

Reflections

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Meet Miss Vivian

The first time I met Miss Vivian she was volunteering as an assistant in Children's Ministry. The group of 10-12 children ranging in age from 3rd grade to 8th grade was gathered together to practice puppetry. The group did not have a classroom for meeting, so they used the hallway to practice. Active does not come close to describing this group of children. A stern voice and a firm hand were needed to maintain any type of order. There were strict rules about handling the puppets and clear guidance on how to practice. For 2 hours I watched Miss Vivian assist the leader by answering questions, guiding children to appropriate behavior and helping them focus their energy on the task at hand. Miss Vivian was a prayer warrior and she prayed with the team as they began and ended practice. She helped serve the snack and drink during a break in practice.

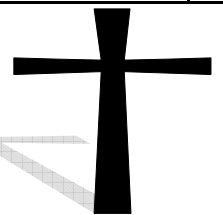
What I have just described Miss Vivian doing during these practices with the children is not anything unique, unusual, or out of the ordinary for any volunteer in Children's Ministry. So let me tell you why you need to meet Miss Vivian.

- * **Miss Vivian was 70+ years old.**
- * **Miss Vivian suffered from Multiple Sclerosis and walked with a cane.**
- * **Miss Vivian was blind and depended on others to be her eyes.**

Nothing kept Miss Vivian from serving her Lord. NOTHING! I watched as she made it to every prayer meeting prior to Sunday worship services, every Bible Study, every leadership meeting, and all worship services. She volunteered to do whatever her frail body allowed.

The last time I saw Miss Vivian, she was completely paralyzed from MS. I was taking my turn visiting her and feeding her lunch at the nursing home. We talked; she had not lost any of her wit and wisdom. I fed her, my son played his viola for her and my daughter helped adjust the TV station for her. But before we left, Miss Vivian again served us. She prayed with and for me and my family.

That is how Miss Vivian spent her last days serving. She prayed. She



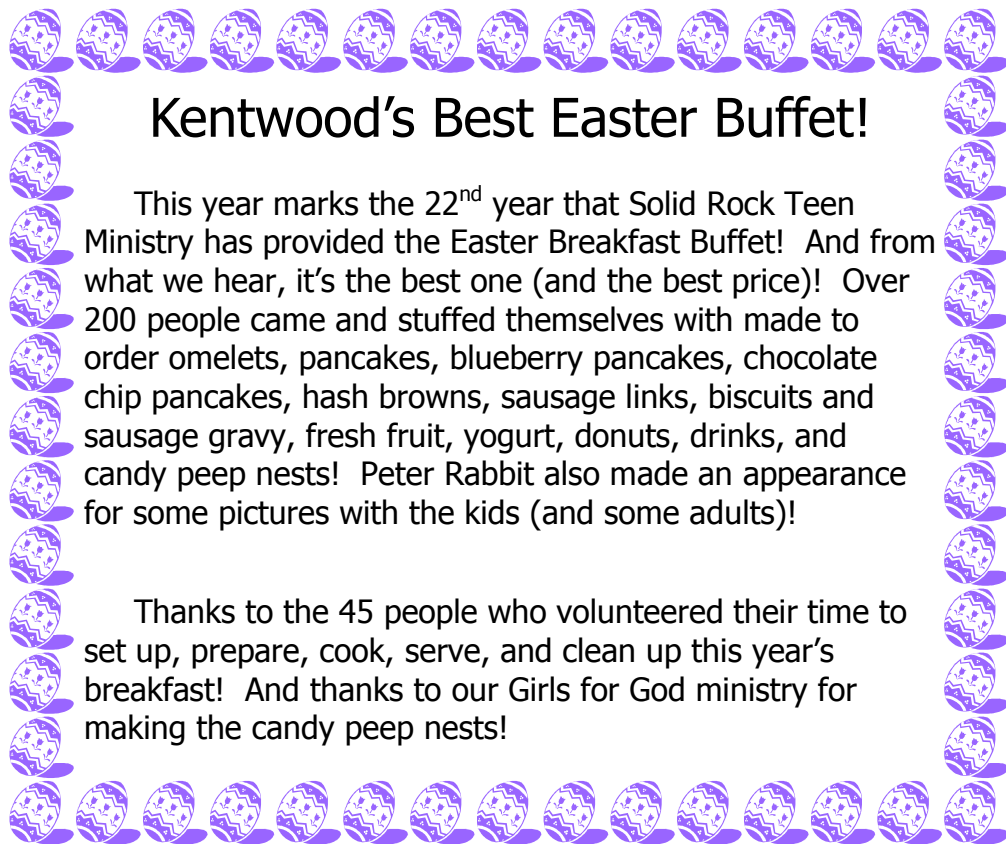
A monthly publication reflecting on past events and promoting upcoming events in the St. Mark faith community.

