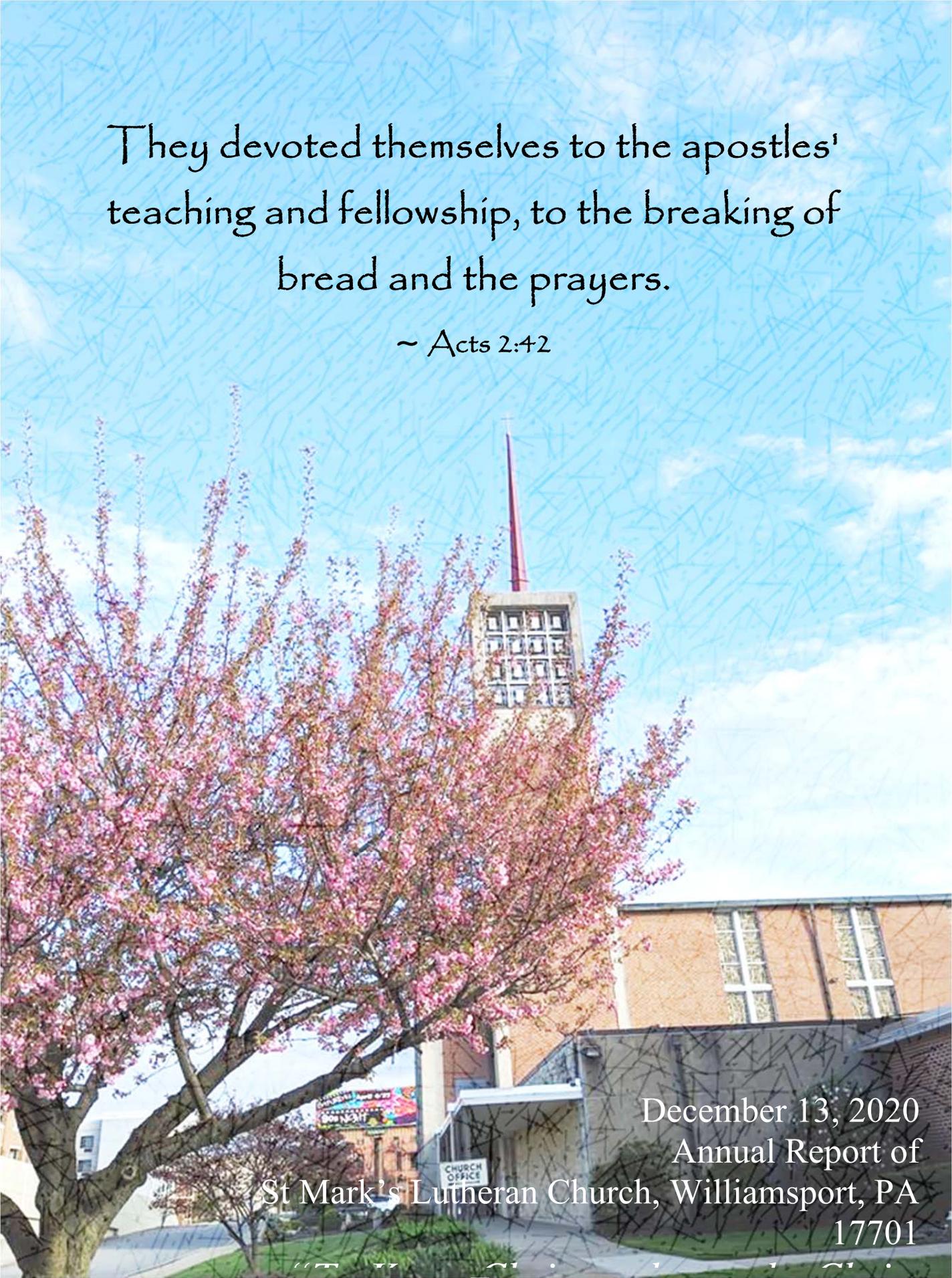


They devoted themselves to the apostles'
teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of
bread and the prayers.

