

**The Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany
February 5, 2023**

“Ordinary Time”

in the 170^h Year of the Parish

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

142 Market Street, Williamsport, PA 17701

stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org

Office (570-323-4619) Fax (570-323-2452)

Rev. Brian D. Vasey, Pastor

bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org

Welcome to Saint Mark's!

This is Christ's church. There is a place for you here. Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

Our Mission: *“To know Christ and to make Christ known.”*



Our COVID-19 Guidelines:

Hand sanitizer is available for your use.

Face masks are optional.

Offerings may be received by way of baskets as you enter or leave.

Please continue to observe social distancing when passing the peace.

A guide to hymnal use: LBW, Green Book; WOV, Blue Book.

**Please stand as you are able.*

PRELUDE

Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele

Johann Gottfried Walther (1684–1748)

WELCOME/ANNOUNCING THE DAY/ANNOUNCEMENTS

***BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P In the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen.**

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The congregation may kneel.

P Most merciful God,

C **we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

P Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ,

and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

***HYMN**

My Lord of Light

WOV, “Blue”, 796

***THE GREETING**

P The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

***HYMN OF PRAISE**



A Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his peo - ple on earth.



B Lord God, heav - en - ly king, al - might - y God and Fa - ther:



We wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God:



You take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.



You are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther; re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - - men

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray. Lord God, with endless mercy you receive the prayers of all who call upon you. By your Spirit show us the things we ought to do, and give us the grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen.**

INTRODUCTION TO TODAY'S READINGS

Light shines in the darkness for the upright, the psalmist sings. Isaiah declares that when we loose the bonds of injustice and share our bread with the hungry, the light breaks forth like the dawn. In another passage from the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus, the light of the world, calls his followers to let the light of their good works shine before others. Through baptism we are sent into the world to shine with the light of Christ.

THE FIRST READING.....Isaiah 58:1-12

1 Shout out, do not hold back!

Lift up your voice like a trumpet!

Announce to my people their rebellion,
to the house of Jacob their sins.

2 Yet day after day they seek me

and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;
they ask of me righteous judgments,
they delight to draw near to God.

3 "Why do we fast, but you do not see?

Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?"
Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day,
and oppress all your workers.

4 Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight
and to strike with a wicked fist.

Such fasting as you do today
will not make your voice heard on high.

5Is such the fast that I choose,
a day to humble oneself?
Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?
Will you call this a fast,
a day acceptable to the LORD?

6Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?

7Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

8Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator shall go before you,
the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

9Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.
If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

10if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.

11The LORD will guide you continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched places,
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.

12Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.

The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM 112:1-9

1 Hallelujah! Happy are they who | fear the LORD
and have great delight in | God's commandments!

**2 Their descendants will be mighty | in the land;
the generation of the upright | will be blessed.**

3 Wealth and riches will be | in their house,
and their righteousness will | last forever.

**4 Light shines in the darkness | for the upright;
the righteous are merciful and full | of compassion.**

5 It is good for them to be gener- | ous in lending
and to manage their af- | fairs with justice.

**6 For they will nev- | er be shaken;
the righteous will be kept in everlast- | ing remembrance.**

7 They will not be afraid of any | evil rumors;
their heart is steadfast, trusting | in the LORD.

**8 Their heart is established and | will not shrink,
until they see their desire up- | on their enemies.**

9 They have given freely to the poor, and their righteousness stands | fast forever;
they will hold up their | head with honor.

THE SECOND READING.....First Corinthians 2:1-12

1 When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. 2 For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3 And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. 4 My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

6 Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to perish. 7 But we speak God's wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. 8 None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But, as it is written,

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,
nor the human heart conceived,
what God has prepared for those who love him”—

10 these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. 11 For what human being knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God.

The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

***THE HOLY GOSPEL.....Matthew 5:13-20**

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the fifth chapter.

Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

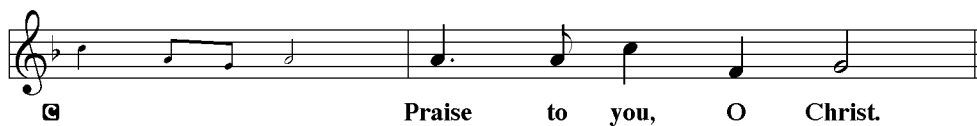
[Jesus said:] 13 "You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

14 "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. 15 No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. 18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. 19 Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these

commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

The gospel of the Lord.



THE SERMON

***HYMN**

Thy Strong Word

LBW, “Green”, 233

***THE APOSTLE’S CREED**

P Living together in trust and hope, let us confess our faith:

C **I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

After each petition, “Merciful God/Hear our prayer.”

