



THE LION OF ST. MARK'S

JANUARY 2011

“Draw near to God and he will draw near to you” ~ James 4:8a



Worship of the Lord God is the central activity of the church. Everything else we do springs from worship, is inspired by worship, and derives its meaning and purpose from worship. So at the beginning of a new calendar year, it would be good to point out again the opportunities for corporate worship here at St. Mark's this January.

1. Each Sunday we gather for the **Holy Communion** at 8:00 and 10:30 A.M. We celebrate whatever in our lives seems to be congruent with Biblical faith, and confess that which does not. We hear the Word of God and share in the real presence of the risen Lord Jesus in his holy Meal.. We encourage and pray for one another and the whole needy world. We are sent out again for service.

2. Each weekday at 9 A.M., we sing **Morning Prayer** in the chapel. It happens whether there are one or a dozen persons present. The Quilters join in on Wednesday mornings, the Stephen Ministers begin their Thursday sessions with Morning Prayer. Members of the staff often join the Pastor in prayer, and lead when the pastor is away.

Anyone is welcome to stop in and add your voice to the prayers. It is much better, of course, for Morning Prayer to be said or sung together, but if that is not possible, go ahead and pray it alone! Get out your copy of the *Lutheran Book of Worship* and find Morning Prayer at page 131. Take your Sunday bulletin and find the Daily Lectionary notice printed there each week. It lists the lesson we are reading each day, the Psalm we use, and a Hymn suggested for that occasion. We are shaped by this experience a little bit at a time.

3. The **Remembrance Service** will be held on Sunday, January 2 at 4:00 P.M. See details on the back cover of the *Lion*.

4. This year we'll also meet on the **Eve of the Epiphany**, January 5, to sing **Evening Prayer** in the nave. It is a festive way to close the Twelve Days of Christmas. Mark your new calendar for 7:00 on that evening. We'll see the lit Chrismon Tree one more time, and pray for guidance in the new year. The evening will close with Lamb's Wool Punch and Epiphany Kings' Bread.



**These are the hands
That make the quilts**



**That come from the congregation
That are inspired by God**



That spread His love all over the world.

In this season of Christmas it is a fitting time to thank the people of St. Mark's for donations.

You have been like the Wise Men bearing gifts for the Christ Child.

Our quilting ministry could not happen without all your help by providing material goods.

Sheets in good condition and old blankets are transformed into backings and fillers for beautiful quilts.

What a great way to recycle!

Come and join our group on Wednesday mornings.

If working at home is more convenient for you, help is needed to machine sew quilt sections.

Also needed are people to sew school bags. Contact Grace Arner or Shirley Hill.

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Council Notes

The Council met on December 13 in Fellowship Hall and enjoyed a Christmas season dinner hosted by the President and wife, Gary & Shelby Weber. An invitation was graciously extended to staff members and their spouses to join in the festivities.

Utilizing a "Christmas Around the World" theme everyone provided dishes from his or her own ethnic tradition or from another country. Appetizers to dessert became a wonderful sampling of delicious and tasty food!

Bob Jones arranged the setting in a most pleasing manner. There was time for conversation and becoming acquainted with spouses and staff members. An enjoyable time was experienced by all!

Blessing for the New Year

**May the new year bring
The warmth of home and hearth to you.
The cheer and goodwill of friends to you,
The hope of a childlike heart to you,
The joy of a thousand angels to you,
The love of the Son
and God's peace to you!**

Parish Register

- ★ Pastor Elkin officiated at the funeral for Doris Mae Fortin in the Nave on Thursday, December 23, 2010.
- ★ Pastor Elkin officiated at the funeral for Elizabeth 'Sis' Chrisman in the Nave on Friday, December 24, 2010.
- ★ Those participating in The Way for 2010-2011: Carol Confer, Leah Haussmann, Walter Haussmann and Mae Thaljih

Staff & Officers Contact Information

Church Office	323-4619	stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org	Church fax number	323-2452
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Director of Music			Website: stmarkswilliamsport.org	
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Lou DeSeau, Environmental Services		ldeseau@stmarkswilliamsport.org	Kathy Eshelman, Stephen Ministry	323-1992

ELCA National News

A leader for Mission

At our Synod Assembly last June Dr. Gemechis Buba served as the representative from the ELCA and Bible study leader. He gave several stirring presentations, calling on the assembly to remain faithful to scripture and to remember that it is the true basis for the work of the church. Dr. Buba has been serving as Director of African National Ministries for the ELCA in Chicago. On December 8 he resigned that position and accepted the call of the North American Lutheran Church to serve as its first Missions Director. "He is a gifted and inspiring preacher and church leader. The NALC is blessed to have him accept our call to service in the church body," said NALC Bishop Paull Spring.

Dr. Buba began his theological studies in his home country of Ethiopia, where his family suffered greatly under brutal dictatorships. After coming to the US, he earned a doctorate in missional leadership studies, and among other things has served as a leader in the Oromo churches that are being established wherever Ethiopian refugees have settled in the US.

In Defense of Marriage

Twenty six leaders from a range of denominations have come together to express their commitment toward the protection of marriage as the union of one man and one woman, in an open letter entitled "The Protection of Marriage: A Shared Commitment." Among the signers of the letter, released on Dec. 7, 2010, are the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, the President of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, the Archbishop of the Anglican Church in North America, and the Bishop of the North American Lutheran Church. The Presiding Bishop of the ELCA did not sign.

