

# Church offers 'almost senior' program

## 'Folks of a Seasoned Age' is a part of Jubilee Ministry

By **LAUREN LINHARD**

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LEWISTOWN — St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Lewistown is catering to a new crowd: folks of a seasoned age. In fact, the church's Jubilee Ministry has officially adopted the title for its new almost senior program, said Rev. David Zwifka.

"Churches often have activities for youth and seniors, but not usually for adults that haven't reached that senior age," Zwifka said. "I call them the AARP crowd. This new group is designed specifically for them."

Though the program began in September, it's still in the early planning stages, said Jackie Wright, chair of the Folks of a Seasoned Age committee. So far, the group has held a number of crafting events, a bus trip to the Farm Show and a free exercise class every Tuesday, she said.

"We kick around ideas of what we think people will enjoy as far as educational and social activities, but we are always open to suggestions," Wright said. "We're hoping to have at least one event, in addition to the exercise class, every month."

The exercise class is actually much more successful than anticipated, Zwifka said. The class is full each week and attendees really enjoy it, no matter their fitness level, he added.

As the program develops, the committee is planning to offer a trip to Longwood Gardens, Wednesday Bible studies, lunch outings and community outreach activities, Zwifka said. It's all

about providing opportunities for people to get out of the house and stay social, he added.

The Jubilee Ministry of St. Mark's decided to start Folks of a Seasoned Age because the church recognized there was a need in the area for such a program, Wright said.

"With a lack of grant funding, many community organizations have had to limit or drop a number of activities," Wright said. "We are hoping to make up for that loss with this new program."

Folks of a Seasoned Age really captures what a Jubilee Ministry is all about, Zwifka added. St. Mark's gives more than a helping hand, but gets directly involved in the local needs and concerns, he said.

"We exist for the wider community, not just ourselves and the church," Zwifka said. "Part of our joy is being helpful to the community. The Jubilee Ministry is an important part of our religious identity."

St. Mark's Jubilee Ministry consists of five specific programs: Folks of a Seasoned Age, Mother's Hubbard's Cupboard, Breaking

Bread Together, Parishioners' Outreach and Environmental Stewardship.

Mother Hubbard's Cupboard is a local food bank that was established after Hurricane Agnes in 1972. The goal of the program is to provide food to the residents of Mifflin County without regard to religious affiliation or status, Zwifka said.

"All of our Jubilee programs are for the community, regardless of religious affiliation," Zwifka said. "Our mission is to provide community fellowship whether you are a member of the church or not."

The Jubilee Ministry also offers a Breaking Bread Together dinner the fourth Thursday of every month. All members of the community are invited to bring family and friends to this regular event, Zwifka said.

"This free dinner is for people in the community who need a hot meal but also for those who want to go out with friends," Zwifka said. "Many of the seniors come in large groups like they are going out to a restaurant."

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Photo submitted by REV. DAVID ZWIFKA

The Jubilee Ministry of St. Mark's hosts Breaking Bread Together, a free community fellowship dinner, on the fourth Thursday of every month.



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