

New year, new spiritual discipline?

There are lots of opportunities for you to study the Bible with your Saint Mark community. Try one for the new year!

**THEOLOGY, RACISM, AND CHRISTIAN PRACTICE:
How Shall We Respond?**

sponsored by: Saint Mark Presbyterian Church • The Presbyterian Outlook and National Capital Presbytery • Institute of Radical Reconciliation

More information below on this meaningful series of events happening at Saint Mark

SAINT MARK



The youth group put together 70 “cold weather care packages” for the women at the Interfaith Works Women’s Shelter

Saying Grace from Pastor Roy

Jesus went down to the river Jordan to be baptized by John the Baptist. When he came up from the water, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending upon him like a dove. Then he heard a voice: “this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” It’s a remarkable scene of the Trinity down by the riverside; the Son of God dripping wet, hearing the Father and sensing the Spirit poured upon him. Immediately following this moment, the same Spirit leads him into the wilderness where he will have claim his identity in a struggle with the devil. On Sunday January 8, we will join the Church universal in remembering this moment in Jesus’ life. We will remember our own baptism, claiming for ourselves the promise of God that we, too, are the beloved in whom God is well pleased. How on earth can we make this claim? We make it because in our baptism we have been united with Christ. This is grace. In Christ, we are the beloved of God. Our true self is coming into being throughout our lives as we let go of all that is false and receive the life of Christ. This is why Martin Luther in his darkest moments of despair and depression could cry out in faithful defiance, “*I am*

baptized!” He was remembering the eternal promise that in Christ he is the Beloved of God. Like Jesus, we have mighty struggles that threaten our identity as the Beloved. It easy to forget who you are when you are told you are sum of your failures. Like the saints that have gone on before us, we are flawed human beings on the journey of letting go. Even so, in Christ we claim the promise of the Beloved: “I am baptized.” Join us on January 8 when we remember our baptism, dedicate our lives to faithful discipleship and ordain/install our officers.

What's Happening: January & February

Jan. 8, 15, 22- Two services, Christian Formation for all ages at 9:30

Jan. 8- Ordination and Installation of new elders and deacons, 11:00

Jan. 29- One Service at 11:00 with Town Hall meeting at 9:30 (see announcement on next page)

Jan. 29 @ 3 pm- Service for Christian Unity at Trinity Lutheran Church

Feb. 5- One service at 9:30, Annual Meeting and lunch to follow. Food first Sunday, bring your food to donate to Manna Food Center!

Feb. 12, 19, 26- Two services, Christian Formation for all ages at 9:30
*Communion will be celebrated every Sunday of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany

New Year, New Spiritual Discipline: Adult Bible Study on Sunday mornings!

Are you looking for a new way to learn about and grow closer to God and your Saint Mark family in 2017? If so, come to Adult Bible Study on Sundays at 9:30 a.m. *beginning January 8*. Whether you've been reading the Bible your whole life and are looking for a new perspective or you're worried you don't know enough about the Bible and you want to learn more, this class is for you!

Each week, members of the congregation will lead an open discussion and exercise on one of the lectionary scriptures. These are the passages that are read during worship and that many children's Sunday school classes study as well. This class will offer a chance for adults to delve deeper into the texts for worship and grow together as a community of faith. We will gather weekly downstairs in the Education Building in Room 105/106.

The Covenant Bible Study series will also begin again on Monday January 9 at 7 PM. If you would like to join the group, please register with Pastor Roy Howard. pastor@saintmarkpresby.org

Annual meeting- February 5, following worship.

The Saint Mark Annual Meeting is an opportunity to hear from members of the session, the church and wider community about how Saint Mark is an important part of their life and work. It is also the

The Lai and Ferguson families helped put together beds for the new Interfaith Works Women's Shelter!



Saint Mark children and youth put on another incredible Christmas pageant!



time when the church approves the terms of call for the pastors. Please plan to attend. A lunch will be coordinated by Parish Life.

