



# THE LION OF ST. MARK'S

MAY 2020

Dear Members and Friends of St. Mark's,  
"All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit..." (Acts 2:4a)



One of my favorite theologians, preachers, and authors is the Rev. Dr. William Willimon (Duke University). In his book on baptism entitled, Remember Who You Are, Dr. Willimon tells of his encounter with a neighbor regarding a conversation about the Holy Spirit. The neighbor asked Willimon, "When did you receive the Holy Spirit?" Willimon answered, "When I was baptized as a child the Holy Spirit touched my life." The lady said in anger, "That doesn't count!" To which Willimon added, "Really? God told me that it did!"

In the church the Day of Pentecost tells the story of how all the followers of Jesus, gathered in one place, received the Holy Spirit. God poured forth the Spirit upon all gathered that all might tell the good news of Jesus!

Sometimes we forget that the Day of Pentecost, just like Christmas and Easter, is not our story but God's story. God wants God's story told and so God provides the way for it to be told. The Holy Spirit—the same Spirit that brooded over creation, filled the prophets and the virgin Mary, and was with Jesus—comes into our lives to tell us the story and to help us tell the story to others. The coming of the Holy Spirit depends not on us, but on God!

As I write this, the pandemic known as COVID-19 continues. We are still practicing suspension of worship services, cancellation of church meetings, and activities, proper hand-washing and social distancing. This will end! Hopefully soon! But no matter when it ends the message of Pentecost does not change. God's story of love, forgiveness, and life eternal through Jesus has been shared with us by God's own Holy Spirit. We have been filled with the Holy Spirit through scripture and the sacraments that we might know and tell of God's story no matter what we encounter and/or experience. We are the ones who feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and shelter the homeless. We are the ones who are called to speak for those who have no voice. We are the ones who are to seek justice for those who encounter injustice. God's Holy Spirit fills us with God's love and zeal to do so.

We have been filled with the Holy Spirit to know the story that we might tell the story. God's Spirit has been poured forth into our lives. It counts!

Grace + Peace,  
Pastor Brian Vasey

Please note: When worship services resume at St. Mark's we will be using Setting Two of the Lutheran Book of Worship. Please remember to stay connected through our webpage and Facebook. Should you need to contact Pastor Vasey, please do so through the church office (570-323-4619). Be well, stay safe and remember, Christ is with you. †

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## NEWS FROM OUR SYNOD AND CONFERENCE DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC:

- ◇ The April (and probably May) meeting of the West Branch Conference has been cancelled.
- ◇ Synod Assembly WILL NOT TAKE PLACE in June. A "one-day Saturday meeting" either in August or September remains a possibility.
- ◇ The West Branch Conference Assembly meeting scheduled for April 26 was postponed.
- ◇ It is uncertain at this time if the West Branch Conference Ascension Service (May 21) will still take place.

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*THE UPDATED ST. MARKS DIRECTORY IS INCLUDED IN THIS MAILING. PLEASE CHECK YOUR ENTRY AND THOSE OF PEOPLE YOU KNOW. IF THERE ARE CORRECTIONS TO BE MADE, PLEASE EMAIL THEM TO [stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org](mailto:stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org).*

*This includes adding information for adult children in their own residences. Thank you!*



WAR



CRIME



HUNGER



DISEASE



POVERTY



HOPE

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## United Churches Ecumenical Lunch

United Churches Wednesday Noon Ecumenical Lunch is again being held virtually. Everyone will gather at their own locations with their own lunch and connect via Zoom for a virtual meeting.

There is no cost to you connect to this Zoom meeting via the internet. To connect go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/728915712>. This link will either help you download the app or prompt you to open your app.

You are also able to connect by telephone. Call 1-301-715-8592, when prompted enter the meeting number, 728-915-712. Note that this is a toll call so long distance rates will apply.

They are checking to see if there is relatively inexpensive way to get a toll-free number for this use. If your phone plan gives you free long distance you won't encounter any charges - but you'll miss all their smiling faces!

## STAFF OFFICE HOURS

**Pastor: The Rev. Brian Vasey**  
 Mon, Tue, Thu 9am—12pm & by appointment

**Sexton: Lou DeSeau**  
 Sun, Mon, Wed, Thu 8:30am—1pm

**Bookkeeper: Jackie Baysore**  
 Tue 8am—12:00pm

**Secretary: Bernadette Jones**  
 Mon, Wed, Fri 9am—1pm

## ANNUAL REPORTS DUE NOW

Though all services, meetings, and other events are suspended at this time, the work of the church goes on. That includes Annual Reports.

True, we will not have an Annual Congregational Meeting until some later date. These reports cover from May, 2019, through April, 2020. With so many homebound right now, this is the perfect thing with which to avoid those household chores!