~ Acts 2:42



December 13, 2020
Annual Report of
St Mark's Lutheran Church, Williamsport, PA
17701

The Annual Report of
St Mark's Lutheran Church
142 Market Street, Williamsport, PA 17701
December 13, 2020

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REPORT OF THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

“To know Christ and to make Christ known.”

Dear fellow members of St. Mark’s Lutheran Church,

What a year this has been! It began with our ambitious Call Committee tirelessly working to find our “Pastor Next” as our interim Pastor West continued to serve and help us from Sunday to Sunday. At the same time, our many church committees continued to serve St. Mark’s. (Please read their annual reports, and perhaps consider giving some of your time to help on one that might “strike your fancy!”)

In October, we bid “Anchors Aweigh/Farewell” to Pastor West, as the Call Committee had found our new minister, Pastor Brian Vasey. We hosted a “Meet and Greet” to get to know Pastor Vasey and his family, and the congregation voted to call him after hearing him preach. Well, I for one, thought we were “all set” and ready to prepare for Advent and the Christmas season.....NOT QUITE! Our beautiful organ was “very sick” and needed immediate repair! Doesn’t our God work in miraculous ways? Our Director of Music, Christian Humcke, found the rare part needed for the organ, many of you donated necessary funds, and, thanks to Gary Chrisman who graciously agreed to donate funds from his Aunt Anna Belle Smith’s Memorial Fund to St. Mark’s, our special organ was “good as new!”

WHEW! Now back to “normal?” Well, not yet! Our friend and wonderful Director of Music, Christian, announced in February that he had accepted a new position at St. Paul’s Lutheran

Church in Windsor, New Jersey! It was a great opportunity for him to grow in his profession. We were so sorry to see him leave, but totally understood his decision! But, then we had to find a new Director of Music! Once again, our dear Lord gave us His guidance, and, after several weeks with generous substitute organists, Sam Robinson, entered the picture, and was ultimately hired for the position.

And then, COVID-19! What in the world was this? So many decisions to be made! So many guidelines to follow! God was and is with us as the virus continues on its journey. We have Pastor Vasey! He has been guiding and serving us on Sunday mornings through his online services. Along with the help of Gary Weber, Bernadette Jones, Tim Vasey, Mabelle Davison, and others, the services have been wanted, needed, and uplifting for our congregation. We could not be together in our beautiful church, but we have been together never-the-less!

As I write this letter, the council is about to discuss and plan for reopening our church. We are still dealing with COVID-19, but little by little, states are opening and trying to get to a “new normal.” Once again, there are so many decisions to be made, and so many new guidelines to be followed. I am so blessed with kind, strong, Christian council members. I KNOW we can “get it all together!” St. Mark’s Lutheran Church is blessed with kind, strong, giving members and an outstanding leader in Pastor Vasey. I KNOW we will all “get this together!” Most importantly, we have Christ with us. We “Know Him and continue to make Him known.”

We ARE together!

In the love of and for Christ,

Linda Rosini

Council President

FROM THE PARISH REGISTER

Marriages:

Brian Jackson and Nikki nee Young

Baptisms

Finley Brielle Stugart

Max Layton Tebbs

Deaths/Burials of Members:

Dorothy Burd

Alona Hopley

Carl Smollinger

*Michele Ramsauer
Carol McMorris
Lawrence Lehman
Dorothy Bingaman
Betty Stroup
Deborah Holmes
Betty Rechel
Frank Ulman
Lawrence Satifka
Barbara Lamade*

Deaths/Burials of Non-Members:

Walter E. Ertel

REPORT OF THE PASTOR

On Sunday, September 15, 2019, this congregation known as St. Mark's Lutheran Church voted in the affirmative, and I accepted your call as pastor. From that day forward, as I began to become more familiar with the ministries and people of this congregation, I have continued to be both excited and humbled to labor with you in knowing Christ and making Christ known.

As all of us know, the pandemic COVID-19, caused us to suspend all worship services and ministry activities of our congregation from March 15 through June 29, 2020. Although in-person worship resumed on July 5, there were many ministry opportunities that were not realized this church year. There may be many more opportunities that will not be realized in this church year. The Coronavirus has changed our lives and some of these changes may indeed be the “new normal” for a very long time.