St. Mark Lutheran Church

prayed for everyone and everything! Even as she lay paralyzed and blind, she served the Kingdom by praying.

I'm not sure what made me think of Miss Vivian and her faith recently, but her witness and example is worth remembering and sharing. So many times we think or say, "I can't" or "I'm not good at that." But Miss Vivian reminds me that "God Can" through us, if we but offer whatever we have for His service.

Chris Stodola, Director Children's Ministry



Kentwood's Best Easter Buffet!

This year marks the 22nd year that Solid Rock Teen Ministry has provided the Easter Breakfast Buffet! And from what we hear, it's the best one (and the best price)! Over 200 people came and stuffed themselves with made to order omelets, pancakes, blueberry pancakes, chocolate chip pancakes, hash browns, sausage links, biscuits and sausage gravy, fresh fruit, yogurt, donuts, drinks, and candy peep nests! Peter Rabbit also made an appearance for some pictures with the kids (and some adults)!

Thanks to the 45 people who volunteered their time to set up, prepare, cook, serve, and clean up this year's breakfast! And thanks to our Girls for God ministry for making the candy peep nests!

Remembering...

I am writing this on an airplane. Laurie and I are on our way to California to see the kids - grand and otherwise. Hopefully we will have some quality time with them and get to share their life and experiences.

For over ten year now it has been our experience to get to know you better - to share your life and experiences. Many of those have been pleasant and delightful. Some have been of the other variety. There have been good times as we celebrated birth and baptisms. There have been good times planning weddings. There have been times when the family gathered to remember a life that has now ended.

At times we gathered on a Sunday morning in a hot sanctuary - maybe that won't happen anymore with the air-conditioning - to worship. We sang together and prayed together and looked at God's Word together. Sometimes the weather outside was so nasty, I wondered if anyone would even show up. Sometimes the weather outside was so beautiful, I wondered if anyone would show up. But we did, Sunday after Sunday, to hear the Good News about Jesus and His love for us.

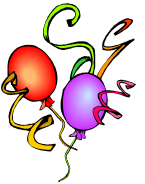
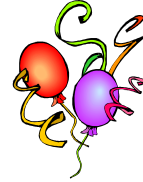
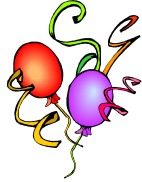
Those are the times I remember most. I love to gather together with you and worship. I appreciate your care for one another as I have seen you deal with the uniqueness of our Bethesda friends. You have handled them with care and compassion. I have seen you give the hugs when you knew that someone needed one. I have seen you listen when a friend needed to unburden.

Through it all I saw God's work in you. That's what makes my position the best one in the whole world. I get to see you living your faith in the little things and in the big. It's been great!

Lloyd Carr, former coach of the Michigan Wolverines football team, said it is great to be able to retire when you still love doing what you are doing. That is the way I feel. I love doing what I am doing - I just don't have the energy to do it at the level I know it should be done anymore.

I look forward to the times that we will still have to gather in the beautiful sanctuary of St. Mark to worship together. It doesn't get any better than that! - Pastor Tom Meyer

May Birthdays



What's His Name?

I corrected a religion worksheet and wrote the grade at the top of the page. I quickly glanced at the space for the name and noticed that the student had written "Jesus". I knew whose paper it was and decided I would ask if he was trying to be cute. I gave him the paper, and he looked at it. Josh just laughed at himself and said he really didn't mean to do that. He was in a hurry, it was religion class, and the names are quite similar. I laughed and told him I was glad he got 100%..... Jesus wouldn't get anything less. An innocent mistake that packs an important message.



Consider these two passages from Scripture: Acts 4:12...*Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven to men by which we must be saved.* Philippians 2:9&10...*Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

We have the privilege (and responsibility) to speak the name of Jesus, to pray in the name of Jesus, to glorify the name of Jesus each and every day here as part of our school ministry. What a blessing! But, of course, it's not limited to our school ministry. This is the privilege, and responsibility, of every believer. And, yes, what a blessing!

