

December 2024

Annual Report of St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Williamsport, PA 17701

"To know Christ and to make Christ known"



Saint Mark's Lion

The Venetian lion is normally depicted with wings, a book that it holds below its paw, and sometimes a halo around its head. These three elements (wings, book, halo) reveal it as a symbol of St. Mark the Evangelist, patron saint of the city of Venice.

According to a tradition dating to the 2nd Century AD, each of the four New Testament Gospel writers is represented by a winged creature: a bull for St. Luke, an eagle for St. John, a human or angel for St. Matthew, and a lion for St. Mark. This set of four creatures was also used in relation with the divine presence in the Old Testament.

Also, the lion has been associated with power, courage and strength since ancient times. What better symbol for the prestigious Venetian Republic?

"Pax tibi Marce"

So, now we know that the book the lion is holding stands for the gospel of Saint Mark.

Have you tried to read the Latin sentence written in it?

It says *"Pax tibi Marce, evangelista meus"*, which translates as "Peace to you Mark, my evangelist". According to legend, while Saint Mark was visiting the Venetian lagoon in the 1st Century AD, a storm put him in danger, but an angel appeared to him and reassured the saint with those words.

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

December 2024



MEMBERS OF THE 2024 CHURCH COUNCIL

Ralph Zeigler, President Nikki Jackson, Vice President
Vicki Haussmann, Secretary Debra Buckman, Treasurer

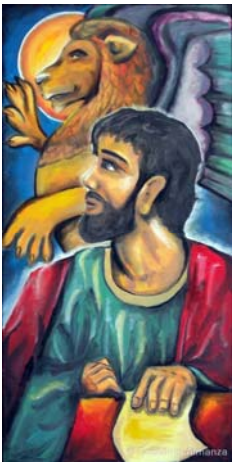
Wanda Fortin Ray Huff Richard Miller Herbert Poff
Richard Reitz Helen Schramm Shelby Weber
Pastor Vasey

Prepared By
Karl Runser, Administrative Assistant



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Report of the Council President	Page 4
From the Parish Register	Page 5
Report of the Pastor	Page 6-7
Report of the Personnel Committee	Page 8
Report of the Director of Music	Page 9
Report of the Administrative Assistant	Page 10
Report of the Memorials Committee	Page 10
Report of the Parish Life Committee	Page 11
Report of the Safety Committee	Page 12
Report of the Evangelism & Fellowship Committee	Page 12-13
Report of the Nominating Committee	Page 14
Report of the Property Committee	Page 15
Report of the Faith and Formation	Page 16
Report of the Finance Committee	Page 17
Report Regarding the Archives and Website	Page 17
Report of the Worship and Music Committee	Page 18
Update on Dossal Replacement Project	Page 19
2025 Budget Report	Page 20



REPORT OF THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Ralph Zeigler

Dear Fellow Members of St. Mark's Lutheran Church:

Our church family shares an important mission statement... "to know Christ and to make Christ known". We have been blessed and called to serve.

We are grateful to those who serve – as members of Council; those who chair or contribute to any of the dozen or so standing committees; those who participate in worship services; those who help to maintain the church property; those who support programs and activities; and those who contribute so much to the life of this congregation and its members. Our parish is an active one. For that and more, accept our appreciation.

To my fellow officers on this year's Council – Nikki Jackson, Vice President; Vicki Haussmann, Secretary; and Debra Buckman, Treasurer – a special note of appreciation. Your service and dedication to St. Mark's is ever present.

My personal gratitude for the blessings of our staff – for Pastor Vasey...capable, thoughtful, and respectful...an informed leader for our congregation...a humble servant of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ; for our gifted organist, Sam Robinson, whose incredible talents enrich our worship; for our devoted bookkeeper, Jackie Baysore, who shares her business expertise with our church; for our volunteer financial secretary, Herb Poff, who is an exceptional resource for our congregation; and for the crew from Choice Cleaners for their ongoing care of our facility.

We note with sadness the passing of Joseph Baur, our welcoming and creative administrative assistant, and extend gratitude to Pastor Karl Runser and several dedicated volunteers who are helping with the day-to-day administrative tasks to support our staff and congregation.