However, when one door is shut, God opens another. True, the ways of ministry at St. Mark's have been very different during these last few months, but ministry has not ceased; indeed it cannot cease. We added a video component to worship and made it available on line. Church Council has cared for administrative issues by way of email and socially distant in-person meetings. Needs have been met by way of contributions to not only St. Mark's but also to other on-going ministries in Williamsport and beyond. We are the church. We are the body of Christ. The body of Christ ministers unto others in the name of Christ. If we cease to minister because of anything—including a horrific virus—we cease to be the church.

This congregation known as St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, is alive and well! Our 167th year as a parish has been a time where God's people have known Christ and have

made Christ known.

In the 168th year of St. Mark's I look forward to ministering with you in sharing what Christ has shared with us: the promise of the Gospel—the gifts of forgiveness and life eternal. As a Church of Jesus Christ we make God's love known, regardless of our situation! Thanks be to God!

~ *The Reverend Brian D. Vasey, Pastor*

ARCHIVES AND WEBSITE REPORT

The Archivist has two distinct responsibilities. The first is to document and preserve the history of St. Mark's Lutheran Church as it occurs. This is done by way of preservation of photographs, videos, written materials and artifacts that represent the church's people and its activities. The second responsibility is to accumulate, catalog, organize and preserve similar materials left behind by past generations of members of St. Mark's.

Over the last several years, we have been able to accumulate both categories of materials in the St. Mark's archive room, located across from the choir room. Last year, this collection was supplemented by Sunday school and VBS photographs and other materials discovered by our cleaning crew while refreshing several of the offices.

Since the archives was assigned a room in 2012, it had become quite cluttered with boxes stacked on the floor. On one recent Saturday, while activities were restricted by the Covid-19 shut down, I was able to organize and shelve all of the recently acquired materials. Cataloging and sorting materials is a longer term job that will require assistance. Likewise, scanning of photographs and documents to preserve and display is a long term goal, requiring much assistance.

The St. Mark's Website Is the primary place where current activities and past history are preserved and displayed. The Website, www.stmarkswilliamsport.org allows our members access to documents, photographs, schedules, news, past issues of *The Lion*, and much more. The Website continues to grow and add more material. The recent closure of the church building has created an opportunity for the Website to provide access to church materials, videos of church services and a mechanism by which members may provide financial assistance to St. Mark's.

The Website design is a bit out-of-date and we must consider an update. Although it complies with the latest security requirements, it is not

“responsive” which means it does not do well on a phone or other small screen device. If someone has some experience in setting up a WordPress type site and would like to work on an upgrade, I would appreciate the help.

St. Mark’s history is well preserved for ourselves and for those who come after us.

~ Gary Weber, Archivist

REPORT OF THE FAITH AND FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

The Faith and Fellowship Committee is committed to our purpose of proclaiming Jesus Christ to each other and to the world through Christian Education as well as through Christian Fellowship.

Christian Education

1. Sunday School classes are held weekly September-May.
 - Adult Sunday School class, The “Master’s Gardeners”, meets in Middle Lounge for study and discussion on a variety of topics.
 - Youth Sunday School includes classes for:
 - High School students (curriculum varies—discussion based)
 - Students in Grades 4-6 (worked their way through The Magician’s Nephew by C.S. Lewis)
 - Elementary students join in with activities and lessons based on materials and stories from the Bible.
1. Devotional Materials were provided for congregational use during both the Advent and Lenten Seasons.
2. Facilitated a month long book study on Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis.
3. Vacation Bible School— Partnered with New Covenant United Church of Christ using their church campus as “headquarters”
4. Together with the Outreach Committee we have incorporated service projects into our Sunday School Curriculum: rock painting, OCC boxes, Reverse Advent Calendar Boxes, Valentine craft.
5. Welcomed Pastor Brian Vasey and began working together to incorporate and present new ideas and educational opportunities to the congregation.

