

**THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY**

**February 8, 2026**

**St. Mark's Lutheran Church**

142 Market Street, Williamsport, PA 17701

[stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org](mailto:stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org)

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

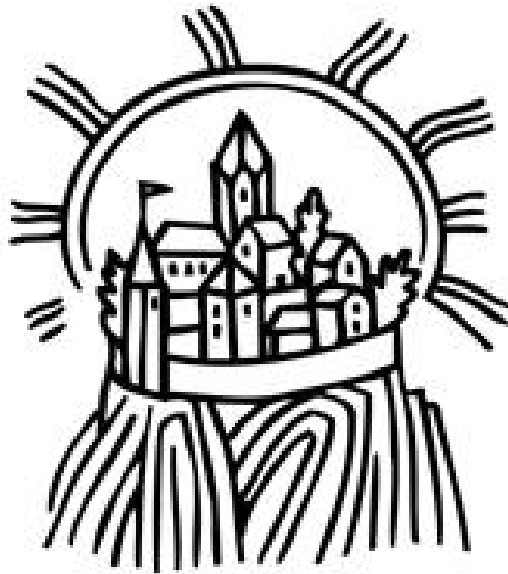
Rev. Brian D. Vasey, Pastor

[bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org](mailto: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 note:**

**Hand sanitizer is available for your use.**

**Offerings may be received by way of offering plates as you enter or leave.**

**An Order for Holy Communion; Setting Two, Lutheran Book of Worship**

*A guide to hymnal use: All hymns are printed in the bulletin and when reference is available the LBW, Green Book; WOV, Blue Book*

*Light print = Pastor/Leader. Bold print = Congregation.*

*\*Please stand as you are able.*

## **INTRODUCTION TO TODAY'S WORSHIP**

*Light shines in the darkness for the upright, the psalmist sings. Isaiah declares that when we loose the bonds of injustice and share our bread with the hungry, the light breaks forth like the dawn. In another passage from the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus, the light of the world, calls his followers to let the light of their good works shine before others. Through baptism we are sent into the world to shine with the light of Christ.*

## **PRELUDE**

## **WELCOME/ANNOUNCING THE DAY/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **\*A BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

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

**Amen.**

Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

*Silence is kept for reflection/kneel or stand*

Mighty God, lover of justice,

**you call us to life in community,**

**but we have served our own interests**

**at the expense of our neighbors.**

**We have sown deceit where honesty was needed.**

**We say the right words,**

**but our hearts are far from you.**

**Turn us to seek your face.**

**Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ,  
that we may do justice, love mercy,  
and walk humbly with you, our God.  
Amen.**

The former things have passed away,  
and new things God now declares:  
Like a spring of water that never fails,  
God covers you in the righteousness of Christ,  
and forgives your sin in † Jesus' name.  
May the Spirit give you strength to live for others,  
and bless you with the gift of peace.  
**Amen.**

**\*HYMN      Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies      LBW, "Green," 265**

### Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies

1 Christ, whose glo - ry fills the skies, Christ, the true and on - ly light,  
2 Dark and cheer-less is the morn un - ac - com - pa - nied by thee;  
3 Vis - it then this soul of mine, pierce the gloom of sin and grief;

Sun of righ-teous-ness, a - rise, tri-umph o'er the shades of night;  
joy-less is the day's re - turn, till thy mer-cy's beams I see,  
fill me, ra - dian - cy di - vine, scat - ter all my un - be - lief;

Day-spring from on high, be near; Day-star, in my heart ap - pear.  
till they in - ward light im - part, glad my eyes, and warm my heart.  
more and more thy - self dis - play, shin - ing to the per - fect day.

## \*THE GREETING

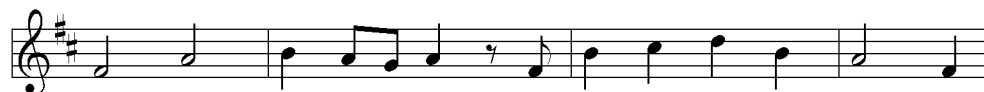
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

## \*HYMN OF PRAISE



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to his peo-ple on earth.



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

## **\*THE PRAYER OF THE DAY**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray. Lord God, with endless mercy you receive the prayers of all who call upon you. By your Spirit show us the things we ought to do, and give us the grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## **THE FIRST READING: Isaiah 58:1-12**

<sup>1</sup>Shout out; do not hold back!

