:** Please join us on **May 10<sup>th</sup>** as we celebrate our mothers, as well as those who mother us now and have mothered us in the past.

**Readers, Wine Servers, and Acolyte Needed:** On **May 31<sup>st</sup>**, Holy Trinity Sunday, we are looking for an Acolyte to help lead us in worship. We also need volunteers to serve wine or be lectors for several upcoming Sunday services. Please see the signups in the narthex to help out one weekend.

**Ruth's Harvest:** Individual shelf-stable microwave meals, fruit, veggies, snacks, and tuna/chicken pouches to provide food for children in need on weekends can be placed in the floor bin next to the office. Donations to Ruth's Harvest provide food to school children in need on weekends when they may not otherwise eat.

**Share Some Inspiration:** April inspiration packets are available in the narthex. These are great for your own spiritual meditation. Additionally, you can pick up an extra one to give to someone else and share your faith!

**Preschool Sub Sale!** Thanks to all who ordered. Pickup in fellowship hall be between 11am and 1pm on **April 29<sup>th</sup>**.

**Vacation Bible School:** Our VBS theme this year will be *Camping with God* and is scheduled for **July 27<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>** from 9:30am to 12noon each day. Please save the dates and help us please spread the word. We have room for 40 kids, ages 4-10, and will have crafts, games, snacks, stories, and music. Registration via St. Paul's website ([stpaulsyorkst.org](http://stpaulsyorkst.org)) will open **before May 26<sup>th</sup>** – watch our announcements for the exact date. If you'd like to help us plan, our next meeting to plan VBS will be Wednesday, **June 17<sup>th</sup>**, at 1:00pm. We'll also be looking for guides and helpers during the week of the events. If you can help, please talk to Karen Feeser or Pastor Kirk, or call the church office.

**Flat Sheets Needed:** The Sewing Group is in need of full-size new/like-new flat cotton sheets. They would like to thank those who've donated flat sheets in response to their need.

**Spring Plant Sale & Market:** St. David's UCC on Hobart Road is holding a spring event on **April 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>**. In addition to spring plants, vendors will have pottery, linens, jewelry, and flea market items for sale, and there will be soup, baked goods, breakfast sandwiches, and hot dogs. Please contact St. David's for more information, including times – 717-637-2299.

**Plant Sale at St. Mark:** The Hanover Garden Club's sale is coming up on **May 2<sup>nd</sup>** 8:00am to 1:00pm. Garden Club members will be selling plants from their own gardens and will be on hand with valuable advice!