

Connections



Rector's Reflections

The Rev. Brian Shoda

We are all in the mood for some warm weather and bright sunshine. May is a month that usually gives us both. I think of May as a gentle month, but that might be because Mother's Day falls on the second weekend. Did you know that the celebration of Mother's Day actually originated in West Virginia? You can Google it.

The important May event in the church is the Feast of Pentecost. This is the birthday of the Church. From Pentecost forward the Apostles knew who Jesus was and what they were to do about His message in service to His kingdom. We need to rededicate ourselves to the service of Christ and help bring His message of hope and forgiveness to this world.

May is not a gentle month in the history of the world. Many wars were in full swing in May as the weather was nice and the mud had dried up. So many people have died during this 'campaign season' month. This is also the month that Communists celebrate with their May Day parades and in Mexico they celebrate Cinco De Mayo and their independence. May definitely has its bloody side.

May is also a month for new beginnings. Many weddings are celebrated in this month. Graduations are held and many graduates begin to look for work and as they move into a new stage in their life. On a more routine level people are working on their yards, planting gardens, and tending to flower beds. You can see new growth beginning all around us.

I pray that May will be a month of new life for you. That it will be a *springtime of the heart*. We can flourish in the love of Christ if we allow it to grow within us. Take time to pray and think about where you are in your life and what season you have entered into. We can all use some gentle quiet time, a time to grow fresh again, a renewal in our hearts. The month, like our lives, will pass quickly if we are not careful. You don't want to miss the beauty and meaning of spring that is given to our souls.

God Bless! *Fr. Brian*

Diocese of West Virginia
Sandscrest Conference and Retreat Center said goodbye to Sarah Lydick after her many years' of faithful service as director.

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God."

1 John 4:7

St. Mark's
Come discover treasures (and take a few home) at the indoor yard sale and lunch on May 4 and 5 at the church.

Our legacy to future generations

by Sally Berman

St. Mark's is an essential part of all of our lives. It is our spiritual home that both nurtures us and challenges us to go out into the world to "love and serve the Lord." As something we treasure, we want to make sure that this parish thrives to enrich generations to come. As parishioners, it is important that we each explore ways to ensure that St. Mark's is on strong financial footing now and in the future.

"Planned Giving" is the term used to describe various ways to help St. Mark's ministry continue for many years. In general planned gifts are:

- * Bequests in a will
- * Life Income Gifts such as a pooled income fund or a charitable gift annuity
- * Gifts of special assets such as real estate, stock, and life insurance.

Helpful information is available on the Episcopal Church USA website at <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/give/planned>. Tax accountants are especially helpful when developing a personal giving plan.

The easiest, most straightforward way to accomplish Planned Giving is through a bequest in your will. Unfortunately 50 to 70 percent of church members die without a will, leaving the state to divide their assets. A bequest can be a set amount of money or a percentage of your estate.

A legacy gift to St. Mark's is a great way to show future generations what a blessing St. Mark's has been in your life.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church

The Diocese of West Virginia

The Rt. Rev. W. Michie Klusmeyer,
Bishop of West Virginia

Clergy and staff

The Rev. D. Brian Shoda, *Rector*
Margaret Place, *Organist*
Kim Kelly, *Sexton*

Vestry and officers

Arlene Verge, *Senior Warden*
Judy McBee, *Junior Warden*
Sandy Buzzerd, *Treasurer*
Susie Barker, Beth Curtin, Melinda Golden, Kim Kelly, Linda Lockhart, Swanee Shedd, Cindy Stull

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Upcoming dates to remember

May 4 & 5 (Friday & Saturday) – Indoor yard sale

May 6 (Sunday) – Margaret Gordon's birthday! 

May 12 (Saturday) – Dave Vetter's birthday! 

May 13 (Sunday) – Susan Thomas's birthday! 

May 18 (Friday) – St. Mark's volunteers at Starting Points Community Kitchen. Contact: Arlene Verge.

May 19 (Saturday) – Sally Berman's birthday! 

May 20 (Sunday) – Pentecost

May 28 (Monday) – Mike Murphy's birthday! 