Finally, we extend sincere appreciation to Herb Poff and Shelby Weber who are completing terms on Council. Please know that we are grateful for your gifts of time and service, and that we look forward to your continuing involvement in this parish.

It has been both humbling as well as an incredible honor to have served the past three years as president of our congregation. Your confidence and support have been very much appreciated throughout my term which also now concludes.

God has provided for us by way of the Cross, in the Waters of Baptism and as he comes to us in His Holy Supper. What greater gifts could we possibly want? What greater gifts could we possibly need? As we have been richly blessed, may we be a blessing to others. And may God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – keep us ever in His grace.

In His name,

Ralph Zeigler, Council President
St. Mark's Lutheran Church



FROM THE PARISH REGISTRY

(as of December 1, 2024)

Saint Mark's Lutheran Church

Members Received by Public Affirmation of Baptism

Theresa Ann Furman	3/30/24
Cynthia Ann Todd	3/30/24
Robert Emerson Furman	3/30/24

Deaths of Members

Patricia Darlene Alexander	1/3/24
Susan M. Kalabacas	2/20/24
Beverly A. Best	3/14/24
Robert Emerson Furman	4/5/24
Mary Geraldine Martin	4/24/24
Beverly J. Farnsworth	6/26/24
John E. Hoffman	8/17/24
Peter Braden Zeigler	10/9/24
Shirley Marlene Dieffenbach Lloyd	10/9/24
Robert L. Miller	11/20/24
Lillian Foucart	11/23/24



REPORT OF THE PASTOR

Reverend Brian Vasey

Pastor's Annual Report for 2024

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Lord, you give the great commission, 'Heal the sick and preach the Word.'

Lest the Church neglect its mission, and the Gospel go unheard,

help us witness to your purpose with renewed integrity.

With the Spirit's gifts empow'r us for the work of ministry.

Jeffery Rowthorn

WOV, 756

The above quote from the great hymn, “Lord, You Give the Great Commission” is an interpretation of the last word Jesus shares with his disciples before his ascension in the Gospel according to Matthew. Throughout the centuries the Church has both rejoiced and struggled with this task from our Lord. How best to make disciples? How best to 'Heal the sick and preach the Word?'

St. Mark's Lutheran Church has received this great commission from Jesus and has made it our Defined Mission Statement, *To Know Christ and to Make Christ known*. The mission statement is read before every meeting in the church. It is printed in every church bulletin, church correspondence and monthly Lion. It has been studied, discussed and agreed upon as an accurate description of both who we are and who we hope to be as people of Christ in this place at this time.

In 2024 our congregation has reflected our mission statement in many ways of ministry to our community and our world:

+ We have remembered the promise that comes to us in Christ; the promise of God's love for us and for all people as the Church through the celebration of the means of grace (Holy Scripture, Holy Baptism and Holy Communion) and Christian Education (Sunday School, Bible Study and Small Group Study). We identify as, “The community of believers and saints brought together by the Holy Spirit for the preaching of the Word and the administration of the holy sacraments in accordance with the Gospel (Augsburg Confession VII)”.

+ We have proclaimed the good news of Christ and in Christ here and abroad through support to our Synod and various ELCA Missionaries and Missions.

+ We have participated in the ministries of Operation Christmas Child, Church World Service

(CROP Walk), Lutheran World Relief, ELCA Good Gifts and Heifer Project International.

+ We have offered prayer, practical help, medicine and food to neighbors far and wide by supporting Diakon Ministries, Family Promise of Lycoming County, the Ministerium of the City of Williamsport (the “Holy COW’s”), the United Churches of Lycoming County and Lutheran Disaster Response.

+ We have offered our building as a place of meetings, celebrations, concerts and learnings for various community groups and Little Lambs Preschool and Daycare.

This is who we are. This is whose we are. We are the church. We are the Body of Christ. We minister to others because Christ has first ministered to us. If we cease to minister because of anything other than our Lord's return — hurricanes; the current wars in Ukraine, Gaza and Israel; disease; death of loved ones; lack of funds; apathy — we cease to be the church and thus cease to be the people of God.