Lift up your voice like a trumpet!

Announce to my people their rebellion,  
to the house of Jacob their sins.

<sup>2</sup>Yet day after day they seek me  
and delight to know my ways,  
as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness  
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;  
they ask of me righteous judgments;  
they want God on their side.

<sup>3</sup>“Why do we fast, but you do not see?  
Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?”  
Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day  
and oppress all your workers.

<sup>4</sup>You fast only to quarrel and to fight  
and to strike with a wicked fist.  
Such fasting as you do today  
will not make your voice heard on high.

<sup>5</sup>Is such the fast that I choose,  
a day to humble oneself?  
Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush  
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?  
Will you call this a fast,  
a day acceptable to the LORD?

<sup>6</sup>Is not this the fast that I choose:  
to loose the bonds of injustice,  
to undo the straps of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,

and to break every yoke?

- <sup>7</sup>Is it not to share your bread with the hungry  
and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
when you see the naked, to cover them  
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
- <sup>8</sup>Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing shall spring up quickly;  
your vindicator shall go before you;  
the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.
- <sup>9</sup>Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;  
you shall cry for help, and he will say, "Here I am."  
If you remove the yoke from among you,  
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,  
<sup>10</sup>if you offer your food to the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,  
then your light shall rise in the darkness  
and your gloom be like the noonday.
- <sup>11</sup>The LORD will guide you continually  
and satisfy your needs in parched places  
and make your bones strong,  
and you shall be like a watered garden,  
like a spring of water  
whose waters never fail.
- <sup>12</sup>Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;  
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;  
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,  
the restorer of streets to live in.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **PSALM 112:1-9**

- <sup>1</sup>Hallelujah! Happy are they who | fear the LORD  
and have great delight in | God's commandments!
- <sup>2</sup>**Their descendants will be mighty | in the land;**  
**the generation of the upright | will be blessed.**
- <sup>3</sup>Wealth and riches will be | in their house,  
and their righteousness will | last forever.

**<sup>4</sup>Light shines in the darkness | for the upright;  
the righteous are merciful and full | of compassion.**

<sup>5</sup> It is good for them to be gener- | ous in lending  
and to manage their af- | fairs with justice.

**<sup>6</sup>For they will nev- | er be shaken;  
the righteous will be kept in everlast- | ing remembrance.**

<sup>7</sup>They will not be afraid of any | evil rumors;  
their heart is steadfast, trusting | in the LORD.

**<sup>8</sup>Their heart is established and | will not shrink,  
until they see their desire up- | on their enemies.**

<sup>9</sup>They have given freely to the poor, and their righteousness stands | fast forever;  
they will hold up their | head with honor.

## **THE SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 2:1-16**

<sup>1</sup>When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the testimony of God to you with superior speech or wisdom. <sup>2</sup>For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. <sup>3</sup>And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. <sup>4</sup>My speech and my proclamation were made not with persuasive words of wisdom but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, <sup>5</sup>so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

<sup>6</sup>Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are being destroyed. <sup>7</sup>But we speak God's wisdom, a hidden mystery, which God decreed before the ages for our glory <sup>8</sup>and which none of the rulers of this age understood, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. <sup>9</sup>But, as it is written,

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,  
nor the human heart conceived,  
what God has prepared for those who love him”—

<sup>10</sup>God has revealed to us through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. <sup>11</sup>For what human knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God. <sup>12</sup>Now we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. <sup>13</sup>And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual.

<sup>14</sup>Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God's Spirit, for they are

foolishness to them, and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. <sup>15</sup> Those who are spiritual discern all things, and they are themselves subject to no one else's scrutiny.

<sup>16</sup> "For who has known the mind of the Lord  
so as to instruct him?"

But we have the mind of Christ.

The word of the Lord.

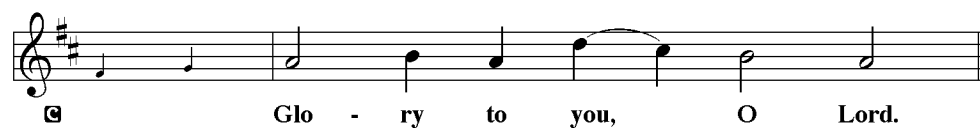
**Thanks be to God.**

### **\*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



### **\*THE GOSPEL: Matthew 5:13-20**

The holy gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ according to St. Matthew, the fifth chapter.



