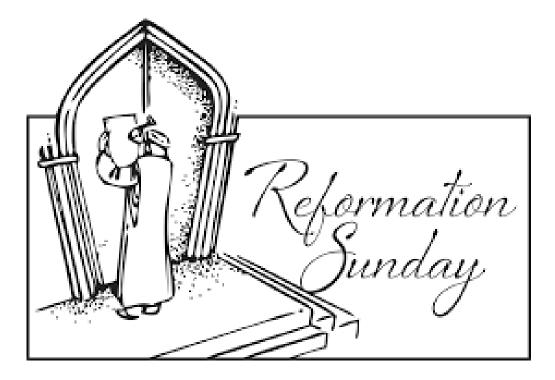
Reformation Sunday October 29, 2023 St. Mark's Lutheran Church 142 Market Street, Williamsport, PA 17701 <u>stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org</u> Office (570-323-4619) Fax (570-323-2452) Rev. Brian D. Vasey, Pastor <u>bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org</u>

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 Note: 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

On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther, a monk in the Augustinian tradition, posted 95 Theses (propositions) on the door of the Wittenberg Castle Church as an invitation to debate the sale of indulgences (guarantees of salvation). That event sparked a reform movement that eventually led to a "Lutheran Tradition". Luther established the idea that the Church is always in need of reform in the light of the gospel. Luther's primary principal is that believers are justified (acceptable in the eyes of God) by God's grace through faith in Christ. Today we pray for church unity, for the purity of God's word, and for a church that is always open to reform and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

PRELUDE*Ein Feste Burg*Max Reger

WELCOME/ANNOUNCING THE DAY/ANNOUNCEMENTS

*THANKGIVING FOR BAPTISM (8 am)

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

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight.

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family. Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed by the Holy Spirit. By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

Water is poured into the font at this time

We praise for the gift of water that sustains life, and above all we praise for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace and love.

To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

CONDITIONAL BAPTISM (10:30 am)

In baptism our gracious heavenly Father frees us from sin and death by joining us to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are born children of a fallen humanity; by water and the Holy Spirit we are reborn children of God and made members of the church, the body of Christ. Living with Christ and in the communion of saints, we grow in faith, love and obedience to the will of God.

(Sponsor) I present Ray, who may not have been baptized before, for baptism.

Ray, called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to be baptized into Christ?

(Candidate) I do.

As you receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities:

To live among God's faithful people,

come to the word of God and the holy supper,

learn the Lord's Prayer, Creed and Ten Commandments,

read the holy scriptures,

be nurtured in faith and prayer,

proclaim Christ through word and deed,

care for others and the world God has made,

and work for justice and peace.

Sponsor, do you promise to nurture Ray in the Christian faith as you are empowered by God's Spirit, and to help him live in the covenant of baptism in communion with the church?

(Sponsor) I do.

People of God, do you promise to support Ray and pray for him in his new life in Christ?

We do.

The congregation stands

I ask you you to profess faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess to the faith of the church.

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

(Candidate and Sponsor) I renounce them.

Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

(Candidate and Sponsor) I renounce them.

Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

(Candidate and Sponsor) I renounce them.

I call on as many as are here present to profess our faith, the faith in which we baptize:

Do you believe in God the Father?

(All) I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

(All) I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord.

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

(All) I believe in the Holy Spirit.

Water is poured into the font.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family and through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you set us free from the power of sin and death and raise us up to life in you.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, the power of your living Word, that those who are washed in the waters of baptism may be given new life. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

The congregation is seated.

Ray if you have not been baptized before, let this become your baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

You belong to Christ in whom you have been baptized.

Thanks be to God!

Let us pray. We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit

you give your daughters and sons new birth, cleanse them from sin and raise them to eternal life.

Sustain Ray with the gift of your Holy Spirit: The spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

Amen.

Ray, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever.

Amen.

Let your light, the light of Christ, so shine before others that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Amen.

*HYMN A Mighty Fortress is Our God LBW, "Green", 229

***THE GREETING**

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

And also with you.

