

Joy

The Third Sunday of Advent

December 12, 2021

in the 168th 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 Lutheran Church!

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

This is Christ's church. There is a place for you here.

We are the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace.

Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person-questions,

complexities and all. Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the

life of the world.

Please Note: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has provided revised guidelines with regard to mask wearing. Following these guidelines, and the specific recommendations of our bishop (Bishop Collins of the Upper Susquehanna Synod) Church Council strongly recommends that masks be worn, social distancing followed, and to speak and sing in very low tones when worshipping in St. Mark's church building. Thank You!

An Order for Holy Communion, (9:30 a.m., With One Voice, Setting Five (WOV, “Blue Book”)

**Please stand as you are able.*

PRELUDE *Besancon (People Look East)*

Wayne Wold

WELCOME/ANNOUNCING THE DAY

***BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

The pastor leads the congregation in the invocation, the sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their baptism.

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who alone does wonders,
who lifts up the lowly,
who fills the hungry with good things.

C **Amen.**

P Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God.
Silence is kept for reflection.

P God for whom we wait,

C **in the presence of one another,
we confess our sin before you.**

We fail in believing that your good news is for us.

We falter in our call to tend your creation.

We find our sense of self in material wealth.

We fear those different from ourselves.

**We forget that we are your children
and turn away from your love.**

**Forgive us, Blessed One,
and assure us again of your saving grace.**

Amen.

P God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you!

Through the power of the Holy Spirit,

† your sins are forgiven.

You are children of the Most High,

inheritors of the eternal promise,

and recipients of divine mercy.

God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace.

Amen.

***HYMN Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel (LBW, "Green" 34)**

Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel



1 Oh, come, oh, come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
2 Oh, come, oh, come, great Lord of might, who to your tribes on
3 Oh, come, strong Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's
4 Oh, come, blest Day - spring, come and cheer our spir - its by your
5 Oh, come, O Key of Da - vid, come, and o - pen wide our



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
Si - nai's height in an - cient times once gave the law
tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save
ad - vent here; dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night,
heav'n - ly home; make safe the way that leads on high,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave. Re - joice! Re - joice!
and death's dark shad - ows put to flight.
and close the path to mis - er - y.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

Text: *Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. John M. Neale, 1818–1866, alt.
Music: VENI, EMMANUEL, French processional, 15th cent.

*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.

*KYRIE



A Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: **C** Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord, have mer - cy:



A Chri - ste e - le - i - son: **C** Christ, have mer - cy.
Christ, have mer - cy:



A Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: **C** Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord, have mer - cy:

*LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH- Light One Candle (stanza 3)

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep - herd, gent - ly lead them home - ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate - way for the King of glo - ry.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954
Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune
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***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray. Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

INTRODUCTION TO TODAY'S READINGS

Christ's presence in our midst in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the God in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one "more powerful" than John, even with a winnowing fork in hand, is good news-and cause for exultation-for us who are being saved. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent.

THE FIRST LESSON.....Zephaniah 3:14-20

14Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!

15The LORD has taken away the judgments against you,
he has turned away your enemies.

The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.

16On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;

do not let your hands grow weak.

17The LORD, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;

he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;

he will exult over you with loud singing
18as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you,

so that you will not bear reproach for it.
19I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.

And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.

20At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes, says the LORD.

The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

THE FIRST SONG OF ISAIAH (Isaiah 12:2-6)

2Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not | be afraid,
for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might, and has become | my
salvation.

**3With joy you | will draw water
from the wells | of salvation.**

4And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call | on God's
name;

make known the deeds of the LORD among the nations; proclaim that
this name | is exalted.

**5Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done | gloriously;
let this be known in | all the earth.**

6Shout aloud and sing for joy, O | royal Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy | One of Israel.

THE SECOND LESSON.....Philippians 4:4-7

4Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. 5Let your gentleness
be known to everyone. The Lord is near. 6Do not worry about anything, but
in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests
be made known to God. 7And the peace of God, which surpasses all

understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

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

***THE HOLY GOSPEL.....Luke 3:7-18**

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the third chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

P 7John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. 9Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

10And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” 11In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” 12Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” 13He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” 14Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

15As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, 16John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

18So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

THE SERMON

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM AND RECEPTION

Helen C. Schramm

P Dear friends, we give thanks for the gift of baptism and for Helen, one with us in the body of Christ, who is making public affirmation of her baptism. This is indeed a special day as we “welcome Helen back” to the fold of St. Mark's.

Sponsor I present Helen, who desires to make public affirmation of her baptism as she rejoins our fellowship.

P Let us pray. Merciful God, we thank you for this sister in Christ whom you have made your own by water and the Word in baptism.