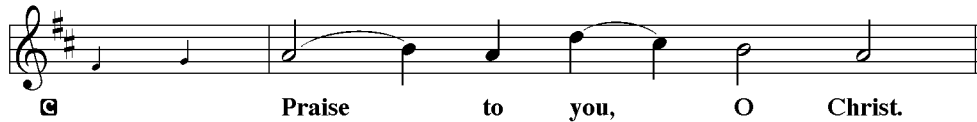
[Jesus said:] <sup>13</sup> "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything but is thrown out and trampled underfoot.

<sup>14</sup> "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. <sup>15</sup> People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

<sup>17</sup> "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. <sup>18</sup> For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. <sup>19</sup> Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these



commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup> For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”  
The gospel of the Lord.



## THE SERMON

\*HYMN

Christ, Be Our Light

No reference Available

### Christ, Be Our Light

1 Long - ing for light, we wait in dark - ness. Long - ing for  
 2 Long - ing for peace, our world is trou - bled. Long - ing for  
 3 Long - ing for food, man - y are hun - gry. Long - ing for  
 4 Long - ing for shel - ter, man - y are home - less. Long - ing for  
 5 Man - y the gifts, man - y the peo - ple, man - y the

truth, we turn to you. Make us your own,  
 hope, man - y de - spair. Your word a - lone  
 wa - ter, man - y still thirst. Make us your bread,  
 warmth, man - y are cold. Make us your build - ing,  
 hearts that yearn to be - long. Let us be ser - vants

your ho - ly peo - ple, light for the world to see.  
 has pow'r to save us. Make us your liv - ing voice.  
 bro - ken for oth - ers, shared un - til all are fed.  
 shel - ter - ing oth - ers, walls made of liv - ing stone.  
 to one an - oth - er, signs of your king - dom come.

*Refrain*  
 Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the  
 dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your  
 church gath - ered to - day.

**\*THE APOSTLES' CREED**

Let us confess the faith in which we were baptized.

**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: Merciful God/Hear Our Prayer*

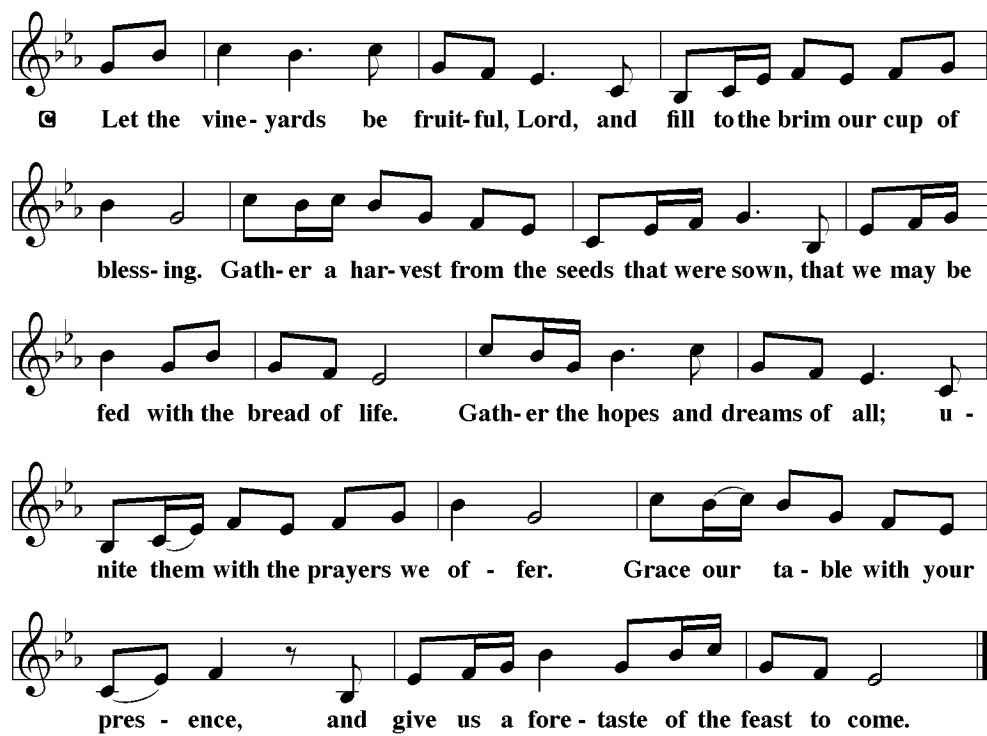
**\*THE PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*People may greet one another with these or similar words.*

