



# The Lion of St. Mark's

## December, 2020

*The Lion looks a little different this month due to the illness of our Church Secretary. We wish Bernadette a "speedy recovery" and ask for your patience during her absence. Thank You!*



Dear Members and Friends of St. Mark's,

On Sunday, November 29, the Season of Advent begins. Advent is marked by Advent Calendars, blue banners, parame-nts and vestments, an Advent Wreath, mid-week services, and proclamations on the merit of waiting and preparation. Rest assured these traditions will be part of our celebration of the Advent Season.

But in 2020 Advent will also include something more. In Advent 2020 we will have the unique opportunity to remember two Christian witnesses in Sunday morning worship: Nicholas, Bishop of Myra (December 6) and Lucy, Maiden of Light (December 13). Nicholas was a fourth century bishop of Asia Minor (Turkey). He is known for his kindness, generosity and care of/for children. He is the historical "Santa Claus" upon whom the legend is based. Lucy, was a first century Christian martyr; a young Christian of Sicily who met her death under the Emperor Diocletian. Her celebration became particularly important in Sweden and Norway because her name means "light" and traditionally her feast day fell on the shortest day of the year. Usually these days go without notice, but this year, because they fall on Sundays, we have the opportunity to proclaim how their witness will add to our celebration of the Advent Season.

The Season of Advent is a season of preparation but also a season of the church year in its own right with much to offer. The celebration of these two "Advent Saints" will help us to prepare in hope for the One who has come and has promised to come again, even the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

Grace + Peace,

*Pastor Brian Vasey*

### I'VE BEEN HACKED!

Dear St. Mark Members and Friends,  
If you receive an email from me requesting "a favor involving a sum of money", please disregard. This is a scam! A good rule of thumb is to always make sure the return address is either [bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org](mailto:bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org) or [cryptol@comcast.net](mailto:cryptol@comcast.net). You can also contact me by telephone or email to verify (570-323-4619).

Pastor Vasey

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### HAPPENING THIS MONTH:

**Midweek Services:** Advent midweek services begin, Wednesday, December 2, at 12:15 pm in the Nave. They will continue through the month of December every Wednesday in Advent through December 17. All are welcome.

**Sunday, December 6:** A Liturgy of Word and Table emphasizing the life and ministry of St. Nicholas, the fourth century bishop of Asia Minor (the historic Santa Claus).

**Sunday, December 13:** A Liturgy of Word and Table emphasizing the life and ministry of St. Lucy, a first century martyr often referred to as the Maiden of Lights. **Reminder: one worship time on December 13 at 10:30 am to care for the business of our Annual Congregational Meeting.**

**Thursday, December 24:** Christmas Eve Liturgy at 7 & 10 pm. See the enclosed guidelines for attendance on Christmas Eve.

*Christmas*  
for **Christ**

**UNITED CHURCHES NEWS:**

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UCLC is looking for volunteers to fill various ministries. You do not have to be a clergy person to participate. Especially needed are persons to fill the nursing home and assisted living centers Sunday services.

Contact Gwen at director@uclc.org or call 570-322-1110.

New Shepard of the Streets—Welcome  
Rev. Mark Brumbach

**SOS Needs—Family Size Please**

- |  |                  |                 |
|--|------------------|-----------------|
| Toothpaste   | Toothbrushes     | Shaving Cream   |
| Razors   | Shampoo          | Conditioner     |
| Feminine Hygiene Products                              | Towels           | Wash Cloths     |
| Band-Aids  | Hand/Body Lotion | Facial Tissues  |
| Toilet Tissue  | Paper Towels     | Soap            |
| Deodorant (men's and women's)                          |                  | Combs & Brushes |
| Bedding - new or clean & gently used (Q & K preferred) |                  |                 |
| Adult Diapers (pull-ups M, L and XL, especially M)     |                  |                 |
| Baby Diapers and Pull-Ups (Sizes 1-6, especially 3-6)  |                  |                 |
| Baby Shampoo   | Baby Wash        | Baby Lotion     |
| Baby Oil   | Baby Wipes       |                 |

**OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD**

The Outreach Committee and the Faith and Fellowship Committee would like to thank you for your support of Operation Christmas Child ~ especially throughout this topsy turvy year. Due to your generous donations, we were able to pack 30 beautiful shoeboxes which will now be sent to children in need all around the world! The impact that these small gifts have on kids is truly miraculous. God is at work!