In the meaning to the Second Article of the Apostles' Creed, Martin Luther states... "[Jesus] has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness."

It says in 1 John 3:1, *How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called the children of God! And that is what we are! As Christians, we bear the name of Christ Jesus. We belong to Him. It's no mistake. Let's lift His name together, let's confess together that Jesus Christ is Lord so that every knee should bow and all glory, honor, and praise be given to Him. Amen!*

Joel Bahr, Principal

“Worship for Shut-Ins” - Sunday Mornings, 11:30am

(Channel 54, DISH Channel 54, Comcast Channel 21, Direct TV Channel 377)

May 1 - 1 Peter:3-9 - "A Living Hope" *by Rev. Paul E. Shoemaker, Emanuel Lutheran Church~New Haven, IN*

The resurrection of Jesus proclaims His victory and the victory He won for us. Trials in life help us to focus on that which is truly important "The salvation of (our) souls. (v.9)."

May 8 - 1 Peter 1:22-25 - "Hold Fast to the Word" *by Rev. Dr. Walter A. Maier, III, Concordia Theological*

Seminary~Fort Wayne, IN I. Through the Word we have spiritual life. II. Through the Word we have strength for godly living. III. Through the Word we have comfort and guidance, and everlasting life.

May 15 - Psalm 23 - "I Shall Not Want" *by Rev. Daniel J. Brege, St. Paul Lutheran Church~Decatur, IN*

Trusting in his Good Shepherd, the Psalmist begins by confessing, "I shall not want." The remainder of Psalm 23 explains how our Good Shepherd provides for our needs and wants. He ultimately provides the eternal mansions, in which we will dwell forever.

May 22 - John 14:1-3 - "Don't Let Your Hearts be Troubled" *by Rev. Karl Frincke, Concordia*

Lutheran Church (retired)~Fort Wayne, IN While there may be many things that trouble us, including dying and death, we need not be troubled over them. Jesus meets us in trouble with His presence now and forever.

May 29 - John 14:1-3 - "Christ in You" *by Rev. James L. Elsner, Prince of Peace~Hudson, IN*

Our risen Lord and Savior Jesus reassures us of the close intimate relationship He has with every believer.



Christ is Alive and Well at St. Mark

“What is a church?” Now that seems like an easy question, the sort of question one might answer in a simple sentence or two. “A church is a building in which Christians meet for worship,” is one obvious possibility. “A church is a group of Christians who gather for religious purposes” is another. These sentences aren't bad for quick answers, but they speak only to the visible church as an institutional body where the Gospel is preached and the sacraments are administered. However, it does not speak to the invisible church that is only seen by God who has access to the hearts of his true followers. Unfortunately, the visible church can have members who are not true believers but merely come for show, out of habit, or simply because there might be a God.

Mahatma Gandhi once said: “I like your Christ; I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ.” This view of Christians is shared by many non-believers and I believe speaks to the visible church and may explain the skepticism that many people have in Christianity, because they do not see the fruits of the Holy Spirit in the lives of some Christians. The Apostle Paul states in **Galatians 5:22-23** “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control: against such there is no law.” (NIV) When these spiritual attributes are not exhibited by Christians, we can see the growth in skepticism that can lead people to turn away from God's Church.

I have experienced over the last two weeks, with the deacon commencement and the recent support that I have received since the death of my mother, that St. Mark is more than the building, the formats of its worship, and the eloquence of its sermons. What I have witnessed is the putting into practice at St. Mark of true Christ-centered discipleship and/or the invisible church.

I emphasize that St. Mark as a church is not Pastor Meyer or I as your deacon, because we are only servants to the congregation, and we support you in sharing the Word, administering the Sacraments and offering Christian caregiving. The role of the congregation is to share with others the Gospel and to express the great love that they have for their Savior Jesus Christ. And what better way to express it than through random acts of kindness, because it best expresses their love for God and others?

I was a recipient of Christ's love from the St. Mark community and I will cherish it, but more importantly I will share it with others. Walking the talk is critical for God's church to grow; because when others see Christ in you, they realize how much they need him in their lives.

Our acts of service for God and others best demonstrate true discipleship, because we put God's Word into practice and that will bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. **John 13:12-16** says it best: When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and

Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them." (NIV)

I want to thank the St. Mark congregation for making visible to me the hand of God at work. I truly know that God is alive and well at St. Mark, because I see through its members. I pray that my deacon ministry will serve St. Mark as well as you have served me and my family.