Archbishop Dolan said, "The broad consensus reflected in this letter – across great religious divides – is clear: The law of marriage is not about imposing the religion of anyone, but about protecting the common good of everyone. People of any faith or no faith at all can recognize that when the law defines marriage as between one man and one woman, it legally binds a mother and father to each other and their children, reinforcing the foundational cell of human society."

Congregations switching affiliations

The ELCA offices announced on December 7 that 308 congregations have completed the process of leaving the ELCA and affiliating with another Lutheran body such as the North American Lutheran Church, Evangelical Lutherans in Mission, or the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. In addition, 173 congregations are midway in the process that is specified in congregational constitutions.

The Church Council of the ELCA recently announced that it would be proposing changes in congregational constitutions that would make it more difficult and time consuming for congregations to leave. Such changes would have to be approved by the next national assembly in August 2011. To date, one congregation has left the Upper Susquehanna Synod.

January 9, 2011: FLOOD SU

Camp Mount Luther and the USS Youth Council present *FLOOD SU*: to be held on Sunday, January 9, 2011, from 4:00-7:00 p.m. at Susquehanna University. Doors open at 3:45 p.m. The event is open to youth in grades 4 through 12.

FLOOD SU features a praise band, service project, swimming, open gym, racquetball, hot dogs, snacks, Rock Band & Guitar Hero. Bring a snack to share, clothes for swimming, a loud voice to sing God's praises, hands to do God's work, games, and sports equipment. We'll provide service project materials, hot dogs and drinks, basketballs, volleyballs, Rock Band and Guitar Hero!

Cost is \$5 if registered by Tuesday, January 4, 2011; \$10 at the door. Registration forms are available on the synod's website (www.uss-elca.org) or the camp's website (www.campmountluther.org).

ELCA Cuts Budget

The ELCA has cut 65 employees from its staff and reduced its 2011 budget by 22% (\$14 million) in recognition that congregations and synods have reduced their financial support for church-wide ministries. Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson said, "In 2008, after adjusting for inflation, the value of financial support had declined by half since the founding of this church in 1988." The ELCA has also abruptly dropped participation in an international project to combat malaria which had been approved at the last national assembly of the ELCA.

Lutheran Shared Ministry

13th Annual Catechetical Retreat



Catechetical Retreat 2011 is scheduled for January 8, 2011, at Messiah Lutheran. Topics of discovery include:

Foods to carry Good News ~ *Pastor Elkin, St. Mark's* ~ From the manna of the wilderness to the bread in Holy Communion, from the hospitality of Abraham to the welcome at heaven's banquet table, food is prominent in telling the Good News. We'll explore several of the Bible stories and prepare some of the foods. In the making and in the sharing, Good News abounds!

Parents, Teens and Money ~ *Mr. Keith Wood, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans* ~ How do advertising, peer pressure, and other influences affect your attitude toward money? Can faith and values offer guidance? It is important to balance what teens share, save, and spend as they gear up for financial independence in the future.

Life Around God ~ *Pastor Aucker, St. John* ~ Often times we think about God on Sunday when we attend worship or when we are in trouble. But God is also present in our lives on Monday, and Tuesday, and...and in those times of fun and joy. In emergencies we look to God in those flashing neon signs. This session will help us see that God is present in our lives in those unexpected moments. Even in a still quiet voice.

2012 - Is It a Big Deal? ~ *Pr. Frontz, Messiah* ~ Many people believe that the year 2012 will be a momentous year - some think it will be the last year of the world. Why do people think this, is there any reason to believe them, and what does the Bible say about the end of the world and if we can know anything about it?

Christians Care for God's Creation ~ *Pr. Huckfeldt, St. Michael* ~ We will read creation stories and from scripture and explore the relationship that God intends us to have with him and his creation. We will discuss environmental stewardship responses of the church and share stories of youth and adults, families and individuals and how they can make a difference in this world.

Help! Who am I and why are these people calling me _____?! ~ *Pr. Deibler, St. Luke* ~ During the course of even just one day, we can find ourselves playing many different roles: friend, dutiful son or daughter, student, employee, etc. But which one is the real you? We will use creative techniques to explore this important question.

Remember to ask our catechetical students how they enjoyed their day!

St. Mark's Social Ministry

Christmas Joy from St. Mark's

The Social Ministry Committee wishes to extend heartfelt thanks to the congregation for their support of our outreach to the Selinsgrove Center and the Danville State Hospital. Your donations of body wash, pudding, homemade cookies, fruit, candy, clothing, small electronic items and money for purchasing items made many individuals much happier this holiday season.

On December 7, 2010 Pastor Elkin, Lou DeSeau, Shirley and Jackie Kinney and Becky Miller Pryor trekked to the Selinsgrove Center to entertain the thirteen ladies and their caregivers of CM-6. We shared songs and stories in addition to our gifting. Everyone had a wonderful time.

On December 16, 2010 gifts for thirty-five individuals of the Danville State Hospital were delivered to Renee Tworkoski, our contact at the hospital. Many of these folks would not have a gift if it were not for your generosity. Please know that the staff at the hospital is extremely grateful for our efforts.