## OFFERTORY

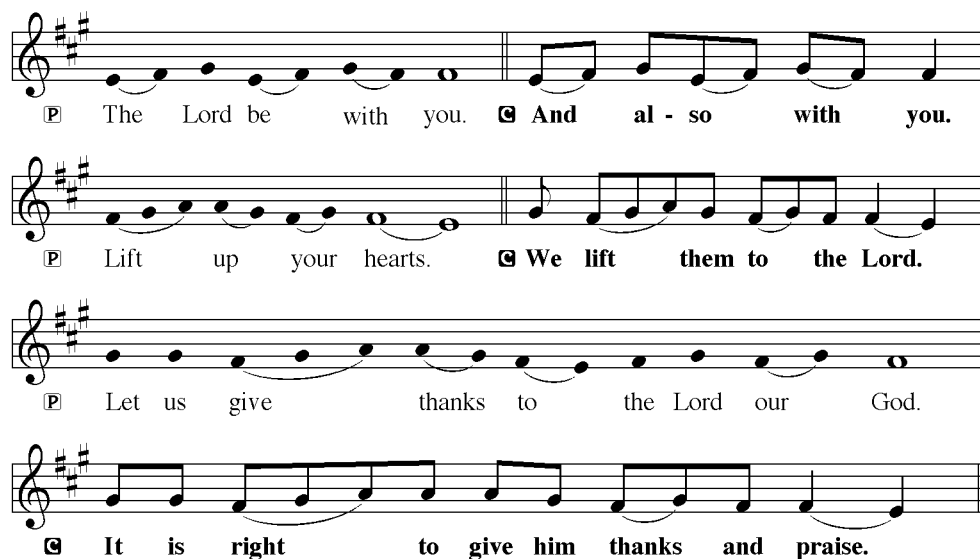


Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of  
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be  
fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of all; u -  
nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your  
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

## \*OFFERING PRAYER

God of majesty,  
no eye has seen, no ear has heard  
what you have prepared for those who love you,  
yet in this meal you reveal the wideness of your mercy.  
Use what we have gathered  
to feed us with the reign of God come near,  
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.  
**Amen.**

## \*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING



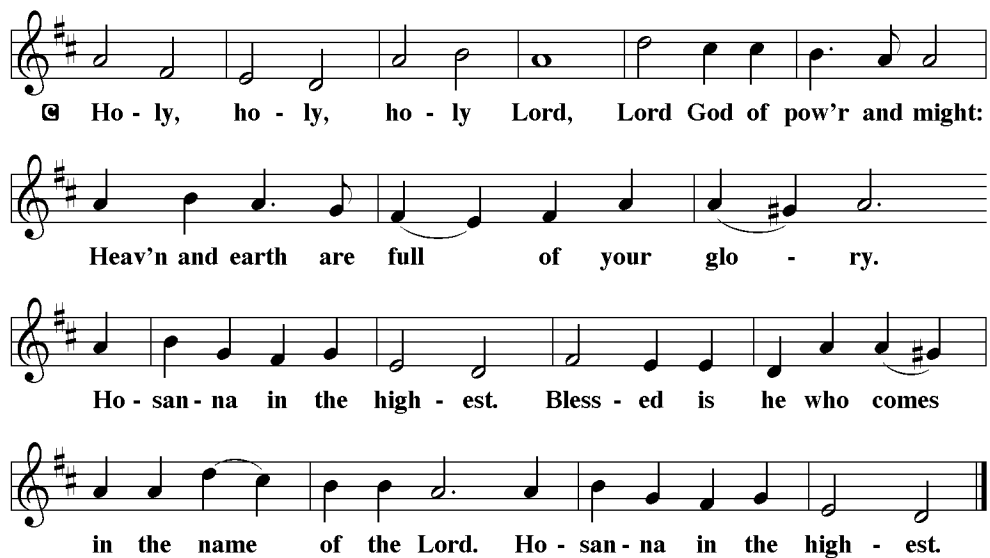
First system: Treble clef, key of D major (two sharps). The melody consists of quarter notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5. The lyrics are: [P] The Lord be with you. [C] And al - so with you.

Second system: Treble clef, key of D major. The melody consists of quarter notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5. The lyrics are: [P] Lift up your hearts. [C] We lift them to the Lord.

