



SAINT MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

"THE LION"

of ST. MARK'S

A Monthly Newsletter by and for the members of St. Mark's

*To know Christ and to
make Christ known.*

July

2025



Pastor's Lion Message for July 2025

Pastor's "Lion" Message July, 2025

Very soon children and the young at heart will squeal with glee and awe as fireworks adore our city's skies. Hot dogs will sizzle on St. Mark's grill at our annual lawn party. Items of swag and refreshments will abound. Just before the pop and grandeur of fireworks our organist will entertain with an American themed concert sure to please. It's that time again...The Fourth of July! Independence Day for our USA!

Benjamin Franklin, a "founding father" of the United States, as well as a proud Pennsylvanian, wrote, "They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety." Franklin's vision of liberty may inspire one to strive for complete and absolute freedom, nevertheless it should be interpreted in the context of civil life and emancipation from an oppressive power.

In his 1520 treatise, *On the Freedom of a Christian*, Martin Luther wrote, "A Christian is the perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is the dutiful servant of all subject to all."

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STAFF OFFICE HOURS

Pastor: The Rev. Brian Vasey
Mon-Thu 9 a.m.-1 p.m., & by appointment
Church Organist: Sam Robinson
Summer Mon 1-3 p.m. & by appointment
Bookkeeper: Jackie Baysore
By appointment
Administrative Assistant: Michele Owen
Tuesday through Friday 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org



Serving Christ in the Williamsport Community
since 1852
142 Market Street
Williamsport, PA 17701

As ELCA Christians we need to ask, “How can we reconcile this tension between political and theological understandings of freedom?”



JOIN US FOR SUNDAY
WORSHIP IN JULY ALL
ARE WELCOME!!

Freedom or “liberty”, in the political or civil sense, is the ability to speak, act, live and think without restriction. Luther's understanding of freedom is grounded in his understanding of God's grace. Thomas Jefferson, principal author of the Declaration of Independence, understood freedom as “a gift from God who gave us life and liberty.” Luther would agree with Jefferson that God gave us life and freedom, but he would be quick to add that Christians are freed from sin, death and evil for the sake of service to the world. Christians have been called by God in baptism to serve in the nation in which they live but not at the expense or neglect of other nations or peoples, nor simply to do our government's bidding. Christian baptism frees us to proclaim in word and deed the love of God to and for all peoples.

Civil or political freedom and freedom as we understand it from Christian theology, need not be mutually exclusive. However, we do need to permit the “Theological” to guide the “Political”. If we don't, we run the risk of using our freedoms to serve only ourselves. Luther often quipped, “God doesn't need your good works, but your neighbor does!” And how do we define neighbor? According to Jesus, “Anyone in need”.

Celebrate Independence Day as freedom from any idea, teaching, philosophy or individual that prevents us from the freedom of serving others in and with the love of Christ.

Grace + Peace,
Pastor Vasey

**SUNDAY JUNE 1 WE BEGAN OUR
“SUMMER SCHEDULE”: ONE WORSHIP
TIME AT 9:30 AM. OUR FALL SCHED-
ULE WILL RESUME SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2025.**

JOIN US FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP IN JULY: ALL ARE WELCOME

Sunday, July 6, 2025, The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

Holy Communion, 9:30 am

Sunday, July 13, 2025, The Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Holy Communion, 9:30 am

Church Picnic follows worship in Fellowship Hall

Sunday, July 20, The Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Holy Communion, 9:30 am

Sunday, July 27, The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Holy Communion, 9:30 am

ALL ARE WELCOME! JOIN US!

PRAYER FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY

Liberating God, you have given us this good land as our heritage. Make us always remember your generosity and constantly do your will. Bless our land with honesty in the workplace, truth in education, and honor in daily life. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance; and from every evil course of action. When times are prosperous, let our hearts be thankful; and, in troubled times, do not let our trust in you fail. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Grand Canyon Synod

ELCA

Please join us on **Sunday, July 13th** following our worship service, for a **CHURCH PICNIC** held in Fellowship Hall. This is the best of both worlds as picnic food will be coupled with a bug-free, dry, cool environment! Hotdogs, beverages, and chips will be provided ~ as well as all plates and utensils. **Please bring a dish to share as you are able.**



If you need a ride or if you have questions, please be in touch with Vicki Haussmann at (570) 447-3263. We look forward to sharing time with you on July 13th!



When you or a family member are ill, have a crisis of faith, or have a personal concern of which you wish to make the pastor aware, please contact him directly by church office telephone (570-323-4619) or email (bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org). Do not assume the pastor will know of your need any other way.