A special thank you is given to Larue Dieter for creating the gift tags and addressing the thirty-five cards to the men and women at Danville AND the thirteen ladies at Selinsgrove. Her efforts behind the scene are what keep our outreach going during this very busy time of year.

A Word of Thanks

*Thank you so much for the wonderful Christmas party! We truly appreciated all the thoughtful gifts and delicious goodies!
The Staff and Ladies of CM-6 Selinsgrove Center*

Go Green for Gifting

The Social Ministry Committee is collecting holiday gift bags and wrapping paper to use for our annual holiday party at the Selinsgrove Center. Recycled gifting materials can be placed in the tub in the narthex.

Daniel's Closet

Many thanks to our congregation for supporting the work of Daniel's Closet, a free clothing ministry of Redeemer Lutheran Church. You regularly support their work with your donations of clothing. But we are also a source of volunteers that set-up, help individuals the day of distribution and stay a bit longer to clean up. Special thanks is given to Clint and Megan Eppleman, Susan Baker and Deb Holmes for their continuing assistance with this ministry.

Hosting for Family Promise

St. Mark's will be hosting families experiencing a housing crisis from March 13 – March 20, 2011. We need people to set-up, donate food, drive the van, prepare and serve meals, visit with the families in the evening, stay overnight, clean-up at the end of the week and launder towels and bedding. Please be thinking of where you can assist with this ministry. Sign-up sheets will be available in February.

Needed: Blankets

As we look to hosting again in March, there is a need for additional blankets due to the cold, winter weather. Co-coordinators, Jane Zimmerer and Becky Miller Pryor are requesting donations of gently used or new washable blankets in size full/queen. Blankets may be left in the tub in the Narthex.

Notice to ALL Women of St. Mark's



There will be a short meeting of the Women of St. Mark's on Wednesday, January 19, at 10:00 a.m. in the Middle Lounge. Our budget for the next year must be down-sized. ALL women who are members of St. Mark's are invited to help decide which charities will receive our contributions. Come and stay for Lunch N' Fellowship afterwards. The food is delicious, and the company is pleasant.

United Churches of Lycoming County

Wednesday Ecumenical Lunches 12 to 1 PM

A tasty \$6 lunch, warm, ecumenical fellowship & a thoughtful program designed to enrich your life mentally, physically, spiritually and socially at Pine Street United Methodist Church.

No reservations are necessary.

- 5- **"Pedestrian Bingo"**, provided courtesy of **The Community Traffic Safety Project**
- 12- **Ms. Peggy Reichenbach**, Executive Director of Big Brother, Big Sisters of the Central Susquehanna Valley, **"Partnering with Children and Youth Here in Lycoming County"**
- 19- **Revs. Danesta Whaley & Gwen Bernstine**, President and Executive Director of United Churches of Lycoming County, **"Getting To Know Each Other Better During this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity"**
- 26- **Rev. Tom Reeder, Rector**, Christ Episcopal Church, Williamsport, **"Making a Difference in Our Community - One Church - One Meal - at a Time."**

This is a ministry that everyone in our congregations and community is welcome to participate in. Make plans to join us and you're welcome to bring a friend!



A 24 hour Devotion Line

is a way for everyone in our community to have "A Closer Walk With God". Devotions are three minutes or less and change daily and at least once on the weekend. Devotionalists change weekly. The phone number is 570-322-5762.

Campus Ministry

On December 3rd and 4th, students with UCM helped to serve dinner for their production of "A Christmas Carol". Special thanks to Lutheran Shared Ministry and everyone involved in the dinner and production.

If you baked a cake, served dinner, washed dishes, sewed costumes, painted scenery, participated in or attended the performance, we thank you and appreciate it. Thanks to you Bernadette Jones for all your hard work and endless enthusiasm. The monies raised from this dinner will help fund our Spring break mission trip.

We are teaming up with The Center for Student Mis-sions and will be heading to Washington, DC to work with Miriam's Kitchen, DC Central Kitchen, The Boys and Girls Club, and Food and Friends to serve the poor and homeless. If you know any students at Penn College that might be interested in joining us for this worthwhile mission opportunity, please let us know.

We are planning a soup sale for the end of January to continue to raise money for our trip. Do you have a special recipe for a really great soup? Are you looking for a way to help UCM? I think you know where I am going with this. That's right. If you would like to donate some soup for the students to sell, we would certainly appreciate it. There is nothing better than a hot bowl of soup to get rid of the chill on a cold, snowy day. Also know that your soup will help us feed others.

May you all be filled with God's amazing blessings throughout the New Year!

Sharon Comini, Coordinator

Contact at: 570-419-5376 or ucm@uclc.org



FOOD PANTRY NEEDS

These are the items that are currently needed:

- | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| Ramen noodles | canned fruit | canned pasta | coffee |
| cake mixes | frosting | pasta products | mac-n-cheese |
| spaghetti sauce | noodles | tea bags | jello |
| hot cocoa mix | chunky soups | | |

Your donations are best brought Monday mornings from 9:30 - Noon. Persons needing food should call and leave their name and number on the answering machine. Appointments to receive food are on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 am - 3 pm and when necessary at other times as well. Gail Burkhart is the UCLC Food Pantry Coordinator and may be reached at 322-1657.