Third system: Treble clef, key of D major. The melody consists of quarter notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5. The lyrics are: [P] Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Fourth system: Treble clef, key of D major. The melody consists of quarter notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5. The lyrics are: [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 Jesus Christ our Lord. Sharing our life he lived among us to reveal your glory and love, that our darkness should give way to his own brilliant light. And so, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Fifth system: Treble clef, key of D major. The melody consists of quarter notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5. The lyrics are: [C] Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might:

Sixth system: Treble clef, key of D major. The melody consists of quarter notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5. The lyrics are: Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.

Seventh system: Treble clef, key of D major. The melody consists of quarter notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5. The lyrics are: Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes

Eighth system: Treble clef, key of D major. The melody consists of quarter notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5. The lyrics are: in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Holy God, mighty Lord, gracious Father:  
Endless is your mercy and eternal your reign.  
You have filled all creation with light and life;  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
We praise you for the grace shown to your people in every age:  
The promise to Israel, the rescue from Egypt, the gift of the promised land,  
the words of the prophets; and the gift of your Son,  
who proclaimed the good news in word and deed and was obedient to your will,  
even to the giving of his life.

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 for all people  
for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me."

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:  
**Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup  
we remember your Word dwelling among us,  
full of grace and truth.  
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.  
We rejoice in the hope of his coming.  
**Come, Lord Jesus.**

Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit,  
that we who share in Christ's body and blood  
may live to the praise of your glory  
and receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.  
**Come, Holy Spirit.**

All praise and glory are yours,  
Holy One of Israel,  
Word of God incarnate,  
Power of the Most High,  
One God.  
Now and forever.  
**Amen.**

**\*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

**☐** 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, grant us peace.

## \*INVITATION TO COMMUNE

Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Come to the table; taste and see.

**Thanks be to God!**

*All are welcome at the Lord's Table. Use the center aisle, pick up a small glass on the way. Receive the bread and then proceed to receive the wine by way of a pouring chalice. After communing return to your pew using a side aisle. Those not communing may come forward for a blessing.*

*Know that the crucified and risen Christ gives himself to you in his supper. If you cannot eat bread, drink only the wine. If you cannot drink wine, eat only the bread.*

## 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**

We have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ.  
In the sacrament of his body and blood  
you have drawn us to your heart.  
Send us from this table with delight,  
that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love,  
and bear witness to all we have seen and heard,  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.  
**Amen.**

**\*BLESSING**

May Almighty God,  
Father, Son ✠ and Holy Spirit,  
bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy.  
**Amen.**

**\*HYMN**

**You Are the Seed**

**WOV, “Blue,” 753**

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REFER TO THE HYMNAL AND PAGE NUMBER*

**\*DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

\*\*\*\*\*

**OUR PRAYER LIST**

Grace Arner, Vanessa Morgan, Charles Miller, Jerry Miller, Richard Ritter, Ashton  
Ott, Lucille Sider, Gary Cable, Virginia Pulaskie, Bunny Ditchfield, Ezra  
Buckman, Sheila Brassard, Kevin Rosini, Kathy Eshelman, Micah, Deb Buckman,  
Linda Rosini, Walt Haussmann, Kristin Rehm, Ariel, John Tartline, George  
Poliska, Connie Shaible, John and Terry Holohan, Loretta Hawe, Donna Baker,  
Ann Kuntz, and Ann & Charles Kuntz.



## COMMEMORATIONS

**Cyril, monk, died 869; Methodius, bishop, died 885;  
missionaries to the Slavs**

*Saturday, February 14, 2026*

These two brothers from Thessalonika, Greece, were monks and were sent to bring Christianity to the Slavic people. In the course of their work they created a written language, inventing the Cyrillic alphabet for it, and translated the Bible and the liturgy.



## THIS WEEK AT ST. MARK'S

**Today, February 8**

**Holy Communion, 8 and 10:30 am  
Sunday School, 9:15 am  
175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee meets  
following 10:30 service  
*Souper Bowl of Caring***

