



Paw Prints & Woolklippings



June 2011

*The Joint Newsletter of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Fort Dodge, Iowa
and the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, Webster City, Iowa*

The Rev'd Richard Graves, Rector and Vicar: stmarks50501@frontiernet.net

St. Mark's: 515-576-2019 St. Mark's Fax: 515-576-0632 Fr. Graves: 515-554-3633 Good Shepherd: 515-832-2707

St. Mark's Web Site: www.stmarksfd.org

Good Shepherd's Website: goodshepherdwc.org

~DAY BY DAY~

"I'm So Glad It's Like That"



It seems like only yesterday, but it was 1976. It was hot and we were late to Glide. Located in San Francisco, Glide United Methodist Church is one of the great churches of America, a unique and powerful blend of spirituality, principled compassion, and cutting edge programs for those most in need. Its membership is more colorful than a rainbow. It was our first visit, but once inside, we discovered being late is never a problem in this church. You see, the worship just kept starting for 30 minutes or so with all kinds of singing. Joyful sounds, I tell you!

The Pastor (The Rev. Cecil Williams, the founder, who, by the way, still serves the congregation) was gone that day. Then the announcement came that the associate minister was gone. Then we heard the news that one of the eight lay ministers would speak. (Wow, were we in for a treat!)

She began, "I'm going to talk about the banquet of the Lord." (It was much more like joyful shouting).

"Now when we talk about the banquet of the Lord, we ain't talkin' bout no junk food. There ain't no Doritos! There ain't no Ho Ho's! There ain't no Twinkies! There ain't no Ding Dongs at the Table of the Lord? At HIS banquet, we get prime rib! I want to talk about that!"

Right then we knew we weren't in for any main-line-protestant-sit-proper-in-your-seat sermon.

"His banner over me is Love," she quoted from the Song of Songs. She told of Solomon and his many loves, and the erotic nature of the text and told us not to get bogged down nor ignore the lustful nature of the text. She declared Solomon had this special love relationship, a woman he brings to the banquet hall with him where others know of her special place in his life: "for his banner over me is love."

Then she said, "That's the way it is with us before God." In spite of all we have been and in spite of all we have done, in spite of everything, his banner over us is love. **"And I'm so glad it's like that."**

At the main door following the service, we told her we were from the Episcopal Seminary in neighboring Berkeley. With a wide smile, she said, as she hugged us, "You white folks paint your theological pictures with your check books. We black folk paint only with the stories of faith."

None of us will ever forget her.

As we drove back over the bay bridge, we glowed with the gladness of God's grace she painted that day.

Love and Prayers, Fr. Richard

Paw Prints from St. Mark's

Book Club Forming

A small group met at St. Mark's to form a book club. The book club will be an informal group of people who enjoy reading and sharing with others. The group meets to discuss books they have read and exchange books with others in the group. There is no assigned reading, just a gathering of reading enthusiasts. The group will meet once a month, and encourage everyone (and their friends) who enjoys reading to attend as often as they can. Next meeting is June 9th at 7:00 PM, at Central Perk at the corner of 14th Street and Central Avenue.

Fall Women's Bible Study

It has been three years since I was introduced to a Beth Moore Bible study and it has been a great blessing for me. I thought I knew our Bible well, but after my first study with Beth Moore I can say I didn't. Beth teaches in a way that is easy to understand; she peels back layers of history and shows us how it applies to our lives today. Christ has love, hope and a future for us all! Ladies, if you desire a closer relationship with Christ, please join me this fall for our first Beth Moore study, "The Book of Esther". This lesson is a 9 week study and is taught through a DVD and daily workbook. The study will be on Saturday mornings; my wish is to begin with a light brunch, discuss the week's lesson, and end with the DVD (which is necessary to start the next week's lesson). I'm very excited about this study and I look forward to sharing it with you all! Have a great summer & I will see you this fall. (To learn more about Beth Moore, go to www.lproof.org.)

Congrats to our other Graduating Senior

Last month we featured Senior Trey Anderson, but missed noting the graduation of our other senior, Ben Martin. Ben's Graduation Party at his home in Renwick was held on May 21st and several member of St. Mark's attended. Ben plans to attend Marshalltown Community College in the fall and major in the arts, as he is very interested in theater.