***HYMN OF PRAISE**



***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. Almighty God, gracious Lord, we thank you that your Holy Spirit renews the church in every age. Pour out your Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep us steadfast in your word, protect and comfort us in times of trial, defend us against all enemies of the gospel, and bestow on the church your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen

THE FIRST READING.....Jeremiah 31:31-34

³¹The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³²It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. ³³But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the LORD," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 46

1God is our ref- | uge and strength,

a very present | help in trouble.

2Therefore we will not fear, though the | earth be moved,

and though the mountains shake in the depths | of the sea;

sthough its waters | rage and foam,

and though the mountains tremble | with its tumult.

4There is a river whose streams make glad the cit- | y of God,

the holy habitation of | the Most High.

5God is in the midst of the city; it shall | not be shaken;

God shall help it at the | break of day.

6The nations rage, and the | kingdoms shake;

God speaks, and the earth | melts away.

7The LORD of | hosts is with us;

the God of Jacob | is our stronghold.

sCome now, regard the works | of the LORD,

what desolations God has brought up- | on the earth;

9behold the one who makes war to cease in | all the world;

who breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, and burns the | shields with fire.

10"Be still, then, and know that | I am God;

I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted | in the earth."

11The LORD of | hosts is with us;

the God of Jacob | is our stronghold.

THE SECOND READING......Romans 3:19-28

¹⁹Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. ²⁰For "no human being will be justified in his sight" by deeds prescribed by the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

²¹But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, ²²the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, ²³since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; ²⁴they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith. He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; ²⁶it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus.

²⁷Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. By what law? By that of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law.

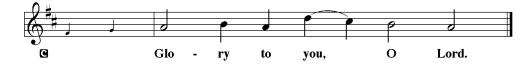
The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



***THE HOLY GOSPEL.....John 8:31-36** The Holy Gospel according to St. John the 8th chapter



³¹Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." ³³They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, 'You will be made free'?"

³⁴Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. ³⁶So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." The Gospel of the Lord.



THE SERMON

***HYMN** Thy Strong Word Did Cleave the Darkness LBW, "Green", 233

***THE APOSTLES' CREED**

Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith:

I believe in God, the Father almighty,

creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

After each petition, "God of Grace/Hear Our Prayer"

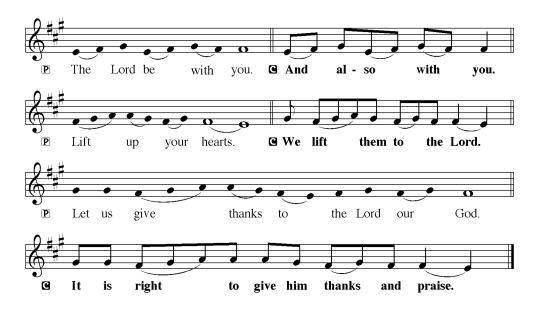
***THE PEACE** The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.** *The ministers and congregation greet each other.*

ANTHEM

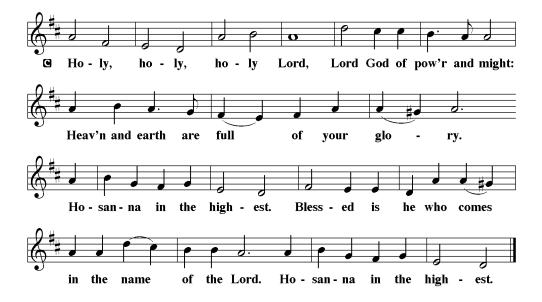
Draw us in the Spirit's Tether

Draw us in the Spirit's Tether is a choral composition by Harold Friedell that has become a beloved piece in the choral tradition. Composed in the mid-20th century, it is known for its lush harmonies and poignant lyrics, which speak to the sense of community and connection in worship. Friedell's composition beautifully captures the essence of unity and spirituality, making it a cherished addition to choral repertoires around the world.

*GREAT THANKSGIVING



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:



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. 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**

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



***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.

Jesus invites you to this table. Come, eat and live.

Thanks be to God.

THE COMMUNION

***AFTER COMMUNION**

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

Amen.

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Blessed be your name, O God, for we have feasted on your Word, Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts. Strengthened by this food, send us to gather the world to your banquet, where none are left out and all are satisfied. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

***THE BLESSING**

Almighty God, Father, 中, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. Amen.

