



The Lion of St. Mark's

DECEMBER 2006

Mission at the Crossroads — *the Next Step*

Results! We all want results, and quickly. But the work of gathering information, thinking, organizing, determining priorities, planning what to do, and judging all of these things to make sure that they are in accord with the Word of God is a slow and thoughtful process.



We gather on Wednesday evening, December 6 at 6:15 in Fellowship Hall to take the next step. After we share a pot-luck meal, we'll look at the dreams and comments that have been gathered from ten different groups of persons around the congregation. We'll begin the process of sorting and evaluating the ideas under the leadership of Beth Fenchko, our consultant.

Whether or not you have been involved in earlier parts of the process, any members of the congregation are welcome to come and join in the meal and the lively conversation. Our Lord Jesus has much for us to be doing together; let's see if we can discern what part of it we should tackle first!

So Many Ways for us to be Together in December!



- | | |
|---------|---|
| Dec. 2 | Civic Chorus Concert, 7 PM
featuring <i>Gloria</i> by John Rutter,
with Richard Lakey & brass |
| Dec. 3 | Worship, 8 & 10:30 AM
Sunday Church School, 9:15 AM
Family Lunch, Advent Wreath
Making & Lighting our Outdoor
Tree, 12 PM, Fellowship Hall |
| Dec. 9 | Kids Morning Out, Cookie Baking,
Craft & Gift Making, 9 AM
Adult Cookie Baking, 12:30 PM |
| Dec. 10 | Worship, 8 & 10:30 AM
Sunday Church School, 9:15 AM
Caroling, 2–4 PM |
| Dec. 17 | Worship, 8 & 10:30 AM
Sunday Church School, 9:15 AM
Service of Remembrance, 7:30 PM |
| Dec. 19 | Bread Plain & Fancy, Baking with
Katy Elkin, 1 PM |
| Dec. 24 | Worship, 8 & 10:30 AM
Christmas Musical, 9:15 AM, in
Fellowship Hall
Christmas Decorating, 12-1 PM
Christmas Eve Musical in Nave &
Service of Holy Communion, 7 PM
Service of Holy Communion, 10 PM |

COUNCIL UPDATE

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Council Notes

The Congregation Council met in regular session on November 19 in the Crossways Room. They:

- received the reports of the pastor, officers, and committees.
- heard a verbal report of the pastor's working trip in the archeological dig at Tiberias, Israel.
- adopted a policy on applause as developed by the Worship and Music Committee.
- noted with pleasure the recent successful dialysis concert.
- encouraged members to participate in the Selinsgrove Center Christmas party.
- examined the financial reports
- discussed the proposed budget, and moved to call a congregational assembly to act on the budget.
- called attention to the upcoming Mission at the Crossroads event on December 6.
- rejoiced that the next council gathering will be a meal hosted by the President and spouse at the Women's Club on December 11.

Directory Changes:

- Stephanie Bieber & Family, 244 Oak Hollow Rd., Lock Haven, PA 17745-8262
- Tracy (Ulmer) Pate, c/o Paternostro, 1862 Green Hollow Rd., Montoursville, PA 17754-8522
- Mrs. Katie Shimp & Cody, 134 W. Hills Dr., Williamsport, PA 17701-1337

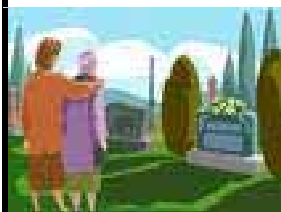
From the Parish Register

- The funeral service for Joanne Lamade was celebrated on November 9.
- Frank Rose & Tracey Hartzel were united in marriage on November 11.

Website & E- Mail Addresses stmarkswilliamsport.org

General mailbox	stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org
Gary Weber	gweber@stmarkswilliamsport.org
Bernadette Jones	bjones@stmarkswilliamsport.org
Susan Bennett	sbennett@stmarkswilliamsport.org
Richard Lakey	rlakey@stmarkswilliamsport.org
Pastor Elkin	pastor@stmarkswilliamsport.org
Lou DeSeau	ldeseau@stmarkswilliamsport.org
Sharon Comini	scomini@stmarkswilliamsport.org
Susan M-Smith	smsmith@stmarkswilliamsport.org

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY NEWS



A Time for Thoughtful Remembrance

The Advent-Christmas-Epiphany season is a happy and exciting time, but it can also be sad and stressful for many persons. The world goes rushing by while one may be thinking about Christmas seasons past with loved ones who have since died. It is appropriate that we take time to remember, whether the sadness you feel is one month old or 10 years past. Plan to

come to the **Service of Remembrance at 7:00 P.M. on Advent III, Sunday, December 17, 2006 in the Nave.** In the course of the Holy Communion, the name of loved ones whom you nominate will be read aloud, and you will have opportunity to light a candle on the Memory Tree. You will also receive a keepsake of the event to hang at home. The mementos are again being crafted by John Burkholder. Please **phone the church office at 323-4619** with the name of the person you wish to remember.

Even if you do not have a specific person that you wish to name this time, by all means come and support your brothers and sisters in the faith in this tender and meaningful event. It can be of great help to gather for God's meal of consolation, and also to receive the encouragement and support of friends and fellow members of the body of Christ. This evening's service has become another of our much-appreciated Milestone events.