We ask that in December you pray for these shoeboxes, asking for God's blessings on the children who receive these gifts. Pray that their hearts may be touched by God's love, and that the Good News of Jesus Christ will be planted on their hearts. Thank you again for your support of this worldwide ministry. We look forward to working with you again in 2021!



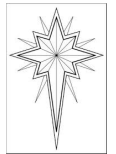
**Advent Bags**

The Faith and Fellowship and Outreach Committees are once again giving congregation members an alternative to the traditional chocolate Advent calendars. On November 29th or December 6<sup>th</sup> please take a holiday bag from the Narthex and on each day of Advent place a non-perishable food item, snack item or hygiene product in your bag. Pray for the person who will receive that specific item. Return your bag by Christmas Eve. All items will be sorted and given to the United Churches Food Bank, Shepherd of the Streets and the Blessing Boxes at New Covenant UCC. For those not filling a bag, extra boxes will be in the Narthex throughout December for individual donations.

**THE BAZAAR ROOM IS OPEN!**

The Women of St. Mark's continue to accept your donations of housewares, jewelry, small appliances, decorations and treasures of all kinds for our sale in 2021. It is most helpful if items could be packed in small boxes and placed in the Bazaar Room away from the door.

Recently boxes and bags have been placed on the stage that make it difficult to determine if the items are clothing for Daniel's Closet or items for the Bazaar. Please help us by placing only Daniel Closet items on the stage. If you cannot get your Bazaar items to the basement please leave them in the stairwell on the lower landing. We can take it the rest of the way. Thank you



**Christmas Activities**

Due to the pandemic our annual Christmas party for the Ladies of CM-6 at the Selinsgrove Center has been cancelled. This is the first time in more than thirty years that folks from St. Mark's have not provided holiday entertainment to residents at the Center. As disheartening as it is, we still can gift the ladies and in doing so assist the staff in providing a joyous Christmas party. We are in need of pudding cups in all flavors, moisturizing body wash and money to offset the cost of items not donated. We will also take a basket of individually wrapped snacks for the caregivers. Monetary donations may be made payable to St. Mark's with the memo line indicating "Selinsgrove Party." Thank you in advance for any help you are able to give.

The Danville State Hospital is also closed to the public due to the pandemic. But they need our help in providing gifts to their residents. Please consider providing a modest gift to ensure all residents will have gifts to open on Christmas morning. We supply general gifts that can be used where they are most needed. The need for gifts is greatest for those residents who arrive in November or December.

**Items being requested this year for both men and women include socks, hats, gloves and scarves, PJ's, nightgowns, packs of batteries (size AA and AAA), inexpensive wallets and watches. Sizes for both men and women are large and up. Body wash, shampoo, conditioner and body lotion in regular sizes are also requested.**

All donations should be left unwrapped and placed in the tub in the Narthex. Thank you for any assistance you can give to this outreach. **All donations for the Selinsgrove Center and Danville State Hospital are needed by**

**Sunday, December 13, 2020.**

## COUNCIL BRIEFS, October, 2020

Council met on November 16, 2020.

Discussed the Upper Susquehanna Synod's Guidelines on "In-person" Annual Meetings of Congregations. Our annual meeting will be held on December 13, 2020.

### Committee Reports:

**Safety Committee:** Update provided by Carl Albright.  
Discussion regarding the ushers unlocking the Narthex door by 10:00 a.m. for the 10:30 a.m. service for those wishing to come early.

**Property Committee:** Update provided by Ed Gair.  
Fall cleanup is complete and the boilers have been checked.

**Faith & Fellowship:** Update on Sunday school provided by Vicki Haussman.

**Outreach Committee:** Update provided by Becky Pryor.  
Due to covid-19 Christmas caroling and the annual visit to the Selinsgrove Center will be cancelled in 2020. Outreach will continue to collect general gifts for the Danville State Hospital and collect body wash and pudding cups for the Ladies of CM-6 at the Selinsgrove Center.