The following reports are needed:

Council President	Parish Life Committee
Parish Register	Personnel Committee
Synopsis of Assembly Minutes	Property Committee
Pastor	Publicity Committee
Archives and Website	Safety Team
Chair of the Call Committee	Stephen Ministry
Faith and Fellowship Committee	Stewardship Committee
Finance Committee	Women of the ELCA
Fine Arts Committee	Worship & Music Committee
Liaison Committee	Director of Music
Memorials Committee	Why God Has Placed Us Here
Nominating Committee	Congregational Financial Statement
Outreach Committee	

Please stay safe and know that God is with you.

**Church Office 570-323-4619 Fax 570-323-2452**

**Website: [stmarkswilliamsport.org](http://stmarkswilliamsport.org)**

**Main e-mail: [stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org](mailto:stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org)**

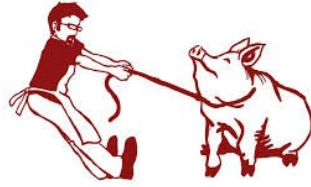
<b>Rev. Brian Vasey, Pastor</b>	<a href="mailto:bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org">bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org</a> 570-323-4619 or 570-523-1415
<b>Bernadette Jones, Secretary</b>	<a href="mailto:stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org">stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org</a>
<b>Jackie Baysore, Bookkeeper</b>	<a href="mailto:jbaysore@stmarkswilliamsport.org">jbaysore@stmarkswilliamsport.org</a>
<b>Lou DeSeau, Environmental Serv.</b>	<a href="mailto:stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org">stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org</a>
<b>Linda Rosini, Council President</b>	<a href="mailto:lr10152@yahoo.com">lr10152@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Becky Miller Pryor, Vice-President</b>	home 570-971-4585
<b>Wanda Fortin, Secretary</b>	570-337-9137
<b>Jackie Kinney, Treasurer</b>	<a href="mailto:jskinney1@yahoo.com">jskinney1@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Kathy Eshelman, Stephen Ministry</b>	570-433-0522
<b>Janet Jones, Parish Life</b>	<a href="mailto:jgmacookie@comcast.net">jgmacookie@comcast.net</a>
<b>Debra Buckman, Family Promise Coordinator</b>	<a href="mailto:dbuckman@pct.edu">dbuckman@pct.edu</a> or <a href="mailto:dabuckman65@gmail.com">dabuckman65@gmail.com</a>
<b>Kathy Kolb, Prayer Chain</b>	<a href="mailto:kathykolb@kolbnetworks.net">kathykolb@kolbnetworks.net</a>
<b>Sally Bjornstad, Altar Flowers</b>	570-494-6637

## FREE COMMUNITY LUNCH 'N' FELLOWSHIP

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20\*, AT NOON

*Pulled Pork is  
scheduled for the  
menu!*

COME AND ENJOY!



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### Martin Luther Actually Had Some Good Coronavirus Advice Back in 1527

Most people know Martin Luther as a theologian and as the father of the Reformation but he also happened to have some pretty relevant advice for communities dealing with the coronavirus.



Back in 1527, a deadly plague hit Martin Luther's town of Wittenberg and he wrote a letter to a friend, explaining how churches should deal with such complicated circumstances. Sure, science

has progressed immensely in the last 500 years and we know way more about infectious diseases than we did back then, but the heart of his words still ring true.

"Use medicine; take potions which can help you; fumigate house, yard, and street; shun persons and places wherever your neighbor does not need your presence or has recovered, and act like a man who wants to help put out the burning city," Luther advised. "What else is the epidemic but a fire which instead of consuming wood and straw devours life and body?"

We have a better understanding of medicine, "potions" and the value of fumigation but Luther's advice about loving your community by avoiding going out is just as pertinent today.

The scientific consensus is that "social distancing", staying home and avoiding crowds is the best way to prevent the spread of the virus and help those who are most vulnerable. But Luther knew that as Christians, even these precautions have their limits.

"If my neighbor needs me, however, I shall not avoid place or person but will go freely, as stated above," he wrote. "See, this is such a God-fearing faith because it is neither brash nor foolhardy and does not tempt God."

In other words, be smart. Use discernment. Protect your community by staying in but if someone needs help, remember the Gospel's call to assist those in need. That may look different for everyone but we can all do something:

Call an isolated friend who might be lonely. Check-in on elderly neighbors and family members. Don't hoard groceries and supplies. Be generous with extra income,

remembering that many people will be suffering financially in the coming days. Support medical professionals through prayer and respect of their advice and guidelines.

And most of all, remember that though the war on the coronavirus is one that can be won through wisdom and science. We protect our bodies and the health of our communities through social distancing and self-isolation, but we battle not against flesh and blood, but spiritual forces that want to strip us of peace and replace it with fear.