When you or a loved one has a change of address, telephone number or email, please contact the church office at 570-323-4619 or stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org. Please direct your intentions whether or not to share this information with our church family.



Do you enjoy reading? Do you have an interest in exploring the variety of materials found in our church library? Would you be willing to write a short synopsis of a church library book you read for *The Lion*? If so, the Faith Formation Committee wants YOU! Please see Vicki Haussmann, Sally Bjornstad, or Bob Campbell if you would like to be featured as a guest columnist in *The Lion*! We will gladly assist you in finding the perfect book to read for this newly established (although not yet named) column. We look forward to discovering more about the materials found in our library through you. Thank you for sharing your talents in this exciting way!

Envelopes

There are special envelopes in the pew racks for Heat (to pay for boiler repair), Roof (for the roof on the Parish house) and Organ (for repairs and general maintenance). When giving to these causes, be sure to put your name on the envelope so your contribution may be recorded correctly on your contribution statement. Please write on the memo line of your check how you wish your gift to be used (cash is always welcome).



Memorials

A reminder that when giving a memorial for a loved one or other church member, please specify where the money is to be allocated (ex. roof fund, music fund). If you do not specify, your donation will be deposited into the "General Account".



Thank you so much to everyone who donated cake pans, cake mixes, and candles to our Lenten "Birthday Bag" collection. Thanks to your generosity, 22 beautiful Birthday Bags were delivered to the United Churches Food Pantry last week. Anne, the pantry director, was visibly moved when these bags were dropped off as the neighbors who are served will now have something to make birthdays just a little extra special. St. Mark's continues to serve others and show love in a myriad of ways. Please know how much it is appreciated.

JULY Worship Leaders

Please arrange for a replacement if you cannot serve.



Communion Assistants

July 6	
9:30 AM	Matt & Wanda Fortin
July 13	
9:30 AM	Shelby & Gary Weber
July 20	
9:30 AM	Ralph & Lou Ann Zeigler
July 27	
9:30 AM	Deb Buckman & Mindy Wentzel
July 29	
9:30 AM	Matt & Wanda Fortin



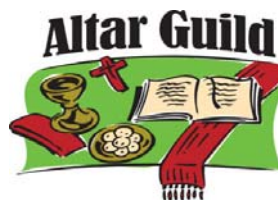
Ushers

July 6	
9:30 AM	Maggs Team, Dick Reitz
July 13	
9:30 AM	Weber Team
July 20	
9:30 AM	Fortin, Yapple, Wentzel
July 27	
9:30 AM	Gair Team
July 29	
9:30 AM	Maggs Team, Dick Reitz



Lectors

July 1	
9:30 AM	Donna Clark
July 8	
9:30 AM	Shelby Weber
July 15	
9:30 AM	Brenda Gair
July 22	
9:30 AM	Becky Pryor
July 29	
9:30 AM	Ralph Zeigler



Altar Guild

Mel & Mindy Wentzel

July Birthdays

Max Hospes	7/3
Phil Thomas	7/4
Corey Hospes	7/6
Dylan Ott	7/9
Nick Buckman	7/10
Annika Waffenschmidt	7/12
Levi Gair	7/13
Vicki Haussmann	7/15
Brenda Bower	7/18
Pam Jensen	7/21
Connie Shaible	7/22
Evan Barone	7/23
Ed Gair	7/24
Shirley Hill	7/25
Ann Kuntz	7/27
John Bower	7/28
Matt Fortin	7/29
Stephen Dewar	7/31

Bob Campbell 6/18
HAPPY BELATED!



July Anniversary

Ray & Cindy Huff	7/03
Bud & Margie Doebler	7/05



*Anniversary
Blessings* 

FAMILY PROMISE

Our next hosting for Family Promise is Sunday, July 15 through Saturday, July 21. As in the past St. Mark's is responsible for providing the dinners for Sun. through Fri. At this point there are still openings for Monday and Friday, if you are willing to provide a meal for either of these dates that would be great. Remember - it can be something you make, ingredients to make a meal, take out, or delivery. Right now there is a full house - 4 families - but this is subject to change. St. Mark's is also responsible for providing items for breakfast and lunches. If you wish to donate for this expense (or better yet, volunteer to do that shopping) you can place your check in an envelope and mark it for Family Promise hosting. If you have questions, please contact Deb Buckman at (570) 971-9321.