**Monday, February 9**

**Office Hours, 9 am – 1 pm**

**Tuesday, February 10**

**Office Hours, 9 am- 1 pm  
West Branch Conference, 9:30 am**

**Wednesday, February 11**

**Office Hours, 9 am- 1 pm**

**Thursday, February 12**

**Office Hours, 9 am- 1 pm  
Pastors' Lunch, 1 pm**

**Friday, February 13**

**Office Hours, 9 am- 1 pm**

**Saturday, February 14**

**Church Office Closed  
*Happy Valentine's Day***

**Sunday, February 15**

**Transfiguration Sunday  
Holy Communion, 8 and 10:30 am  
Sunday School, 9:15 am  
Hasko Baptisms**

## WHY DO WE CELEBRATE VALENTINE'S DAY?

Valentinus, a church pastor of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, defied the Roman Emperor Claudius by marrying Christian couples. Christianity was still an “outlawed religion” at this time. For his crime Valentius was imprisoned and sentenced to death. While incarcerated Valentinus taught the jailer's daughter to read and write. Eventually, Valentius and the daughter shared their affection through short notes of devotion. On the day of his execution, Valentinus signed his last note, “From your Valentine.” By the middle ages the day became associated with sharing love, friendship and concern for others. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the sharing of hand-made and factory-made cards became common.

### OUR STEWARDSHIP for February 1, 2026

Regular Offering	\$7,177.00
Plate Offerings	10.00
Lent	10.00
Initial Offering	10.00
World Hunger	50.00
Food Pantry	150.00
Global Mission	50.00
Operation Christmas Child	60.00
Family Promise Hosting	50.00
Roof Replacement Fund	75.00
Organ Fund	200.00
Flower Memorials/Tributes	105.00
Memorials	25.00
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	75.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$8,047.00</b>

**ALTAR FLOWERS** are given to the Glory of God; and  
In loving memory of our Parents, Luella & Lawrence Bair, by the Children; and  
In Celebration of our St. Mark's Family by Memorial Fund.

## **WORSHIP LEADERS for February 8, 2026**

Lector	8:00 am	Drew Haussmann
	10:30 am	Karen Mariano
Communion Assistants	8:00 am	Drew Haussmann
	10:30 am	Shelby & Gary Weber
Ushers	8:00 am	Miller/Poff
	10:30 am	The Magg's/Dick Reitz
Hospitality	8:00 am	Herb Poff
Organist		Sam Robinson
Altar Guild (FEBRUARY)		Lou Ann Z., Cindy T., Theresa F.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Margie Doeblor	2/8
Gloria Greevy	2/10
Emily Newcomer	2/13
Michele Owen	2/13

## **KEEP IN MIND:**

~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) email (bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org) or his cell phone (272-788-0161). Do not assume the pastor will know of your need any other way.

~ When you or a loved one has a change of address, email, or telephone number, please contact the church office at stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org or 570-323-4619. Please direct your intentions whether or not to share this information with our church family, so that it may be included in the weekly bulletin and/or the "Lion."



So we are done for this year however, please do not stop thinking about the kits and the items for them! Watch the clearance racks and shelves for items and snap them up. If you do not want to store them at home, you can bring them to the church and put them in the office opposite the middle lounge -

you will know which one it is - the messy one with boxes, etc. Baby clothes, towels, etc. can be found on clearance. Deb Buckman



**WANT TO EXPLORE WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A LUTHERAN CHRISTIAN?** Adults wishing to unite with St. Mark's in church membership are invited to contact PASTOR VASEY at 570-323-4619 or email: [stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org](mailto:stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org).



**Still Needed At.....**

Our congregation generously donated food, snacks and hygiene items to various nonprofits in our community during our Reverse Advent project. But the need for these items continues. As you are able, please consider donating to these nonprofits.

**Shepherd of the Streets:** Currently there is an urgent need for paper towels and toilet paper. Gently worn coats, hats and gloves are also being collected during these winter months.

**Sojourner Truth Ministries (STM):** Needed are brown, large-size lunch bags, ketchup, mustard, salad dressings and Lysol spray.

**United Churches Food Pantry:** Please consider continuing to offer non-perishable food items to be used by the Pantry. Participating in Souper Bowl Sunday is a fun way to participate.

**Sandwich Crews at St. Mark's:** We provide sandwiches weekly to New Covenant's Blessing Boxes. Monetary donations to offset the cost of rolls, meat and cheese are always appreciated. Checks may be made payable to St. Mark's with the memo line indicating Parish Life. Thank you, Devin Owen, for joining the Wednesday Sandwich Crew.

### **Valentine's Day Greetings----Help is still needed!**

The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee still needs the congregation's help in sending Valentine's Day greetings to our Special Concern Folks and others we do not see as often as we would like.

Cards are available in the Narthex today, **Sunday, February 8, 2026** after each service. Please add a cheery message, affix a stamp and mail in time for Valentine's Day. Thank you for any assistance you can provide.