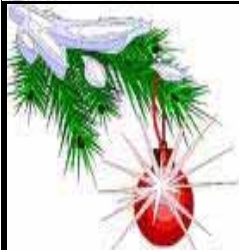
CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES FOR 2007

will be available in the Narthex the first two Sundays in December. Please take your box of envelopes home with you after service. If possible please consider taking a friend's, shut-in's or neighbor's box with you to deliver. By working together we can save the cost of postage. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance!



THE LAST DAY FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

TO BE RECORDED IN 2006 IS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31ST.



Sending Christmas Cheer To The Vicars

Please consider adding the names of Matthew and Lisa Schuster to your Christmas card list. Matthew and Lisa are Gettysburg seminarians serving internships in the Jersey Shore area. It was our privilege to meet them earlier this year. Greetings may be sent to:

Mr. And Mrs. Matthew Schuster



Heating Help

It's that time of the year again!
COLD!

Time to start filling the fuel tanks and heating the building. A building the size of St. Mark's takes a lot of fuel to heat and any contribution you could make over and above God's tithe and your regular offering would be most appreciated by everyone worshipping and working here throughout the winter!

Thank you in advance for your generosity!

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY NEWS

Milestones Marked:

Funeral:

Joanne Lamade, celebrated on November 9, 2006

Upcoming Milestones:

Officially entering The Way on December 3:

Rachel Clausen, with Brenda Bittner as mentor
 Megan Maiolo, with Deborah Holmes as mentor
 Cheryl Williams, with Michele Ramsauer as mentor

Those receiving Bibles (3rd Grade) on December 10:

Jarrett Eyer, James Newcomer and Nastassiya Rockwell

A new Milestone offered:

Prayers of Blessing

When a special day in life is approaching such as birthday, wedding anniversary, or other days of milestone significance, prayers of blessing may be requested and will be offered by the Pastor at the Sending portion of the service on Sunday. Please call the pastor to arrange the date and occasion.



MERRY TUBACHRIST- MAS!



Sunday, De-
cember 3rd
6:00 PM

Billtown Brass Presents A Holiday Special



Sunday,
Klump Auditorium
2:00 PM
Tickets \$10

Dec. 3rd

West 3rd Street
Info 322-0227

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY NEWS

Flowers at Christmas

Orders are now being accepted for flowers to grace the nave during the Christmas Eve services and the weeks following. We will continue to have a choice of poinsettias, kalanchoes, and cyclamens. Please make use of the envelope attached to the Lion, or with the Sunday bulletins over the next two weeks. Absolute final deadline is Sunday, December 17.



Flower delivery

Some of the flowers we enjoy on Christmas Eve will be delivered to the Special Concerns list of persons on December 27. Volunteers are needed at 9:15 A.M. at the Choir hall doorway to help with this delivery and visiting task. As your time permits, get one or a dozen to deliver.

A good time is assured and you will certainly brighten someone's day!



Bread Plain and Fancy

Whether an experienced baker or a complete novice, everyone can have an enjoyable time on Tuesday afternoon, December 19, when Katy Elkin returns to St. Mark's kitchen and shares the joy of bread-baking with a very easy method. Those who participated last year will testify what fun the group had. This year, the basic recipe will get something of a holiday twist. Whether baking for one's own family or for gift-giving, there will be ideas for every baker to use. Please call the office to reserve a spot at the counter, so that adequate supplies will be on hand for the 1:00 event on Tuesday, December 19.

More Visitors with Communion



One of our important and continuing ministries has been the sharing of Holy Communion with those who are not

able to be physically present on Sunday morning. Each week one person is sent from the Liturgy with a small case bearing the Body and Blood of Christ to a specific person. These visits are arranged by Lois Smith (433-0183). We would like to give additional persons an opportunity to serve in this ministry. Please telephone Lois with your interest or curiosity about this. A training conversation will be offered to any who wish to serve.

Official Notice:

By call of the Congregation Council, a Special Assembly of the St. mark's congregation will be held following the 10:30 service of worship on December 10, 2006 for the sole purpose of acting on the budget for 2007. A summary of the budget is included in this Lion, and complete details can be obtained from the Treasurer, Jackie Smith Kinney at 323-5938.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY NEWS

Notice From Hall's Florist



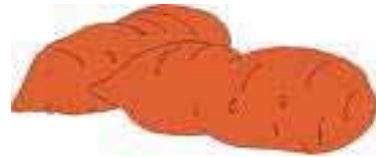
Hall's Florist has prepared our altar vases for years and generally has done a fine job. However, members of the congregation have occasionally expressed concerns about the size, quality and condition of the flowers. These concerns were addressed with Hall's staff and they have promised to do a better job. They have also expressed the need to raise the price of each vase from \$15.00 to \$20.00. This price will become effective with the December flower orders.



Please call me with any questions.

Sincerely,

American Rescue Workers



Christmas Baskets

This year St. Mark's is collecting cans of yams / sweet potatoes for the American Rescue Workers to assist in filling more than 300 Christmas baskets they prepare for needy people in our community. The American Rescue Workers

Recognizing Good Work!