January Youth Group Schedule

8- Mission Bible study, learn about mission trips (MS and HS separate, dinner)

15- Family Sabbath Weekend, MLK weekend

22- Volunteer @ A Wider Circle, after church

29- Make "Wall of Envelopes" Fundraiser Supplies (MS and HS separate, dinner)

Join the community conversation on Jan. 29

The session has set aside five Sundays in 2017 for the congregation to gather for conversation about a variety of topics or concerns. This conversation will usually be facilitated by the pastor but the topics will emerge from the members and the common life we share in the wider community. For instance, on January 29 we will hear from the leaders who will have completed their annual retreat. There may also be those who want to discuss the cultural climate and Christian responses following the inauguration of the President. This is our opportunity to engage in civil conversation being a model for others seeking to do the same. The conversation will be Town Hall style, beginning and ending with prayer. If you have a topic you would like for the conversation, speak to Pastor Roy or Shelby.

Theology, Racism, and Christian Practice: How Shall We Respond?

See [flyer](#) on our website for more information & pricing.

Febraury 10-11 - The Origin of Race

Friday 7pm -Presentation by Dr. Willie Jennings followed by Q&A

Saturday 9am -Panel with Dr. Willie Jennings, Dr. Paul Roberts and The Reverend Denise Anderson (co-moderator of the P.C.(U.S.A))

-Conversation groups: How shall we respond?

-Future steps

March 30 - The Cross and the Lynching Tree

Thursday 7pm- Presentation by Dr. Cone with response and discussion

Registration is required. Register [here](#).

Booklovers- The Saint Mark book club

The book for February is *The Secret Chord* by Geraldine Brooks. Pastor Shelby will lead the conversation. The next meetings will be Monday, February 13, 12:30 to 2:00 and 7:00 to 8:30. The 12:30 meeting will be held in Room 109. The evening group meets in The Parlor. This is a great way to meet and catch up with other Saint Markers.

In March we will be reading **Behind Every Great Man: The Forgotten Women Behind the World's Famous and Infamous** by Marlene Wagman-Geller. The author will be skyping with us during our discussion. We have rescheduled the meeting for Sunday, March 12, at 12:30 after worship. "This witty, illuminating book reveals the remarkable stories of 40 captivating females, from Mrs. Oscar Wilde to Mrs. Jerry Garcia, who have stood behind their legendary partners, and helped to humanize them, often at the expense of their own careers, reputations and happiness." A fun read if you are a history buff or not!

New officers

Welcome the new elders and deacons for the class of 2019.

Elders: Jennifer Carr, Mary Casper, Mike Lutz and Colette Ramm. (Sharon Tarr will join the class of 2017 to fill an unexpired term.) **Deacons:** Mariechen Bresler, Li-Jen Chen, Brian Hoshaw, Nancy Shea and Brent Shoemaker.

New members

On December 11 we welcomed six new members to life at Saint Mark. Keep an eye out for them and say hello if you have not already! They are: Mason Hawk, Tom Peterson & Bridgette Vincent, Maryse Pierre-Louis, and Sunerine & Stacy-Ann Ramdial and their daughter Victoria.

Legacy Campaign update

Thank you!! Thank God! What a terrific response. Since the last update in October, we have received \$65,059.49.

Here is where we stand with LCII:

The total amount pledged was	\$577,361.30
The number of pledges was	107
The total amount received as of 12/29/16	\$505,720.81
Difference between amount received and pledged	\$ 71,640.49

Those of you who made payments during 2016 will be receiving tax statements in January. You still have until May 2017 to complete your pledges.

Downsizing: Tips for Letting GO and Moving ON

This seminar has been postponed. Stay tuned for a later date and be thinking of those in your life who could benefit from this conversation! For questions please contact Jean Muir at djmuirrn@aol.com.

Saint Mark Prayers

- For our incoming President, members of Congress and new government leaders, that they might embody Christ's call to care for the least among us.
- For Rachel Zutshi and her family.
- For Chuck Coe and his family.
- For Tom Akins.
- For the leadership team of elders, deacons and pastors, on retreat January 27-28 at Hallowood.