For Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, the proper Hebrew greeting is, “Shana Tovah.” Although a number of non-Jews, myself included, have said, “Happy New Year!” to our Jewish friends this past week, the Hebrew phrase, “Shana Tovah” actually doesn’t mean the same thing. “Shana Tovah” conveys the hope for a good year rather than a happy year, and the meaning is understood to be significantly different.

Atlantic Monthly published an article titled, “There’s More to Life than Being Happy.” The author, Emily Esfahani Smith, pointed out that researchers are beginning to caution against the pursuit of mere happiness. They found that a meaningful life and a happy life overlap in certain ways, but are ultimately very different. Leading a happy life, the psychologists found, is associated with being a "taker" while leading a meaningful life corresponds with being a "giver." Ms. Smith quotes Kathleen Vohs, one of the authors of a new study to be published this year in The Journal of Positive Psychology: "Happy people get joy from receiving benefits from others, while people leading meaningful lives get a lot of joy from giving to others." In other words, meaning transcends the self, while happiness is all about giving the self what it wants. According to Roy Baumeister, the lead researcher of the study, "What sets human beings apart from animals is not the pursuit of happiness, which occurs all across the natural world, but the pursuit of meaning, which is unique to humans." Happy is good, but good is better. To hope for a happy year is to hope “to have a good time;" to seek a good year, however, is to recognize the superiority of meaning over the joy of the moment.

The word “good” has special meaning in the Bible. The first time we find it used is where God, after each day of creation, views God’s handiwork and proclaims it “good.” Then, when the initial work of creation was done, God looked at it, “and behold it was very good.” Commentators offer a profound insight: the word “good” indicates that every part of creation fulfilled God’s purpose; it was good because it was what it was meant to be. That is the deepest meaning of the word “good” when it is applied to us and to our lives: we are good when we are fully ourselves, fully the people we were created to be. If I am being the best Mary Perrin that I can be, that is good. So, a good year, from a spiritual perspective, is far more blessed than a simply happy one.

Yesterday I read that, while many people think acquiring more money would make them happier, social scientists have come to this significant conclusion: while having money does not automatically lead to happiness, giving it away almost always achieves that goal! “It doesn’t surprise me at all that people find giving money away very rewarding,” explained Aaron Ahuvia, associate professor at the University of Michigan. "People spend a lot of money trying to make their lives feel meaningful, significant and important. When you give away money you are doing the same thing, only you are doing it in a more effective way."

In pursuing a meaningful life for ourselves, in living the life of goodness we were meant to live, we will also be happier. We will find that our lives are meant to be shared with others, and that the more generous we are with what we have, the more goodness, meaning, and true happiness we will experience.

So today I say to my Jewish friends and to you, “Shana Tovah!” May your life be filled with meaning and purpose... and the true happiness that will surely follow.
Everyone Is Welcome at Our Prayer Shawl Retreat!

St. Martin’s Prayer Shawl Ministry is hosting a prayer shawl retreat on September 30 from 10:00am to 2:00pm. The cost is $10 if you wish to have the box lunch, free if you bring your own. Please contact Carina to RSVP at 269-986-6067 or carina.hilbert@gmail.com.

The retreat will be focused on prayer as well as on learning new skills — from learning how to knit and/or crochet if you want, to learning more intermediate skills of cables and how to read and change patterns. It will be a great time of prayer, reflection, learning, and fellowship.

We would love to see you there!

Celebration of St. Francis Day by Deacon Mike

October 1 is St. Francis Day (transferred)

St. Francis is perhaps one of our most admired saints. Founder of the Order of Friars Minor (now simply known as Franciscans) in the year 1210, he lived his life in absolute poverty, and in absolute joy of the creatures and flowers he encountered. He considered them all brothers and sisters. Francis was passionate about bringing the Good News to people, but when no one would come to hear him, he was known to preach to the birds and other animals. For all those reasons, we associate this mendicant saint with our feathered and furry friends.

October 4 is the official feast day of St. Francis on the church calendar. With permission, we are moving the day to Sunday, October 1, and we will include a Blessing of the Animals in addition to the normal Eucharist at the 10:00am service only. You are invited to bring your pet (whatever that might be!), or a photo or other reminder of a pet, past or present, or even a treasured stuffed animal that you would like to be blessed. We do ask that you keep live animals on a leash or in an appropriate carrier.

Nancy M is providing a “people cake” in honor of the day, and treats for critters will also be available at coffee hour after the regular service.
Ministry Opportunity
Have you considered helping our Alcott ministry by having bible study with our mentally- and physically-challenged friends? We have it on Monday mornings from 10:00 to 11:00am on Mall Drive in Portage. You would be helping once every other week with a team-singing, Bible lesson, prayers, and crafts. Please contact Judy F or Sharon K if you are interested in learning more.

Heads Up
Because the furniture in the nave will be moved for the blood drive, Morning Prayer and our Thursday mid-week Eucharist will be held in our outside worship space October 2-5. If the weather makes that uncomfortable, Plan B is to meet downstairs.