Lutheran World Relief - soon school supply sales will begin so remember that we need spiral bound notebooks (70 pages), boxes of crayons (24 count), rulers (with both metric and English scales), blue or black ink pens (Bic or other brand) and scissors with blunt points. We do not need erasers or pencils as we have them left over from last



Lutheran
World
Relief

year. School bags will be available beginning mid-July. For baby care kits: flannel or knit (light weight) receiving blankets (36" to 54" square), pre-folded diapers (from Amazon), bars of soap suitable for use on a baby, baby socks, and dark hand towels. There will be a tub in the Narthex for items beginning in July. Thanks for all you do in keeping our outreach going. For questions, please contact Deb Buckman at (570) 971-9321.



**Become
Part of
Our
Church
Family**

WANT TO EXPLORE WHAT IT MEANS
TO BE A LUTHERAN CHRISTIAN?

Adults wishing to unite with St. Mark's in church membership are invited to contact PASTOR VASEY at 570-323-4619 or email

stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org.



June 2025

Minutes

St. Mark's Council meeting- June 9, 2025

Call to Order: 6:00 pm

Council recited the Defining Mission Statement

LouAnn led us in devotions.

Secretary's roll call:

Members present: Debra Buckman, Vicki Haussmann, Ray Huff, Cindy Todd, Lou Ann Zeigler, Donna Clark, Richard Miller, Richard Reitz, Pastor Vasey

Minutes of the May meeting were reviewed and approved as submitted.

Deb Buckman delivered the Treasurer's Report. The report was accepted and filed for audit.

Pastor's Report: Pastor shared his Pastoral duties for the month. The bishop will visit us at some point. The Joshua Study concluded. Pastor will be on vacation from June 16-22. Ray will preside and Michele will be in the office for the entire week. The Seylers will be joining the church.

All statistical reports have been completed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Evangelism and Fellowship: Becky needs help for the 4th of July celebration. A signup sheet is in the nave.

Faith Formation: Twenty two birthday bags were filled.. Sunday School is over for the summer, and the study of Revelation is finished. The Church Picnic is on July 13 after the single service. UCLC VBS will be at St. Johns Newberry from July 15-17. Camp Mt. Luther staff will host the CML Summer Day Camp at Trinity Episcopal Church from July 21-25

Council Minutes Continued

Finance: Deb Buckman presented the report. The committee will meet in July to set up separate accounts for memorials. Power Church was discussed from a financial point of view.

Little Lambs: Deciding on date for a meeting.

Nominating: No report.

Personnel: No report.

Property: No report.

Publicity- The electronic billboard will give information for the Fourth of July activities.

Safety- No report

Publicity: No report

Safety: No report.

Worship and Music: Sam will provide the *Pedal to the Metal* concert at 7:30 PM on the Fourth of July. The committee will meet in August.

Unfinished business:

The 175th Anniversary of the founding of St. Mark's will take place in 2027~ March 7, 1852 congregation was formed. April 5, 1852 congregation celebrated their first communion. (March 7, 2027 is a Sunday). Looking to form a committee to plan for this celebration.

New business:

Civic Choir Board Meeting: June 16

God's Work-Our Hands will be observed on September 7.

Sight and Sound presentation of *Noah!* will be on September 24, 2025. Cheryl Williams is organizing it- cost is \$177.76

Synod Assembly: June 13-14

Council Minutes Continued

CC2025.06.01 (Huff/Todd) Moved to investigate the baby grand piano offered to us through Civic Chorus. Sam will check on how it might fit in with our programs.

LouAnn led us in closing prayer.

The meeting ended at 7:08



Evangelism and Fellowship Committee

July 2025

Fourth of July Celebration at St. Mark's

Join us as we honor God and country on this special day. Bring a friend and a lawn chair. Come early and stay late. Street hospitality begins at 6:00 PM with a performance by Sam Robinson at 7:30 PM in our Nave.



The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee is still accepting monetary donations to offset the purchase of needed items. Checks may be made payable to St. Mark's with the memo line indicating the July Fourth Celebration.

Cereal Sundays



For food insecure families with children, there is no vacation from hunger during the summer months. We can help ease that burden. In addition to non-perishable food items being donated to the United Churches Food Pantry, the Evangelism and Fellowship Committee is designating the second Sunday of June, July, August and September to collecting boxes of cereal of any kind and in any size.

Our next Cereal Sunday is July 13, 2025.

Can we match or beat our June collection of 32 boxes of cereal?

Red Cross Blood Drive

Give the gift of life. Donate blood.



The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee will hold the first of three Red Cross Blood Drives on Friday, July 11, 2025 from 11:00 – 3:00. Please consider donating yourself or encouraging your friends and family members to donate. In our community there continues to be a critical need for all blood types. Donors can preregister by calling 1-800-Red Cross.