Parish Briefs

- **Rummage Sale Recap:** Many, many, and many more thanks to all who coordinated, donated, purchased, cooked, planned, and in any other way helped to make our Friday the 13th of May sale so successful. After expenses, our net gain was \$2,437.00!
- **Spring Clean Success:** Many thanks to everyone who helped spruce up the church on May 15. Our motto: "Only the windows in God's House should be stained!"
- **Interfaith Forum Annual Meeting:** On May 17, we played host and Holly Scherff cooked up a storm. The food was divine! Helping Holly with preparation, decoration, and service were Kaelly Scherff, Lydia Schmoker, Jane Martin, Anthony Slama, and Mary Duro. Great job!
- **Frontier Days' Pancake Breakfast:** Saturday, June 5; 8:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. Taylor Hall. Menu: Holly's famous pancakes; sausage; orange juice; and, coffee. Proceeds benefit Swaziland Medical Mission. Also, a tie dying experience will be available.
- **Rethinking Taizé:** Our midweek contemplative service is going to be suspended beginning this week and throughout the summer. The New Life Committee, in consultation with Fr. Richard, will be exploring together the midweek worship needs of the congregation and then determining whether Taizé or perhaps some other worship service might be embraced going forward. If you would like to be part of this conversation, please come to the next New Life Committee meeting, which is scheduled for Tuesday, June 7, at 6:00 p.m.
- **Vestry Meeting:** The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 28, at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room.
- **June 18th Wedding:** Fr. Richard's oldest daughter, Claire Marie, will wed Danny Mayo in Dubuque. Claire and Danny met during their college years at Coe College in Cedar Rapids. They will reside in Maquoketa, where Danny teaches General Science at the high school and Claire functions as a Relationship Coordinator in a dental office. Fr. Richard is not performing the service (hooray!), but functioning only as the father of the bride that day.



"WOOLKLIPPINGS" FROM GOOD SHEPHERD

So Very Sad to Say Goodbye to Lynn Flowerday Memorial Day Weekend

It was a very long week for us all. Special thanks to everyone who donated food, time, music, remembrances, to make it a fabulous send off. Lynn would have loved all of the pomp and circumstance, funny stories, great music! He loved a good party. It was wonderful to meet Lynn's family and witness his life in this community and others. He touched so many people of all ages so generously and will leave a huge hole in his family's lives, our congregation and the community. Good Shepherd would like to express our profound thanks to the St. Mark's congregation for their very generous offer of providing the reception after the funeral on Saturday. We can't express how much of a relief it was for us to know that this had been taken care of and it was lovely. We felt nurtured by our "partners in ministry."

May 7th Lamb Dinner A Smash

It was our biggest crowd in years! We celebrated with great food (Christopher Moglebust had his first bite of lamb and he liked it!), observed Dave Moglebust's birthday, told humorous jokes and stories, and enjoyed wonderful musical entertainment. Dave and Cathy had us all in great voice, as we sang some of the great standards of American musical theater. Nine members of St. Mark's came to the party and all vowed it would not be their last! Our congregation has a gift for hospitality and we and those we include in our celebrations wouldn't have it any other way! Special thanks goes to all those who helped with the food preparation and other details of the event.

Congregational Shorts

- On May 15th, we baptized Avery Sophia Limuti, the daughter of Joe and Regan Limuti. Avery's grandmother, Jackie Anderson, and two older brothers, Sam and Jack, were on hand for her big day.
- The Ecumenical Human Needs Committee (EHNC) met at Good Shepherd on May 19. Working in partnership with Upper Des Moines Opportunity and the Webster City Ministerial Association, EHNC meets human need in Hamilton County. Judy McLaughlin, who serves as EHNC Treasurer, and Fr. Richard were in attendance.
- On June 12, Khaiana Mercedee Chitavong and Nathan Earl Anderson will be baptized at the 11:00 a.m. service. Khaiana is Kelly Ubben's granddaughter and Nathan is her nephew. Ranae Anderson is looking forward to the baptism of her great-granddaughter and grandson.
- Paul Dahl, director at Kendall Young Library, plans to begin a Spirituality Book Club and a Spirituality Film Club in the fall. The September book selection is *Dakota: A Spiritual Geography*, by Kathleen Norris (2002); the September film is *Jesus in Montreal*. Dates, times, and future books and films will be forthcoming.
- Thank you for supporting the Food Backpack program. The children who took part really benefitted. The program will resume in the fall.
- The Bishop's Committee meets on June 12 following the service. Cathy Moglebust is willing to serve on the board, filling Lynn Flowerday's open seat.
- Fr. Richard will be away on Sunday, June 19. He and the rest of his clan will be in Dubuque, involved in wedding festivities for daughter Claire and new son-in-law, Danny Mayo.

Easter Sermon at Canterbury Cathedral

(Editor's Note: The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams, delivered his Easter sermon at Canterbury Cathedral, where he spoke on the theme of joy, and the capacity to be surprised by it. As we leave the season of Easter, being reminded of joy seems like a fitting thing to do! The full text of his sermon is below.)

We're now officially told that it's a good idea to be happy. Politicians have started talking about happiness rather than just prosperity, and there is even a research program on the subject, trying to identify the essence of human well-being. And it's nice and entirely appropriate that we are being encouraged to some public displays of shared celebration next Friday: let a thousand street parties blossom!