You have called her to yourself,
enlightened her with the gifts of your Spirit,
and nourished her in the community of faith.

Uphold your servant in the gifts and promises of baptism,
and unite the hearts of all whom you have brought to new birth.

We ask this in the name of Christ.

C **Amen.**

P Let us profess our faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church.

**P & 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 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.**

P Helen, you have made public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:

to live among God's faithful people,

to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,

to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,

to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,

and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

Helen I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.

P People of God, do you promise to support our sister Helen and pray for

her in her life in Christ?

C We do, and we ask God to help and guide us.

P Let us pray. We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give us new birth, cleanse us from sin, and raise us to eternal life. Stir up in Helen the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

C Amen.

P Let us continue to rejoice in our Lord and welcome back Helen into the membership of St. Mark's Lutheran Church.

***Hymn Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn (WOV, "Blue, 633)**

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for
 2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
 3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when
 4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing, Sing out your joy, for
 man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is
 all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
 dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.
 qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
 qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
 crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
 mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -
 Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in
 Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and
 kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to
 won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and
 sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
 shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
 weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
 bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950
 Music: REJOICE, REJOICE, Marty Haugen
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***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

After each petition, "Hear us, O God/Your mercy is great."

***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.

ANTHEM *Come Thou Long Expected Jesus*

***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

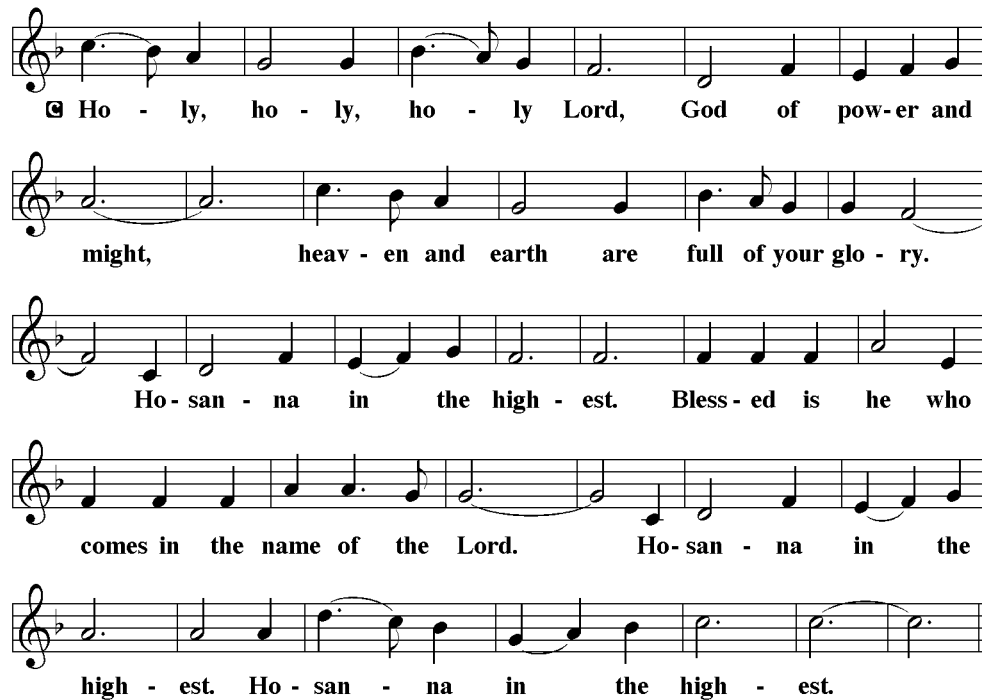
P Lift up your hearts.

C **We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and ever-living God. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes again to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and
 might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.
 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. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

P 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.

Again, 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 you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