A working policy adopted by the Congregation Council, presented for information to the congregation:

We share the leadership of worship among many people, including musicians, speakers, actors, artists, and others. What are appropriate ways to express our appreciation for the diligent work of all of these persons?

1. In order to facilitate this expression of appreciation from time to time, the pastor will invite persons to join him in greeting people at the door. He will call the congregation's attention to this with a verbal announcement similar to the following: "During the social time following the service, please express your appreciation to those who have led us in (word, speech, art, or music, etc.), especially ____ who joins me at the door today."
2. When the number of persons to be acknowledged is too great for them to easily meet everyone at the door, during the announcements at the close of the service the pastor may invite the congregation to respond as follows: "The members of the congregation are invited to express their appreciation to those who have assisted in leading our worship today in (word, speech, art, or music, etc.), both verbally and with applause at this time."
3. It is our intention that the worship service itself not be interrupted by applause. The focus during worship is on the Lord God and the proclamation of God's Word using all of the persons and means at our disposal; the focus is properly on the message and not the person.
4. A distinction is made between concerts and programs on the one hand, and services of worship on the other. In our situation, applause may be encouraged during the first, but not during the second.

USS ARK

Advent Workshop Coming Up

For those who want to prepare for the upcoming Christmas season and spend an afternoon with their family at the same time, Camp Mount Luther is holding an Advent Workshop on Sunday, December 10, 2006 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in their Evergreen Center. Activities at the event include craft making for all ages including making German stars, cookie baking, singing, and gift buying. Those attending will get to make homemade wrapping paper, and buy gifts from the camp store. Cost is \$6.00 per person. Make reservations by calling the camp office at (570) 922-1587 or e-mailing cml@campmountluther.org.

Watoto Children's Choir Coming to West Milton!

Watoto means: "the children." Since 1994, Watoto Children's Choir from Kampala, Uganda, has regularly toured the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. Accompanied by a small team of adults, Watoto's performances are a soulful blend of native African rhythms, contemporary Gospel music and ethnic dance. These children are among the more than 2 million children in Uganda that have had the tragic and life-threatening experience of losing one or both of their parents to the AIDS virus or to war. Now, through their lively and inspiring performances, the Watoto Children's Choir share their unique experiences, as well as their newfound joy and hope, which thrill and dazzle audiences everywhere. Come see them on January 3, 2007 at 7pm at United in Christ Lutheran Church, 1175 Churches Road, 2 miles west of Route 15/West Milton. Call 570-568-2254 for more information.

Christmas Message from Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson.

"The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory..." (John 1:14).

We live in a visited world. On that holy night twenty centuries ago, God visited the world in the miracle of Bethlehem. Held in Mary's arms that night was the revelation of steadfast, unbounded love for all humanity. The birth of Jesus disclosed God's saving will and eternal desire for reconciliation and peace. In this season of Christmas, we encounter again Jesus, sent from God for our salvation. As the Word is proclaimed in both simple buildings and cathedrals of grandeur, we receive the good news of God's love in Christ Jesus for the whole earth. We witness the mystery of rebirth in the waters of Baptism and rejoice as new ones are embraced by the community of faith. As bread is broken and wine poured in the Eucharist, we give thanks for the real presence of Christ in our midst.

We gather with the whole Church for the celebration of our Lord's Nativity. In our gathering, however, we hear the sounds of discord throughout the world. From divisions caused by walls of separation, from the struggles of many for survival from disasters, devastation, hunger, and poverty, from the dread of rampant disease and the spread of HIV and AIDS, from war and the threat of war, even with nuclear weapons, from broken relationships in homes and hostilities within communities and countries, we seek rescue. We yearn for the gracious, healing, and reconciling Word of the Prince of Peace.

We hear the angel say, "Do not be afraid." With that message of courage, we realize as believers that we are never alone. We have been claimed by God and made a part of the household of faith.

So we join with the whole Church on earth, lifting our voices with renewed hope. In so doing, we join the grand anthem: Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king....

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Social Ministry News

Calling Saint Mark's Elves!



Please join the Social Ministry Committee on Tuesday, December 5, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. in hosting a Christmas party for twenty-one women at the Selinsgrove Center.

Saint Mark's has been visiting the Selinsgrove Center for many years. In the past we visited a group of men in the Terrace Cottages. We were informed the men have been moved to various other cottages at the facility.

This current group of ladies has not had a volunteer supported Christmas party for a few years. These ladies have restricted diets and spend much of their time in wheelchairs. They may not have our usual goodies. But we have been given alternative gifting ideas.

The committee needs your assistance with this event. Please consider doing one or more of the following.

- Join us that evening. There will be singing, storytelling and gifting. **We will meet at the church parking lot at 5:30 p.m. and carpool to Selinsgrove.**
- Donate non-deodorant body wash. Most of the ladies can use scented body wash.
- Donate individual servings of pudding in all flavors. It is their favorite treat.
- Donate gift bags and colored tissue paper to package the slipper socks and body wash.
- Donate money to offset the cost of gifting. (The slipper socks have already been purchased.) Checks may be made payable to Saint Mark's.

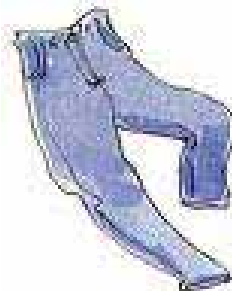
Requested items for gifting can be left in the box in the Narthex. Please speak with Becky Miller Pryor to assist with this heartwarming event.