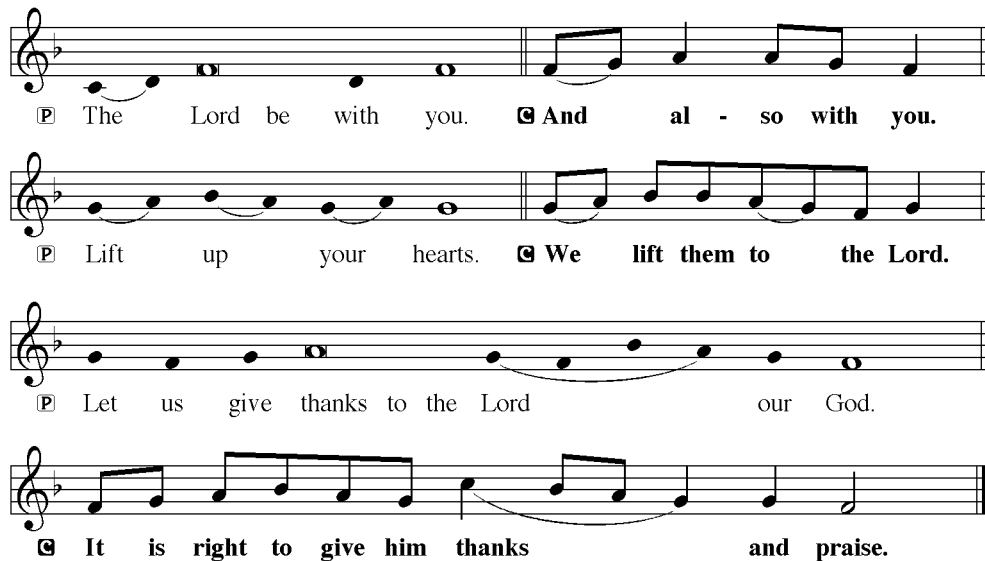
***THE PEACE**

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

The ministers and congregation greet one another with these or similar words, and/or gestures of peace, limiting physical touch and contact with one another.

***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**



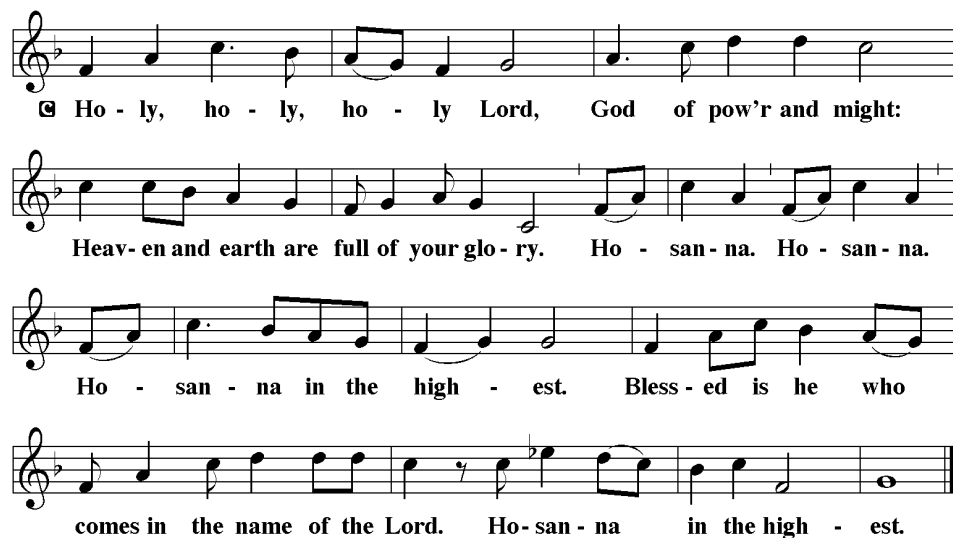
P The Lord be with you. **C** And al - so with you.

P Lift up your hearts. **C** We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give him thanks and praise.

P It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord. Sharing our life, he lived among us to reveal your glory and love, that our darkness should give way to his own brilliant light. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:
Heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho - san - na.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

P You are indeed holy, O God, the fountain of all goodness; you bring light from darkness, life from death, speech from silence.

We worship you for our lives and for the world you give us.

We thank you for the new world to come and for the love that will rule all.

We praise you for your grace and promises revealed to your people.

In all this we bless you for your only-begotten Son who fulfills your promises.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it and gave it to his disciples saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

After supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Send now, we pray your Holy Spirit, that we and all who share in this bread and cup may be united in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, and receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.