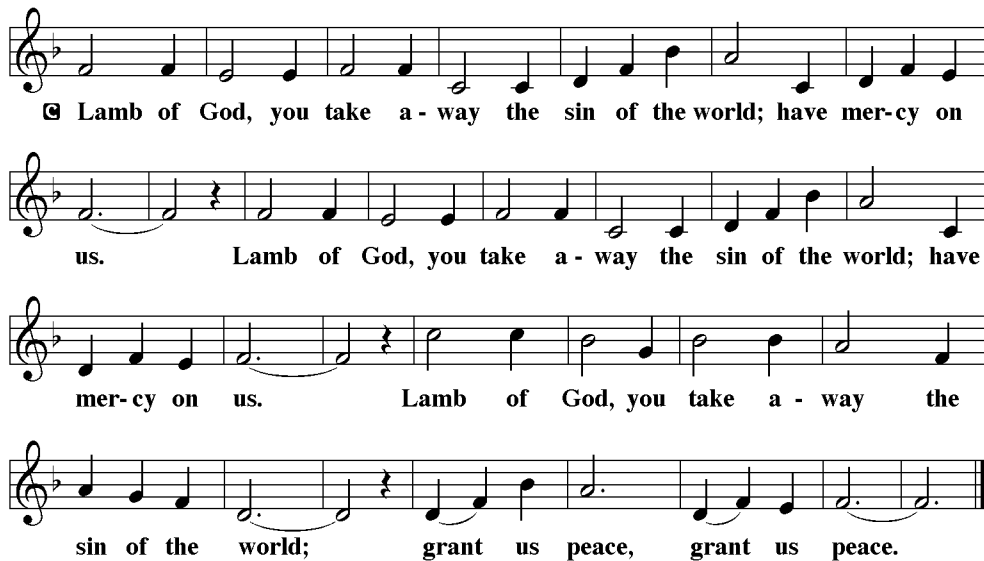
***OUR LORD'S PRAYER**

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, 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, masked and observing social distancing, are asked to come forward as directed by ushers by way of the center aisle, take a cup from the tray provided and receive the bread from Pastor Vasey.*
- *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. Kneeling at the rail will return at a time to be determined by pastor and Church Council.

P Come to Christ's banquet. Feast on grace.

C **Amen. Come Lord Jesus.**

THE COMMUNION

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P Most High God,

you have come among us at this table.

By the Spirit's power, form us to be bearers of your word,

sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all,

through Christ Jesus, our host and our guest.

C **Amen.**

***THE BLESSING**

P The God of hope

fill us with all joy and peace in believing,

so that we may abound in hope

by the power of the Holy Spirit,

through Christ Jesus for whom we wait.

C **Amen.**

***HYMN Lo, How a Rose Is Growing**

(LBW, "Green" 58)

Lo, How a Rose Is Growing



1 Lo, how a rose is grow - ing, a bloom of fin - est grace;
2 The rose of which I'm sing - ing, I - sa - iah had fore - told.
3 The shep - herds heard the sto - ry the an - gels sang that night:
4 This flow'r, so small and ten - der, with fra - grance fills the air;
5 O Sav - ior, child of Mar - y, who felt all hu - man woe;



the proph - ets had fore - told it: a branch of Jes - se's race
He came to us through Mar - y who shel - tered him from cold.
how Christ was born of Mar - y; he was the Son of light.
his bright - ness ends the dark - ness that kept the earth in fear.
O Sav - ior, king of glo - ry, who tri - umphed o'er our foe:



would bear one per - fect flow'r here in the cold of
Through God's e - ter - nal will this child to us was
To Beth - le - hem they ran to find him in the
True God and yet true man, he came to save his
bring us at length, we pray, to the bright courts of



win - ter and dark - est mid - night hour.
giv - en at mid - night calm and still.
man - ger as an - gel her - alds sang.
peo - ple from earth's dark night of sin.
heav - en and in - to end - less day.

Text: German, 15th cent.; tr. Gracia Grindal, b. 1943
Music: ES IST EIN ROS. *Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengesäng*, Köln, 1599

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***DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace, Christ is near.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE *Veni, Emmanuel (O Come, O Come Emmanuel)* Robert Powell

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Prayer List: Victims of COVID-19 and their families, Liz Ruesskamp, Grace Arner, Diane Damaska, Vanessa Morgan, Gary Clark, Doris Brown, Charles Miller, Jerry Miller, Patricia Alexander, James Zeigler, Diana Zeigler, Richard Ritter, Ashton Ott, Lucille Sider, April Clark, Lenny Sherlinski, Ruth Sherlinski, Gary Cable, Elsie Sechler, Virginia Pulaskie, Mark Stiller, Bernadette Jones, Susan Kalabacas, Bunny Ditchfield, Judy Fortin, Roy and Gloria Meyer, Mary Lou Doebler, Walt Haussmann, Lou and Linda DeSeau.

WELCOME HELEN SCHRAMM! Today St. Mark's welcomes Helen Schramm into membership. Helen is transferring her membership from St. Joseph the Worker Roman Catholic Church (Williamsport) to St. Mark's. We welcome Helen to the life of our congregation. Ruth Rees is serving as Helen's sponsor.

Our **ANNUAL MEETING** takes place today immediately following the 9:30 a.m. Holy Communion. By action of our Church Council St. Mark's will host one annual meeting and not two as in previous years. The business of the meeting will be to vote on our annual 2022 budget, members of Church Council, and special projects of the congregation.