May 29 (Tuesday) – Katie Redmond's birthday! 



Remembering **Dolores McKinley Strock**

Dolores was born an Episcopalian, in Hancock, and attended St. Thomas church for about 80 years before becoming a beloved member of our congregation. Her mother was in the choir there for 75 years; from the time she was 14-years old through the age of 89. Dolores played the organ at St. Thomas for almost 18 years.

Her Hancock grade school is now the town meeting hall. Her favorite subjects were always grammar, spelling, and anything having to do with English.

At 17 Dolores left Hancock to continue her education in the 3-year nursing program at Memorial Hospital in Cumberland, Maryland. After finishing nursing school and becoming an RN a friend introduced her to Harry. Their ensuing courtship seemed a bit too long for Dolores so at one point she went to Fort Wayne, Indiana and worked as a private duty nurse to encourage him to move their relationship along. Before too long she and Harry were married.

When Harry and Dolores settled down in Hancock, Harry bought a store from Mrs. Steiner and for the next 50 years it was their livelihood. Their new home was located above the store, on Pennsylvania Avenue, the same home Dolores lives in today.

Throughout their life together, Harry and Dolores loved to play word games and especially Scrabble. Dolores also wrote poetry and comedy skits. For many years she performed her skits during intermission at the Miss Hancock pageant. In the beginning,

she wrote and performed them alone. Her costumes transformed her as she impersonated Phyllis Diller and others. She later added Harry to her productions as her "straight man". He was a willing participant and even allowed her to dress him as a woman for one extravaganza.

Many years ago Dolores was found to have colon cancer. After surgery came radiation therapy. She credits her very skilled and able doctor with saving her life.

Dolores relates her many blessings without hesitation. Her parents, grandparents, children, all her family, and Harry ("the greatest blessing of my life") are treasured and remembered with great love. She describes her daughter Becky as "my old faithful" and relays stories of her small and enormous acts of kindness. Her son, Harry, is also a great support to her.

She remains a faithful reader of the daily Hagerstown and weekly Hancock papers. She spends most of the day in her kitchen and lining up a tasty snack of pretzels before eating them is an important part of every day. Tootsie Rolls and any other kind of chocolate are also favorites.

Leaving St. Thomas church was not without hardship, but what she has found at St. Mark's has made it all worthwhile. She cherishes all the wonderful people who have made her feel so at home. Even a short conversation with Dolores reveals her spunky nature. We give thanks for her presence among us.

This story was originally included in the March 2017 issue. Dolores's recent passing from this life to the next changes our relationship with her, but it certainly doesn't end it. Her wit and childlike enthusiasm will be long remembered. She was a joy to know and her life a gift.

Vestry Update – April 8 meeting

Arlene Verge, Susie Barker, Beth Curtin, Melinda Golden, Kim Kelly, Linda Lockhart, Swanee Shedd, Cindy Stull, Father Brian Shoda, and Bishop Michie Klusmeyer were present at the meeting.

The Bishop's visit preempted the usual work of the vestry and the meeting focused primarily on the diocese and general matters facing our congregation.

Matters addressed by Bishop Klusmeyer:

- Assistant Bishop Mark Van Koevering has left our diocese to become Bishop Provisional of The Episcopal Diocese of Lexington in Kentucky.
- Finances of Peterkin Camp and Conference Center
- The possibility of hiring to fill positions vacated by Donald Vinson, Canon for Mission and Transition and Faith Perrizo, Canon for Ministry Development and Transition.
- The Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music for the Episcopal Church is moving forward with prayer book changes. It is expected that a supplement or alternative to the current prayer book will be offered sometime in the next three to five years. The expectation is that each congregation will decide how and if they will use the revisions.

Matters addressed by Father Brian:

- The stained glass rejuvenation fundraising project
- New members to St. Mark's, deaths of some of our longtime members, and the loss of members through transfer out of the area
- The outstanding community service of the St. Mark's congregation

Questions asked:

- Is it possible for us to use elements from the Reserved Sacrament at a Sunday service when a priest is not available? Bishop Klusmeyer explained that this practice is forbidden by canon.