Christian Fellowship and Outreach

- Souper Bowl Sunday
- OCC Shoebox Packing Event

- Church Picnic/Fishing Derby
- Advent Wreath Making
- Rally Day
- Reverse Advent Calendar Boxes
- Hobby Day
- Sight and Sound Bus Trip
- College Care Packages

Milestone Events Celebrated

- Progressions Milestone—sending our High School graduates out into the world
- Faith Chest Milestone—celebrating Baptism
- All the Languages of the Good News Milestone—celebrating our kindergarteners
- 70+, Single and Still Praising God

We continue to navigate and explore how this committee works as we strive to reinvigorate education and participation for the entire congregation. Please join in any of our classes and activities. All are welcome!

~ Vicki Haussmann, Chair

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

The purpose of the finance Committee is to proclaim Jesus Christ to each other and to all the world by managing the financial resources of the congregation.

The Finance Committee handled the following items in the course of the year:

1. Reviewed and evaluated the monthly financial reports.
2. Met with our portfolio managers from M & T Bank in February to review our Investments.
3. Prepared the 2020 Budget for action by Council and the Congregation.
4. Handled many small regular management matters beyond those budgeted then made recommendations to the Council for final action.

Thanks to Gary Weber, Barb & Phil Thomas, Herb Poff, Diane Bardsley, Wanda Fortin, Ralph Zeigler and Pastor Vasey for all their help with financial matters.

A special thanks to Harold and Joyce Hershberger for their many years of service on this committee. Your knowledge and dedication to our committee will be greatly missed.

~ Jackie Kinney

(the FINANCIAL STATEMENT is attached)

REPORT OF THE MEMORIALS COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Memorials Committee is to proclaim Jesus Christ to each other and to the whole world through the thoughtful use of Special gifts given to the congregation in memory of members and friends of the parish.

Gifts have been received in memory of the following members of the parish in the past year:

JANE ANGLE	CAROL MCMORRIS
DAVID MCMORRIS	EDWARD RICHNER
WALTER ERTEL	RAYMOND STILLER
ALONA HOPLER	BETTY STROUP
REBA JACOBS	ELDA ZEIGLER

~ Carl and Beverly Hieber, Co-Chairs

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee is pleased to nominate Ray Huff to serve on Church Council.

REPORT OF THE SAFETY TEAM

The goal of this committee is to provide safety and security to the Congregation, and guidance in the event of an emergency.

This committee was formed in June, 2018. The team members are Carl Albright (Chairman), Sally Bjornstad (Co-Chairman and Secretary), Dr. Drew Haussmann (Medical Adviser), Herb Poff, Dave Williams, Bud Doebler, Lou De Seau, and Pastor Vasey.

To achieve the Safety and Security goal, all doors are locked 5 mins. after the Service begins, except for the Narthex door which remains open with a team of Ushers. The Handicap door remains locked but there is a Greeter to open the door for the people who use that door. The Fellowship Hall door continues to be a challenge as there are no Ushers willing to usher there for use by Sunday School Teachers and participants.

All doors on the main floor have been numbered for the Police Department and an updated floorplan has been given to them in case of an emergency.

Last Fall, after both Services, Carl Albright explained to the Congregation the Safety Team Plan. It was also put in the Bulletin each week for a month, and the Lion.

In October, Dr. Drew Haussmann agreed to be our Medical Advisor and he had an inservice in November with the Safety Team and all Ushers in the use of the 3 new First Aid Kits available in the Narthex, the Pastor's Sacristy, and Fellowship Hall. He explained the use of each item and when to use them. He explained the most common events that

need medical assistance from the Safety Team and Ushers are a Fall, Fainting, Seizure, a Cardiovascular Event such as a Heart Attack or Stroke, a Diabetic Event, and/or Gunshot Wound. He also advised that both Ushers and Safety Team need a definite Plan of Action as far as who does what in a medical emergency. The Safety Team and Ushers devised a Plan of Action.

Doorbells were also installed at the Office door as well as the Fellowship Hall door.

Looking ahead, to provide more security, the Safety Team is recommending the purchase of video cameras to monitor the parking lots, Office door, Fellowship Hall door, Handicap door, and Narthex door with monitors in the Office and Narthex. Safety Team will present this to the Finance Committee for consideration and approval and then on to Council for final approval.