On Sunday, December 1, we began the Season of Advent and thus a new Church Year. This provides an opportunity to look back at the past with fondness and thanksgiving and to the future with hope. Many of our accomplishments in 2024 should be looked at with great satisfaction: Two new times of Bible Study (October and April); a more intentional relationship with Little Lambs; exploring ways that our building can be “in ministry” to our local community; nurturing youth through and with the gift of music; creating a space of welcome and inclusion. Ministry in our Lord's name has taken place at St. Mark's by people of God known as St. Mark's: The Members and Officers of our Church Council; Church Committees; Church Staff both paid and volunteer; members and friends of the congregation. As pastor I thank you for your work in the name of Christ for the sake of the world. I praise God and give thanks for the many ways you make Christ known.

Martin Luther said many times in his ministry, “Have faith! Grace abounds!” Let us go forth in the hope of a new church year ever clinging to the promises of God as we, empowered by the Holy Spirit to do the work of ministry, strive to, *Know Christ and Make Christ Known* in 2025 and beyond.

Grace + Peace

Pastor Brian Vasey

Advent, 2024



REPORT OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Nikki Jackson (Vice-President Church Council
and Personnel Committee Chair)

Mel Wentzel, Candy Dewar, Helen Schramm,
Pastor Vasey and Ralph Zeigler

Greetings and God's Blessings be upon you.

This year has been very interesting, with the recent passing of our Church Secretary and the absence of a Sexton. Thank you to all who have helped in so many ways and supported our good work here at St. Mark's.

Choice Cleaning Service continues to do a wonderful job maintaining a clean St. Mark's. They continue to help wherever possible such as setting up and taking down tables and chairs for events in Fellowship Hall. We would like to thank Choice for doing such a great job.

In April, we were informed of our Administrative Assistant, Joe Baur's cancer diagnosis. Joe continued to work helping with all he could until he was no longer able. We have had several church members help fill in when Joe was unable to be here. Since Joe's passing, we are currently looking for a permanent part-time administrative assistant with job postings listed in several locations. We want to give a special thank you to Pastor Karl Runser, Cindy Todd, and everyone who is helping to cover this position until we find a replacement. Our continued thoughts and prayers go to Christine and the entire Baur Family.

We have yet to fill the part-time Sexton position since the passing of Lou DeSeau in 2022. We will be looking to add a few of the Sexton tasks to the new Administrative Assistant role to assist in some of the minor upkeep of St. Mark's. Currently we have multiple volunteers filling the Sexton's duties on an as needed basis.

We are fortunate to have Jackie Baysore remain in the role of Bookkeeper. She continues to do a great job at maintaining the financial duties of St. Mark's. We would also like to thank Jackie Baysore, Herb Poff, Pam Jensen, Deb Buckman, Wanda Fortin, Jackie Kinney, Ralph Zeigler, and Vicki Haussmann for all their help in the offices as well.

And last but not least, Sam Robinson continues to perform wonderful music for us here at St. Mark's. His preludes, hymn selections, postludes and the entire incidental playing have not gone unnoticed. We have been truly blessed with the music that enhances and invigorates our congregation each and every week. Our congregants continue to stay and enjoy the postlude in its entirety. Thank you, Sam.

I would also like to thank the members of this committee, Candy Dewar, Helen Schramm, Mel Wentzel, Pastor Vasey, and Ralph Zeigler, Council President. They have been such a tremendous help in assisting me transition into this role, especially with the recent passing of our administrative assistant.

A special thank you to Candy Dewar as she continues to make sure the staff is celebrated on special occasions and dates. She provides small gifts and tokens of our appreciation for the important work they do every day to the benefit of St. Mark's Lutheran Church.

And finally, a personal thank you to Pastor Vasey and President Ralph Zeigler for their support, guidance and tireless efforts as we progress through the challenges and success of the Personnel Committee as well as the Church Council.

Respectfully submitted,

Nikki Jackson

Council Vice President (Personnel Committee Chair)



REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Sam Robinson

As we reflect on another year, I am deeply thankful for the opportunity to create and share music with the St. Mark's community. This year marks my fifth as Director of Music and Organist, and each season brings a renewed sense of purpose and connection.

