

**The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
July 30, 2023**

in the 170^h Year of the Parish

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

142 Market Street, Williamsport, PA 17701

stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org

Office (570-323-4619) Fax (570-323-2452)

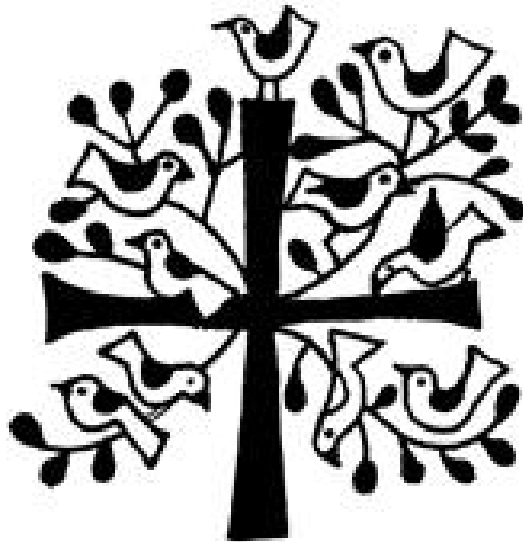
Rev. Brian D. Vasey, Pastor

bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org

Welcome to Saint Mark's!

This is Christ's church. There is a place for you here. Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

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



Please be aware:

Hand sanitizer is available for your use.

Face masks are optional.

Offerings may be received by way of baskets as you enter or leave.

A guide to hymnal use: LBW, Green Book; WOV, Blue Book

**Please stand as you are able.*

C = Congregation P = Pastor

INTRODUCTION TO TODAY'S WORSHIP

As Solomon prays for wisdom, we seek to more deeply know the treasures of faith. In today's gospel Jesus offers everyday images that reveal to us the reign of God: a tree that becomes a sheltering home, yeast that penetrates and expands, a treasured pearl, a net that gains a great catch. Even as we seek the riches of God's reign, the great surprise is that God's grace finds us first!

PRELUDE

Aria from Rinaldo

GF Handel

WELCOME/ANNOUNCING THE DAY/ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P In the name of the Father, and of the Son ✠, and of the Holy Spirit. one

C **Amen.**

P Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen.**

P If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Please kneel as able.

P Most merciful God,

C **we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us and lead us, so that we**

may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

P In the mercy of Almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the \dagger Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

***HYMN How Great Thou Art LBW, “Green”, 532**

***THE GREETING**

P The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

***HYMN OF PRAISE**



A Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his peo - ple on earth.



B Lord God, heav - en - ly king, al - might - y God and Fa - ther:



We wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God:



You take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.



You are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther; re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray. Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen.**

THE FIRST READING.....1 Kings 3:5-12

⁵At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, “Ask what I should give you.” ⁶And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. ⁷And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?”

¹⁰It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹God said to him, “Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹²I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you.”

The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 119:129-136

¹²⁹Your de- | crees are wonderful;
therefore I obey them with | all my heart.

**130When your word is opened | it gives light;
it gives understanding | to the simple.**

131I open my | mouth and pant
because I long for | your commandments.

**132Turn to me and be gra- | cious to me,
as you always do to those who | love your name.**

133Order my footsteps | in your word;
let no iniquity have dominion | over me.

**134Rescue me from those | who oppress me,
and I will keep | your commandments.**

135Let your face shine up- | on your servant
and teach | me your statutes.

**136My eyes shed | streams of tears,
because people do not | keep your teaching.**

THE SECOND READING.....Romans 8:26-39

26The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. 27And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

28We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. 29For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. 30And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

31What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 32He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? 33Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. 35Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

37No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved

us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

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

***THE HOLY GOSPEL.....Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52**

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the 13th chapter

Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

³¹[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;³²it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

³³He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

⁴⁴“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

*THE PEACE

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

The ministers and congregation greet one another with these or similar words.

ANTHEM

The King of Love


Wilbur Held

Soloist: Chase Bower


*GREAT THANKSGIVING



P The Lord be with you. **C** And al - so with you.



P Lift up your hearts. **C** We lift them to the Lord.



P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



C It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:
 Heav- en and earth are full of your glo- ry. Ho - san - na. Ho - san - na.
 Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who
 comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Blessed are you Lord of heaven and earth.
 In mercy for our fallen world
 you gave your only Son,
 that all those who believe in him
 should not perish
 but have eternal life.
 We give thanks to you for the salvation
 you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ.
 Send now your Holy Spirit,
 into our hearts and on these gifts,
 that we may receive our Lord with a living faith
 as he comes to us in this his holy supper.

C Amen. Come Lord Jesus.

In the night in which he was betrayed
 Our Lord Jesus took bread,
 gave thanks; broke it,
 and gave it to his disciples saying:
 Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.
 Again after supper,
 he took the cup,
 gave thanks and gave it for all to drink saying:
 This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
 shed for you and all people
 for the forgiveness of sin.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

*OUR LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord as you have taught us, so now we pray,

C **Our Father, who art in heaven,**

hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come,

thy will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those

who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

*LAMB OF GOD



☪ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the



sin of the world; grant us peace.

*INVITATION TO COMMUNION *All Are Welcome to Receive.*

Persons may come forward to the chancel to receive Holy Communion. This format will be more "continuous" noting the following procedure:

- *Communicants as directed by ushers are asked to come forward by way of the center aisle, take a cup from the tray provided and receive the bread.*
- *Once receiving the bread, communicants will proceed to one of two stations (left or right) to receive wine from the pouring chalice.*

- *After receiving wine, communicants will place the empty cup in the designated tray and return to their pew by way of the side aisles.*

P All people are called to Christ's table.

Come, taste and see that the Lord is good.