**Personnel Committee:**  
Approved motion for St. Mark's to make a donation in the amount of \$200 for the rebuilding of the school in Liberia that recently was destroyed by a fire.

**Worship & Music:**  
Approved motion for one Christmas tree for the Nave this year.

**Finance Committee:** Approved motion to sell St. Mark's 1/3 interest in the Plankenhorn land that was bequeathed to the church along with two other non-profit organizations. (SPCA and HSUS)

Next Council meeting—Jan. 18, 2021 6:00 PM

Remember, Christ is with you!

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

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**Make sure to send in any corrections for the Church Directory so that they can be printed here! We don't know unless you tell us! Call or email [stmarks@stmarkwilliamsport.org](mailto:stmarks@stmarkwilliamsport.org)**

## Ongoing Events at Redeemer Lutheran:

**Community Supper** on Thursday, December 10, 2020 from 5:00 PM. All are welcome. This is a take-out meal delivered at the curb.

**Daniel's Closet** (Free Seasonal Clothing) on Saturday, December 18th from 8:30 – 11:00 AM.. With cooler weather comes the need for warmer clothing and sturdier shoes. This is one week earlier due to Christmas.

**Donated Clothing** may be dropped off at Redeemer on Thursday, December 10th from 3:00 – 4:00 PM. **Note the new drop off date due to the pandemic.**

**If you have a large quantity of clothing** that cannot wait until the monthly drop off, please contact Barb Horn at 570-974-3744 or Vicor Carol Johnson at 570-772-6674 to arrange a time to meet at Redeemer Lutheran.

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## SHARING IN THE CARING

### Ongoing Collections at St. Mark's:

- **United Churches Food Pantry:** Non-perishable food items and healthy snacks are always in need.
- **Shepherd of the Streets:** Hygiene Items in regular sizes for infants, kids and adults. Especially needed are deodorant for men and women, disposable diapers and feminine hygiene items.
- **Blessing Boxes at New Covenant UCC:** Individual Snacks, Cup of Soups, Microwave Mac & Cheese, Ramen Noodles and warm socks (new or gently used are needed).
- **Items for the Pantry, Shepherd or the Blessing Boxes** may be placed on the table in the Narthex.
- **Aluminum Soda Can Tabs:** Containers are available in the Narthex and Fellowship Hall. Tabs are given to support the Ronald McDonald House in Danville.
- **Pennies for Youth Activities:** A container is available in the Narthex for your donations.

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## WORSHIP/MUSIC COMMITTEE

Advent (Nov. 29-Dec. 20).

A Preaching Series on "Advent Saints" for two Advent Witnesses:

- 12/6: Nicholas, Bishop of Myra (the historical St. Nicholas)
- 12/13: Lucy (Lucia, Maiden of Lights)

Annual Meeting to elect 2021 Council Members and to vote on 2021 budget. Note there will only be one worship time on this Sunday. December 13

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**SUNDAY SCHOOL (9:15 am)**



Please join in one of the classes that our being offered:

Elementary Kids ~ Church Library

Middle/High School Kids ~ Confirmation Class:

Orientation is Nov. 15/Class begins Nov. 22

Adult Sunday School ~ Fellowship Hall

Our meeting spaces look a bit different than in the past so that we are able to accommodate social distancing. We also require that masks be worn at all times. Please enter the church through the front doors that lead into the Narthex. From here, classrooms may be accessed by walking through the courtyard and Front Lounge.

We look forward to learning and growing in Christ. We look forward to spending time together in Christian fellowship. We look forward to seeing You!

**Our Church Secretary, Bernadette Jones,** continues to recuperate from her surgery at UPMC, Pittsburgh. She thanks you for your prayers. You may send her greetings/cards at her home address: 665 Fifth Street, Williamsport, PA 17701

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**Our sympathy goes out to Gladys Knauss on the death of her son Randy**