This fall, we welcomed four new choral singers: Colton Taylor, Hannah Bell, Megan Louder, and Dylan Garbrick. Their voices have enriched our 10:30 am services, allowing us to present beautiful choral anthems on select Sundays. Thanks to their contributions, we have been able to increase the frequency of choral offerings, and we look forward to adding even more Sundays with choral music in 2025. I am grateful to the members of St. Mark's who continue to sing in the choir, and I am always eager to add more.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the congregation for investing considerable funds toward the maintenance and restoration of our Mighty Möller organ. This support has allowed us to begin essential repairs, including the replacement of essential internal components and leatherwork, helping bring this magnificent instrument closer to its full potential. Although more work remains, this is an excellent start. The Möller is a true treasure for our community and serves as a vital part of our worship experience every week.

St. Mark's is also an invaluable part of the broader musical community. Our church provides rehearsal spaces for two community choirs and serves as a performance space for numerous musical groups throughout the year. The acoustically beautiful nave is cherished by musicians and audiences alike, making it a sought-after space for fostering musical artistry and enriching the cultural life of our area.

Thank you for your continued support in making music a central and cherished part of our worship life at St. Mark's.

Respectfully submitted,

Samuel Robinson
Director of Music & Organist



REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

First and most importantly, I want to extend my deepest condolences to the congregation of St. Mark's for the death of your Administrative Assistant, Joseph Baur. I did not know Joe personally, but I enjoyed your stories and memories of him as I have filled in as your temporary Assistant.

As a pastor currently on leave from call, I have always known that church secretarial work requires a particular combination of gifts, dedication, and understanding of how a congregation functions. My appreciation of those things has only increased through the weeks I have worked for St. Mark's. I have enjoyed it here, and will consider this a time of continuing education — among other benefits!

My main tasks have been to prepare bulletins, newsletters, and the packet of annual reports. For this purpose I have found it good and expedient simply to copy much of what Joe has already done. I hope that is satisfactory; any errors, omissions, or failures to meet your standards are mine alone.

I must thank Pastor Vasey and the St. Mark's congregation council, who invited me to fill in here, and all the members who welcomed me with hospitality and help. I look forward to hearing about your ministry in the coming year. May you always know that Christ is in your midst, and God bless your witness to the Good News of our Lord.

Pastor Karl W. Runser III



REPORT OF THE MEMORIALS COMMITTEE Carl and Beverly Hieber (Co-Chairs)

The purpose of the Memorial 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 in the past year:

PATRICIA ALEXANDER

ROBERT FURMAN

JOHN HOFFMAN

DIANA ZEIGLER

PETER ZEIGLER

Carl & Beverly Hieber, Co-Chairs



REPORT OF THE PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE

Becky Miller Pryor (Chairperson)

Members: Deb Buckman, Bob Campbell, Jackie Kinney, Cheryl Williams, Connie Shaible, and Barbara Thomas

Our activities within the congregation included

Serving funeral luncheons when asked by the families to do so.

Providing hospitality for church events when requested such as pot luck luncheons, the church picnic and Donut Tuesday. We are pleased to support the other committees who spearhead these events.

Hosting the annual meeting luncheon. This year a brunch, catered by the Food Guy, is being served.

With assistance from the Property Committee, the commercial stove, which was in disrepair, was removed from the kitchen. Plans are in place to replace our aging dishwasher.

Our activities for the community included

Catering the monthly luncheons for the Center City Pastors of the United Churches of Lycoming County.

Providing twenty-four sandwiches twice per month to New Covenant UCC's Blessing Boxes.

This activity is entering its third year. We are grateful for the congregation's financial support.

Assisting the Evangelism and Fellowship Committee with providing and packaging desserts for Redeemer's community dinner.

Our activities going forward include

Continuing with all the activities from this year and looking for opportunities to further serve the congregation and the community as we are able.

On a housekeeping note, we will be deep cleaning cupboards in the kitchen and the Parish Life office.

Chairperson: Becky Miller Pryor

Members: Becky Miller Pryor, Connie Shaible, Barbara Thomas with support from Deb Buckman, Bob Campbell, Jackie Kinney and Cheryl Williams and several congregation members who make the holding of funeral luncheons and other events possible.