*HYMN The Church's One Foundation LBW, "Green", 369

*DISMISSAL

Go in peace, God is with you. **Thanks be to God.**

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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, Ezra Buckman, Sheila Brassard, Kevin Rosini, Kathy Eshelman, Micah, Deb Buckman, Linda Rosini, Mike Ford.

CONDITIONAL BAPTISM



Today at 10:30 worship we celebrate a "Conditional Baptism". A conditional baptism takes place when there is some legitimate doubt if a person has been baptized. Ray Huff expressed doubt in his baptism to have taken place. Therefore, as it stated in our liturgy today, if baptism has not already taken place, the action today of water and the Word become his baptism.



October begins a time of change and of looking forward. Looking forward to a new calendar year at St. Mark's means it is time for our Stewardship Campaign. Stewardship Sunday will be All Saints' Sunday, November 5. Please start thinking about how you wish to pledge support in and for the ministry of Christ through St. Mark's in 2024.

Upcoming projects in this new calendar year will include repair to the roof, a new sound/video system, a new air conditioner for the second floor of the parish house, pipe organ repair, plus the ongoing expenses of cleaning and salaries for paid staff. We have a beautiful building and organ as well as a wonderful staff. Take some time to discern and pray how Christ is asking you to support the work of His church in 2024 through your prayers, presence, gifts and service.

All Saints' Sunday celebrates the faithful. May the faithfulness of others inspire us to faithfully serve Christ through St. Mark's in 2024 and beyond.

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!





NEXT SUNDAY (NOVEMBER 5) IS ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY. All Saints' is the church "Memorial Day" for on this day we remember all the faithful who have since joined the Church Triumphant from All Saints' Day 2023.

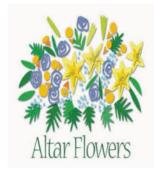
ComeGIOW	WORSHIP LEADERS October 29, 2023	
WITH US Lector	8:00AM 10:30AM	Candy Dewar Deb Buckman
Communion Assistants	8:00AM 10:30AM	Becky Pryor Walt Doebler and Gary Weber
Organist		Sam Robinson
Ushers	8:00AM 10:30AM	Richard Miller and Herb Poff Carl Albright, captain Brenda, Owen and Levi Gair
Altar Guild	October	Bev Hieber and Audrey Albright



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!

ALTAR FLOWERS today are given to the glory of God: +In Honor of our daughter, Hannah, on her 22nd birthday by Vicki and Drew Haussmann.

+In Loving Memory of my grandmother, Freda Shaner, on what would have been her 98th birthday by Shelby Weber.





OUR STEWARDSHIP October 22, 2023

Regular Offering	\$2,565.00
Plate Offerings	3.00
World Hunger	50.00
Food Pantry	50.00
Global Mission	50.00
Sunday School Offering	6.00
Operation Christmas Child	50.00
Flower Memorials / Tributes	60.00
GRAND TOTAL	\$2,834.00

WOOD CARVING

The wood carving of "The Lord's Prayer" by our baptismal font was originally carved by John Michael Goertz (the great grandfather of Dick Miller).

In 1863, the German Lutherans organized Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church on the site which is now New Covenant United Church of Christ. The Goertz family became members and was gifted this carving.

Thank you Dick for sharing this with us for Reformation Sunday.

Redeemer's November Dinner



The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee will be baking brownies for Redeemer's November dinner. We are in need of brownie mixes or brownies that have already been prepared. Mixes may be placed on the table in the Narthex. Speak with Becky Miller Pryor if you wish to donate a pan of brownies.

FAMILY PROMISE



Thanks to all who participated in providing dinners for the families at the Family Promise house. Your thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated by the families. If you want to contribute to Family Promise to help defray the cost of providing the breakfast and lunch items, please use a pew envelope and write Family Promise on the memo line of your

check. Our next hosting is in December. God bless you all!

Spaghetti Dinner



New Covenant UCC Saturday, November 4 from 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm Dine In or Take Out Ages 12 to Adult - \$12.00 Ages 3 - 12 - \$6.00Under 3 - Free Tickets can be purchased until October 29, at the church office or by calling 570-326-3308. Tickets must be purchased before the dinner.