**Anniversaries**

PRYOR, Thomas & Becky Miller 12/21  
REITER, Joseph & Rachel 12/29



**Birthdays**

ELKIN, Maria	12/01
JONES, Sara	12/01
OTT, Rob	12/02
MILLER, Robert	12/03
ELKIN, David	12/04
SCHRECKENGAST, Laura	12/07
ELKIN, Emma	12/09
LARSON, Ernest	12/12
COMERFORD, Alverda	12/14
STUGART, Lyndsi	12/15
VOLLMER, Marlene	12/17
CLOKEY, Ryan	12/18
JENSEN, Michael	12/18
HOPLER, Martha	12/19
KNAUSS, Gladys	12/19
LEWIS, Daryl	12/22
FORTIN, Judith	12/23
YOUNG, Sarah	12/23
MCMORRIS, Scott	12/24
THORNE, Holly	12/24
RAMSAUER, Hannah	12/26
ROBERTSON, Amalie	12/30
HUFF, Cynthia	12/31



Please remember our shut-ins and those who are ill..  
Drop them a card or call one of them on the phone.  
Remember—Loneliness can be cured with your help.

Liz Ruesskamp	Grace Arner
Ruth Pile	Gary Clark
Paul Young	Bob Shaible
Doris Brown	Gladys Knauss
Patricia Alexander	Ashton Ott
Lenny Sherlinski	Esteban Mazer
Elsie Sechler	Cheryl Williams
Bernadette Jones	Kay Poliska
Tanya Bower	Steve Dewar

**ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
BUDGET REPORT  
YEAR 2021**

**GENERAL FUND:**

<b><u>INCOME:</u></b>	<b>2021 BUDGET</b>	<b>2020 BUDGET</b>
Envelopes/Pledges	\$ 190,000.00	\$ 210,000.00
Other Religious Income	\$ 8,800.00	\$ 20,800.00
Parking Lot/Rentals	\$ 27,850.00	\$ 30,090.00
Transfer from Investment Fund	\$ 88,272.00	\$ 79,978.00
Welker/Capital General	<u>\$ 21,612.00</u>	<u>\$ 28,000.00</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>\$ 336,534.00</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 368,868.00</u></b>
<b><u>EXPENSES:</u></b>		
Staff	\$ 188,269.00	\$ 218,633.00
Administration	\$ 10,050.00	\$ 10,670.00
Worship & Music	\$ 9,220.00	\$ 8,600.00
Christian Ed & Youth	\$ 3,350.00	\$ 3,440.00
Outreach	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
Property	\$ 62,470.00	\$ 58,550.00
Capital Improvements	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 40,000.00
Benevolence & Charity	<u>\$ 27,575.00</u>	<u>\$ 28,375.00</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$ 336,534.00</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 368,868.00</u></b>



**Be the Lifeline Patients Need**

**Give Blood**

The Outreach Committee in collaboration with the Northcentral PA Chapter of the American Red Cross will hold a **Blood Drive** on **Friday, December 11, 2020 from 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM in Fellowship Hall.** Please consider being a donor as the Red Cross experiences critical shortages of blood during the holiday season. Please call 1-800-733-2767 or visit [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) and enter: St. Marks to schedule an appointment.



**DECEMBER 2020**  
**ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**CHURCH POLICY FOR CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES DURING CORONAVIRUS**

**To St. Mark's Congregation:** Please note that each member of St. Mark's will continue to have a choice of watching a recorded version of our service on-line (available Christmas Day) – **or** - attending in-person on Christmas Eve (Thursday, December 24, 2020) at 7:00 PM or 10:00 PM. If the risk becomes too high in our area or due to inclement weather, there is always a chance that we may need to cancel our services. We will make every attempt to notify our members. The best way is to check our Facebook page. We will try to do a church email as well as leave a message on our Church answering machine if this happens.

**Before coming to church, it is very important that .....**

If you are considered at risk in contracting the coronavirus, please consider remaining at home and worshipping on-line.

If you have symptoms related to the coronavirus, or if you believe yourself to be ill, please do not come to in person worship. Take advantage of video worship.

Symptoms include Cough, Fever, and/or Shortness of Breath

If you cannot be positive about keeping these guidelines and requests regarding in person worship, please remain at home and worship on line.

When you come to church, we will be following the same guidelines that we have been using on Sunday Mornings, but with modifications specific for Christmas Eve. The Church Opening Policy can be viewed on our website or call the church office for a copy to be mailed to you.

**As a reminder .....**

**Safety**

Safety of our staff and members is our highest concern.