Now it's certainly a good thing that people have publicly acknowledged that there is more to life than the level of our Gross National Product, that we're just beginning to say out loud that corporate prosperity divorced from personal and communal fulfillment or stability is an empty thing. It's when we try and put more flesh on this that it becomes more complicated – and, worse still, more self-conscious. Some of you might just remember an episode of Doctor Who a couple of decades ago called 'The Happiness Patrol' where the Doctor arrives on a planet in which unhappiness is a capital crime, and blues musicians lead a dangerous underground existence. But less dramatically, most of us know the horrible experience of a family outing where things aren't going too well and Mum or Dad keeps saying, through ever more tightly gritted teeth, 'This is fun, isn't it?'

There's the catch: the deepest happiness is something that has crept up on us when we weren't looking. We can look back and say, Yes, I was happy then – and we can't reproduce it. It seems that, just as we can't find fulfillment in just loving ourselves, so we can't just generate happiness for ourselves. It comes from outside, from relationships, environment, the unexpected stimulus of beauty – but not from any program that we can identify. It's a perfectly good idea to test and tabulate the ways people measure their own happiness – but beware of thinking that it will yield a foolproof method for being happy.

We have just heard the beginning of the resurrection story – a narrative of shock and amazement, utter disorientation. One of the things that makes these stories so believable is just that sense of unexpectedness – the disciples don't come to the empty tomb and say, 'Well, there you are; just like he said.' They arrive never having really believed that their Lord would return from death, and now they find themselves in a disturbing new world where anything is possible; and so bright is the light in this new morning that even the familiar face of Jesus becomes unrecognizable. But as the story goes on in John's gospel, we are told that the disciples anxiously gathered in their locked room were 'filled with joy' when they saw Jesus among them. They have been jolted out of the rut of what is usual and predictable – and joy springs on them without warning, 'Christ the tiger', in T.S. Eliot's great image.

What was it like for those first few hours after the empty tomb had been found, after Mary Magdalene had delivered her breathless message? It must have been a period of alarming uncertainty, half hope, half terror; which of us would really rejoice at the prospect of a miracle that would make us rethink most of what we had taken for granted? But into that chaos steps a figure before whose face 'the questions fade away' – the words with which C.S. Lewis finishes his greatest book, *Till We Have Faces*. And joy arrives, irresistibly. The world is even more dangerous and strange than before, the future is now quite unimaginable; but there is nothing that can alter the sheer effect of that presence.

And that's another thing about authentic happiness. It doesn't take away the reality of threat or risk or suffering; it's just there. This is one of the hardest things to get hold of here. How can I feel 'happy' in a world so full of atrocity and injustice? How can I know joy when I'm aware of my own failure, my own shabbiness, my own depression? There are no answers in theory because this isn't a matter of theory: it simply happens that way. People in the middle of extreme stress will witness to this. We might well remember today some of those in such situations – Christians facing threats and attacks in Pakistan or, right at the moment, in Northern Nigeria; and please pray and think of them, as some fanatics of all backgrounds seek to exploit religious differences there, even in the wake of what appears as a free and fair election. Or we might think of an aid worker in Congo, or a nurse or teacher in a strained and under-resourced institution, or a carer sitting through the night with a terminally ill child – people such as this will sometimes speak, shockingly, of feeling joy in the middle of what they endure. It is not – God forbid – feeling cheerful, it is not pretending that things aren't so bad after all. And it's a grim reproach that

that's all too often what people half-expect from Christians, a glib and dishonest cheerfulness. No, it is an overwhelming sense of being where you should be, being in tune with something or someone, being rooted in the moment in a way that doesn't at all blur your honesty about what's there in front of your eyes but gives you what you need to sit in the presence of horror and grief, and live.

More than just a feeling, then, a passing emotion, certainly more than a self-conscious determination to put a brave face on things. Once again we have to be clear that it depends on something quite other than our efforts and our will power. And that takes us into a further dimension of joy. What we can contribute by our will or effort is not a system for making ourselves happy but a habit of readiness to receive. The person whose mind is completely cluttered with anxiety, self-absorbed worry or vanity or resentment, is going to find it hard to give way to moments of gift and surprise. That's why people who are fairly used to taking time in silence and reflection may often be people in whom you see joy coming through. It's also why, for many of us, like the disciples at Easter, it takes something of a shock to open us up to joy, some experience that pushes its way through the inward clutter by sheer force and novelty. Perhaps part of the message of Easter is very simply, Be ready to be surprised; try clearing out some of the anxiety and vanity and resentment so as to allow the possibility of a new world to find room in you.

