

# Connections



## Rector's Reflections

The Rev. Brian Shoda

Happy Fourth of July...

This month we celebrate the birth of our nation with fireworks and outdoor cookouts. We need to remember that the freedoms we have come at a great cost to so many people. We celebrate and honor them for their sacrifice and hard work. However, these people worked, served, and some died so that we can enjoy our freedoms, so take time to have a hot dog, swim in the pool, or just visit freely with families and friends. Enjoy the holiday.

Flooding...

As most of you know we had a terrible flood in our undercroft last month. The damage was extensive, but at least no one was hurt. The town's sewer system could not handle all the water coming into it. It over-filled with storm water and backed up, some of it into our undercroft. All of this caused an urgent need for us to dry, clean, and sanitize the facility. It will take time to get things restored back into order. We are very thankful that we have coverage with the church insurance company. They have been very helpful to us and are working to restore and refinish our undercroft.

The silver lining of the event was the way that everyone stepped in to try and stop the flood and then to save as much stuff as possible. I felt honored to work with them and I saw the life and vitality of a healthy parish community. Together we will have a bright future and we will get back on our feet once again.

Stained Glass...

We are also working on the restoration and preservation of our stained glass windows. The project is expected to begin the second half of the month of July. We continue to raise money for

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### The Episcopal Church

The first Episcopal church-wide appeal is taking place to support ministries that provide vital services throughout the nation and the world.

"The most terrible poverty is loneliness and the feeling of being unloved"

Mother Teresa

### St. Mark's

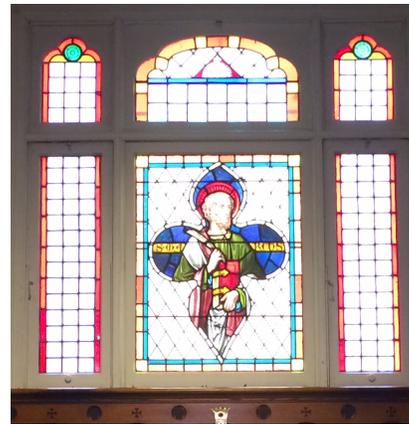
Window restoration work is scheduled to begin Monday, July 16.

## Window Restoration Update



The contract with Epiphany Studios of Front Royal, Virginia has been signed and beginning payments have been made. Restoration and protection of our stained glass windows is scheduled to begin on Monday, July 16.

This much needed and exciting project is underway and still in need of donations. Please consider donating to help fully fund the work to restore and protect our beautiful stained glass windows.



### 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

**June 2** (Monday) – Vestry meeting

**July 4** (Wednesday) – Margaret Place's birthday!



**July 5** (Thursday) – Dennis Curtin's birthday!



**July 16** (Monday) – Window restoration begins

**July 18** (Wednesday) – Beth Curtin's birthday!



**July 20** (Friday) – St. Mark's volunteers at Starting Points Community Kitchen, contact: Arlene Verge

**July 28** (Saturday) – Ron Barker's birthday!



**July 30** (Monday) – Beverley McNeill's birthday!





## Getting to know you

**Sandy Buzzerd**

Sandy describes herself as a typical Berkeley Springs person. She was born and raised in Morgan County and with the exception of time away at college she has lived here her entire life.

Sandy met her husband, Jim when she was 12-years old and he was 14. They will celebrate their 42<sup>nd</sup> wedding anniversary later this year. It was their wedding that introduced Sandy to St. Mark's.

While growing up, her family bounced around from church to church. The churches were mostly of the Pentecostal persuasion and Sandy describes these experiences as fearful. Her first service at St. Mark's felt right. She relaxed into the ritual, liturgy, and organization of the Episcopal tradition and continues to be drawn to it today.

In 1893 Jim's great-grandfather started the Morgan Messenger and it's been in the family ever since. Sandy joined the staff as a part-time employee when her father-in-law decided that he needed someone in the family who knew how to use a computer to be involved in the business. Her part-time status lasted about 2 weeks and she's been working full-time ever since. She now serves as managing editor and averages about 50 hours each week. Largely due to what she describes as a very good staff she is able to travel to Myrtle Beach for several days each month to check in on Cassie, one of her two daughters. Shelly is nearby in northern Virginia.

After Jim and Sandy were married she soon realized that if she wanted to spend more time with him, she had better learn to golf. Golf is now a favorite activity. Sandy plays a couple times a week when the weather allows.

In her time at St. Mark's Sandy has served on the vestry for 20 years and that does not include her current service to the vestry as treasurer. She is also a Chalice Bearer and a member of the Altar Guild. In the past she taught the older children in Sunday School and enjoyed the opportunity it presented for her to learn more about the Episcopal Church. Through all of this, it may be her service as Senior Warden in the first decade of 2000 that stands out most of all.

St. Mark's found itself in the position of no longer having financial resources to support a full-time priest. At the encouragement of the bishop, Sandy worked through the obstacles and logistics of partnering with Mt. Zion to fulfill the needs of both congregations. Her tenacity and quiet confidence were a gift to the church then as they are now. While Sandy describes herself as *typical* we all know that is far from the case. She enriches our Worship, our community, and our life together. We thank God for all she brings and shares.

## Do

Be attentive to what it is that God is asking you to be or to do today. And trust that your weakness presents no obstacle to God. Do what you can. God will accomplish the rest.

-Br. David Vryhof  
Society of Saint John the Evangelist

## Undercroft Update

The recent flash flood affected many roads, bridges, and homes throughout Berkeley Springs. St. Mark's took in 17 inches of sewage water resulting in much destruction.

A parishioner bucket brigade, led by Father Brian, ended their desperate cleanup efforts as the water was rising faster than they could bail. Thankfully, items from the lower kitchen cabinets were removed to higher ground.

Blue Ridge Property Restoration Company has been working in the undercroft since June 6 drying out and removing unsalvageable and infected items. Refrigerators, ovens, lower kitchen cabinets, lower drywall, items left on the floor, all floors, and the wood framing around entrance doors have all been removed.

Our insurance coverage required a \$1,000 deductible and an adjuster is working closely with Blue Ridge as the work is done. The replacement process will begin as soon as germicidal spray is applied and final approval comes from our insurance carrier. We are hopeful that this will not take too long.

This is the second destructive flood in 5 years with other minimal flooding periodically. The vestry will be working on solutions to this reoccurring problem and possible professional assistance. Preventative maintenance to eliminate the chance of future flooding is the goal. Any suggestions will be greatly appreciated.



## Rector's Reflections – continued

the work and we invite all people to consider a donation to help pay for this work. When I look at all these exciting projects, I know that we need to thank God, even for the bad things like the flood, because we have a strong family and this is an exciting moment in our parish history. God is good all the time; all the time God is good.

God Bless! *Fr. Brian*