All proceeds benefit New Covenant's Blessing Boxes

Blessing Box

In the spring of 2019 with grants from the national offices of the United Church of Christ and the Penn Central Conference of the United Church of Christ, a Blessing Box was built and installed at New Covenant by the Women in Construction Club at Penn College. Since that time, we've discovered that the box is widely needed and is well used. It is neighbors helping neighbors. Many people have expressed their appreciation to our church for installing this box which allows folks to take desperately needed food and/or hygiene items, discretely and free of charge.

Community Collections

The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee thanks the congregation for their many donations of hygiene items for the women and children temporarily housed at the Saving Grace Shelter. Many thanks also to the congregation for the new socks given to Sojourner Truth Ministries during their Socktober event. Certainly, people in need were comforted by your generosity.



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 (<u>bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org</u>). 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 <u>stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org</u>. Please direct your intentions whether or not to share this information with our church family



The 2023 CROP walk was a huge success on October 8th! Members from St. James Lutheran Church joined the St. Mark's Lion team and together we raised \$940.00! Thank you for the many generous donations! Of the \$940 raised, 25% (\$235) went to our community and the other 75% (\$705) was distributed by Church World Service nationally

and internationally to help people who are hungry. We enjoyed the fellowship of other walkers and although it was a windy day, discussed how those we were walking to represent have to walk in all types of weather, so we persevered. We made one more step to Help Stop Hunger. Next year, we hope you can walk with us!

Brenda Gair



November brings much excitement for Operation Christmas Child as it is time to pack our shoeboxes! We have been collecting all sorts of items over the past 10 months, and it is now time to pull everything together! We will be packing our shoeboxes in Fellowship Hall on **Sunday, November 12th**, **after late service**. A light lunch will be served, and a brief presentation will show how meaningful and life-changing these gifts are to the kids who receive a shoebox filled with all sorts of goodies. Plus, packing shoeboxes for others is tons of fun! This promises to be a fun hour with the goal of packing at least 60 boxes to be sent out to children in need.

In addition to our packing event, we will be collecting monetary donations during the month of November. Samaritan's Purse asks for a **\$10.00** donation to help cover the cost of shipping each shoebox. This \$10.00 donation also helps Samaritan's Purse train and equip local churches to use the Ministry Partner Guide. This resource teaches churches how to share the Good News of the Lord Jesus Christ in a child-friendly way. Your donation also provides The Greatest Gift Gospel Booklets, which are written in the children's language and distributed along with shoebox gifts.

Lastly, please pray that the shoeboxes we pack and send bless the child who receives it with the love of Jesus Christ. Thank you for your continued support of Operation Christmas Child. How exciting that we at St. Mark's are able to share the Good News around the World!



Monday, October 30, -Sunday, November 5, 2023

7PM

WCC Rehearsal

FH

Monday, October 30 Tuesday, October 31 Wednesday, November 1 Thursday, November 2 Friday, November 3 Saturday, November 4 Sunday, November 5

All Saints' Sunday/Stewardship SundayHoly Communion8:00 AMHoly Communion10:00 AMWorship/Music Committee 10:30AM

BIRTHDAYS

Deborah Maggs

October 30

ANNIVERSARIES

Jennifer and Rick Robertson November 5

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Sunday, November 5

Worship/Music Committee 10:30AM

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 <u>jbaur@stmarkswilliamsport.org</u>

COMMEMORATIONS

Martín de Porres, renewer of society, died 1639



Friday, November 3, 2023

Martín was the son of a Spanish knight and a freed Black woman from Panama. As a lay brother in the Order of Preachers (Dominicans), he engaged in many charitable works in Lima, Peru. He founded an orphanage, a hospital, and a clinic for cats and dogs.



Just a reminder that year-end giving statements for 2023 will be issued during the month of January 2024. If in the interim if you would like to have a year-to-date statement of your contributions, please contact the church office

(570-323-4619), and our Financial Secretary, Herb Poff, will print a copy and mail it to you. As always, your continuing support of St. Mark's ministry is sincerely appreciated. Thank you!