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*

...rang in the season with song and story!!! On Friday and Saturday, December 3 and 4, 2010, Lutheran Shared Ministry (LSM) presented *A Christmas Carol*, dinner theatre style, in Fellowship Hall at St. Mark's Lutheran Church. A total of \$894.00 in donations go to United Campus Ministry of Penn College.

Before the performances, a spaghetti dinner was enjoyed by approximately 150 people over the two nights. Organized by Bob Jones and led by Michele Fredericks, a veritable army of volunteers served the meal and were able to enjoy the show before cleaning up afterwards.

After an excellent performance on Friday night, Nick Buckman, pulling double duty as Jacob Marley and the Ghost of Christmas Present, went to the hospital where an emergency appendectomy was performed. The cast rallied and, while keeping Nick in their prayers, supported Doug LeBlanc (Bob Cratchit) and Bernadette Jones as they stepped into Nick's roles for the Saturday evening performance.

Thanks go out to all those who contributed; either time & talents, props & costumes, food...the list is endless. The support of St. Mark's congregation was invaluable.

Merry Christmas, and God bless us, every one!!

ALL CHURCH FRIDAY FUN NIGHT

January 21
at 6:30 PM

Cure the winter blahs!

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OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD GROUP PACK'N'WRAP!!!

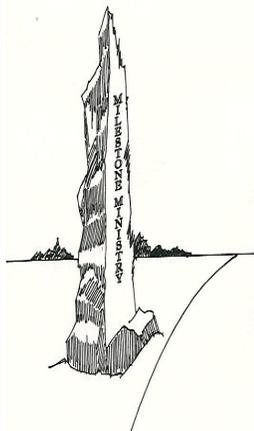
Yes, we know it's over for 2010! This is just a reminder to check out the after-Christmas sales for toys, hygiene items, school/coloring supplies (we have plenty of pencils)—anything that would fit in a shoebox!! A box remains in the staff hallway to collect donations—thank you!

Passing on Faith: Remembrance Service

Please join us for this moving service on Sunday, January 2, 2011, at 4:00 pm, during which we remember those who have gone before us to join the church triumphant. (see cover)

Passing on Faith: Remembrance of Baptism

Tanya Sheets and her daughter, Audrey Marie Bower, were both baptized this past year at the Easter Vigil. On January 9, we remember their baptisms and present them with their Faith Chests.



YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY



We are on a mission to fight hunger and poverty. You can help.

“Lord, as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those without a bowl of soup to eat”

More than 15 years ago on a Super Bowl Sunday, a single youth group was inspired by a simple prayer. They started the Souper Bowl of Caring, a youth-led movement that is now an international event. Since 1990, the Souper Bowl of Caring has raised more than \$33 million for individual charities across the country. It is also turning our nation’s biggest weekend of football into its largest weekend of giving. Each year, tens of thousands of our nation’s youth put God’s love into action through the Souper Bowl of Caring. You can help them feel the significance of caring for others. Drop a dollar in the soup pots that will be in the narthex on January 30 and February 6 as you leave worship. Your donation will go directly to a charity right here in our community. With your help, more dollars will be raised, more lives will be changed, and more young people will experience the joy of serving Christ by serving others.



CHILDREN’S CHURCH will meet Sunday, January 9, at 10:30, in the Chapel. Children’s monetary donations this month go toward our milestone ministry on this anniversary of the Baptism of our Lord. Please join us!

ST. MARK’S LIONS JBBL GAME SCHEDULE

The John Bower Basketball League games have begun! Beginners are at a 1-1 records as this goes to print, and the Pee-Wees are undefeated!!!

Practices will continue on Tuesday evenings after the holidays. Adults, feel free to help out with driving, treats or beverages. Contact the church office at 323-4619 or e-mail us through the website.

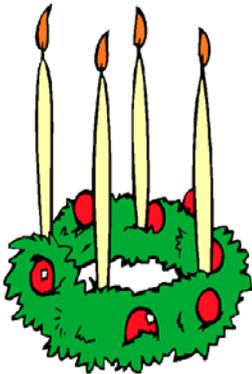


01/08	9:30 am JR 10:00 am PW 10:30 am JR 12:30 am BG	01/15	9:00 am BG 9:00 am PW 9:30 am JR	01/22	11:00 am JR 12:00 pm PW 12:30 pm BG	01/29	9:00 am BG 10:00 am JR 10:30 am PW
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JANUARY 23 6:00 PM
MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL AGE
 Bring a snack to share and a friend!
 Transportation available!

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY



Advent Wreath-making

About twenty-five people attended the meal marking the first Sunday of Advent. We all sat down to a lunch delicious chicken noodle soup after the 10:30 service.

The making of the wreaths followed. Ten wreaths were put together by folks ranging from small children to children-at-heart. Creativity abounded in the use of holly, pine, spruce and hemlock; ribbon and berry sprigs; small ornaments and, of course, candles.

While all that was going on, preparations were being made for the first technical rehearsal for *A Christmas Carol* which began at 2:00! All-in-all, a very busily productive day!

Kids' Morning Out

What a great time! Ten children and twelve helpers attended this event on Saturday, December 11. They made and decorated cookies and greeting cards for our shut-ins, made birdfeeders and presents for their families, and played games. The parents were appreciative of the time to run errands and relax! A good time was had by all!