It’s Almost Here!
On the last Sunday of every month during this program year, our young people will be participating more than usual in our 10:00am liturgies. They may be greeters, lectors, alms and oblations bearers, or help in some other way — but, most noticeable, they will be offering a selection of music in praise to God. This coming Sunday, September 24, is the first time they’ll do this. Under the director of Tressa, the youngest of our kids will be singing, “This Little Light of Mine” as the first offertory anthem. They are pictured below practicing “This Little Light of Mine” during their Godly Play Sunday School class.

Community Living Options
“Together We Achieve”
Ministry Opportunity
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SUNDAY SCHOOL: MUSIC!
We have four classes for our young people again this year — Nursery, Godly Play, Faith Explorers, and 7-Uppers — and they all began meeting on Homecoming Sunday. A big change this year is that they’re meeting every Sunday except the last Sunday of the month, when they will be involved in the 10:00am liturgy. It’s a great program, and is wonderfully organized! We’re asking that parents, grandparents, and godparents make every effort to get the kids here each week. Thank you!

SUNDAY SCHOOL IS ON!
SUNDAY SCHOOL: FAITH-EXPLORERS
Eucharist at Friendship Village
Thursday, September 28
2:00pm in Room B-1
All are welcome
Come greet St. Martin’s

Eucharist at Friendship Village
Thursday, September 28
2:00pm in Room B-1
All are welcome
Come greet St. Martin’s
Parking Lot Notice — Again

The driveway and parking lot here at St. Martin’s will be sealed again next Monday and Tuesday, September 25 and 26.

The office will be closed and Morning Prayer has been cancelled for those two days.

SUNDAY SCHOOL: GODLY PLAY

Fall Clean-Up Day

is tomorrow
Saturday, September 23

Come at 8:00am or as soon after that as you can
Work indoors or outdoors

The more the merrier — and the more tasks will get done.

Help us keep St. Martin’s looking good!

Formation Leaders Training & Retreat

This diocesan-wide event will be hands-on, including:

- Group and community building
- Debriefing activities with a theological perspective
- Leading discussion and keeping people on track
- More topics will be included - if you have anything you’d like to learn or discuss, please contact Gennie at gcallard@edwm.org

It will be held October 27-28 at Camp Newaygo. Registration will be open until October 19. Cost: $40
The Blessing of the Backpacks litany was expanded this year. We not only blessed backpacks, we also blessed all students, teachers, school administrators, and retired school personnel. People representing all levels of education from pre-school through university were here and were prayed for. Everyone received a copy of the litany to take home; the first part might be especially good to use with young children on a daily or weekly basis. People who weren’t here heard about it, so we’ve had multiple requests for blessings and for the gifts we distributed for the backpacks (tags and stones).

Note: There are still some available, so if you missed it and would like a stone and/or a tag, talk with Sharon or Mike or Mary.
Great News!

**Ndoole** can not only be referred to as an “immigrant” instead of a “refugee” now, but he also just earned his Michigan Driver’s License! Congratulations, Ndoole! We are so proud of the hard work you’ve done and the progress you’ve made since coming to the USA.

Now that Ndoole has been here a year — yes, his 1-year anniversary of coming here was September 15! — he can begin the process to obtain a green card. This has been a long road for him, but he has persisted. Many thanks to all who have helped him. Please remember to keep him in your prayers.

**A Prayer from/by**

The Archdiocese of Chicago

We pray that those who seek to make a home in this country may find us welcoming and willing to help them find a path toward citizenship. We pray that our legislators, as they craft new immigration legislation, may find the wisdom and courage to enact new policies that do justice for our country and for those who would immigrate here. We pray for those who fan the flames of fear and discrimination against the undocumented, that they may be touched with your divine compassion. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

THANK YOU, **Julie** and **Joel** for creating and maintaining the bases around our signs, and for planting the fall flowers in them recently. The signs are beautifully presented!

**American Red Cross**

**POWER in the blood**

You can put the power of faith into action and help save a life!

**Blood Drive**

**St. Martin of Tours**

Narthex
2010 Nichols Road
Kalamazoo

**Thursday, October 5, 2017**
12:00 PM to 5:45 PM

To schedule an appointment, log onto redcrossblood.org (sponsor code: Tours) or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).
The Society for History and Racial Equity and its partners in the 2017 Summit on Racism have launched a Resisting Hate Initiative that will culminate on November 17 at the Summit on Racism.

- **September 17—November 18:**
  **“HATEFUL THINGS” EXHIBIT** — Kalamazoo Valley Museum. A traveling exhibit from the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia at Ferris State University. The exhibit displays racist memorabilia that serves to teach about the history of racism and present day stereotyping. Free and Open to the public. [www.kalamazoomuseum.org](http://www.kalamazoomuseum.org)

- **Wednesday, September 20, 1:00pm and 5:30pm:**
  **STAND AGAINST RACISM** — YWCA of Kalamazoo 353 E. Michigan Ave. The meeting (choose afternoon or evening session) is intended to be an engaging session where community members and partners have the opportunity to brainstorm, make suggestions or commitments, and give feedback. [Please RSVP here](#).

- **Friday, November 17, 9am-4:30pm:**

- **Saturday, November 18, 10:30am:**
  **COFFEE & DONUTS WITH LECIA BROOKS** — Kalamazoo Valley Museum. Ms. Brooks will answer questions about the Southern Poverty Law Center.