REPORT OF THE SAFETY COMMITTEE

Dr. Drew Haussmann (Chairman)

Sally Bjornstad (Secretary)

Members: Herb Poff, Dave Williams, Walter Doeblor, Ralph Zeigler Jr., and Pastor Vasey.

Annual Report of the Safety Committee for 2024

The goal of the Safety Committee is to provide Safety and Security recommendations to the congregation of St. Mark's.

Seven surveillance cameras were installed with monitors, one in the office and one in the copy room. Also, two doorbells were installed, one outside the Fellowship Hall door and one outside the office door. They also have cameras. The entire church grounds can be seen.

Each door has a sticker reading "Premises monitored by Compu-Gen."

There are signs below the light switches that indicate where the fire extinguishers, first aid kits, and the AED are located. These signs are throughout the church.

The big stove in the kitchen has been removed. Fry's Fire Service comes annually to make sure everything is working properly and is certified. The certification then goes to the fire department. This includes the fire extinguishers.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 7, 2025.

Respectively Submitted,

Dr. Drew Haussmann (Chairman)

Sally Bjornstad (Secretary)



REPORT OF THE EVANGELISM AND FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Becky Miller Pryor (Chairperson)

Members: Cathy Fenderson, Wanda Fortin, Jackie Kinney, Karen Mariano, Linda Rosini and Barbara Thomas

The purpose of the Evangelism and Fellowship Committee is to proclaim Jesus Christ to each other and to the entire world by sharing Christian love through social, emotional and material support.

Our outreach within the congregation included

Sending greeting cards to our Special Concern folks and others we do not see as often as we wish. Cards were sent at Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, July Fourth/Summer and Halloween/Autumn.

Continuing the Card Ministry which was reestablished in 2021. In addition to our committee members, congregation members send cards, on a rotating basis, to our Special Concern folks and other members as needed to honor birthdays, anniversaries, thinking of you or

get-well greetings as another way to stay in touch.
Assisting the Faith Formation Committee in various activities throughout the year.
Providing “Welcome Mugs” to visitors to St. Mark’s.

Our outreach to our community included

Hosting two blood drives in Fellowship Hall in partnership with the American Red Cross.
Providing meals during our hosting weeks for Family Promise.
Facilitating the collecting of non-perishable food items, paper products, cleaning supplies and snacks year-round for The United Churches Food Pantry, Shepherd of the Streets, Sojourner Truth Ministries and the Blessing Boxes at New Covenant UCC.
Hosting the annual July Fourth Lawn Party with a music program in the Nave.
Collaborating with the Faith Formation Committee in collecting items and packing Operation Christmas Child boxes and Reverse Advent bags.
Collecting and delivering small gifts to the Ladies of CM-6 at the Selinsgrove Center and their caregivers. This year we will be able to entertain and gift in-person.
Collecting and delivering general Christmas gifts to the residents (consumers) of the Danville State Hospital. We also participated in their Spring shoe drive.
Providing monthly support to Daniel’s Closet with our clothing donations.
Supporting Redeemer Lutheran’s free community dinner by providing desserts each month.
Assisting the Parish Life Committee in providing sandwiches twice each month to the Blessing Boxes of New Covenant UCC.
Providing two lunches for the Faith Build volunteers of Habitat for Humanity.

Our outreach going forward includes

Continuing with those projects that serve members of the congregation and the community.
We are on the call list for providing lunches at future build sites of Habitat for Humanity.
We look for other ways to be of service to our congregation and the community. We encourage you to pray and answer Christ’s call to serve as our outreach could use more hands and feet.

Chairperson: Becky Miller Pryor

Members: Cathy Fenderson, Wanda Fortin, Jackie Kinney, Karen Mariano, Linda Rosini and Barbara Thomas



REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Ralph Zeigler (Chairman)

Members: Robert Campbell, Wanda Fortin, Vicki Hausmann, Herb Poff, Pastor Vasey

The Nominating Committee is chaired by the president of Council and includes three or more additional voting members of the congregation appointed by the president for a term of one year. Serving on the 2024 Nominating Committee are Robert Campbell, Wanda Fortin, Vicki Hausmann, Herb Poff, Pastor Vasey, and me.

