

# NEWSLETTER



## Saying Grace

On my desk is a quote by my professor of Church History Dr. Roberta Bondi. In her book, *To Pray and To Love*, she writes “Living in the power of the resurrection means refusing to accept that anything that is broken will ultimately remain lost.” I find this to be a powerful summons to hope during a time when much seems broken in our common life. Divisions appear sharper. Violence bursts forth with startling unpredictability and, paradoxically, regularity. There are deep sighs rising up from many of us wondering the best strategy to move forward as faithful followers of Jesus in a country that teeters in chaos. Yet, along comes this reminder to hope and a summons to live by faith in the ever-present power of the resurrection to make whole what is broken. There are other recurring signs of hope: children returning to school eager to learn, Christians returning to their congregations after summer travels eager to worship and serve, the changing of the seasons with a whiff of cool on the breeze

somehow brings a brightness of spirit. All of these signs, along with the Biblical call to hope, point to a strategy that will bring wholeness. Still it’s not easy. My other professor of theology, Jurgen Moltmann, wrote in his classic text, *The Theology of Hope*, ““Faith, wherever it develops into hope, causes not rest but unrest, not patience but impatience. It does not calm the unquiet [human] heart.... Those who hope in Christ can no longer put up with reality as it is, but begin to suffer under it, to contradict it. Peace with God means conflict with the world, for the goad of the promised future stabs inexorably into the flesh of every unfulfilled present.” As we begin enter into the autumn, I pray that you will be filled with hope and encouraged to be faithful and courageous in these days. Moreover, may be the beauty of creation fill your hearts and minds with wonder and gratitude. Grace and peace,  
Pastor Roy



## GIVING IS RELATIONAL

The Stewardship Team is taking a new approach in its annual drive to inform members about giving and to encourage their generosity. Understanding that giving is relational not only with God but with our fellow givers, the Team will be meeting with existing groups like the choir, the Elders and Deacons, the Bible study group, and other groups that relate to one another within the broader congregation. The team will also conduct a Sunday service with all members November 4 with a format similar to the Legacy 3 Capital Campaign meeting last January. A video, and remarks by members of the team will be followed by a question and answer segment with members.

Consecration Sunday is November 11 and the team hopes all members will feel more connected and better informed when they present their pledges that day.

The team members are Marilyn Andersen, Nathan Brown, Lisa Freeman, Rachel Kaufmann and Edward Lee along with Stewardship Leader Dick Pavlin and Pastor Roy Howard. Mark your calendar now to attend November 4 as well as October 28 when Roy will lead the service with a video on the meaning of generosity.



## SAVE THE DATE: NOVEMBER 18

Katharine Hayhoe, Ph.D., accomplished atmospheric scientist who studies climate change, is giving a free public lecture at Saint Mark at 7:00 PM. She studies why it matters to us here and now, and is best known for bridging the broad, deep gap between scientists and Christians. Free tickets will be available soon.





## RELATIONSHIP SUNDAY – OCT 7, 2018

Ever wonder what another church member has experienced, how their experiences have shaped them – and if they might have some of the same faith needs you have? On Sunday, Oct 7, you'll have an opportunity to talk with another member about those things and perhaps others. The Session is hosting Relationship Sunday, a pairing of members with each other to spend a half hour or so talking and listening. The goal of these 1 on 1 meetings is to become more aware of how we can better love one another as Jesus called us to do. Our purpose is not to achieve an extraordinary social experience but rather to develop our spiritual bond thru Christ. The Session experienced the value of these 1 on 1 relational meetings in its retreat last year and the spiritual bond that developed among members. As a result, the Session invites you to set aside now an hour after worship Sunday, Oct 7. Come and experience the value of being more connected to others spiritually in fellowship with Christ.



## CHOIR UPDATE

All are welcomed to sing in the choir: The Chancel Choir always welcomes new members to join this rewarding ministry. We meet each Thursday evening for rehearsal from 7:30 to 9:00 PM, and sing every Sunday at the 11am service (9:30 on the first Sundays of the month). The group currently consists of 17 members, and is lead by professional section leaders.

The more the merrier! Please contact Jeff Doenges if you have any questions:  
[jeffdmusic@gmail.com](mailto:jeffdmusic@gmail.com)





## BOOKLOVERS OCTOBER 8 1:00 PM

The Road Not Taken: Finding America in the Poem Everyone Loves and Almost Everyone Gets Wrong by David Orr

“The Road Not Taken” has confused audiences literally from the beginning. The difficulty starts, appropriately enough, with its title. Search-engine data indicates that searches for “Frost” and “Road Less Traveled” (or “Travelled”) are extremely common. The poem isn’t “The Road less Traveled.” It’s “The Road Not Taken.” The title isn’t about what he did; it’s about what he didn’t do. Or is it? “David Orr has written the best popular explanation to date of the most popular poem in American history.” Alison Bennett will lead us in talking about making choices.



