

NEWSLETTER



Saying Grace

Advent is the most strange and beautiful season of the Christian year. It's strange because, with images that shake us awake, it points to the second coming of Jesus Christ to fulfill the promise of God's reign. It's beautiful because the music and scriptures lift our hearts, stir us to hope and challenge us to be alert, open for the coming of Christ. The four Sundays of Advent focus on waiting, anticipating, yearning and hoping for God. As such the season of Advent forms our hearts and minds around the hope of Jesus Christ rather than any hope in this world. The Church formed by the deep hope of Jesus Christ – rather than the passing hopes of this broken world - is resilient and robust, capable of bearing witness to the presence of God now, while waiting for the fullness of God's promise. Sometimes Advent is called the "Apocalyptic" season that reveals what is to come. Others speak of "the already and the not yet", referring the presence of Christ now and yet still to come in fulfillment of God's

promise. We live in this space of time – the already, and the not yet – yearning always for the God who is present and yet coming. The theologian Karl Barth said Advent is time we are always living: waiting, hoping and yearning for God. There is a shortage of hope these days as we bow under the weight of mass shootings, political turmoil, threatened populations and shattered lives. Advent comes to us with the message that Jesus Christ is the hope of the world. We do not rest in ourselves alone; we rest in God day by day, in the hope for the final day when all shall be made new. This is a counter culture message and often is hard for us to hear, yet it is the gospel and by it we can be God's people for a weary world. Christian hope is grounded in God. Together let us enter this season with our hearts open to Christ and ready to receive the gifts of God for the people of God.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Roy



LEGACY CAMPAIGN

The Legacy 3 Campaign team is grateful for the generosity of all members who pledged, exceeding our goal of \$350,000 by \$30,675 for a total of 103 pledges for \$380,675!

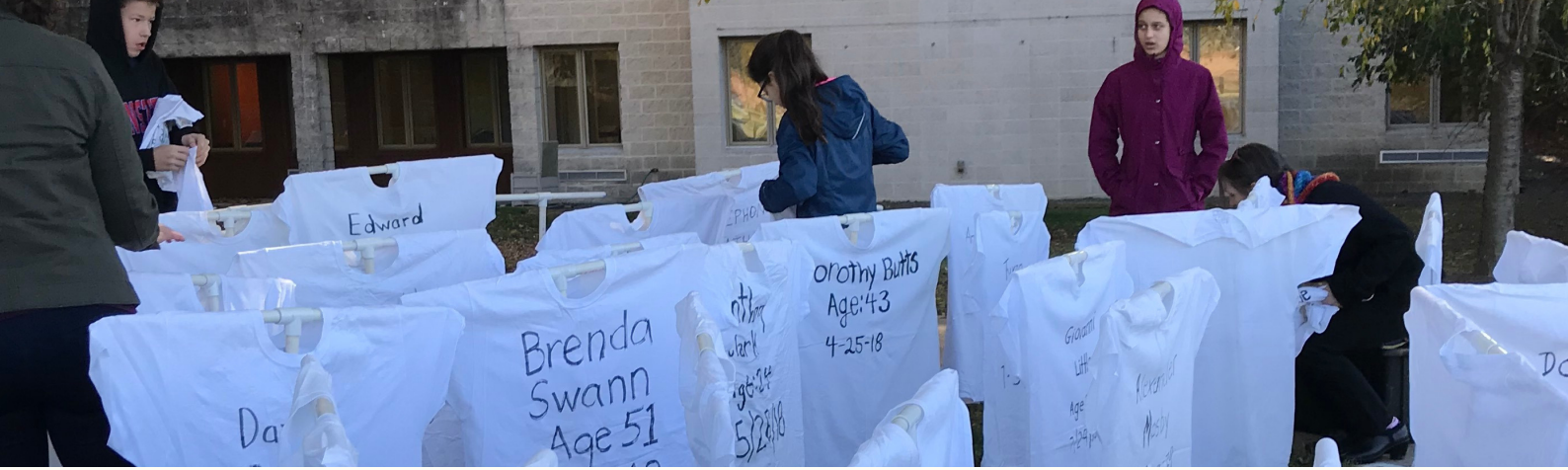
We also want to thank the 16 who have already paid their entire 3 year pledge, as well as those 23 who have completed their first year's portion of their pledges, even though the first year is only half complete, for a total of \$68,220.