Also, because of our aging Congregation and to provide more safety, the Team is recommending the purchase of an AED (Auto External Defibrillator) and CPR/First Aid Training. The Safety Team researched several agencies such as the Williamsport Hospital, Red Cross, and Zoll Medical Services. The best offer was made by Zoll Medical. The cost is \$1749 for the AED and Set-Up which includes an inservice on the use and a free cabinet to house it. The cost of the CPR/First Aid Training is \$880 for up to 12 persons and it comes with Certification. We would like to present this to the Finance Committee for consideration and approval. Then it would go to Council for final approval. Also, we would like to recommend proposing to collect a donation from the Congregation to help offset the cost with Council's approval. Then Carl Albright will explain it to the Congregation after each Service in the Fall. The announcement will also be put in the Bulletin and in the monthly Lion. Any donations would go to the Finance Office and the final cost would then decrease depending on donations from the Congregation.

Respectively submitted,

~ Carl Albright- Chairman

~ Sally Bjornstad- Co-Chairman

REPORT OF THE WOMEN OF THE ELCA

The Women of St. Mark's have been an active part of our church for over 160 years. We strive to make Christ known worldwide, as well as in our community, by turning our faith into action.

Under the expert direction of Becky Miller Pryor, our annual Bazaar/Rummage Sale produced

a profit of \$1180.00. These funds were donated to local and global charities. Those organizations were Shepherd of the Streets, United Churches of Lycoming County, Camp Mt. Luther, Habitat for Humanity, Church Women United, Lutheran World Relief (shipping), ELCA International Disaster Response, ELCA Domestic Disaster Response, NGA-Newberry Branch, Family Promise, Sojourner Truth Center, and American Rescue Workers. Unsold items left after the sale were given to other local charities for further use.

Our Quilting Group continues to grow smaller, but still completed and sent 55 quilts to Lutheran World Relief. Spreading God's love, as well as warmth and comfort, remains our commitment. We thank Ruth Sherlinski, Shirley Hill, Ernestine Doane, Elsie Sechler, Bunny Ditchfield, Ruth Rees, and Diane Bardsley for their dedication.

Deb Buckman chaired the collection of kits and sent 50 School Kits, 9 Personal Care Kits, 6 Baby Care Kits, and 4 Fabric Kits to Lutheran World Relief along with the quilts.

A monetary sum of \$188.00 was sent to the Synod to purchase blankets as well.

The support of the people of St. Mark's for our projects has been generous and very much appreciated. You have helped us with rummage sale items, kit and quilt materials, and donations of money. God bless you for sharing God's love.

~ Shirley Hill, Chairman

Women of the ELCA Checking Account

Previous balance 4/16/2019	\$1059.38
Income/Deposits	
Bazaar profit (2019)	\$1180.00
Misc	8.50
Total Income	\$1188.50

Expenses

West Branch Women ELCA	200.00
ELCA SWO Convention	100.00
Charities (12)	1575.00
Misc	75.00
Total Expenses	1950.00
Balance (4/28/2020)	\$297.88

~ Barbara R. Thomas, Treasurer

REPORT OF THE WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE

Our mission statement contains many elements that

are crucial to our ministry.

To Know Christ, and to make Christ known.

The purpose of the Worship and Music Committee is to see that the worship of God is conducted in good order in accordance with the Bible and the Lutheran tradition.

The Worship and Music Committee, in an oversight capacity, continued to be busy again this year within the congregation, as well as in the community. We have two beautiful spaces for worship. The nave was sight for Sunday liturgies, weddings, funerals, concerts and other events. The chapel was utilized in many ways as was intended when it was renovated. The chapel provided a warm atmosphere for Morning Prayer, Advent and Lenten services, funeral visitations, Children's Church and more. The challenge this year was the COVID-19 impact on the way that we worship.

We sadly said goodbye to Christian Humcke. Christian is an outstanding director, composer, pianist, organist and youth aficionado. He energized the Chancel Choir and worked extremely well with our youth. He composed and introduced the congregation to a new setting of the Holy Communion liturgy, written by him especially for St. Mark's. We were so fortunate to have had Christian as our Director of Music.