God's Blessings,
Deacon Chris Rubino

Volunteering...

Volunteers in Service continues to serve as a bridge for community for people on their journeys. VIS connects hurting people with a network of churches whose members want to show Christ's love by building relationships. Located on Eastern Ave in Grand Rapids, they are in their 25th year of ministry. Solid Rock Teen Ministry has worked with them numerous times in the past, helping the needs of many people.

VIS is always looking for people to partner with in ministry. Here are a few ongoing opportunities:

The Supportive Friends program is looking for Christian mentors for adults and especially male mentors for young boys without dads who need a mature man in their lives to help them face the real temptations of gangs, violence, drugs and truancy.

Our Friendly Visitor program connects isolated, lonely, seniors and non-seniors with a friend who will just spend time with them and show God's love simply through caring.

Church volunteers are needed to assist with light housekeeping, meals, or care for children for moms with young children who have a limited support system. This is a great opportunity for a group of women to reach out and love a mom in need.

For more information, or to volunteer, please contact VIS at 459-7500. You may also visit their website at visgr.org.

Tom Chester

Nursery News

I want to thank each and every volunteer who helps in the Nursery either on our regular schedule or as a sub. Because of these volunteers, the Nursery at St. Mark is open for both services on Sunday. We also have many events besides the Sunday services when the Nursery is needed to be open. Those of you who use the Nursery know how important it is for you to be able to place your child/children there at these times.



Our on-going problem is not having enough volunteers for these special times. We continue to have more children who use the Nursery, but do not have more volunteers signing up to help. We do not insist that the parents who use the Nursery periodically help in the nursery. Should we?

We would like the Nursery open during CAMP Moosefeather Falls, June 20 through June 24 for the helpers, if they have a child who is not old enough to attend CAMP. If you can help one or two nights, please contact me. If you have other children who attend CAMP and you would like to remain at church during that time and would be able to help in the nursery during that time, please contact me.

We would like the nursery open at Pastor Meyer's retirement during the program, which is June 12. This would be only during the program after the dinner, if the parents have previously signed up to use the nursery at that time. It will also depend on how many volunteers we have in the Nursery.

Donations are always accepted during the year. We are always in need of fruit snacks which are the children's favorite. We are always in need of fish crackers and unfrosted animal crackers. We are always in need of used toys.

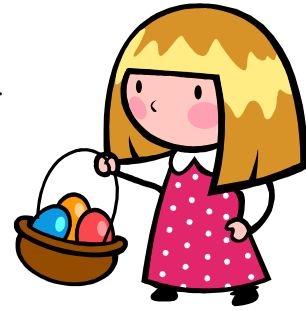
The Nursery is a blessing. To parents who use the Nursery: Please prayerfully consider helping as you know how important it is. If you do not have children who use the nursery and would want to help, please contact me. You do not have to sign up to be a regular volunteer. You can help periodically, either being on the sub list or help at special events.

To all of you: Thank you for your prayers, your support, your help and your donations.

Sandy Pillsbury, Infant & Toddler Ministry

An EGGciting Event!

On the morning of Saturday, April 16th things were HOPPING at St. Mark! The School and Church staff planned an Easter Eggstravaganza party for our community! It was designed to be an outreach event to bring new people into our school and church building and it worked! Our hope was to have 50-75 kids attend and God blessed us with almost 200 kids and their parents!!! God is good...all the time!



The 90 minute event was jammed packed full of great activities: Easter crafts, Easter games, a reading corner, videos about Jesus, balloon creations, 3 age appropriate egg hunts (with 4,000 eggs!), pictures with Peter Rabbit, and a continental breakfast! We also handed out colored bags with info on our school, church, and CAMP Moosefeather Falls.

So why was it a success? We had a LOT of new people in our building and were able to promote the great things going on here. Not long after the party, a parent called the office and wanted to let us know what a great event it was and how impressed they were with our ministry. Another person called one of our members and said the same thing. The Balloon Guys (a ministry of Solid Rock) was invited to do a birthday party on Easter Saturday. Two families joined us for worship the next day. One family enrolled their child in our Kindergarten, another family inquired and toured our Preschool. And we have already begun to follow up with those families who registered for the event.

So you can see why it was a SMASHING Success! Thanks to the Church & School staff for their hard work in planning and organizing the event...thanks to the 46 student & adult volunteers who made the day possible...thanks to the Women in Mission, PTL and Church families for providing funds...AND our St. Mark family who donated the eggs and candy!!!!