WORSHIP LEADERS (12/12/2021)

Lector Deb Buckman

Communion Assistants

Carl & Audrey Albright

Organist Sam Robinson

USHERS:

Matt Fortin, Captain. Glenn Yapple and Bud Doebler

COVID CONTACT: Please note that your attendance at worship will be recorded. This serves as a precaution in case contact-tracing due to the pandemic is warranted. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

ADVENT BIBLE STUDY: continues on Wednesdays in Advent, 12:15 p.m. This year a Bible study during the noon hour replaces the traditional mid-week Service of the Word. Our study will be the traditional themes of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love associated with the Advent Season, and the schedule will be as follows:

+JOY: Luke 1:39-56, December 15

+LOVE: John 3:16-21, December 22

We will meet in Fellowship Hall 12:15-12:45 p.m. No meal will be served but feel free to bring a “bag lunch” if you so desire. Coffee, water and tea will be provided. All are welcome!

Little Lambs will be having a **CHRISTMAS PROGRAM** Thursday, December 16 and Friday, December 17 at 10:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. All are welcome!

THE WILLIAMSPORT CIVIC CHORUS presents “*A Rutter Christmas*”, the music of John Rutter on Friday, December 17 at 7:00 p.m. in the nave. Tickets are \$12 at the door for general admission and \$10 for students and seniors.

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP TIMES:

+ Friday, December 24, 7 p.m. A brief “Family- Friendly Service” with a message especially appropriate to children. Join us for candlelight liturgy, Holy Communion and familiar carols.

+ Friday, December 24, 10 p.m. “Traditional Holy Communion by Candlelight” substituting carols for the Christmas Liturgy.

+ Sunday, December 26, 9:30 a.m. “The Feast of Stephen”; the First Sunday of Christmas. Our theme will be why the day we remember the death of the first deacon, Stephen, is part of our Christmas tradition. The story of “Good King Wenceslaus” will be shared and sung.

HATS, GLOVES AND MITTENS, OH MY!

The Newberry Branch of NGA distributes new clothing and coats to needy children, women and families in the Greater Williamsport Area. Since November we have distributed 126 coats and counting. If we have hats, gloves and mittens we include them with the coat. At this time, we have very few of these accessories. Please consider donating hats, gloves and mittens for boys and girls in sizes from toddler to adults. A tub is in the Narthex for donations. Thank you for any help you can give.

POLISH STARS

As you enter the Narthex there is a display of Polish stars, created by Lou Ann Zeigler. The Outreach Committee is giving them away at no cost. But to make the joy they give stretch further, we are accepting a modest monetary donation. The combined donations will be used to purchase \$10.00 grocery cards to be given to the United Churches Food Pantry. Mona Rundio, director, gives a card to clients receiving a three-day supply of food. This card allows them to purchase fresh meat, dairy and fruit.

The New Year 2022 **ALTAR FLOWER SIGN-UP BOOK** will be available starting the first week of January.

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 (12/5/21)

Regular Offering	\$ 7,135.00
Plate Offering	\$ 10.00
Miscellaneous	\$ 50.00
Food Pantry	\$ 20.00
Christmas & Advent	\$ 5.00
Thanksgiving	\$ 45.00
Capital Fund	\$ 10.00
Flower Memorials/Tributes	\$ 60.00
Synod Benevolence	\$ 10.00
World Hunger	\$ 10.00
Selinsgrove Christmas Party	\$ 50.00
Grand Total	\$ 7,405.00

ALTAR FLOWERS today are given to the glory of God:

+ In loving memory of my parents, Elias and Grace Lehman, Herbert Winters and son, Scott, and sisters, Eva and Helen by Lois Winters Goldy.

+ In loving memory of Helen and F.B. Troxell by Margie Levinson and her family and by Frank Troxell and his family.

COMMEMORATIONS

Lucy, martyr, died 304

Monday, December 13, 2021

Lucy was a young Christian of Sicily, who was martyred during the persecutions under Emperor Diocletian. Her celebration became particularly important in Sweden and Norway, perhaps because the feast of Lucia (whose name means “light”) originally fell on the shortest day of the year.

John of the Cross, renewer of the church, died 1591

Tuesday, December 14, 2021

John was a member of the Carmelite monastic order, and worked to reform it. His writings reflect a deep interest in mystical thought and meditation.

Las Posadas

Thursday, December 16, 2021

This celebration, long popular in Mexico, takes its name from the “posadas”, or lodgings, sought by Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem. Their search is reenacted in a neighborhood, unsuccessfully, until they are welcomed in, and a party commences.