With appreciation, we recognize two members completing their service on Council and extend to them our sincere gratitude: Herb Poff and Shelby Weber. Glenn Yapple resigned earlier this year, and my term also ends this year.

The Nominating Committee is pleased to present the following names for your consideration for election to Council. Their three-year terms begin January 2025. All have agreed to allow their names to be placed in nomination at our Annual Congregational Meeting:

Donna Clark

Cathy Fenderson

Cindy Todd

Lou Ann Zeigler

Additional nominations may be made from the floor and require a second to the motion. As a courtesy, please confirm with the person being nominated their willingness to serve on Council should they be elected.

Lay Delegates to the Annual Assembly of the Upper Susquehanna Synod Conference will be elected by Council at a later date. If you have an interest in serving in this capacity, please contact a member of Council. Thank you!

In His name –

Ralph Zeigler, Chair
Nominating Committee



REPORT OF THE PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Drew Haussmann and Ed Gair (Co-Chairs)

Members: Dave Williams, Deb Buckman, Susan Newcomer, James Newcomer, Carl Albright, Herb Poff.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Property Committee is to proclaim Jesus Christ to each other and all the world by promoting the use of the congregation's physical resources in the support of our Christian Mission. To this end the committee arranged for the promotion, protection, maintenance, repair and expansion of church properties. The Committee supervises the use of the same by the congregation and other organizations so that the facilities are adequate for the functions assigned by the congregation.

The year 2024 posed a number of challenges for St Mark's as we continue to address maintenance needs for the church's large and aging infrastructure.

Roof — a number of leaks required attention on the Parish House roof. Indeed the entire roof is in need of replacement. This is anticipated to be a major repair in the next 1-2 years.

HVAC — A leak in the return line of the Parish House heating system occurred during the winter. Thankfully this was easy to access as it developed in the basement. Unfortunately, many of the lines throughout the building are felt to be heavily corroded and future leaks are highly likely. Completely replacing the steam pipes would be extremely costly and disruptive to the building. In addition, the pipes are covered in asbestos material. It was decided to make repairs as they become necessary rather than completely replace the heating of the Parish House. Circulator pumps for the Nave boiler were replaced, one in late 2023 and the other late 2024.

Exterior — Ezra Buckman mowed the lawns throughout the summer months. Vandeline landscaping was contracted for mulching, weed control and other trimming. The east side of the church was power washed and the awning over fellowship hall door replaced.

Pest Control — A termite infestation was found within a single area of the Parish House basement. There did not appear to be any activity outside of the "art room" used by Little Lambs. This was treated, and damage was limited to furniture/built-ins and not structural members of the building.

Fire/Emergency Infrastructure — Security cameras and door cameras were installed. In October, it was discovered that there are no smoke detectors within the Parish House and that exit and emergency lighting was not in adequate working order. As much of this building is rented to Little Lambs Daycare, these systems require prompt updating and installation. Electrical repairs/updates have been contracted with Williamsport Electric, and fire detection equipment is to be installed

Choice Cleaning continues to perform the cleaning duties keeping the building tidy. As a suitable sexton was not able to be found, Ed Gair has agreed to work on a "per diem" basis to assist with the coordination of contractors and maintenance needs of the church.

We appreciate the time and talents of the other active members of the committee, including Herb Poff, Dave Williams, Deb Buckman, and Jim & Susan Newcomer

As we look ahead to 2025, we ask for the prayer and insight of the congregation as we strive to preserve and promote the physical space that is the church of St Mark's.

In Christ, Drew Haussmann and Ed Gair, Property Co-chairs



REPORT OF THE FAITH FORMATION COMMITTEE

Vicki Haussmann (Chairperson)

Sally Bjornstad, Robert Campbell, Pastor Vasey

The Faith Formation 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 was offered in a variety of ways this past year including: Adult Sunday School class, Lenten and Advent studies/services, support of United Churches of Lycoming County Vacation Bible School, and providing devotional materials for the seasons of Lent and Advent. The opportunity to make an Advent wreath to be used at home during the season of Advent encourages us to take time to remember the true meaning of the Christmas season. Christian reading material is available in Front Lounge for congregational use, and we offered several "book reports" in The Lion to encourage use of this "Front Lounge Library". We were pleased to offer a midweek Bible study throughout the months of May and October, and are encouraged by the positive response in attendance for these studies.