Needlework Guild America News

St John's Newberry United Methodist Church in Newberry was the site of the recent In-Gathering of clothing items for the Newberry Branch of NGA. Coats, clothing, shoe vouchers, hygiene items, and linens were on display for more than 400 individually named people. Young children are the primary recipients of these items. The eighteen Head Start classes in the Williamsport Area are one of our largest responsibilities with 271 children receiving a sweat suit, shoes, or a winter coat.



On behalf of NGA, Debra Buckman and Becky Miller Pryor wish to thank the congregation and the Women of St. Mark's for their clothing and monetary donations. Without your assistance, we could not continue in the work our grandmothers and mothers began believing "New Clothes for New Tomorrows" was possible.



Thank You!

The Social Ministry Committee thanks Dr. Drew Hausmann and Lou DeSeau for assisting with our November outreach. Drew presented information related to organ donation on Organ Donor Sabbath. Lou delivered our canned goods to The Center for use by the Shepherd of the Streets in preparing Thanksgiving baskets. The committee also thanks those members of the congregation who made a financial contribution to the Shepherd's Thanksgiving



United Churches News

Food Pantry Update

Donations, if possible, should be brought into the Food Pantry on Monday mornings from 9:30-Noon. We are located in the Sojourner Truth Building on the corner of High & Center Streets.

Items we are in need of:

Spaghetti Sauce	Canned Fruit
Oodles of Noodles	Tuna Helper
Chicken Noodle Soup	Sugar—1lb. Box
Coffee & Tea Bags	Crackers
Powdered Drink Mixes	Chunky Soups
Fruit juices in plastic bottles	Jelly
Hamburger Helper	Canned Stews

Wednesday Ecumenical Lunch

United Churches of Lycoming County invite you to join them for their Wednesday Noon Ecumenical Luncheon. You're always assured of a tasty \$4 lunch, warm, ecumenical fellowship and a thoughtful program designed to enrich your life mentally, physically, spiritually and socially. The parking is free in the Pine Street lot north of the church from 11 AM to 1:30 PM No reservations are necessary.

December Luncheon speakers:

6th **Sandy Grier**, Owner, Along the Way Christian Bookstore, *"Sharing the Spirit of the Season Through Books"*

13th **To Be Announced**

20th **Rev. Harlan Frank Showers**, Pastor, Church of the Savior, Lutheran and St. Matthews Lutheran Churches, & **Rev. Theodore Cockley**, Chaplain, Buffalo Valley Lutheran Village, *"A Couple of Guys Share the Sounds of Christmas"*

27th **No Luncheon or Program Scheduled**

This is a ministry that everyone in our congregations and community is welcome to participate in. Please make plans to join us and you're welcome to bring a friend.

Our Footprint on Earth

Tread lightly, we are told, and we tell others the same. Take only photographs and leave only footprints, we advise one another, when we take a walk in the woods. Thus we encourage being responsible toward the earth.

Yet we can be more precise and ask just how we sustain the environment. Can we seek to use no more than we contribute? Can we contribute more than we use? This is the question posed to us,* and we are asked to meet that challenge by making a pledge to be more responsible, to take less, to leave less of a footprint.

One analysis of the estimated environmental "legacy" a First World nation person born in 1916 and having died in 1990 would have left as his/her "footprint" is as follows:**

- 580 tons of carbon dioxide from breathing
- 159 tons of carbon dioxide from driving
- 575 pounds of chloroflourcarbons (CFCs)
- 860,000 gallons of methane (from cattle raised for food)
- 93,000 gallons of oil burned for domestic use
- 40,000 gallons of gasoline burned
- 4 million gallons of water used in the home
- 700 tons of mineral resources including 50 tons of metal
- 864 tons of topsoil eroded
- The weight of 4 Statues of Liberty discarded of household trash, including
 - 9000 aluminum cans
 - 7000 plastic bottles
 - 4800 disposable diapers
 - 15 tons of paper
 - 16 tons of yard and food waste
 - 300 pulp trees cut down for paper subsequently discarded
 - 51 tons of toxic waste released

Consider this in your daily thanks and gratitude. Consider what it means for the long term sustainability of our earth. Consider how you can reduce your impact.

*This is the lifestyle change pledge raised up then-national ELCA Bishop Chilstrom in the Mission 90 videotape *Creation*.

** Michael and David Orr. "John Doe's Legacy." *Earth Island Journal*. Winter 1991. 41.

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

The John Bower Basketball League



season has begun!! We have twelve youth on the Beginner Pee-Wee team, who practice from 6-7 pm, at Trinity Episcopal, on Tuesdays. We have combined our two older teams with children from Messiah since neither congregation had enough youth for two teams. With our joining forces, all interested kids have the opportunity to play. Our Pee-Wees and Midgets, with ten players each, practice from 7-8 on Tuesday evenings at Trinity. Our first games will be on Saturday, Dec. 16! Look for times in the bulletins!



CHILDREN'S CHURCH

will be held on Sunday, December 17! Kids, remember your offering envelopes (parents, don't forget to put your number on them). If you haven't received your envelopes yet, stop and pick them up from the pocket on Mrs. Comini's door. Our special offering that day will be Cans of Yams to send to the American Rescue Workers. They will pack these in the baskets of food going out to needy families. Please join us in worship with the whole family!