Tom Chester, Youth Minister



Sunday, May 8th is Mothers Day

Don't forget to show mom how much you love and appreciate her for all the wonderful things she has done for you!!!

Who's Serving in May

Sunday	May 1	May 8	May 15	May 22	May 29
Elders 8:30	White/Galloway	Stegehuis/ Ambriz	Galloway/ Schramm	Broecker/White	Galloway/Eden
Elders 11:00	Schramm/ Ambriz	Eden/Hop	Plainte/ Stegehuis	Ambriz/Eden	Rubin/Schramm
Communion Elders	Hop/Eden		Worch/Rubin		
Usher Team 8:30	Johr	Weih	Seddon	Symons	Johr
Usher Team 11:00	McClenathan	Rolf	Ainsworth	McClenathan	Rolf
Greeter Team 8:30	Larson	Symons	Seddon	Broecker	Larson
Greeter Team 11:00	Rubino	Rubin	Rutty	Vaughn	Rubino
Altar Guild	Bruce/Galloway	Marsiglia/ Mussehl	Marsiglia/ Mussehl	Drake	Drake
Nursery 8:30	Thompson/ Worch	Trombley/ Trombley	Sauer/DeHoag	Klug/Mahon	Mahon/Shumate
Nursery 11:00	Evele/Winkler	Berg/Stevenson	VanZweden/ Rolf	Munyon/Bahr/ Gehrls	Ambriz/Galloway
Sound Console	Sauer/Knorr	Worch/Gilcher	Trombley	La Vigne	Vaughn
Lawn Care	<i>May 5</i> Worch/Jakiel/ Sobol	<i>May 12</i> Symons/Symons /Veltman	<i>May 19</i> Bond/Seddon/?	<i>May 26</i> Weih/Hopkins	
Coffee Hour Help	Pillsbury/ VanZee & Glendenning	Rutty/Krueger	Rubin/Sauer	Tafel/Heldt/ Frobel	White/Baldwin
Bulletin Folders	<i>May 6</i> Evele/Tafel/ Mahon/Fahey	<i>May 13</i> Frobel/Heldt/ Ennis	<i>May 20</i> Glendenning/ Weih	<i>May 27</i> Larson/Domire/ DeHoag	

Confirmation

On April 17 at a special service at 3:00pm, twelve students made their pledges of faithfulness to God, and Marissa Stevenson was baptized as well. For many of them this was a faith that began at the time of their baptism as infants. Now it was time for them to confirm that faith. Those who were confirmed are:



Alex Carpenter
Kevin Elliott
Christopher Frass
Daniel Krueger
Evan La Vigne
Owen La Vigne

Justin Nanzer
Cassidy Ochsankel
Chrystina Ochsankel
Austin Pitts
Jacquelyn Salzwedel
Marissa Stevenson