We realize that Christian Fellowship is also an important facet of connecting with and encouraging each other to grow in our faith. In that regard, we were pleased to be able to host many events throughout the year. Our third annual Shrove Tuesday event was a success, and we enjoyed sharing the evening with our friends from St. Luke's. Souper Bowl Sunday, Birthday Cake Boxes, Graduation Celebration, "God's Work, Our Hands" Sunday, Operation Christmas Child, and Reverse Advent Calendars provided opportunities to come together to provide outreach to those outside of our congregation. The annual church picnic once again provided an opportunity for fellowship in the comfort of Fellowship Hall! And activities such as Backpack Blessing Sunday, Pet Blessing Sunday, Advent Wreath Making, and Christmas Tree Decorating helped bring us together to celebrate various seasons throughout the year.

A special thank you to both Sally Bjornstad and Bob Campbell who are faithful and committed members of the Faith Formation committee. Thank you for all you do to support the studies, activities, and events that occur at St. Mark's.

As we look ahead to 2025, we will continue to navigate and explore how this committee works as we strive to reinvigorate education and participation for the entire congregation. We are especially committed to expanding Christian Education. We welcome any and all new members to our committee, and we are open to new ideas. Please join in any of our classes and activities. All are welcome!

Vicki Haussmann, Chair



REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Debra Buckman, Treasurer

Committee Members: Diane Bardsley, Wanda Fortin, Jackie Kinney, Herb Poff, Barb Thomas, Phil Thomas, Gary Weber, Ralph Zeigler and Pastor Vasey

The finance committee met on a regular basis during 2024. The committee worked on the Gift Giving Policy which was approved by Council in June. Additional work consisted of financing of the dorsal and the organ repair. The committee met with the financial advisors at M&T bank to review our investments. Finally the big task was the budget for 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Buckman, Treasurer



REPORT OF THE ARCHIVES AND WEBSITE

Gary Weber

In May of 2024, your archivist was honored to be asked to present a workshop at a synod day of fellowship and worship in Northumberland. I was somewhat surprised by this as I have no training or background in historical preservation. Upon further thought, I realized that I have been the keeper of the St. Mark's records for some 25 years, so I guess that is enough of a qualification.

At the workshop, I emphasized three key points to ensure that one's church's history is preserved: 1) Find, accumulate, save important and historical records and materials; 2) Preserve and protect them - from the elements, from destruction, from being lost in the building; and, 3) When the time allows, index, digitalize and organize your records so that future generations can better understand and appreciate the life of their church.

So why is a church archive so important – because a church that preserves its history and documents the accomplishments and activities of its members, organizations, Sunday School classes or the stories about its memorials and gifts, is really preserving the lifetime memories of its congregation, creating a sense of community among the members, and reasons for members to remain active with the church.

With the above in mind, St. Mark's has set aside a room, that is dry and protected, for the physical archives of the Church. All the historical records, photographs, histories, artifacts, and the like are gathered in one place, safe from those elements that can ravage such materials.

In the workshop, I pointed out that there is always more to be done. As to the last of the above three points, we at St. Mark's have not maintained a good index and there is much more to be scanned and digitalized. All in good time, and with assistance, that will occur.

In the meantime, you can rest assured that we are preserving our history and working to digitalize records. In the St. Mark's Website, you can read about current activities and past history. The Website, www.stmarkswilliamsport.org, allows our members access to documents, photographs, schedules, news, past issues of The Lion, worship services bulletins and much more. And, our worship services are all recorded and saved.

Anyone interested in working with our historical records is welcome to join the Archives Committee, as there is much help needed.

Gary Weber, Archivist and Webmaster



REPORT OF THE WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE

Ray Huff (Chairman)

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 a site for Sunday liturgies, weddings, funerals, concerts, and other events.

We are extremely fortunate to have Sam Robinson lead our worship in word through music. We look forward to Sam, with our help, in rebuilding our music program.