C **Thanks be to God.**

THE COMMUNION

*AFTER COMMUNION

P The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C **Amen.**

*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P Let us pray. We thank you, generous God,
for the refreshment we have received
at your banquet table.

Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world,
through the one who is our dearest treasure,
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord;
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

*THE BLESSING

P Almighty God, Father, †, Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.

C **Amen.**

*HYMN **I Love Your Kingdom, Lord**

LBW, "Green", 368

*DISMISSAL

P Go in peace, share the Good News!

C **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE *Gothique Fanfare* Lester Groom

WORSHIP LEADERS July 30, 2023

Lector		Audrey Albright
Communion Assistants		Dan Zeigler
Organist		Sam Robinson
Ushers		Matt Fortin, captain Glenn Yapple, Bud Doebler
Altar Guild	July	Wanda Fortin and Mindy Wentzel

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Prayer List: Victims of COVID-19 and their families, Liz Ruesskamp, Grace Arner, Diane Damaska, Vanessa Morgan, Gary Clark, Charles Miller, Jerry Miller, Patricia Alexander, Richard Ritter, Ashton Ott, Lucille Sider, April Clark, Lenny Sherlinski, Ruth Sherlinski, Gary Cable, Elsie Sechler, Virginia Pulaskie, Susan Kalabacas, Bunny Ditchfield, Judy Fortin, the people of Ukraine, Eastern Europe and Afghanistan, Ezra Buckman, Sheila Brassard, Kevin Rosini, Kathy Eshelman, Micah, Steve Beiber, Deb Buckman, Linda Rosini, Dick Reitz, Mary Ann Stiller.

READ ANY GOOD BOOKS LATELY? Faith Formation has temporarily “moved some books” from our church library to the Front Lounge in order to make them more accessible. Stop by the Front Lounge and take a look!

OUR STEWARDSHIP July 23, 2023

Regular Offering \$2,881.00

GRAND TOTAL \$2,881.00

ALTAR FLOWERS today are given to the glory of God:
+In Celebration of our St. Mark's Family by the Flower Fund
+In Celebration of our St. Mark's Family by the Flower Fund



SIGHT AND SOUND "MOSES" BUS TRIP, SEPTEMBER 20, 2023

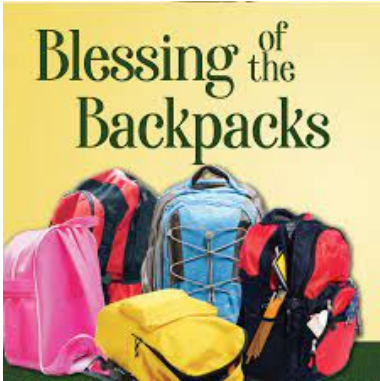
Our bus to see "Moses" at the Sight and Sound Theatre has been filled! The cost of the trip is \$139.00/person and checks should be made payable to Cheryl Williams by August 13, 2023. The bus departs from Beiter's Parking Lot (540 Montgomery Pike, Williamsport) 6 am on September 20. Please park your car in the West End Parking Lot of Beiter's. Questions may be directed to Mrs. Cheryl Williams (570-327-1627). Checks can be mailed to Cheryl Williams, 249 Johnson Drive, Williamsport, 17702.



+ 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.



BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

Please join us Sunday, August 20th during our 9:30 AM worship service as we bless our backpacks for the upcoming school year. All students, teachers, and educators are encouraged to bring your backpacks as we prayerfully send you into the 2023-23 school year.

We pray: Lord bless this backpack and the one who carries it. May they feel your love and protection in all they do. ~ Amen

Cereal Sundays

SUPERCEREAL SUNDAY



For food insecure families with children there is no vacation from hunger during the summer. In July we helped to ease that burden with our cereal collection. The congregation donated **54 regular-sized boxes** of cereal and **50 single-serve boxes** of cereal!

Our next Cereal Sunday is August 13, 2023.

Can we beat our July collection of 104 boxes of cereal?



Pastor Vasey has a new cell phone
Number: 272-788-0161. Please use this number as his primary telephone number when he is not available by the church telephone or the church email. Thank You!

Open Williamsport



Open Williamsport is a program through Lycoming College that works to integrate inner-city and urban first-time college students to life in Williamsport. There is an outreach event planned for these students in which St. Mark's can easily participate.

New Covenant UCC will be the staging site for community service projects happening on August 21, 2023. One of the service projects is assembling hygiene kits for Shepherd of the Streets' clients. New Covenant UCC is accepting donations of hygiene items (the usual SOS requests) to use that morning.

The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee is requesting that members consider donating one or more hygiene items to deliver to New Covenant by August 14. Items may be placed on the table in the Narthex.



ANNUAL BLUEBERRY FESTIVAL

Saint Luke Lutheran Church

1400 Market Street

Williamsport, PA 17711

SATURDAY, AUGUST 26, 2023

1pm TO 5pm

Free food—blueberry desserts

Voting for the best pie

Kids games—blues band

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

This event is free to attend. We are accepting donations for Sojourner Truth Ministries in Williamsport this year.



Monday, July 31, -
Sunday, August 6, 2023

Monday, July 31
Tuesday, August 1
Wednesday, August 2
Thursday, August 3
Friday, August 4
Saturday, August 5
Sunday, August 6

Holy Communion 9:30 a.m.

BIRTHDAYS

Stephen Dewar July 31

ANNIVERSARY

Nancy and Ernest Larson August 1
Donna and Ronald Baker August 2
Leah and Walter Haussmann August 3

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Tuesday, August 1 Evangelism and Fellowship 5:30pm
All are welcome

Please remember to let the administrative assistant know when committee meetings are scheduled, or changed, so it can be included in the bulletin.

If there is anything you would like to include in the "This Week at Our Church" please let the administrative assistant, Joe Baur, know at jbaur@stmarkswilliamsport.org