Lunch N' Fellowship

December 13th,
Noon

Roast Beef, Potatoes & Gravy!
Bring a dish to share & a friend!

Nurse's Notes

- December 3** Ladies, have you ever given a thought to where your purse has been throughout the day? Women carry them everywhere, and throughout the day they sit on restaurant floors, car mats, and yes ... bathroom stalls. Recently an informal experiment involving cultures obtained from purses, took place in Utah. The results were eye-opening! The purses contained pseudomonas, staphylococcus aureus, salmonella and e-coli, all of which can lead to serious illness. So ladies, you may want to think twice about sitting your purse on a table-top, countertop or desk!
- December 10** Is holiday stress getting to you? Borrow a little wisdom from McDonalds'. Grab a few sticky notes and write on each, "You deserve a break!". Now place them at eye-level on your computer, your fridge, your car – anywhere you spend a lot of time and will notice it. Then take a non-caloric break! Walk, spend a few moments gazing out the window, read a chapter in a good book, whatever helps you to de-stress! (*Prevention, November 2006*)
- December 17** What are the top ten causes of illness? Your fingers. Most cold and flu viruses are spread by direct contact. Someone sneezes then touches the phone, the Computer keyboard, a pen, or the doorknob, to be picked up by the next person touching the same object. So wash your hands – often!
- December 24** Holiday Health Tip: Have a blessed and peaceful Christmas, and may the joy of Emmanuel, "God with us", accompany you into the coming year!
- December 31** If you are a smoker, resolve to quit this coming year! Just two weeks to 3 months after quitting, you have better circulation and your lung function increases up to 30%. Just one year after quitting, you reduce your risk for heart disease by 50%!

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

Thank you to those who have stepped up to lead the Middle Lounge adult class! We now have leaders through January!

Anyone who is interested, but felt they weren't quite ready to lead right away, please consider volunteering for the spring.

Thanks again!



SIMPLE GIFTS OF CHRISTMAS

This lovely musical based on the carol "The Friendly Beasts" will be presented during the Sunday School hour on Sunday, December 24, and again at the 7:00 Christmas Eve service.

We have a wonderful cast, ranging in age from 2 years to...well, we won't reveal that. Our youthful actors include: Jarrett Eyer, Theoron Hershey, Ben Haussmann, Stefan Weber, Makensi Doebler, Kara Hershey, Riley Weber, Emily Newcomer, Laura Zeigler, Madalyn Fortin, Sadie Wentzel, Taylor Wentzel, Annika Waffenschmidt, Anna Zeigler, Sean Jensen, Hannah Haussmann, Lynna Robertson, Amalie Robertson, Gabriella Gregory and Elizabeth Haussmann.

The teens and adults lending their vocal talents to tell the story are: Mel Wentzel, Mindy Wentzel, Pam Jensen, Sara Jones, Diana Zeigler, Stephanie Fortin, Gary Weber, Jane Kline, Joyce Hershberger, Jennifer Robertson, Trish Hershey, Shelby Weber, Vicki Haussmann, Bud Doebler, Declan Jones, Lou DeSeau, Bob Jones, Ruth Burkholder, Andrea Gregory and Beth Shafranko.

Additional members of the congregation who have assisted us so far are: Jack Burkholder, Shirley Kinney, Jackie Kinney, Bonnie Eyer and Steve Eyer.

The music is very familiar, putting new words to old carols and hymns. The story itself is based loosely on the old carol, "The Friendly Beasts." **SIMPLE GIFTS OF CHRISTMAS** is under the direction of Bernadette Jones, with Richard Lakey as Musical Director and Sharon Comini as Artistic Director. Please join us on Sunday, December 24, in the morning or evening as we present this fun and meaningful rendering of the Christmas story.

CAST: The December 3 rehearsal is cancelled because of the conflict with the Advent Wreath Making.

We will gather next on Saturday, December 16. See you there!!

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

Caroling

Sunday, December 10th, 2:00—4:00 PM
 For the Special Need Members of our Congregation



THE TREES COME ALIVE THIS ADVENT SEASON...

...alive with Teddy Bears, mittens, gloves, hats! Two trees will be ready to decorate with these items by Sunday, December 3.



Please stop in Fellowship Hall and add your gift to the trees. The Teddy Bears will be given to the Williamsport Police and the mittens, gloves, and hats will be given to The Kids Clothes Closet.

ADVENT WREATH MAKING DAY!



You...yes, you...and your family are invited to attend the annual Advent Wreath Making on Sunday, December 3, at noon in Fellowship Hall. A light lunch will be provided. The children will again decorate their tree in the Hall with the hand-made ornaments donated to the children of St. Mark's. Please join us for a time of food, fun and fellowship and make an advent wreath for your home!

A NEW TRADITION IS BEING STARTED HERE!

We will light up the night during the Advent and Christmas season by stringing lights on our blue spruce out back! This tree is now wonderfully visible from Via Bella and the beltway and is a superb way to let the Light shine forth! After we make our wreaths, we will tackle the lighting of the tree—which, if you are wavering on whether or not to come, is worth attending for the entertainment value alone!!!