A big "THANK YOU" goes out to Sara, Devin, Hannah, Riley, Emily, Christina, Laura, Anna, Kara, Morgan and Stephen, for their invaluable assistance with preparation, the younger children and clean-up. Thank you, too, for allowing us to enjoy your children for a few hours. We look forward to this event every year!



Cookie Baking

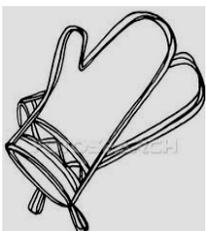
Another huge "THANK YOU" goes out to Shirley, Jackie, Chele, Donna, Sally, Sara, Sarah, and the ladies from Corning (Ninette, Nancy, and friends) for their able assistance later on that Saturday with the cookie baking. Flour was flying EVERYWHERE!! It was great! We produced hundreds and hundreds of cookies for the carolers to deliver that Sunday and for our Corning friends to share with their congregation's homebound.

A wonderful assortment of goodies was assembled during this afternoon: pizelles; chocolate chip, double chocolate, sugar, ricotta, and oatmeal cookies; snicker doodles and more! These were added to the Watchagot cookies and decorated sugar cookies made by the children for the trays which were delivered the next day. Do try to join us next year. THANK YOU!!!

Caroling

Four groups totaling 24 carolers visited as many of our homebound as they could on the afternoon of December 12. Any we missed on that day were visited later by Pr. Elkin.

It's wonderful to visit those members of our church family whom we don't see on a regular basis. We are always made to feel so welcome. Can we see more of you with us next year?



THANK YOU to everyone who contributed on the trees in Fellowship Hall!! Many children in the area will be the recipients of your generosity in the giving of teddy bears for comfort and mittens, scarves and hats for warmth. Thank you!



YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY



"I don't know what we were thinking,
baking inside a tree..."

CALLING ST. MARK'S BAKERS!!

It's that time of year, again!

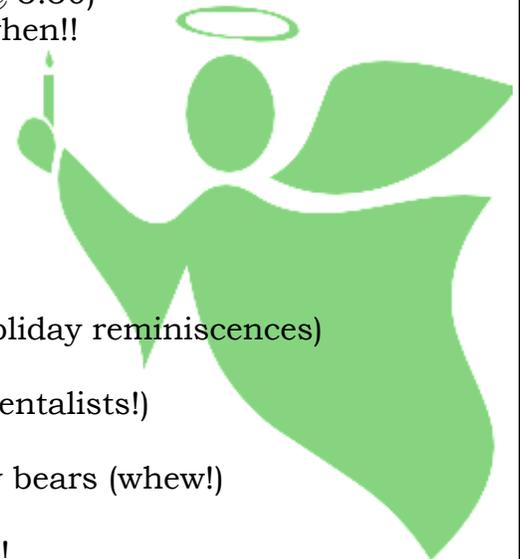
Yes it's time to don our aprons, roll up our sleeves and fling some flour!

Our annual bread baking takes place on Thursday, January 6 (Epiphany). We will start at 10:00 a.m. after morning prayer. Plan on staying for lunch.

What happened this December?

If you weren't around for any of the following, you missed some fun times!

- * Advent Wreath-making & luncheon (always fun)
- * General cleaning and decorating of the office/lounge areas
- * All-day rehearsal for "A Christmas Carol" (with pizza!)
- * Packed Finals Survival Kits for our college-age members (& sent!)
- * "A Christmas Carol" dinner theatre f/b/o UCM (two nights)
- * Selinsgrove caroling (join us next year)
- * Kids' Morning Out (10 kids, 7 helpers, gifts, cookies, cards!)
- * First John Bower Basketball games (we won BOTH!)
- * Adult Cookie Bake (flour was flying everywhere!)
- * Children's Church (presented cards for our shut-ins)
- * Christmas caroling to our homebound (with cookies & cards)
- * John Bower Basketball practices (practice makes perfect)
- * Gift collection for Danville residents (thanks to all who gave)
- * Dancing on the Premises (every Wednesday @ 3:30)
- * Christmas preparations everywhere & everywhen!!
 - ★ Choir practices!
 - ★ Family & Adult handbells!
 - ★ Youth string ensemble!
 - ★ Instrumental soloists!
- * Lunch-n-Fellowship (with Christmas carols!)
- * Friday Fun Night (holiday fun)
- * Decorating the Nave!! (and lunch!)
- * Monthly catechetical meal & meeting (with holiday reminiscences)
- * Christmas Eve!
 - ★ Family service (full of youthful instrumentalists!)
 - ★ Late service (a few more of the same!)
- * Counting & packing scarves, mittens & teddy bears (whew!)
- * Teen Movie Night
- * Catching our breath as the New Year begins!!!



Check out what's happening in January for opportunities to chase away the winter doldrums and cabin fever! Remember: if you need transportation, just call!!

Thank you! Thank You! Thank you! Thank You! Thank you!