Vacation Bible School Supper

The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee will host a light supper at 5:30 PM on one evening the week of July 13-17 for the children attending the United Churches' VBS program at St. John's-Newberry UMC. Although our menu or the number of children attending is not confirmed at this time, we would be grateful for monetary donations to purchase food items for the evening. Checks can be made payable to St. Mark's with the memo line indicating the Evangelism and Fellowship Committee. Thank you for any help you can give.

Ongoing Collections at St. Mark's:

Blessing Boxes at New Covenant UCC: Monetary donations toward the cost preparing 80 - 100 sandwiches per month are greatly appreciated. Checks may be made pay-



ble to St. Mark's with the memo line indicating Parish Life. Also needed are easily prepared foods like Cup of Soups, individual packs of crackers and cookies, microwave mac & cheese and ramen noodles. Travel size hygiene items are also in need.



Blessing Box Needs: The Parish Life and Evangelism and Fellowship Committees are asking for two specific donations. They are **Star-Kist Tuna Creations: Deli Style Tuna Salad and Star-Kist Chicken Creations: Chicken Salad**. These items do not need refrigeration and resist spoiling due to extreme temperatures. A container is available in the Narthex for these specific items. These two items will be collected throughout the summer.

United Churches Food Pantry: In addition to boxes of cereal, any non-perishable food item is needed. Reduction of government grant money has reduced the available food at the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank. This in turn has reduced what is available to the pantry to receive for those they serve.

Shepherd of the Streets: Thank you to everyone who donated children and infants' hygiene items May – June. Currently needed for men and women are Shampoo and Conditioner, Shaving Cream, Toothbrushes, Toothpaste, Body Wash, Paper Towels, Toilet Tissue, Deodorant and small packages of Laundry Pods. Feminine hygiene items for women and girls are also needed.

Sojourner Truth Ministries (STM): Lemonade and ice tea mix, ketchup, relish, large lunch bags and 9-ounce Dixie Bowls FYI: STM serves more than **600** meals each week that include both eat-in and brown bag lunches to go.

Donations to Sojourner Truth Ministries, the Food Panty, Shepherd of the Streets or the Blessing Boxes may be placed on the tables in the Narthex closet.

Ongoing Events at Redeemer Lutheran:

For desserts in July, Jim and Susan Newcomer will provide their delicious brownies. Thank you, Jim and Susan, for your continued commitment to this outreach.



Community Dinner on Thursday, July 10, 2025 beginning at 5:00 PM until all meals are distributed. This is a take-out meal available at the curb. All are welcome.

Daniel's Closet: This month's clothing drop-off at Redeemer is Thursday, July 25, 2024 from 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM.



Distribution of free summer clothing is Saturday, July 26, 2025 from 8:30 AM– 11:00 AM. In addition to clean, summer clothing in good condition, shoes for men, women and children are always needed. Sheets, blankets, throws and afghans are also accepted.

If you have a large quantity of clothing, please call Redeemer's office (leave a message) at 570-322-2333 to make an appointment. Smaller quantities of clothing may be placed on the stage if you are unable to accommodate the drop off date.

Did You Know?

The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee reaches out regularly to our community in addition to managing the card ministry and helping to host events at St. Mark's in conjunction with the Faith Formation and Parish Life Committees.

In addition to our regular outreach activities this summer, we will be assisting with the church picnic, hosting a blood drive and providing a Saturday lunch for volunteers in partnership with Habitat for Humanity at a build in Williamsport.

If any of these activities interest you, please consider joining us for one or all of them. Speak with Becky Miller Pryor for details.

Still Cleaning? Redecorating? Moving? Got Stuff?



The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee and the Women of St. Mark's need many more donations for our annual Fall Sale that is tentatively scheduled for September 12 and September 13. If you are discovering items, you no longer need or want, please donate them to us.

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

We cannot accept VCR tapes, text books, encyclopedias, computers, televisions, large gym equipment, broken items, cribs or mattresses.

Please place your donations in boxes small enough for us to lift. Donations can be placed in the Bazaar Room in the basement. If you cannot get to the basement, leaving them on the second landing in the back stairwell is helpful.





I t's "Christmas in July" for our Operation Christmas Child Ministry! On our Christmas Wish List this year is ... monetary donations (we are more like teenagers than toddlers I guess!). Monetary dona-

tions will be put toward one of two items: shipping costs to help defray the expense of shipping our 60 (or more) shoeboxes **or** soccer balls and pumps. Soccer balls are a wonderful "**WOW**" item to include our shoeboxes. Shoebox recipients share that a soccer ball can also be a gift for an entire village when everyone gathers to play on the pitch. Monetary donations may be placed in the offering plate earmarked for Operation Christmas Child.