Even if you can't join us for the fun, your donation of a long string of small, white, indoor/outdoor lights would be greatly valued. These can be left in the narthex after the morning services on December 3.

If you plan to attend, please sign up in the staff hallway or call the church office to let us know you're coming. We need to prepare for lunch and gather supplies for the



Passing on Faith: Third Grade Milestone



Jarrett Eyer, James Newcomer and Nastassiya Rockwell will receive Bibles at the 10:30 service on December 10. They and their families will partake of a light lunch immediately following the service. At that time Pastor Elkin will sit down with the children to explore their Bibles and see what messages relatives and friends have written or favorite passages they have highlighted in the Books.

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

The Christmas Story



Read the story of the birth of Jesus in Luke 2:1-20.
 Twenty-four words from the Christmas story are found in the letter maze below. Plus there are two bonus words not found in the Christmas story that are hidden in the Wordfind. The words may be written horizontally, vertically or diagonally.
 The answer is on page 14.



9:00 a.m. 'til Noon
 Saturday, December 9

Join us for a morning of fun activities. Help bake cookies for our shut-ins—maybe sample a few as well? Create a craft project as a gift for a special someone—Mom, Dad, grandparents...? Play a game or two!

Don't miss out on this action-packed morning!!

G	E	F	O	B	T	A	N	R	M	U	L	T	I	T	U	D	E
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P	Y	M	I	N	N	U	S	A	V	I	B	G	M	Z	O	N	E

COOKIE BAKING

12:30 'til ??
 Saturday, Dec 9th



HEALTH, HEALING & WHOLENESS

December 2006

Several months ago, I had the privilege of meeting two women whose insight and passion in their faith touched me deeply. I asked them to put into words, the blessings and frustrations inherent to parents who are raising children who are differently-abled. Following are the words of Linda Baker and Kellee Rumbough.

WHERE 2 OR MORE ARE GATHERED IN MY NAME

My friend Kellee & I are on fire with Jesus' commission to His followers, found in Ephesians 4:15-16: "*grow up in all things into Him, who is the Head, Christ, from whom the whole body joined & knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causing growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.*" We are drawn to the words, "whole body"; the repeated use of the word "every"; the phrases, "effective working" & "causing growth of the body". Why? We are members of a group that no one asks to join, well almost no one. As members of this group, we find worship in a church, any church, any denomination, very difficult, awkward, unwelcoming, frightening, tense. Our families carry the label, "special needs". One or more of our children are atypical or different than the other kids, even if he or she doesn't look different.

Our family has 5 human members & 2 canines. All three of our children fit into a different special needs category. Our now adult son has ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder), our twin teenage daughters are each affected with different forms of cerebral palsy. Our youngest daughter exhibits mental retardation with brain damage that affects her speech as well.

Attending church & worshipping with any meaning for any of us was possible when the adults [in our family] outnumbered the children. Once our daughters were born, church attendance was just that, **attendance**. Sunday school was possible as long as I was our daughter's aide & could carry her up & down the stairs, as she is in a wheelchair. Our church family supported us valiantly in prayer throughout the early years.

Joshua 1: 9 was the first of many bible verses that I taped above my kitchen sink. "*Have I not commanded you? Be strong & courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.*" It has taken me 17 years to truly reconcile myself & my family to the meaning of this verse; to really **LIVE** this verse, every day, including Sunday.


Kellee & I have begun a Special Needs' Ministry at our church. Our pastor shares our vision of a 1 to 1 buddy to be available & ready for every special needs individual who enters our church. We are in the planning stages: meetings with church staff, discussions with the local Ministerium members regarding resources & referrals, surveying our church family for volunteers to be buddies & for members who need buddies. Our church, through our ministry, wants a complete, developed, mature body of Christ in our community. We do not want to keep missing the gifts that each unique person, created in Jesus, a new creation, has to offer for the growth of God's church. **Note:** In the note which accompanied this article, Linda writes, "*My children are my gifts by being in my life, a sentiment that I believe most mothers share. Special blessings they have demonstrated to me are their uniqueness, as people. Another universal mother sentiment, I believe.*"

Special Needs, Special Ministry by Group Publishing, is an excellent resource for ministry development to the differently-abled. In addition, you may contact Linda at peace2u@hotmail.com, or Kellee at krumb@ptd.net. to share ideas, resources and support. May we all see these special individuals with the eyes of Christ, to indeed appreciate the gifts that each brings to our congregational families, and may no one be turned away, because there is no room for them at the inn!

Christmas blessings to all!