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Holy Communion 8:30 am Traditional Worship 9:45 am Learning Hour 11:00 am Contemporary Worship 12:30 pm SRTM Pit Crew Mtg	2 6:30 pm St. Mark Adult Co-ed Volleyball 7:00 pm Gam-Anon 7:00 pm Gamblers Anony- mous	3 General Election 1:00 pm Quilters 8:00 pm Al-Anon	4 8:30 am School Chapel SMLS St. John Lutheran, Grand Haven, Track Meet* 6:30 pm Jr. High Full Throttle	5 National Day of Prayer 5:30 pm TOPS 6:30 pm Hand Bells 7:30 pm Sanctuary Choir	6	7
8 Mother's Day 8:30 am Traditional Worship 9:45 am Learning Hour 11:00 am Contemporary Worship	9 7:30-9:30 am SMLS/P Vol- unteer Appreciation Break- fast 6:30 pm St. Mark Adult Co-ed Volleyball 7:00 pm Gam-Anon 7:00 pm Gamblers Anony- mous	10 7:30-9:30 am SML S/P Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast 1:00 pm Quilters 7:00 pm School Council 8:00 pm Al-Anon	11 8:30 am School Chapel 6:00 pm Thrivent So. Kent Co. Chapter Meeting 6:30 pm Jr. High Full Throttle 6:30 pm Praise Team	12 5:30 pm TOPS 6:30 pm Hand Bells 6:30 pm SRTM Service on Thursdays* 7:30 pm Sanctuary Choir	13 SMLS PTL Walk-a-Thon	14
15 Holy Communion 8:30 am Traditional Worship 9:45 am Learning Hour 11:00 am Contemporary Worship 12:30 pm SRTM Oakcrest Worship* 12:30 pm New Member Lunch	16 6:30 pm St. Mark Adult Co-ed Volleyball 7:00 pm Gam-Anon 7:00 pm Gamblers Anony- mous	17 1:00 pm Quilters 8:00 pm Al-Anon	18 8:30 am School Chapel 6:30 pm Jr. High Full Throttle SMLS 7th & 8th Gr. Class Trip*	19 5:30 pm TOPS 6:30 pm Hand Bells 7:30 pm Sanctuary Choir SMLP Last Day Celebra- tion SMLS 7th & 8th Gr. Class Trip*	20 SMLP Last Day Celebration SMLS 7th & 8th Gr. Class Trip*	21
22 8:30 am Traditional Worship 9:45 am Voters' Assembly 11:00 am Contemporary Worship 11:00 am High Octane Wor- ship 1:00 pm Bridal Shower	23 7:00 pm Gam-Anon 7:00 pm Gamblers Anony- mous	24 7:00 pm Board of Directors 8:00 pm Al-Anon	25 8:30 am School Chapel 6:00 pm SRTM Newbie Picnic	26 5:30 pm TOPS 6:30 pm Hand Bells 7:30 pm Sanctuary Choir	27 SMLS Our Savior Lutheran, GR, Field Day* (student dismissal from field location)	28
29 8:30 am Traditional Worship 10:00 am Contemporary Worship	30 Memorial Day Church & School Offices Closed SMLS—No School 7:00 pm Gam-Anon 7:00 pm Gamblers Anony- mous	31 8:00 pm Al-Anon	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p align="center">St. Mark Lutheran Preschool's Annual Summer Camps</p> <p align="center">8:45-11:45 a.m. Cost \$60 per Camp</p> <p align="center">The Magical Musical Mystery Tour - May 23-26</p> <p align="center">Monster Fun Camp - May 23-26</p> <p align="center">Fabulous Food Camp - May 31-June 3</p> </div>			



April Showers...

If April showers bring May flowers, what do May flowers bring? Pilgrims!

The pilgrims were explorers of sorts, settling in a new world and experiencing many new things. Our students continue to explore and experience new things, especially with the arrival (finally) of spring, and the *resurrection* (Easter fits well here, don't you think?) or *revival* found in plants, birds, and bugs. We also are exercising our stewardship of God's creation with a few clean-up activities, one in the community as we handled our "Adopt-A-Road" responsibility on 60th St. between Wing Ave. and East Paris.

5th through 8th graders continue to enjoy electives on Tuesdays in May where they are experiencing cooking, photography, biking, arts & crafts, and gardening. Preschoolers have enjoyed a visit to the Grand Rapids Children's Museum and held a "Beach Day" in anticipation of warmer weather. The last days of Preschool are May 19 & 20. Kindergarten through 4th grade students are busy practicing for an upcoming spring musical.

May also has our school participating in two track and field days, one regional Lutheran school event held at St. John's Lutheran in Grand Haven, and the other at Our Savior Lutheran, Grand Rapids. 7th & 8th graders will compete in an annual co-ed softball tournament in Wyoming, hosted by Holy Trinity Lutheran. The 7th & 8th graders are also looking forward to a class trip, including Michigan's Adventure, a lock-in, and Mackinac.

Other activities in May include our annual volunteer breakfasts on the mornings of May 9 & 10, our first PTL Walk-a-thon on May 13th, and Preschool Camps the last week in May and first week of June.

Just as in a long race the runners try "kicking it in" to finish the race in strong fashion, we are busy working to end the school year in a strong way, too. God continues to bless us along the way and we give Him thanks and praise for His goodness.

If you, or anyone you know, might be interested in becoming a member of our growing family, please feel free to contact our office. We continue to grow in Him from whom all goodness abounds.

Joel Bahr, Principal

St. Mark Lutheran Church

1934 52nd Street SE

Kentwood, MI 49508

Return Service Requested

“CONNECTING
PEOPLE TO GOD
AND ONE ANOTHER.”



Traditional Worship 8:30 a.m.

Learning Hour 9:45 a.m.

(Ends on May 15 for the summer.)

Contemporary Worship 11:00 a.m.

Remember: May 29 **begins** the Summer
Worship schedules of 8:30 am & 10:00 am.