C Amen. Come Holy Spirit.

P Join our prayers with those of your servants in every time and place, and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest until he comes as victorious Lord of all.

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

C Amen.

***OUR LORD'S PRAYER**

P Let us pray in the words our Savior gave us:

C Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come,

thy will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

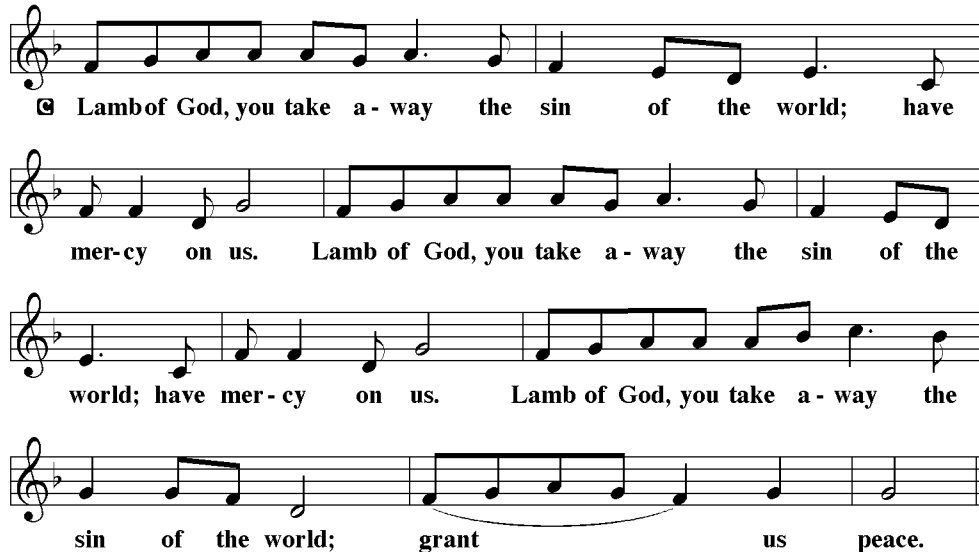
and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those

who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen

*LAMB OF GOD



☪ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

*INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Persons may come forward to the chancel to receive Holy Communion. This format will be more “continuous” noting the following procedure:

- *Communicants as directed by ushers are asked to come forward by way of the center aisle, take a cup from the tray provided and receive the bread.*
- *Once receiving the bread, communicants will proceed to one of two stations (left or right) to receive wine from the pouring chalice.*
- *After receiving wine, communicants will place the empty cup in the designated tray and return to their pew by way of the side aisles.*

Please do not kneel at the rail.

P Come and taste the joy of the Lord!

C Thanks be to God.

THE COMMUNION

***AFTER COMMUNION**

P The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C Amen.

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P Let us pray. Holy One,
we thank you for the healing
that springs forth abundantly from this table.
Renew our strength to do justice,
love kindness,
and journey humbly with you.

C Amen.

***THE BLESSING**

P Almighty God, Father, †, Son and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C Amen.

***HYMN Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service LBW, “Green”, 423**

***DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace. Follow the way of Jesus.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE *Herr Christ der einig Gottes Sohn*
Johann Gottfried Walther (1684–1748)

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Prayer List: Victims of COVID-19 and their families, Liz Ruesskamp, Grace Arner, Diane Damaska, Vanessa Morgan, Gary Clark, Charles Miller, Jerry Miller, Patricia Alexander, Diana Zeigler, Richard Ritter, Ashton Ott, Lucille Sider, April Clark, Lenny Sherlinski, Ruth Sherlinski, Gary Cable, Elsie Sechler, Virginia Pulaskie, Susan Kalabacas, Bunny Ditchfield, Judy Fortin, Roy and Gloria Meyer, the people of Ukraine and Eastern Europe, Storm and Hurricane Victims, Ezra Buckman, Sheila Brassard, Kevin Rosini, Kathy Eshelman, Micah, Ray Huff, Matt Fortin, Harold Hershberger.

WORSHIP LEADERS (February 5, 2023)

Lector	8:00 a.m.	Vicki Haussmann
	10:30 a.m.	Ray Huff
Communion Assistants	8:00 a.m.	Jackie Kinney
	10:30 a.m.	Carl & Audrey Albright
Organist		Sam Robinson
Ushers	8:00 a.m.	Richard Miller and Herb Poff
	10:30 a.m.	Gary and Shelby Weber
Altar Guild	February	Wanda Fortin and Mindy Wentzel



READ ANY GOOD BOOKS LATELY? Faith and Fellowship has temporarily “moved some books” from our church library to the Front Lounge in order to make them more accessible. Stop by the Front Lounge and take a look!