To the members of St. Mark's, Thank you so much for the care package!
The snacks really helped me get through this week and the long hours at the library!!
May all the joys of the Christmas Season be yours. Merry Christmas! ~ Sara Larson

To the five female carolers and the numerous bakers...Thank you so very much! I really enjoyed those 'mothers with daughters' and friend when they came on their caroling visit. Thanks to Pastor Elkin for his visits in 2010 and to the staff for all they accomplish at St. Mark's. ~ Larue Deiter

Pastor Elkin, Staff and members - each of you a friend! Thank you for the cards, the many communion visitations, the carolers singing on 12-12-10, the prayers and all others who remembered us. We wish to thank everyone. Sincerely, Art & June Decker

What a joy it was for us to have a group of you visit on Sunday, Dec. 12th.
We thank you for your time, music, card and the delicious cookies you brought along.
Your visit was much appreciated. Sincerely, Shirley & Frank Vognet

To St. Mark's Church Council & Church Members, Thank you so much for the wonderful Christmas dinner you held for the staff & spouses. The Christmas décor and buffet presentation was beautiful, the food scrumptious and the company warm and delightful! Every detail was so very thoughtfully addressed and make us feel so very special! We wish all of you a Merry Christmas & a Blessed New Year! ~ God's love and ours, Rev. Mark & Susan Mahserjian-Smith

THE NEWS IN OUR PEWS

The Sun-Gazette has been full of news about the **Buckman family** – December 10 featured **Nick** in a front page story about his emergency appendectomy which kept him from performing in Forever Plaid:Plaid Tidings and cancelled the show altogether to be rescheduled later. A testament to his value in the performance! Of course, being the trouper he is, he did his parts in The Christmas Carol which was presented at St. Mark's and then went to the emergency room for his surgery! We are happy to announce that he is mending well and back to be part of the choir.

Deb had her own feature in Webb Weekly which was a summary of the many roles she has performed in Whitemarsh, Pa. and also as a member of the Community Theater League. All three **Buckmans, Deb, Nick** and **Jim** are members of the Civic Chorus.

Several of our young members have been named to the distinguished honor roll at their respective schools – those include **Riley Weber, Theoron Hershey** and **Cara Hershey**.

Spotted **April Hartzel-Lewis**, daughter of **Cindy Hartzel**, featured as a hospice nurse at Susquehanna Health Home and Hospice in a discussion of the valuable services provided for those in that very special need.

Cindy Huff was pictured in a testimonial to the value of the Silver Sneakers program at the Eastern Lycoming YMCA- she is turning into a real contender!

Rumor has it that **Brett Campbell** had two of his own compositions featured in a performance at New York University- more about that later!

A blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year to all!

~ *Joyce Anne Hershberger*

Please submit items to Joyce via her email deermountain2@comcast.net or by calling her at 322-0410.

Happy Birthday!

Shelby Weber	01/01	Suzanne Hutchins	01/11	Ruth Rees	01/17	Ruth Burkholder	01/27
Cecil Calvert	01/02	Owen Elliott	01/12	Brenda Bittner	01/19	Dustin Kimble	01/27
Ashley Ciesielski	01/02	Grace Elliott	01/12	Morgan Comini	01/19	Phyllis Ulman	01/27
Jeremy Hinds	01/02	Kathy Kolb	01/12	Herbert Poff	01/21	Cassandra Wellen	01/27
Katherine Crane	01/03	Jackie Kinney	01/13	Elizabeth Ruesskamp	01/22	Sean Buckman	01/28
Charlotte Hughes	01/03	Riley Weber	01/14	Christina MacGill	01/23	Kristopher Caster	01/28
Gregory Calvert	01/04	David Butters	01/16	Tara Thorne	01/23	Theoron Hershey	01/29
James Newcomer Sr.	01/04	Lee Doane	01/16	Neil Eshelman	01/24	Zachary Jarrett	01/29
Mary Lou Doebler	01/06	Donna Boston	01/17	Walter Doebler	01/25	Linda DeSeau	01/30
Shirley Dieffenbach	01/08	Nathan Kimble	01/17	Bonnie Eyer	01/26	Makaylee Goertz	01/30
Susan Baker	01/10	Ruth Lamade	01/17	David Heaps	01/26	Devin Owen	01/30
Andrew Zeigler	01/10	Barbara McCullough	01/17	Marc Kinney	01/26	Travis Thorne	01/30
Peter Zeigler	01/10	Beth Miller	01/17	Robert Smith	01/26	Kathleen Caster	01/31
Toby Zimmerman	01/10						

Happy Anniversary!

Art & June Decker 01/20

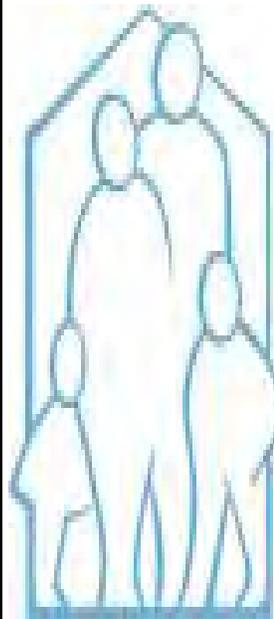


Chuck & Ruth Homan 01/23

Family Promise Update

"It's the work we do together until each family finds home again."

That is a key phrase from a new song written especially for Family Promise, to remind us why we are so busy with the tasks of hosting and advising, companionship and encouragement. It is especially appropriate in this season when we remember the Holy Family, traveling to Bethlehem for the birth, to Egypt to find temporary refuge, and finally settling in Nazareth.