We are extremely fortunate to welcome Sam Robinson to our worship in word through music. Sam followed different organists who lent their talents to fill the void until he was finished with his duties at an Episcopal church in Bloomsburg. His journey is not quite as far now as he is a choir director at the Williamsport Area High School. He has provided inspiring music during our YouTube services. We look forward to Sam, with our help, in rebuilding our music program

The committee is pleased to recognize the musical groups serving in the church's worship: the senior choir, the adult hand bell choir, and the many groups and soloists, both vocal and instrumental. We are truly blessed to have some talented and giving members who share their talents and will hopefully continue for many years.

The Altar Guild was extremely active again this year with the many scheduled and unscheduled activities to keep the church supplies and articles in proper order.

Acknowledgment must be made for the diligent service of our committee members, musicians, the behind-the-scene helpers and those who share in the worship leadership roles. Without their assistance,

leadership and contributions, our services to the Lord would not be as fulfilling. We express our appreciation to Pastor James West, who provided much-needed leadership in our worship and music experience.

In a year of many challenges, Pastor Brian D. Vasey has been leading us in our various forms of worship and discipleship in a most heart-warming way. His children's sermons with his pals, I. N. Stine and his canine companion Bosco, will bring more parents and children to participate in the church. Pastor Vasey's sermons are from the heart and are shared from the pews. We thankfully welcome him to St. Mark's.

Additional communion assistants, assisting ministers, and acolytes were introduced this year. The service opportunities are always expanding and the need for volunteers to fill these roles is always present

Thanks are due for those who so graciously helped in the many duties to keep things flowing throughout the entire year, especially the committee members: Bev Hieber, Cindy Huff, Linda Rosini, Michele Owen, Karen Boone, Lou Kolb, Diane and Dan Ziegler and, of course, Christian Humcke.

Challenges continue each year, mainly in the areas of volunteering, meeting parishioners' needs, and increasing our active membership. It may not be obvious to some, but it truly takes a host of people to keep the church, music and worship services ministering properly. This is most evident during the seasons of Advent and Holy Week, but the need continues every day during the year. There exist many opportunities for volunteer ministry at St. Mark's. Please feel free to contact any member of the Worship and Music committee or Pastor Vasey if you can share in any of the various volunteering capacities. Together we all will continue to praise and proclaim Jesus Christ through His Word and Sacrament.

In closing, God has blessed St. Mark's in so many ways. Sometimes we lose sight of who is in control of things. We had doors close when Pastor West and Christian Humcke departed, but God opened new ones for us in His time. Let us rejoice in His wisdom and grace.

~ Ray Huff, Chairman

Report of the Director of Music

Christian Humcke resigned as Director of Music in February, 2020.

On May 24, 2020, Sam Robinson assumed the position of Music Director for St. Mark's.

WHY GOD HAS PLACED US HERE

"To know Christ and to make Christ known"
Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

~ Romans 15:7

CONGREGATIONAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT

2020 Financial Statement will be available after the beginning of next year

**ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
BUDGET REPORT
YEAR 2021**

<u>GENERAL FUND:</u>	2021 BUDGET	2020 BUDGET
<u>INCOME:</u>		
Envelopes/Pledges	\$ 190,000.00	\$ 210,000.00
Other Religious Income	\$ 8,800.00	\$ 20,800.00
Parking Lot/Rentals	\$ 27,850.00	\$ 30,090.00
Transfer from Investment Fund	\$ 88,272.00	\$ 79,978.00
Welker/Capital General	<u>\$ 21,612.00</u>	<u>\$ 28,000.00</u>
 Total Income	 <u><u>\$ 336,534.00</u></u>	 <u><u>\$ 368,868.00</u></u>
 <u>EXPENSES:</u>		
Staff	\$ 188,269.00	\$ 218,633.00
Administration	\$ 10,050.00	\$ 10,670.00
Worship & Music	\$ 9,220.00	\$ 8,600.00
Christian Ed & Youth	\$ 3,350.00	\$ 3,440.00
Outreach	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
Property	\$ 62,470.00	\$ 58,550.00
Capital Improvements	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 40,000.00
Benevolence & Charity	<u>\$ 27,575.00</u>	<u>\$ 28,375.00</u>
 Total Expenses	 <u><u>\$ 336,534.00</u></u>	 <u><u>\$ 368,868.00</u></u>