But this means in turn that rather than battling all the time to lay hold of a happiness that we have planned according to our fantasies, we should concentrate on challenging the things that make us anxious. About six weeks ago, I was visiting Manchester to see some of the work done by local churches and other faith groups for community regeneration; and I found myself listening more and more carefully for what these groups were saying about how the local people they worked with thought about well-being. They didn't have extravagant plans – but they simply identified a few conditions that would relieve loneliness, boredom and fear. Good and reliable mental health care, specially for the young; access to fresh air and space; opportunities to be creative, whether in growing vegetables or running a drama group. And it was impossible not to wonder where some of these hopes were on the scale of official priorities, in local or national government. On the same visit, an unscheduled stop at a local library in a rather devastated council estate revealed a lively group of teenagers who were regular users, welcomed by staff, glad of a place to do homework, gossip and feel secure. Space, opportunity, the time to discover a larger world to live in – where are the clearly articulated priorities in public discussion that would spotlight all this, so as to make us think twice before dismantling what's already there and disappointing more hopes for the future? Talk about the happiness of the nation isn't going to mean much unless we listen to some of these simple aspirations – aspirations, essentially, for places, provisions or situations which help you lay aside anxiety and discover dimensions of yourself otherwise hidden or buried.

Because, ultimately, joy is about discovering that the world is more than you ever suspected, and so that you yourself are more than you suspected. The joy of the resurrection has a unique place in Christian faith and imagination because this event breaks open the shell of the world we thought we knew and projects us into the new and mysterious realm in which victorious mercy and inexhaustible love make the rules. And because it is the revelation of something utterly basic about reality itself, it is a joy that cannot just be at the mercy of passing feelings. It roots itself in the heart and remains as a foundation for everything else. The Christian is not therefore the person who has accepted a particular set of theories about the universe but the person who lives by the power of the joy that is laid bare in the event of the resurrection of Jesus. To be baptized 'into' Christ is to be given a lasting connection with joy, a channel through which the basic sense of being where we ought to be can always come through, however much we choke it up with selfishness and worry. Sometimes, clearing out this debris needs a bit of explosive – encounter with an extraordinary person or story, experience of passionate love, witnessing profound suffering, whatever shakes us out of our so-called 'normal' habits. But we can at least contribute to this by giving time to clearing the channel as best we may, in silence, in the space of reflection. And we can also ask persistently what it is in our social environment that will most help create this for others, especially those who live with constant anxiety because of poverty, disability or other sorts of disadvantage.

Christian joy, the joy of Easter, is offered to the world not to guarantee a permanently happy society in the sense of a society free from tension, pain or disappointment, but to affirm that whatever happens in the unpredictable world – sometimes wonderfully, sometimes horribly unpredictable – there is a deeper level of reality, a world within the world, where love and reconciliation are ceaselessly at work, a world with which contact can be made so that we are able to live honestly and courageously with the challenges constantly thrown at us. And on the first Easter morning, it is as if 'the fountains of the great deep' are broken open, and we are allowed to see, like Peter and John at the empty tomb, into the darkness for a moment – and find our world turned upside down, joy made possible.

**ST. MARK'S
HOUSEKEEPING DUTIES
JUNE 2011**

	<u>Acolytes</u>	<u>LR/CB</u>	<u>Altar Guild</u>	<u>Coffee Servers</u>
JUNE 5	Anna Bacon	Von Ketelsen	Holly Scherff	(Please sign up for a Sunday)
JUNE 12	Celeste Rice	John Duro	Joanne Tjelmeland	(Please sign up for a Sunday)
JUNE 19	Callan Anderson	Holly Scherff	Margo Daniel	(Please sign up for a Sunday)
JUNE 25	Brody O'Tool	Mary Beth Rice	Mary Duro	(Please sign up for a Sunday)

Funeral Committee: Joyce Anderson, Chairman; Sharon Vogel; Cheri Cerwick; Volunteer

Birthdays

June 6 – Deb O'Tool
17 – Kathy Walters
29 – Margo Daniel

Happy Birthday

**GOOD SHEPHERD
HOUSEKEEPING DUTIES
JUNE 2011**

	<u>Acolytes</u>	<u>LR/CB</u>	<u>Lector</u>	<u>Greeters</u>
JUNE 5	Jake Haberman	Deb Leksell	Von Ketelsen	Katie Haberman
JUNE 12	Zac Katschke	Judy McLaughlin	Nan Bucknam	Angie Martin-Schwarze
JUNE 19	Joel Haberman	Robbie Katschke	Nancy Dermand	Ranae Anderson
JUNE 26	Katie Haberman	Cathy Moglebust	Joan Haberman	Michelle Haberman

Altar Guild – OPEN

Coffee Server – Mona Zahn

BIRTHDAYS

June 1 – Laurie Lubbers
Nancy Whaley
2 – Steve Dermand
3 – Joe Whaley
6 – Jared Wilaby

10 – Nancy Dermand
20 – Steve Haberman
21 – Joel Haberman
Kelly Ubben
26 – Adam Martin-Schwarze

Happy Birthday