### **Card Ministry**

A new year for sending cheery messages to our Special Concern folks is underway. The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee still needs volunteers to take a month of card sending for 2026. Everything is provided but you. The sign-up sheet is in the Narthex.

### **Soup Sale Success**

The United Campus Ministry Soup Sale was a big success. More than 125 quarts of soup were sold for a profit of \$1,500! Our own Jackie Kinney, donated 10 quarts of her delicious, homemade chicken noodle soup. Thank you, Jackie.

If you purchased soup, pick up is at Pine Street UMC, North Street door, on Thursday, February 12 from 9:00 a.m. to 5 p.m.



## **Go Tell It IN The Mountains Initiative Sunday February 1, 2026**

The **Go Tell It IN the Mountains Initiative** is a grant fund work of the Allegheny, Upper Susquehanna, and Northwest PA Synods of the ELCA. This Initiative has the three main goals of

- 1) Equipping preachers with techniques and developing skill to communicate the gospel in more compelling ways.
- 2) Recruiting and equipping aspiring preachers, and
- 3) Encouraging existing members of our congregations to respond to compelling preaching through integrating the gospel into their daily lives.

In support of increasing compelling preaching in our region the following resources have been developed. A Preaching with Power Cohort along with 7 small group preaching cohorts are active. Weekly Pericope Studies have been promoted through zoom and each quarter a professionally led pericope study is conducted. Three times each year there are trainings on preaching in coordination with United Lutheran Seminary. Special videos on inclusionary language, understanding our Pennsylvanian Appalachian context, and understanding the basics of AI usage in congregations have been created.

In support of increasing the availability of preachers, free training for those interested in being Authorized Lay Worship Leaders have been created in partnership with Luther Seminary. A connection tool for congregations and preachers is also in the design phase of development.

In support of us as listeners, two resources have been affirmed for congregational study. First is "Listeners Dare" by Will Willimon and the second is "I Will" by Thom Rainer. Any congregation who wishes to study the "I Will" book may have this book purchased for them by the Initiative! Finally, EVERY congregation had a 5-mile radius demographic analysis completed by Initiative staff and mailed to each congregation in our three synods.

Today, we desire your help to understand where we should focus our efforts in preaching and listening development. Please take a moment to answer this question and turn it in TODAY. "What are your hopes for the sermon each Sunday?" Your responses will be gathered to seek common needs and desires related to preaching in our region. Your support is genuinely appreciated!

That question again is: "What are your hopes for the sermon each Sunday?"



At the January meeting of **St. Mark's Congregational Council**, the following officers were elected for calendar year 2026:

President	Ray Huff
Vice-President	Richard Reitz
Secretary	Cindy Todd
Treasurer	Deb Buckman

Thank you to all who have agreed to serve St. Mark's for 2026 and all who have previously served our congregation.



## **RENEW RETREAT FOR MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH CAMP MOUNT LUTHER**

**When:** February 20-21, 2026  
Friday 6:30 pm – Saturday 4:00 pm

**This is a weekend to grow in faith, make friends, play games, enjoy nature,  
and have fun at Camp Mount Luther.**

**Theme:** Food & Faith (Genesis 18: 1-8)  
Includes hands-on activities, workshops, and special guests  
Adult leader required (1 per 7 youth).  
No adults? Contact us – we'll help.

For questions call (570) 922-1587 or [cml@campmountluther.org](mailto:cml@campmountluther.org)

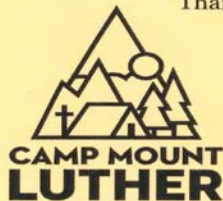


## MARCH 11-12, 2026 CAMP MOUNT LUTHER

is once again participating in Raise the Region and we need YOUR support! Your donations made through [raisetheregion.org](https://raisetheregion.org) will help Camp Mount Luther continue to provide quality spiritual formation, outdoor adventure, intentional community, and leadership development experiences for people of all ages. The more donors and donations we raise the better our chances of receiving incentives, stretch dollars, and awards!

Please go to [raisetheregion.org](https://raisetheregion.org) March 12 at 6pm through March 13 at 11:59pm to make your contribution.

Thank you for your generosity!



[campmountluther.org](https://campmountluther.org)  
355 Mt Luther Ln, Mifflinburg PA 17844  
[cml@campmountluther.org](mailto:cml@campmountluther.org)  
(570) 922-1587



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