The first year goes from 6/1/2018 to 5/31/2019, however if you want to receive credit for your 2018 taxes, you should make your payments as soon as possible. We note that 31 pledges have not yet been credited with any payments, but you have until 5/31/2021 to complete your pledge. It is very encouraging to all of us to have such dedication and commitment to 'Growing our Roots, Securing God's House' the theme of Legacy 3.



SEEKING TEMPORARY CHOIR MEMBERS

Would you like to sing in the choir for Christmas Eve (and possibly Advent), but don't have the time to join the choir year-round? Then, please consider this possibility. The Chancel Choir welcomes you to sing on a temporary basis (but of course, you're welcomed to stay after, as well). We rehearse every Thursday from 7:30 to 9 PM (except Thanksgiving), and will sing every Sunday. Please contact Jeff or a choir member if you have questions.



FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE: BY LOVE, SERVE ONE ANOTHER

Forman Christian College is an independent research liberal arts university located in Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan founded in 1864 by American Presbyterian missionary Dr. Charles William Forman along with Presbyterian missionaries, Dr. Rhea and Margaret Ewing, who were the great aunt and uncle of Gordon Hawk, beloved spouse of Page Hawk of Saint Mark. Initially named as Mission College, the name was changed to Forman Christian College in honor of Dr. Forman. Ewing Hall, a dormitory where many have lived, is a testament to the Ewing service.

The university is administered by the Presbyterian Church and follows an American-style curriculum. In memory of Gordon and honor of Page, Saint Mark through the Global Mission Ministry has contributed \$1,000 to Forman for the building of a new Student Center with a digital library. To quote from Page Hawk, "Little did those missionaries of long ago realize what an important contribution they were making to the promotion of peace in today's world". The

college's motto is: By love, serve one another.

The college remained financially autonomous until 1960 when the Pakistani government began annual grants to the college for its nursing program. The college was nationalized from 1972 until 2003 when the control was returned to the Presbyterian Church. Ambassador Akbar Ahmed, the current Chair of Islamic Studies at American University studied at Forman and lived in Ewing Hall.

Forman is also known for its noted alumni and staff, including Nobel laureate Arthur Compton, former Indian Prime Minister I.K. Gujral, former Pakistani Presidents Farooq Leghari and Pervez Musharraf, and activist Eqbal Ahmad. It now has over 7,000 students, including Christians and Muslims. The college runs a \$1 million scholarship aid fund.

Submitted by Ellen C. Kiel GMM



SAINT MARK GLOBAL MISSION MINISTRY

Recently GMM allocated the following funds for Disaster Relief from hurricanes and earthquakes:

\$2,000 to Globalgiving for Indonesia earthquake. Globalgiving funds local Indonesian projects who are doing disaster work on several of the islands. Two local groups will address basic humanitarian needs.

\$2,000 to Habitat for Humanity in Puerto Rico to rebuild and build housing. Habitat is quite active in Puerto Rico.

\$1,000 to Salvation Army for Hurricanes Florence and Michael in Florida, North Carolina and other areas devastated by the hurricanes.

Also, GMM voted to provide a Congregational Christmas Giving Tree for Wings Program in Haiti and to allocate \$500 from GMM to Wings as a Christmas gift for operations.

Submitted by Ellen C. Kiel, GMM



GREENING THE SANCTUARY

Advent will be here before you know it! Mark your calendar for November 25 to stay after worship and help decorate! This holiday preparation activity will involve some folks on ladders, so it's best suited for older kids and adult helpers.