Luther wrote: "In closing, we admonish and plead with you in Christ's name to help us with your prayers to God so that we may do battle with word and precept against the real and spiritual pestilence of Satan in his wickedness with which he now poisons and defiles the world."

*Posted on March 16, 2020, relevantmagazine.com*

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### Churchwide Summer Internships

It is time to put the word out....2020 ELCA Churchwide summer internships are posted! Here are a few of the details:

- ◇ The ELCA summer internship program provides the opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students to develop and refine their professional skills in their areas of study while experiencing the work of the churchwide organization.
- ◇ Start date will be June 8, 2020 (end dates will be decided based on needs of the unit and the intern).
- ◇ Hourly rate is \$14.00. Yes, they are paid internships!
- ◇ These are full-time, 40 hours/week internships.
- ◇ Interns will have the chance to join Bishop Eaton for lunch, participate in lunch and learn sessions with units and offices and attend a field trip or two to some of our local ministry sites.
- ◇ Prospective summer interns must be at least 18 years of age and should be enrolled in an undergraduate/graduate degree program.
- ◇ If selected, interns are responsible for securing housing for the summer.
- ◇ Individuals who have held internship positions with the churchwide organization in the past are not eligible.

If you know someone who might be interested, please feel free to share this information and the link to the job board (<https://tinyurl.com/u46mqjj>). Questions? Please contact Andrea Young at 773-380-2471 or [andrea.young@elca.org](mailto:andrea.young@elca.org)

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*"Every book is a great action and every great action is a book!" ~ Martin Luther*



## STEWARDSHIP REPORT FOR MARCH INTO APRIL

### Sunday, March 8, total attendance—49

Total Offering—\$2589 Distributed as follows: Regular Offering \$2315, Plate Offering \$22, Lent \$175, Parish Life \$37, Memorials \$30, Synod Benevolence \$10

### Sunday, March 15, total attendance—61

Total Offering—\$3341 Distributed as follows: Regular Offering \$3021, Plate Offering \$20, Lent \$84, World Hunger \$25, Food Pantry \$50, Global Mission \$25, Sunday School \$6, Disaster Relief \$10, Capital Fund \$50, Memorials \$50

### Contributions for period of March 23-April 1

Total Offering—\$3705 Distributed as follows: Regular Offering \$3415, Lent \$90, Memorials \$200

### Contributions for period of April 4-April 10

Total Offering—\$4016 Distributed as follows: Regular Offering \$3551, Lent \$45, Food Pantry \$25, Shepherd of the Street \$20, Memorials \$200, Pastor's Discretionary Fund \$175

### Contributions for period of April 11-April 15

Total Offering—\$10,760 Distributed as follows: Regular Offering \$9159, Easter \$1126, Lent \$228, World Hunger \$10, Food Pantry \$26, Shepherd of the Street \$15, Memorials \$150, Synod Benevolence \$46

### Dedicated offerings from the above include:

- + Memorial donation for the Paschal Candle in memory of Alona Hopler.
- + Hunger Offering given in memory of Forrest and Margaret Klinger by Ronald and Donna Baker.

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## Our Church and Social Media



We are making every effort to connect with all of you during this time—with services of the Word, messages for children (with our friends Boscoe, Charles, and I.N. Stein), devotions, and more.

Bulletins for the online services are also on our website and sometimes include bits of history like the stained-glass window depicted here. The window shows Christ and Thomas. Originally located in the old chapel in the parish house; it is now seen in our current chapel.



Links for all of the above can be found at [www.stmarkswilliamsport.org](http://www.stmarkswilliamsport.org). Regular email "blasts" are sent with new links and information. If you are not receiving these and wish to, please contact our church office.

## Report from Church Council (April, 2020)

Dear Members and Friends of St. Mark's,

Due to COVID-19 Church Council did not meet in April. However the Council did receive and take action upon the following reports by way of email:

- ◇ "Family Promise of Lycoming County" informed St. Mark's that our congregation will not serve as a host location due to the coronavirus pandemic.
- ◇ Aware of the impact COVID-19 has had and will continue to have upon our congregation, our part-time Church Staff voluntarily reduced their working hours. Council thanked them for their commitment to St. Mark's and understanding of the situation.
- ◇ St. Mark's has waived all fees related to our Parking Patrons for all of April and May, 2020.
- ◇ The March and April monthly rent of "Little Lambs" will be reduced 50%. Council will revisit this reduction on a monthly basis after conferring with owner Holly Tillman.
- ◇ The Parish Life Committee donated 250 styrofoam "take out" containers to the West End Community Center to assist with the WECC's "take-out" lunch program. This program has seen a sizable increase in request for meals.
- ◇ Snacks and crackers will continue to be donated to New Covenant UCC to stock their "Blessing Box". The "Blessing Box" seeks to minister to the needy in this downtown neighborhood of Williamsport.
- ◇ Worship Services at St. Mark's remain suspended for the remainder of April, 2020. Council will re-evaluate the situation by May 1, 2020. Videos of abbreviated Services of the Word can be watched at our website, [www.stmarkswilliamsport.org](http://www.stmarkswilliamsport.org), and Facebook.