We have gone from having volunteer cantors at the single service in the summer and both services to having young guests lend their talents with our “pop-up” choir, adding much to our worship. We are also fortunate to have a soloist at the 8:00 service on occasion.

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 given for the diligent service of our committee members, musicians, the behind-the-scenes 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.

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. He is also bringing more notable visitors to the church as well. We remember a visit from Martin Luther at the Reformation Service. We thankfully appreciate Pastor Vasey's efforts for St. Mark's.

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, Karen Mariano, Dan Zeigler, Ralph and Lou Ann Zeigler and, of course, Sam Robinson and Pastor Vasey.

Challenges continue each year, 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. You will notice the new Advent wreath. The old base now has greens of permanence.

We are in the process of replacing the dossal behind the altar. Ralph and Lou Ann Zeigler have spent much time and effort on our behalf on this project. We look forward to the beauty to our services that the new dossal will add.

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. Let us rejoice in God's wisdom and grace.

— Ray Huff

UPDATE ON DOSSAL REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Replacement of the dossal cloth behind the altar was first discussed at the February 2020 Council meeting. Council members (and others) noticed that the current white dossal cloth was becoming noticeably dirtier and, in many places, torn and frayed. At that meeting, Council approved using red fabric for the new dossal, the color originally chosen by the award-winning architect, T. Norman Mansell, who designed our church. It adds some warmth to the chancel and offsets the coolness of the two larger grey screens (one on either side of the dossal) on which the wooden plaques are hung.

We are pleased to report that we are making progress, although it has been very slow. The current dossal cloth is made up of 21 panels that together create a white backdrop for the suspended cross. The area is approximately 11 feet wide x 36 feet high. It features two multi-color orphreys or bands, one on either side of the dossal. One plan would be to replace the current fabric with red cloth and to reinstall the frames. A second plan would be to revert to the architect's original design, that of a continuous red cloth from ceiling to floor.

Mr. Mansell chose blue as the color for the original two orphreys. Several companies are able to provide fabric for the project. While we had hoped to have the cloth replaced by this past year, there was a major setback. When a larger sample of the deep red fabric chosen by the Worship and Music Committee was ordered, the piece delivered to us had an orange hue, apparently a change created in the manufacturing process. At this time, we are looking for alternate fabrics to complete the project. Lundy Construction Company, Williamsport, can help with the installation once the new fabric is chosen and fireproofed to meet City codes.

St. Mark's is blessed to have a beautiful worship space. Our nave was thoughtfully designed nearly 65 years ago and continues to serve us well. The Worship and Music Committee is being deliberative as it seeks ways to assure that our facility retains its splendor. We appreciate your patience and understanding, as well as your thoughts and financial support for this project.

In His name,

Ralph Zeigler, Member
Worship & Music Committee

2025 BUDGET REPORT

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ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, WILLIAMSPORT, PA			
		<u>Actual</u>	
	<u>2024 Budget</u>	<u>(10/31/2024)</u>	<u>2025 Budget</u>
INCOME			
Parking Lot Rent	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 7,920.00	\$ 7,065.00
Little Lambs Room Rental	15,469.00	11,350.93	16,344.00
Room & Hall Rental	700.00	450.00	1,000.00
Welker/Capital General	21,612.00	16,209.45	21,612.00
Religious Income	173,445.00	159,227.62	163,530.00
Fund Transfers	189,122.00	160,000.00	212,351.00
Income Totals	\$ 406,348.00	\$ 355,158.00	\$ 421,902.00
EXPENSE			
Salaries	\$ 143,749.00	\$ 116,939.50	\$ 139,392.00
Administrative Benefits	39,524.00	36,268.88	45,585.00
General Administrative	16,650.00	18,533.62	20,700.00
Worship & Music	20,000.00	40,037.80	11,700.00
Christian ED, Youth & Family Min	3,150.00	711.93	3,100.00
Outreach Ministries	1,000.00	300.77	1,000.00
Property	148,200.00	119,171.46	166,150.00
Benevolence & Charity & Synod Donations	34,075.00	29,319.33	34,275.00
Expense Totals	\$ 406,348.00	\$ 361,283.29	\$ 421,902.00
Difference	—0—	(\$ 6,125.29)	—0—