Debbie Best, Congregational Health Ministries & Family Life Service, Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries

BIRTHDAYS

Phyllis Holmes	12/01		Haley Miller	12/17
Sara Jones	12/01		Michael Jensen	12/18
Earl Foulkrod	12/02		William Waldeisen	12/18
Robert Miller	12/03		Ryan Clokey	12/18
David Elkin	12/04		Martha Hopley	12/19
Lawrence Lundy	12/06		Gladys Knauss	12/19
Madalyn Fortin	12/06		Elizabeth Metzger	12/19
Catherine Goertz	12/08		Fred Thayer	12/19
Fred Dieffenbach	12/10		Zachery Zimmerman	12/19
Calvin Bennett	12/11		Donald Armstrong	12/21
Scott Bittner	12/11		Matthew Hartsock	12/22
Orion Snyder	12/11		Edith Anderson	12/23
Ernest Larson	12/12		Judith Fortin	12/23
Jeannette Aderhold	12/13		Patti Drake	12/24
Richard Hafer	12/15		Holly Thorne	12/24
James Sheaffer	12/15	Celebrate Jesus!	12/25	
Lyndsi Stugart	12/15	William Hill	12/26	
Betty Kaufman	12/16	Hannah Ramsauer	12/26	
Lucille Weaver	12/16	Helen Schramm	12/28	
Marlene Vollmer	12/17	Amalie Robertson	12/30	
Derek Gilbert	12/17	Cynthia Huff	12/31	

ANNIVERSARIES

Kester & Eleanor Sobers	12/06
Robert & Aletha Swartz	12/20
Thomas & Becky Miller Pryor	12/21
Daniel & Mary Lou Hartsock	12/27
Cecil & Kathryn Calvert	12/31



The St. Mark's staff wish you & yours a
wonderful Christmas celebrating the Christ Child
& a new year filled with His richest blessings!

In His Love,

Pastor, Dick, Lou, Bernadette, Sharon, Sue & Susan

SPECIAL THANK YOU'S

Dear friends at St. Mark's Lutheran Church,

We appreciate very much your generous contribution to the Mossy Foot Project in Ethiopia. You are partnering with us in providing shoes and socks for the children vulnerable to mossy foot. Hopefully, they may never know the effects of this disease.

You also are helping to spread the Gospel through the treatment centers and the ministry of the site workers in the villages.

Please continue to serve with us by praying for the staff, especially Mr. Meskele and Zewdie as they lead the staff. Thank you for serving with us.

In God's Service,
The Mossy Foot Project

Dear Friends,

We acknowledge with thanks the receipt of \$25 for the Gettysburg Seminary Fund.

The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg community thanks you for your continuing support of our ministry. Your partnership is important in providing quality education for the leadership of Christ's church.

Sincerely,
The Rev. Dr. Christine E. Reimers
Director of Development

Wishing you a very Happy Thanksgiving! May God bless you in a special way this Thanksgiving.

We appreciate your kindness, your generosity, and your loving support. Many blessings! Our prayers are always with you.

Gratefully,
Sister Henry
St. Anthony's



Thank you so much for the flowers delivered by Mike, Pam & Sean Jensen!

Sam Crabtree
Roseview Manor

Dear Saint Mark's,

Thank you for letting me go to the Revolve Tour Concert. I loved the music—it was great! Thank you also for letting me, Paige, Sara & Christina hang out. I can't wait to see the girls again!

Thank you, Mariah Mahserjian-Smith

Thank you for letting me go to the Revolve Tour. It was fun! I liked the music best. And I liked going to two concerts! I liked the cotton candy & the drinks too! Staying in the hotel was fun. I want to go next year.

Christina Comini

Thank you for your contribution so that I could attend the Revolve Tour. I enjoyed meeting new friends and spending time with members of my St. Mark's family.

Paige Fortin

Thank you congregation for providing the money for the kids and adults to go to the Revolve Tour. I had a really good time and it was really fun! The best part was the concert.

Sincerely, Sara Jones

Dear friends,

I cannot thank you enough for providing the tickets to the Revolve Tour! What a wonderful time of bonding for us as mothers with our daughters, as well as the girls with each other. The speakers were energetic and powerful and the music reinforced the positive messages of the speakers. With our youth exposed to so many negative messages it was comforting to know they were being exposed to Spiritually sound teaching in a format they could easily digest. Thank you again for caring!

SPECIAL CONCERNS LIST

Patricia Alexander
1745 Chestnut St.
Williamsport, PA 17701

Nancy Bohartz
624 Sixth Ave.
Williamsport, PA 17701

Bonita Crossly
R.R. #1, Box 1001
Hills Grove, PA 18619-9300

June Decker
338 Sherwood Ave.
South Williamsport, PA 17702

Larue Dieter
2150 Warrensville Road, Apt. 2
Montoursville, PA 17754

Jane & Luther Doebler
Wmspt. Home, Apt. #115A
Williamsport, PA 17701

Harriet Fornwalt
729 Wilson Street
Williamsport, PA 17701

Doris Fortin
Rose View Center
1251 Rural Ave., Room 223
Williamsport, PA 17701

Earl Foulkrod
Sycamore Manor
1445 Sycamore Rd., Rm. 403
Montoursville, PA 17754

Jean Gulliver
3039 Elimsport Road
Montgomery, PA 17752

Charles Homan
2215 Warrensville Rd.
Montoursville, PA 17754

Charlotte Hughes
140 Blueberry Lane
Williamsport, PA 17701



Lucille Markel
Rose View Court, Apt. 307
1251 Rural Ave.
Williamsport, PA 17701

Anne Miller
947 Hepburn St.
Williamsport, PA 17701

Jane Oakes
833 Funston Avenue
Williamsport, PA 17701

Frank Pile
Manor Care S., Rm. 52
Williamsport, PA 17701

Anne Rhodes c/o Carole Finn
20308 Cabana Drive
Germantown, MD 20876

Dorothy Rivetti
Manor Care North Room 108A
Williamsport, PA 17701

Marian Rubendahl
1900 Ravine Road Bldg. C
Williamsport Home Apt. 1010
Williamsport, PA 17701