We are following recommended guidelines by the CDC, PA Department of Health, and our Bishop.

Please note that face masks will be required.

Please use hand sanitizer when you enter the church and when appropriate during the service.

Please respect others and practice social distancing especially when entering and departing the building.

Wearing gloves is at the discretion of the member (whatever makes you the most comfortable)

We will be cleaning back & ends of pews, door handles, Narthex bathrooms, etc. between the services (touch points).

For any additional details, please see our Church Opening Policy.

We apologize if this causes any inconveniences to our worshipers.

**Here is what to expect ....**

**When you enter the Narthex**

Everyone will be entering only through the Narthex door. (All other doors will be locked.)

Please have a face mask on. (Face masks are available if needed).

Please use the hand sanitizer station when you enter.

Please take your coat to the pew with you as well as any other belongings. (Please lay your coat on the pew you are sitting in. Avoid draping your coat on the back of pews.)

Please pick up a bulletin and a prepackaged elements for Holy Communion from the table in the Narthex.

If needed, there are a few hearing aid devices (leave in the pews) and individual bags with the ear phone (take with you).

## Christmas Eve Continued

### When you enter the Nave

The Baptismal Font as you enter the Nave will be empty.

We want to accommodate as many people as we can in the Nave. We will be using both sides of the Nave for each service. Each service will sit in different pews, so please be sure to sit in the appropriate pews. An Usher will be available to assist you.

Please adhere to Social Distancing within the designated pews, except for families or couples can sit together.

A few "seats" on each side will be reserved for handicap people, but may be available if advised by an Usher.

In the event that the Nave is full, people are welcome to listen to the service in the Narthex or the Chapel. The same guidelines apply in the Narthex and Chapel.

**For the Service** (Both services will basically be the same. We will not be able to have our typical family service at 7:00 PM for the obvious reasons)

**Confession and Forgiveness:** We will NOT be kneeling during this time.

**Communion:** Worshipers will take Communion at the same time while remaining in their pews.

Used or unused Communion items are to be placed back in the sealed bag, and placed in a designated container as you exit the church using the Sacristy door.

**Offering:** Offering will not be collected during the service. (There will be an Offering Basket as you exit the church.)

**Sharing of the Peace:** Due to social distancing, we will not share the Peace with physical contact.

**Children:** Children are to remain in pews during children's sermon.

**Silent Night:** No Candles will be distributed to families or individuals.

Candles at the end of the pews and on the window sills will be lit prior to worship. Nave lights will only be partially dimmed.

### When you leave

At the end of the service, everyone must exit at the left side of the Nave and thru the Handicap door by the Sacristy.

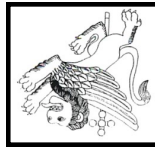
There are receptacles to discard your communion ziplock bag, and bulletin if you so desire. (We will not be reusing bulletins)

Those in the Chapel can exit using the Chapel door.

Please follow social distancing as you exit.

**St. Mark's is taking important safety precautions for in person worship. If, however, you still are uncomfortable with these steps, please remember that online worship continues to be available through this pandemic.**





ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
 142 MARKET ST.  
 WILLIAMSPORT, PA 17701  
*Address Service Requested*  
 Phone: 570-323-4619  
 Fax: 570-323-2452  
 Website: <http://www.stmarkswilliamsport.org>  
 Email: [stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org](mailto:stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org)

Non-Profit Organization  
 U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
 Permit No. 257  
 Williamsport, PA 17701

**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>Sam Robinson, Church Organist</b>	<a href="mailto:srobinson@stmarkswilliamsport.org">srobinson@stmarkswilliamsport.org</a>
<b>Bernadette Jones, Secretary</b>	<a href="mailto:stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org">stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org</a>
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<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
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<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</b>	<a href="mailto:dbuckman@pct.edu">dbuckman@pct.edu</a> or <a href="mailto:dabuckman65@gmail.com">dabuckman65@gmail.com</a>
<b>Family Promise Coordinator</b>	
<b>Prayer Chain—coordinator needed</b>	
<b>Sally Bjornstad, Altar Flowers</b>	570-494-6637



**STAFF OFFICE HOURS**

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

**Church Organist: Sam Robinson**  
 Summer: Mon 1pm-3pm & 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