

St. Mark's Episcopal Church

412 Cedar Street, P.O. Box 307
Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-657-3762

MAY/JUNE

Services Sunday at 9:30 am
All are welcome to attend



Greetings!

How time flies when you're having fun! Isn't that how the adage goes? Time is a strange concept; seemingly it stands still or barely creeps along when you are anxiously awaiting news from the surgeon or a month or a year has gone by before we can draw a breath. I think it was Einstein who postulated that if we go fast enough or slow enough (I can't remember which) we could literally speed up or slow down time. Early civilizations thought about time as a circular thing: winter, spring, summer, fall; fallow time, planting time, cultivating time, harvest time; times of plenty, times of scarcity. We moderns tend to think of time in a linear fashion, everything always evolving and at an ever increasing rate.

I once had an interesting conversation with a Bishop about time. He said that for God there is no past, present or future; that God understood and saw all time in the same instant. I'm not sure I can wrap my mind around that idea or believe it, but here is what I do believe.



Jesus, God's Son, entered human history at a certain time and place. He promised before he died that he would return. He taught us to pray for the realization of God's Kingdom on earth and to work toward that fulfillment always. Scripture quotes Jesus saying a lot about the Kingdom of God and eternity, but I believe Jesus is talking about both here and now and after we die. We are living during in-between times; between Jesus's birth and Jesus' return. No one, not even Jesus knows when that second coming will be, but what we do know is that for the last two thousand years believers have looked for Jesus to come again. We know that Jesus urged us to be prepared.

So how do we prepare for the end of time as we know it? I believe we prepare by living fully into our baptismal covenant, by doing justice, loving mercy and walking humbly with God. We prepare by remembering always to love one another as Jesus loves us. We prepare by daily scripture reading and prayer and preaching the Gospel always. We prepare by doing all in our power to bring God's Kingdom to fruition here and now by loving our neighbors as we love ourselves.

Will there be an end? I don't know. Jesus says not to worry about it. We are marked as Christ's own forever and he said he would return to take us to where he is. We can rest easy on that promise.

LIVING COMPASS PROGRAM COMES TO ST. MARK'S

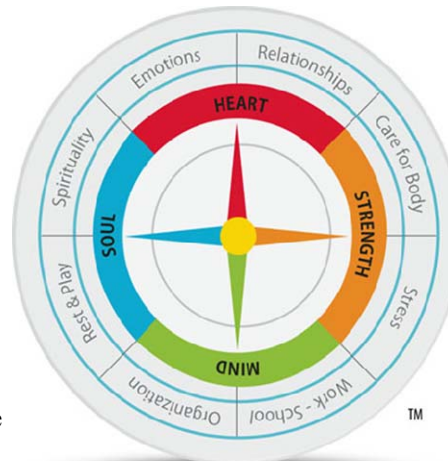
**Here's an opportunity you won't want to miss.
Would you like to:**

- Learn an ancient, holistic approach to wellness that is very different from modern approaches to wellness.
- Explore the deeper connection between spirituality and wellness.
- Be renewed, reenergized, and reoriented!
- Leave with your own personal wellness "map" to help you succeed in taking the next steps toward greater balance and wellness.
- Take a self-assessment that will reveal your current state of life balance and wellness.
- Be inspired and have fun!

If you answered "Yes" to all or most of these bullet points, read on.

St. Mark's will sponsor a Living Compass program in six sessions, beginning June 12th. Our own Eve Jerome will partner with Deacon Karen McDonald to lead the program at St. Mark's. Sessions will run on successive

Wednesdays from 6:30 to 8:00 pm. Dates are as follows:



June 12

June 19

June 26

July 10

July 17

July 24

(continued on page 4)

SPOTLIGHT ON...



Is there a doctor in the house? If you're Judy Peterson, the answer to that question will be a resounding "YES!" Her daughter is a cardiologist and her daughter's husband, Judy's son-in-law, is also a physician. He works with children who have cancer. With not one, but two doctors in the house, so to speak, Judy is assured that the best in medical care will always be close at hand.

When asked about her aspirations as a young person growing up, Judy says (with a smile) she was cut out to be a trophy wife. But now that she's older (and having failed to meet that expectation) she says (again with a smile) "now that I'm older I'm just going to be a cougar instead."

Those of you who may be a little naive about those terms, as I was, here are some definitions: a trophy wife is a young and attractive woman who marries a man much older who is wealthy. A cougar is just the opposite — an older woman who marries a younger wealthy man. Ed.

Judy was born in Springfield Pennsylvania, a small community in the suburban Philadelphia area. At age 11, Judy's father was offered a new job in Kalamazoo so the family was uprooted and began their new life in Michigan. She attended Kalamazoo Central through high school.

Judy reminded me that she can still sing the Kalamazoo Central fight song. We've memorialized that feat in the cookie walk video posted on the church website.

Judy attended Michigan State University where she met her husband-to-be and graduated with a degree in Medical Technology. She worked at Bronson Hospital in this capacity for several years before dropping out of the workforce to start her family.

She has two children, a daughter, already mentioned. is a cardiologist and lives in Texas (a bit of a stretch for house calls to Judy ☺). She has three grandchildren by her daughter. Her son, who lives in nearby Vicksburg, is newly married and works for the city of Kalamazoo promoting the downtown area.