OUR STEWARDSHIP (January 29, 2023)

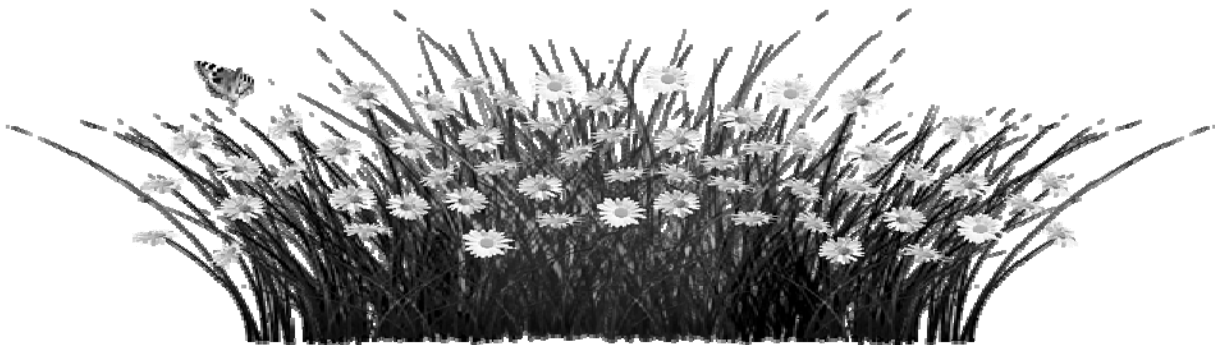
Regular Offering	\$2,197.00
Plate Offerings	30.00
Sunday School Offerings	7.00
Flower Memorials / Tributes	136.00
Souper Bowl	10.00
GRAND TOTAL	\$2,380.00



ALTAR FLOWERS today are given to the glory of God:
+In Celebration of our St. Mark's Family



There are many openings to sign up for altar flowers.
Remember a loved one, Honor a special occasion. For more
information see Sally Bjornstad or text to 570-494-6637.





SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY

In 1990, a Super Bowl Sunday prayer inspired a group of people to do something more than celebrate a football game? “Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat,” They created the

Souper Bowl of Caring, and have mobilized others across the country to raise more than \$100 million since its inception for people in need.

This February, St. Mark’s will once again join churches all across the country in the Souper Bowl of Caring and collect money and food for the hungry and homeless in our community. Our donations of non-perishable food items will be given to the United Churches Food Pantry to help stock their shelves. Monetary donations (please mark checks with Souper Bowl) will be used to buy \$15.00 grocery store gift cards to be quietly given to families in need.

Be part of this movement that is sharing God’s love with those in need. Please give generously on Super Bowl Sunday. A gift in any amount is greatly appreciated and truly makes a difference!

Got Stuff?



The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee and the Women of St. Mark’s need donations for our annual Fall Sale that will, after an absence of two years, be held in early September.

We are accepting holiday decorations, housewares, linens, toys, small, working electronics, gadgets, dishes, jewelry, lamps, art work and the list goes on. If you don’t want it, we probably can sell it.



Ash Wednesday

Holy Communion (Chapel) 12:05 p.m.

Holy Communion (Nave) 7:00 p.m.



**Midweek Lenten Series: Making
Change**

***Wednesdays in Lent (March 1-29),
12:15 p.m., Chapel***

Change is a constant in our lives. Some changes mark gradual transitions, as when daytime shifts toward twilight or winter turns to spring. Others happen in the blink of an eye, separating time into “before” and “after”. We choose to undergo some changes after carefully considering our options, while others are

forced upon us.

In the weeks, days, and hours before Jesus’ crucifixion, the disciples also experienced change: a change of venue as the gates of Jerusalem approached; a change of plans as their long-awaited Messiah was arrested and tried; a change of circumstance as the crowds shouted “Crucify!”

Change is hard. We long for the expected and familiar, but all too often find ourselves in the midst of uncertainty and the unknown. We cannot predict how things will turn out. The hymnwriter Joachim Neander proclaimed God’s steadfast love in the midst of life’s inevitable changes: “All my hope on God is founded who will all my trust renew, who through change and chance will guide me, only good and only true. God unknown, God alone, call my heart to be thine own” (WOV 782).

Each Wednesday in Lent we will explore together how in the midst of change, God in Christ is always with us.

All are welcome!