School supplies will also be making their entrance onto the scene within the next couple of weeks so crayons, pencils, pencil sharpeners, erasers, and pens are also wonderful donations.

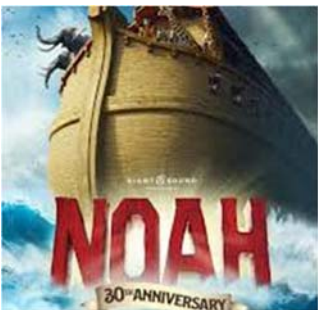
These items (or any others you find) may be placed in our red, OCC bin located in the Narthex. We thank you for your continued generosity! "Merry Christmas in July!"

Camp Mount Luther's Summer 2025 registration is now open! Find out more information and register at www.campmountluther.org/summer.

Summer camp brochures are available in the church office.



All Aboard The Ark!



With a catastrophic storm on its way, Noah is given a monumental task: build a boat big enough to save his family from a flood that will cover the entire earth. As Noah endeavors to live faithfully in the midst of an increasingly chaotic world, can he trust that God's promises run deeper than the rising waters around him?

A bus trip to see **Noah** at the Sight and Sound Theater in Lancaster, PA is being organized by Cheryl Williams. This trip is being planned for Wednesday, September 24, the 11:00 AM show. While the bus will be pulling out around 6:00 AM, the early start will certainly be well worth it! Bus fare, show ticket, and dinner at Hershey Farm Inn are all included in the price of \$176.77. If interested, please contact Cheryl Williams at (570) 327-1627.

July 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
					6:00PM July 4th Lawn Party 7:30PM Pedal to the Metal Concert	
6 9:30AM Holy Communion	7	8	9	10	11 9:30-AM – 4:00PM Blood Drive	12
13 9:30AM Holy Communion Church Picnic Cereal Collection VBS @St. John's Newberry	14 VBS @St. John's Newberry	15 9:30AM West Branch Conference VBS @St. John's Newberry	16 2:00PM Williamsport Home VBS @St. John's Newberry	17 VBS @St. John's Newberry	18	19
20 9:30AM Holy Communion	21 Civic Chorus Board Mtg.	22	23	24 Daniel's Closet Drop-off 4PM-6PM	25	26 Daniel's Closet 8:30AM-11PM
27 9:30AM Holy Communion	28	29	30	31		

United Churches of Lycoming County
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Sunday July 13th- Thursday July 17th

Held at St. John's- Newberry UMC
2101 Newberry Street Williamsport

Free Supper: 5:30-6:00 PM, **VBS:** 6:00-8:00 PM

Designated for ages 4-12, and special abilities adults



REGISTRATION FORM

One form per participant:

Participants Name: _____

Address: _____

Age: _____ Grade Completed: _____ Church Affiliation: _____

Emergency Contact Information:

Emergency Contact Name: _____

Relationship: _____ Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Name of person who will be dropping off/picking up participant: _____

Attending Nightly Supper: ☐ Yes ☐ No

What special needs/concerns/allergies do we need to be aware of to make this the best experience:

How did you hear about our VBS? _____

Photo Release: VBS has my permission to use my child's photograph publicly in VBS materials. I understand the images may be used in print publications, online publications, presentations, websites, and social media.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Please drop off or mail information by Sunday July 6th to any participating church or to the office of:
Saint John's Newberry UMC, 2101 Newberry Street Williamsport, PA 17701 or email: secretary@stjnumc.com

Participating Churches: Christ Episcopal, First Church of Christ Disciples, New Covenant UCC, Saint John's Newberry UMC, St. Luke and St. Mark's Lutheran, Sojourners Truth Ministries, and Trinity Episcopal.



PEDAL TO THE METAL

Samuel Robinson

ORGANIST

Friday, July 4, 2025

7:30pm

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

142 Market Street

Williamsport, PA

---- free refreshments at 6:00 ----

14th Annual United Churches of Lycoming County Golf Tournament

WHITE DEER GOLF COURSE - VINTAGE COURSE

Friday, September 26, 2025

Registration & Refreshments - 8:00 a.m.

Shot Gun Start - 9:00 a.m. Format - Scramble

Lunch - To Follow

\$110.00 per Golfer Entry Fee

\$440 per foursome

Every golfer receives a Player Package of Grace!

Golfer	Phone	E-mail
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____
TOTAL \$ _____		

.....
Send Registration with Payment by September 5th to:

United Churches of Lycoming County

202 East Third Street

Williamsport, PA 17701

(checks payable to "United Churches of Lycoming County")

Phone: 570-322-1110

E-mail - director@uclc.org