After several years focusing on raising her children, Judy considered going back to work. However, she soon learned that she'd have a lot of re-training to do to catch up in her chosen field of Medical Technology. On the advice of the dean at Michigan State, Judy went back to school on a somewhat divergent path. She graduated again, this time with a masters in Public Administration. Her plan was to utilize her medical technology background at the administrative level in a public health capacity. As it turned out, she wound up working in local government administration for more than a decade.

At this point in her life Judy came to grips with the fact that she had an alcohol problem. With strong support from family and friends she went into treatment and can now look back on nearly 15 years in recovery.

Judy spent the final 9 years of her working life employed by The Community Action Agency helping the poor of Van Buren, Berrien and Cass counties.

St. Mark's has been the beneficiary of Judy's membership and support since 1995. The success of our annual craft show is due in large part to the crafting talents and organizational skills Judy possesses. Most recently, Judy organized a team who created the new scapulars for the choir. (*see video of this event on the church website*). Those of you who use the kneelers at church can thank Judy for the comfort they enjoy while kneeling at church services. One amusing anecdote Judy volunteered during our interview was about her daughter, Gail — the cardiologist. This apparently took place the first time Gail was attempting to cook their Thanksgiving turkey.

Judy receives a phone call from her daughter with this plaintive question: "Mom, where are these gizzards they keep talking about?" She had been looking inside the body cavity and found no gizzards. The dialog then went like this:

Judy: "Do you have the bird on its back?"

Gail: "yes, I do."

Judy: "Turn the bird over on its stomach"

Gail: "Okay, now what?"

Judy: "Fold the flap of skin down where his neck used to be and reach in there. That's where the gizzards are."

Thank God for mothers. Where would we be without them.



PICTURES FROM THE MARIE DEKONING MEMORIAL SERVICE



See more pictures of this memorial on St. Mark's web site on the News Page.



BUMPER STICKER SPOTTED ON I 94

**PERFORM SENSELESS ACTS
OF KINDNESS AND RANDOM
WORKS OF MERCY**

Have you ever been to a party or other social event where you knew only a few people who were there? You feel awkward, particularly when the few people you know are busy interacting with other guests. You're all alone in a sea of humanity. You're not part of any of the little cliques that inevitably form at such an event. You hesitate to break into conversations already in progress with people who know one another, but are strangers to you. You feel self-conscious and uncomfortable. People are looking past you and through you, but no one seems to want to acknowledge your presence. You're an outsider. You consider sneaking out of the gathering to escape the discomfort you feel.

Before you make up your mind to do just that, someone comes up to you, offers a hand and with a broad smile introduces herself. She then engages you in conversation seeming genuinely interested in what you have to say. How differently you feel. A simple gesture of kindness and courtesy has put you instantly at ease. You feel as if you've been accepted and the next thing you know, others approach you and suddenly, you feel you're part of the group. What a difference a small gesture can make, especially when it's done at an opportune moment.

Many of us have experienced this situation at one time or another and can relate to the scenario I just described. A basic need we all have is to feel a sense of belonging — to be accepted into a group.

(Living Compass—continued from page 1)

A little about the course leaders...

Eva Jerome, a registered nurse since 1976, has a master's degree of science in nursing from Andrews University. Her most recent practice involves education of nursing students.

Deacon Karen McDonald, a registered nurse since 1960, has a bachelor of science in health and a master's degree in Public Administration from Western Michigan University. She received certification of health minister through Faith Community Health Ministry .

Now, to answer the question foremost in your mind — how do I sign up for this exciting program?

Simply call this number and leave your name, phone number and address. You will receive a confirmation.

269-657-3762

For more information you can download a brochure from the St. Mark's website. You may also wish to visit the Living Compass website at :

www.livingcompass.org

Let me describe my most recent moment of feeling like an outsider and how a simple gesture brought me into the fold, so to speak.

Shortly after I began coming to St. Mark's, I attended a dinner and silent auction sponsored by the church. I knew very few people in the congregation at that time and was still very much in my discomfort zone in the group that attended the dinner. One of the items up for auction was a plate of a most delectable looking chocolate fudge. Now I have many weaknesses, but among those that test my will power, few rise to the level of my inability to resist chocolate fudge.

Marie DeKoning was high bidder on the fudge. When she accepted her prize, I commented to her in a joking manner — something about how tempting the fudge looked. I had not officially met Marie or spoken to her up to that moment.

The very next Sunday, before the service in church, Marie's daughter Jill approached me and said her mother had something for me. I turned around and there stood Marie holding out a small brown paper bag. I took the bag and looked inside. In the bag, carefully protected in plastic wrap, were two generous size pieces of the chocolate fudge.

This was my moment of acceptance. That simple gesture, at once, made me feel that I was a member of group. It was a senseless act of kindness. I will always remember Marie for that senseless kind act. *Ed.*



**IT DOESN'T GROW ON
TREES, BUT FROM
HARD WORK AND
COMMITMENT**

Thanks to all who participated in our recent successful fund raisers. We earned the following amounts from the events shown:

Silent Auction	\$344
Dinner	\$330
Rummage Sale	\$826



NEW ON THE WEBSITE

Pictures in Photo Gallery
Chris & Alex Baptism video
Vestry minutes
Living Compass Brochure