We have had several families move through the Family Promise program in recent months. One has moved on to Journey House, the intensive program sponsored by New Covenant Church. Several others have moved into permanent apartments. Still others have made arrangements with relatives. All of them have received a warm welcome from our hosting congregations and from the office volunteers. All of them have worked out plans in consultation with our Director, Melissa Magargle. All of them know that there are more than 600 volunteers in many congregations who intend to follow Jesus' direction to feed, shelter, and comfort those in need.

Our work together with 13 hosting congregations and a group of supporting congregations is not possible without money. We might encourage each other to start off the calendar year with a membership in *Club 180*, a gift of 50 cents per day throughout the year, adding up to \$180. The treasurer will be pleased to receive memberships as a lump sum or quarterly payment, if that is more convenient.

A commitment card can be secured from congregation coordinators or from the office by writing to mmagargle@gmail.com or calling 567-7103. Of course, offerings in any amount are very much desired. Will you do something to help a family find a home?

HEALTH, HEALING & WHOLENESS

"Forty years you sustained them in the wilderness so that they lacked nothing; their clothes did not wear out and their feet did not swell."

(Nehemiah 9:21)



Like many women, I love shoes – shoes of all shapes, colors and heel heights! As I grow older, however, my feet don't necessarily love the shoes I've put them in; sometimes for good reason. Forced too often into the tight confines of pointed toe-boxes and towering heel heights, they've begun to rebel.

Over time, our feet become wider and longer, and the natural padding that we had when younger, begins to thin out. Years of walking and standing tend to flatten the natural arches and stiffen feet and ankles. Wearing shoes with heels two inches or more, pitch the toes forward, redistribute our weight, and can create pressure points, leading to the formation of bumps, heavy calluses, and unnaturally shaped and aligned toes. Along with corns, bunions, and hammertoes, some women may experience a tightening of heel cords.

Wearing high heels daily can also lead to a shortening of the Achilles tendon – the tough, fibrous band that connects the calf muscle to the heel bone. "Your Achilles tendon helps point your foot downward, rise you on your toes, and push off as you walk. Wearing high heels prevents your heel bones from regularly coming in contact with the ground, which in turn keeps your Achilles tendon from fully stretching. Over time, your tendons can contract to the point that you no longer feel comfortable wearing flat shoes." (www.mayoclinic.com)

Though it is reassuring to know that these foot problems do not occur over night, continuous wearing of high heels have also been linked to leg muscle injury, osteoarthritis of the knee, and lower back pain. Toppling off of stilettos or high platforms also lead to numerous daily ankle sprains and injuries. For those of us who love wearing heels, this all sounds pretty depressing - enough to send fashionable women everywhere running to the closest "comfort-wear" isle of the local shoe department! However, before you toss out all those pointy-toed heels, there may be some hope from Dr. Martin Ellman, specialist in podiatry at Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota, and podiatric surgeon, Dr. Jacqueline Sutera of New York City.

Dr. Ellman suggests that you save wearing high heels for special occasions – such as church on Sunday, or an evening out, and avoid wearing them on a daily basis to minimize risk of injury or problems developing over time. Instead he suggests wearing more comfortable shoes – such as athletic or walking shoes – for commuting to and from work, changing into pumps once you arrive at work. He also recommends not wearing them for the entire day, switching to lower heeled footwear in the afternoon and between meetings. Along with recommending heels no higher than three inches, Dr. Sutera recommends wearing a variety of three heel heights throughout the week.

To counter potential shortening of the Achilles tendon due to shrinkage, Dr. Sutera also recommends keeping muscles limber by doing a "stiletto stretch". "Lean against something waist high, like a counter or bathroom sink. Move your left foot 2 feet behind the right, keeping both feet flat, toes forward, and left knee straight. Bend forward at the waist slightly, hold for 15 seconds, then switch legs. Repeat four times with each leg. (*Prevention*, December 2010, pg. 16) These, as well as some savvy shopping tips, will help you be more kind to your two "chief supporters": don't rely on shoe size alone – always try on both shoes before buying; since feet swell during the day – shop for new shoes in the afternoon or evening; understand that there is no such thing as a "break-in" period – shoes should feel comfortable right away; pay attention to seams that may rub and cause injury over time; and finally, ask about the store's return policy.

Though we may not be wandering for forty years as did the Hebrews, we potentially walk thousands of miles in the course of our lives. Taking a few small steps toward caring for our feet now, may prevent a life with crippling foot or leg pain later!

New Year Blessings!
Debbie Best, RN, MS, FCN

SPECIAL CONCERNS LIST

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Edith Anderson

The Hillside, Room #109
2725 Four Mile Drive
Williamsport, PA 17701

Nancy Bohartz

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Williamsport, PA 17701

Marie Byerly

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Bonita Crossley

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Larue Dieter

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Danville, PA 17821

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S. Williamsport, PA 17702

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Montoursville, PA 17754

Anna Stiadle

Williamsport Home, Apt. 112
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Williamsport, PA 17701

Ira Tuxford

210 Louise Ave.
Montgomery, PA 17752

Beulah Wrede

Faxon Commons, Apt 305
1804 Loyalsock Drive,
Williamsport, PA 17701

Ralph Zeigler Sr.