## LEGACY CAMPAIGN 3

We praise God for inspiring the generosity of our congregation to pledge \$379,675 to repair and maintain our facilities. This is almost \$30,000 over our campaign goal of \$350,000. In addition we will have 10% or \$38,000 for local and global mission projects. Thank you for keeping your pledges current and using your pink envelopes. It makes it so much easier for the counters.



## NOTES FROM THE SESSION

Saint Mark Session met in June and August over the summer. We discussed issues of Personnel as we planned for the maternity leave of Pastor Shelby and the time off for Pastor Roy. Fortunately and by God's grace there were no pastoral issues during their absences.

The Session prayed for our Youth as they traveled for mission in Appalachia and Massanetta and deepened their faith at Montreat. Throughout the summer Session members served Communion during our worship services on Sundays. Ministry teams met to further the work of Parish Life, Property, Mission, Christian Formation, Finance, Stewardship, Welcoming and Worship.

We approved the Statement below regarding immigration in the United States.

Saint Mark Presbyterian Church seeks to be an open and inclusive community of Christian faith pursuing the love of God and neighbor. Our neighbor includes the men, women, and children who are desperately fleeing their countries for the chance of a better life in the United States. When the government establishes a policy that conflicts with God's call to love our neighbor, as the zero tolerance policy of President Trump's immigration policy does, we must respond with fierce opposition.

We reject the interpretation that the Bible and the Christian faith defends any policy that forcibly separates families and dehumanizes them. The Bible is clear that we are required to care for the vulnerable stranger. Who is more vulnerable than a child trying to escape violence and poverty? Jesus, who was taken as a child across borders in search of safety, calls us to love the suffering stranger.

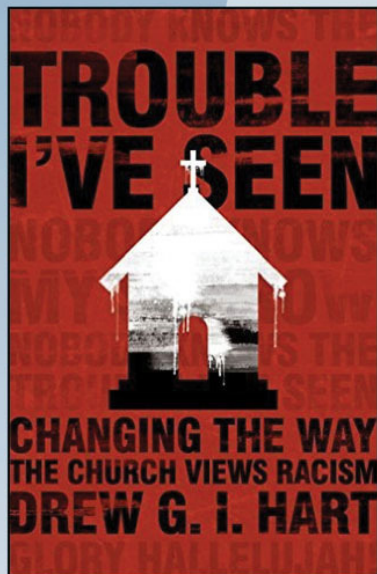
We call upon the government to end the zero tolerance policy that has torn apart thousands of families in recent weeks, to act quickly to reunite parents and children that have been separated, and to facilitate communication between parents in custody and their children until they are reunited.

In Leviticus 19: 33-34, it is written, "When a foreigner resides among you in your land, you must not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners..." We commit ourselves to fight for humane and sensible laws and policies that provide respect for all immigrant communities, grounded in the principles of Christian faith.

June 26, 2018

Faithfully,  
Mary Casper, Clerk of Session





FREE! Thursday, October 4, 2018

1:00 – 3:00 pm WORKSHOP

7:30 pm LECTURE

Saint Mark Presbyterian Church  
10701 Old Georgetown Road  
Rockville, MD 20852

RSVP: <https://theology-racism-and-christian-practice-continue-saint-mark.pushpayevents.com/booking/attendees/new>

Please attend our continuing series on Theology, Racism and Christian Practice.

# DREW HART

—teacher, author, activist—

**Thursday, October 4, 2018.**

**Church leaders workshop: 1:00–3:00 pm • Public lecture: 7:30 pm**

Drew G. I. Hart is an author, activist, and professor of theology in the Bible and Religion department at Messiah College, with ten years of pastoral experience. His work has also included working for an inner-city after school program for black and brown middle school boys, delivering lectures and leading anti-racism workshops, collaborating with faith-based organizers in his neighborhood, and doing a broad range of public theology. *Trouble I've Seen* utilizes personal and everyday stories, Jesus-shaped theological ethics, and anti-racism frameworks to transform the church's understanding and witness.

**Both events are designed to address ways the church can counter the sin of racism with practices that embody the story of Jesus.**



## DREW HART EVENT

Saint Mark Friends and Members:  
Mark your calendars and register  
now at this link: [bit.ly/2MZGIw6](http://bit.ly/2MZGIw6)

This is another workshop-  
presentation in the continuing  
series: Theology, Racism and  
Christian Practice. The workshop

is open to everyone, not only  
pastors. Previous speakers have  
included James Cone, Willie  
Jennings, Paul Roberts and Denise  
Anderson.

[Co-sponsored by Saint Mark,  
National Capital Presbytery and  
The Presbyterian Outlook.]

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