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Adult Sunday School Class is currently studying *Living the Kingdom; Reflections on the Small Catechism*. We meet in the Middle Lounge at 9:15a.m.

All are welcome



HAPPENING IN FEBRUARY:

Sunday, February 19, The Transfiguration of Our Lord

Holy Communion, 8 and 10:30 a.m.

Sunday Church School, 9:15 a.m.

Tuesday, February 21, *Shrove Tuesday (Faustnacht Day)*

6:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall: Donuts, Faustnachts, Coffee and Conversation

6:50 p.m., Burning Ashes for Ash Wednesday from last year's palms

7:05 p.m., Liturgy to "Bury the Alleluia" in preparation for Lent.

Wednesday, February 22, Ash Wednesday

Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion, 12:15 a.m. (Chapel)

Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion, 7 p.m. (Nave)

Sunday, February 26, First Sunday in Lent

Holy Communion, 8 and 10:30 a.m.

"GROW IN THE SNOW" YOUTH RETREAT



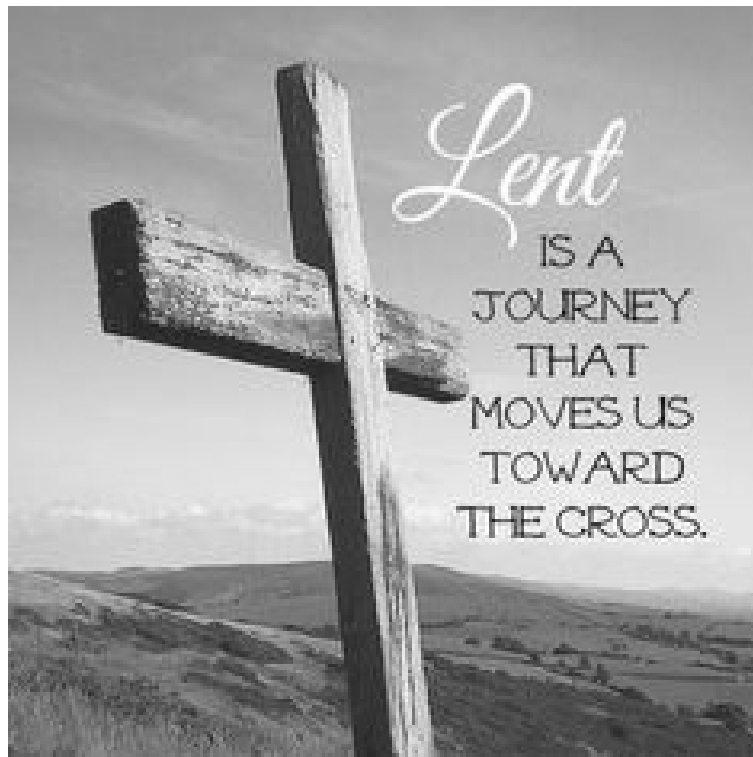
"Grow in the Snow", a winter youth retreat for Grades 6-12 will be held at Camp Mt. Luther March 17, 6:30 p.m. - March 18, 4 p.m.

Cost: Both days is \$66.00; Saturday only \$45.00. Please register by March 10. Details are available by contacting the Church Office (Tuesday- Friday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 570-323-4619 or

stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org).

DO YOU WANT TO FAST THIS LENT?

- ❖ Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
- ❖ Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
- ❖ Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
- ❖ Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
- ❖ Fast from worries and have trust in God.
- ❖ Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity
- ❖ Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
- ❖ Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy.
- ❖ Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
- ❖ Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
- ❖ Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.



The best things about this week

This Week we celebrate the following Birthdays

Michael Reitz	February 6
Margie Doebler	February 8
Matthew Heaps	February 8
Paul Zimmer	February 8
Joseph Baur	February 10
Gloria Greevy	February 10



UPCOMING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

No Meetings are scheduled this week.

Please update the Administrative Assistant, Joe Baur, of the date of Committee Meetings and Times so they can be included weekly in the bulletin. Thanks.

There is a folder in the Administrative Assistant Office (Joe Baur) that has copies of committee meeting minutes. Minutes can be reviewed at any time. When possible, please send them to me and I will include them.

Thanks, Joe.



The Deadline for the March Newsletter is Tuesday, February 21, 2023. Please have your articles in by this date. Thanks.

COMMEMORATIONS



The Martyrs of Japan, died 1597

Sunday, February 5, 2023

Christianity was brought to Japan in the sixteenth century by Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries. The religion was suppressed, however, and in 1597 twenty-six missionaries and converts were crucified.

Nevertheless, Christianity survived and later prospered.