Rose View Court
1251 Rural Ave., Apt. 209
Williamsport, P A 17701

Lunch 'N Fellowship

Wednesday, January 19th at Noon

Serving Pork & Sauerkraut!

Bring a side dish to & a dessert to share
& a friend!



ST. MARK'S JANUARY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

1 Saturday

New Years Day Office Closed

2 Sunday

8:00 AM Holy Communion
9:15 AM Sunday School
10:30 AM Holy Communion
12:15 PM The Way Gathering
4:00 PM Remembrance Service

3 Monday

9:00 AM Morning Prayer
6:45 PM Handbells

4 Tuesday

8:00 AM City Pastors
9:00 AM Morning Prayer
6:00 PM Brownies
6:00 PM JBBL Practice @ Cochran

5 Wednesday

9:00 AM Morning Prayer
9:20 AM Staff Mtg & Quilting
12:00 PM Bible Study
3:30 PM Praisercise
7:00 PM Evening Prayer

6 Thursday

6:31 AM Men's Ministry
9:00 AM Morning Prayer
10:00 AM Bread Baking

7 Friday

9:00 AM Morning Prayer

8 Saturday

9:00 AM Catechetical Retreat
9:30 AM JBBL-JR
10:00 AM JBBL-PW
10:30 AM JBBL-JR
12:30 PM JBBL-Beg

9 Sunday

8:00 AM Holy Communion
9:15 AM Sunday School
10:30 AM Children's Church
10:30 AM Holy Communion
11:45 AM Faith Chest Milestone

10 Monday

9:00 AM Morning Prayer
5:30 PM Parish Life Dinner
6:45 PM Handbells
7:00 PM Civic Chorus

11 Tuesday

9:00 AM Morning Prayer
6:00 PM JBBL Practice @ Cochran
6:30 PM Finance Committee

12 Wednesday

9:00 AM Morning Prayer
9:20 AM Staff Mtg & Quilting
12:00 PM Bible Study
3:30 PM Praisercise

13 Thursday

6:31 AM Men's Ministry
9:00 AM Morning Prayer

14 Friday

9:00 AM Morning Prayer

15 Saturday

9:00 AM JBBL-Beg
9:00 AM JBBL-PW
9:30 AM JBBL-JR

16 Sunday

8:00 AM Holy Communion
9:15 AM Sunday School
10:30 AM Holy Communion
6:00 PM Confirmands, Parents & Mentors

17 Monday

Office Closed
9:00 AM Morning Prayer
6:00 PM Civic Chorus Board
6:30 PM Council Mtg.
6:45 PM Handbells
7:00 PM Civic Chorus
7:00 PM Dog Club

18 Tuesday

9:00 AM Morning Prayer
6:00 PM Brownies

19 Wednesday

9:00 AM Morning Prayer
12:00 PM Lunch 'N' Fellowship
3:30 PM Praisercise

20 Thursday

6:31 AM Men's Ministry
9:00 AM Morning Prayer

21 Friday

Newsletter Deadline
9:00 AM Morning Prayer
6:30 PM Friday Fun Night

22 Saturday

9:00 AM Daniel's Closet @ Redeemer
11:00 AM JBBL-JR
12:00 PM JBBL - PW
12:30 PM JBBL-Beg

23 Sunday

8:00 AM Holy Communion
9:15 AM Sunday School
10:30 AM Holy Communion
12:15 PM The Way Gathering
6:00 PM Teen Movie Night

24 Monday

9:00 AM Morning Prayer
6:45 PM Handbells
7:00 PM Civic Chorus

25 Tuesday

9:00 AM Morning Prayer
6:30 PM Family Promise Board

26 Wednesday

9:00 AM Morning Prayer
9:20 AM Staff Mtg & Quilting
12:00 PM Bible Study
3:30 PM Praisercise

27 Thursday

6:31 AM Men's Ministry
9:00 AM Morning Prayer
9:20 AM Stephen Ministry

28 Friday

9:00 AM Morning Prayer
9:15 AM Lion Crew

29 Saturday

9:00 AM JBBL-Beg
10:00 AM JBBL-JR
10:30 AM JBBL-PW
5:00 PM Wmspt. Dog Club Dinner

30 Sunday

8:00 AM Holy Communion
9:15 AM Sunday School
10:30 AM Holy Communion
12:15 PM The Way Gathering

31 Monday

9:00 AM Morning Prayer
6:45 PM Handbells
7:00 PM Civic Chorus

ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
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Email: stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org



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Service of Remembrance

Sunday, January 2, 2011

4:00 P.M.



To help you find comfort during this season of joy we offer the Service of Remembrance as an opportunity for us to name your loved ones in prayer, to light a candle on the memory tree, and to gift you a handcrafted keepsake of the day and event. You may invite as many people to be with you as you would like. In the number of years that we have been offering this quiet time of prayer and reflection, many have found it to be an especially meaningful occasion to be with our brothers and sisters in the faith.

You can greatly assist our preparations if you would call the church office at 323-4619 or email mowen@stmarkswilliamsport.org with the name of your loved one. All of the names that we have received by print time will be listed in the service bulletin; those arriving later will be read aloud without being in print, and still more can be added verbally at the time of the service. For more information contact Michele Owen at the church office.