James Sheaffer
Rose View Court Rm. 321
1251 Rural Ave.
Williamsport, PA 17701

Mary Helen Scinicarello
Danville St. Hospital
Ward #311
Danville, PA 17821

Geraldine Shipman
1900 Ravine Rd.
Apt. #222A
Williamsport, PA 17701

Kester & Eleanor Sobers
425 W Highland Ave.
S. Williamsport, PA 17702

Ira Tuxford
1838-Blanchard Ave.
Williamsport, PA 17701

Ralph Zeigler Sr.
Rose View Court
1251 Rural Ave., Apt. 209
Williamsport, P A 17701

SAINT MARK'S CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 2006

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																
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					9:00 AM Morning Prayer	7:00 PM Civic Chorus Concert																																																																																																
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Advent I 8:00 AM & 10:30 AM HC 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Liturgy of Welcome to the Way 11:40 AM Cont. Choir 12:00 PM Wreath Making 4:00 PM The Way 5:15 PM Fam. Handbell	Pastor at Society of the Holy Trinity 9:00 AM Morning Prayer 6:45 PM Handbells	Pastor at Society of the Holy Trinity 9:00 AM Morning Prayer 6:00 PM leave for Selingsgrove Ctr. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM JBBL Prac.	9:00 AM Morning Prayer 9:15 AM Staff Mtg. & Sewing 12:00 PM Bible Std. 6:15 PM Mission at the Crossroads Supper	6:31 AM Men's Ministry 9:00 AM Morning Prayer 9:30 AM Little Lambs Lia. Mtg. 7:00 PM Cookie Bake Mtg. 7:30 PM Senior Choir	9:00 AM Morning Prayer	9:00 AM Kids' Morning Out 12:30 PM Cookie Bake																																																																																																
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Advent II 8:00 AM & 10:30 AM HC 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Children's Ch. 10:30 AM Milestone: 3rd Grade Bibles/Meal 11:30 AM Cong. Assem. 11:40 AM Kantorei 2:00 PM Caroling 4:00 PM The Way	9:00 AM Morning Prayer 6:30 PM Council Dinner at Women's Club 6:45 PM Handbells	9:00 AM Morning Prayer 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM JBBL Prac. 7:00 PM Property Comm. Mtg.	9:00 AM Morning Prayer 9:15 AM Staff Mtg. & Sewing 12:00 PM Lunch 'N' Fellowship	6:31 AM Men's Ministry 8:00 AM - 10:30 AM Stephen Min. Mtg. 9:00 AM Morning Prayer 7:30 PM Senior Choir	Newsletter Deadline 9:00 AM Morning Prayer	10:00 AM - 11:30 AM Simple Gifts Rehearsal																																																																																																
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Advent III 8:00 AM & 10:30 AM HC 9:15 AM Sunday School 11:40 AM Kantorei 5:15 PM Fam. Handbell 6:00 PM Mtg./meal with Confirmands 7:30 PM Remembrance Service	9:00 AM Morning Prayer 10:00 AM L. L. Christmas Tea 6:45 PM Handbells	9:00 AM Morning Prayer 10:00 AM L. L. Christmas Tea 1:00 PM Breadmaking w/ Katy 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM JBBL Prac. 6:30 PM Fin. Comm. Mtg.	9:00 AM Morning Prayer 9:15 AM Staff Mtg. & Sewing 12:00 PM Bible Std.	6:31 AM Men's Ministry 9:00 AM Morning Prayer 7:30 PM Senior Choir	9:00 AM Morning Prayer	9:00 AM Christmas Tree Erecting 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM Simple Gifts Rehearsal																																																																																																
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Advent IV Christmas Eve 8:00 AM & 10:30 AM HC 9:15 AM Christmas Musical & Treat for Sunday School 11:30 AM Final Decorating 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Musical & Communion 10:00 PM Holy Comm.	**Office Closed** Christmas	St. Stephen's Day 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM JBBL Prac.	St. John's Day 9:15 AM Flower Delivery	Holy Innocents 8:30 AM Counters	5th Day of Christmas 9:15 AM Newsletter Crew	6th Day of Christmas																																																																																																
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7th Day of Christmas Last day for 2006 Contributions 8:00 AM & 10:30 AM HC 9:15 AM Sunday School 11:40 AM Kantorei	<table border="1"> <tr><th colspan="7">November 06</th></tr> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>		November 06							S	M	T	W	T	F	S				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30			<table border="1"> <tr><th colspan="7">January 07</th></tr> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>		January 07							S	M	T	W	T	F	S		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			
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ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
142 MARKET ST.
WILLIAMSPORT, PA 17701

Phone: 570-323-4619
Fax: 570-323-2452

Website: <http://www.stmarkswilliamsport.org>
Email: stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org



Return Service Requested

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Williamsport, PA 17701

Williamsport Civic Chorus Concert

"Gloria"

by the contemporary British composer John Rutter
Accompanied by organist Richard Lakey & brass.

Saturday, December 2nd at 7:00 PM

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

142 Market Street, Williamsport, PA 17701