Please continue to practice the CDC guidelines associated with COVID-19: Wash Hands, Stay Home, Limit Travel, Practice Social Distancing. Be well. Stay safe. Remember that Christ is with you!

*The Congregational Council of St. Mark's  
Lutheran Church.*

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## THIS PAST LENT

Me: I'm giving up chocolate for Lent.

God: *You're also giving up restaurants.*

Me: Okay.

God: *Oh—and watching all sports.*

Me: Alright.

God: *And you can't go to church.*

Me: *(gasp)!* Wait! Oh—I am the church.

God: *Now you have it.*

**SPECIAL CONCERNS LIST**

**Patricia Alexander**  
Rose View Center, 223B  
1201 Rural Ave.  
Williamsport, PA 17701

**Catherine Lundy**  
c/o Carol Butters  
123 Aberdeen Road  
Williamsport, PA 17701

**Elsie Sechler**  
AristaCare, Rom 312  
1445 Sycamore Road  
Montoursville, PA 17754

**Dottie Bingaman**  
Williamsport Home, Rm 309  
1900 Ravine Rd.  
Williamsport, PA 17701

**Ruth Pile**  
Wmspt Home Care Ctr #105A  
1900 Ravine Road  
Williamsport, PA 17701

**Frank Ulman**  
570-971-2054  
He welcomes calls.

**Marie Byerly**  
AristaCare Nursing Ctr.  
1445 Sycamore Rd.  
Montoursville, PA 17754

**Kay Poliska**  
1100 Allen St.  
Montoursville, PA 17754

**Marion Waldeisen**  
Williamsport Home  
1900 Ravine Rd. Bldg C Apt. 1213  
Williamsport, PA 17701



**Elizabeth Ruesskamp**  
Rose View Center, 222B  
1201 Rural Ave.  
Williamsport, PA 17701



**Happy Birthday!**

Melvin Wentzel 05/01  
Jerod Barone 05/02  
Robert Clokey 05/02  
Jacob Schreckengast 05/02  
Grace Schreckengast 05/05  
Rosemary Clokey 05/06  
H. Vincent Bardsley 05/12  
Thomas Waffenschmidt 05/12  
Catherine Lundy 05/13  
Lori Ann Zimmerer 05/13  
Karen Mariano 05/14

Jane Larson 05/15  
Stephen Boone 05/18  
Candace Dewar 05/19  
Kenneth Schreckengast 05/19  
Jaden Roberts 05/22  
Ryan Jensen 05/24  
Dawson Owen 05/24  
Dustin Pelleschi 05/24  
Norma Prato 05/26  
Robert Ramsauer 05/26  
Audrey Albright 05/27  
Walter Haussmann 05/27  
Joyce Hershberger 05/27

Owen Gair 05/30  
Steven Bieber III 05/31



**Happy Anniversary!**

Pr. Brian & Joanne Vasey 05/24  
Michael & Pamela Jensen 05/30

**SHEPHERD OF THE STREETS**

J. Morris Smith, Th.D.,  
570-322-6538, [shepherd@uclc.org](mailto:shepherd@uclc.org)

To help us bring hope and help to those who ask, send a blessing to Shepherd of the Streets, Box P.O. 2184, Williamsport, PA, 17703, and/or visit us at Shepherd of the Streets, 320 Park Ave., Monday-Thursday, 9am-2pm.



Thank you for your donation of hygiene items, baby needs, and/or bedding. These family sized hygiene items are such a blessing because people suffer the most when there is not enough money to feed, clothe, and house their family, and most illnesses are a surprise to their budget. This continues to be a necessary part of

our ministry. The list follows:

- Toothpaste and Toothbrushes*
- Shaving Cream and Razors*
- Shampoo and Conditioner*
- Women's Hygiene Products*
- Towels and Wash Cloths*
- Bedding and Blankets*
- Tissues, Toilet Paper, and Paper Towels*
- Soap*
- Deodorant*
- Combs*
- Baby Diapers*
- Baby Shampoo*
- Baby Oil*
- Baby Q-Tips*
- Baby Wipes*
- Baby Powder*

*#beablessing*







# Save The Date!



Vacation Bible School: July 12-16, 5:30-8:30 PM  
@ New Covenant United Church of Christ  
for ages 3-12 years old



We are once again joining forces with New Covenant United Church of Christ, Trinity Episcopal, and First Church of Christ to present **Rocky Railway VBS**.

Please see Vicki Haussmann for registration information and for ways to help. Watch for more info as to how to chug into town these next few months as well.

# Choo, Choo!

