

# St. Mark's Lutheran Church

142 Market Street  
Williamsport, PA 17701  
570-323-4619



## THE LION OF ST. MARK'S DECEMBER 2021

Dear Members and Friends of St. Mark's,

*Yes, we need a little Christmas,  
Right this very minute,  
Candles in the window,  
Carols at the spinet.  
Yes, we need a little Christmas,  
Right this very minute.  
Need a little Christmas, now.  
-Jerry Herman.*

As the pandemic continues, as gas prices rise, as violence in our world escalates with each passing day, that song seems to be more and more appropriate. We need a change! We need some news that is good! We need all that Christmas has to offer us.

Yes, we need all that Christmas has to offer. But what Christmas are we referencing? Sentimentality? Fantasy? Commercialism? For many this is Christmas. Christmas is a magical day. Christmas is an escape from the world. Christmas is a smile. Christmas is limited to a single day, maybe even a morning, and when the day is over, well, so is Christmas and all that Christmas has to offer.

In order for Christmas to be all that we need it to be we need to see it as more than just a day at the end of the year; we need to see it

and celebrate it for what it was and is meant to communicate, that Christ is with us; that Christ is born among us. Christmas assures us that we are loved, loved by God more than we could ever imagine. Christmas is God giving to us the greatest of all gifts, God's self. In that act of giving God proclaims that there is no longer any enmity between Creator and creation. Sins may be forgiven. Eternal life can be reality. In Christmas God declares that deity and humanity are reconciled.

For Christmas to be what we seek, what we say we need, is to celebrate Christmas as the birthday of Christ and as a celebration for all God gives us in Christ.

Do we “need a little Christmas” this year? No. We need “a lot of Christmas” this year. Christmas does not end on December 25; it begins and brings to birth in us all that is life in Christ. May we all receive what God in Christ shares with us through the proclamation of Emmanuel, “God with us.”

Grace + Peace,  
*Pastor Brian Vasey*

## ***HAPPENING THIS MONTH:***

**ADVENT BIBLE STUDY** begins on Wednesday, December 1, 12:15 p.m. This year a Bible study during the noon hour replaces the traditional mid-week Service of the Word. Our study will be the traditional themes of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love associated with the Advent Season, and the schedule will be as follows:

- +HOPE: Luke 21:5-19, December 1***
- +PEACE: Luke 1:57-79, December 8***
- +JOY: Luke 1:39-56, December 15***
- +LOVE: John 3:16-21, December 21***

We will meet in Fellowship Hall 12:15-12:45 p.m. No meal will be served but feel free to bring a “bag lunch” if you so desire. Coffee, water and tea will be provided. All are welcome!

Our **ANNUAL MEETING** will take place on Sunday, December 12 immediately following 9:30 a.m. Holy Communion. There will be one worship time on this Sunday. By action of our Church Council St. Mark's will host one annual meeting and not two as in previous years. The business of the meeting will be to vote on our annual 2022 budget, members of Church Council, and special projects of the congregation. Hope to see you there!

## **CHRISTMAS WORSHIP TIMES :**

- + Friday, December 24, 7 p.m. A brief “Family Friendly Service” with a message especially appropriate to children. Join us for candlelight liturgy, Holy Communion, familiar carols.
- + Friday, December 24, 10 p.m. “Traditional Holy Communion by Candlelight” substituting carols for the Christmas Liturgy.

+ Sunday, December 26, 9:30 a.m. “The Feast of Stephen”; the First Sunday of Christmas. Our theme will be why the day we remember the death of the first deacon, Stephen, is part of our Christmas tradition. The story of “Good King Wenceslaus” will be shared and sung.

## **ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SYMBOLS HELP TELL THE STORY:**

**BLUE:** The color of hope. Often Mary, Mother of Lord is dressed in blue and in some parts of Europe all newborns regardless of gender receive a “blue” blanket. Blue reminds us that our God and the message of the gospel is one of hope and not despair.

**WREATHS OF HOLLY AND IVY:** Holly and ivy are symbols of our Lord's passion, death and resurrection. Advent and Christmas begin the story of God's love. They should never be separated from it. The red berries of holly remind us of the blood of Jesus. The red bow on wreaths (which should always be at the top not the bottom of the wreath), remind us how the love (blood) of Jesus mingles down upon all the world. The green color of wreaths and swags remind us of God love and life eternal (ever-living and ever-green).



**PINE AND GARLANDS:** Reminders of God's gift of life eternal. God “wraps” this world in a message of love, life eternal and love.



**BRANCHES OF CEDAR:** Symbol of royalty. Cedar is the “wood of kings” and was used to construct the Temple of Jerusalem. Cedar reminds us that Jesus is the “New Temple” who enfolds us and calls us to worship.

**CANDY CANE:** Red stripes are reminiscent of the “stripes of Jesus' crucifixion”. White is the color of purity and life eternal. The cane shape can be seen as a shepherd's crook (the good shepherd and the shepherds who came to worship Jesus) and when inverted becomes a “J” for Jesus.



**LIGHTS:** Jesus is the “Light of the World.”

**ANGEL:** Angels tell the news of Jesus' birth.

**STAR:** A “star” guided the wise men to Jesus (the event known as Epiphany).



**MISLETOE:** An ancient symbol of peace calling to mind Jesus as Prince of Peace (hence the kiss of peace).

There are many symbols, traditions and decorations which tell the story of Jesus among us. Those listed here are some of the more popular. What are your family's symbols, decorations and traditions? How do they “tell the story?”

### **A PRAYER BEFORE OPENNING CHRISTMAS GIFTS:**

Lord Jesus Christ, as we gather to open gifts scattered beneath this tree, turn our eyes and hearts toward you, the greatest gift ever given. Amen.

### **CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:**

Monday- Thursday 9 a.m.-Noon  
Friday Church Office Closed

**THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED MONDAY, DECEMBER 27.**

### **BEST WISHES FOR A BLESSED CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY AND HEALTHY 2022!**

The St. Mark's Church Staff:  
Pastor Brian Vasey  
Mary Beth Lingle (Parish Secretary and Administrative Assistant)  
Sam Robinson (Organist and Choir Director)  
Lou DeSeau (Sexton)  
Jackie Baysore (Bookkeeper)

**Please continue to hold Bernadette Jones,  
and Lou and Linda DeSeau in prayer.  
Cards and calls are always welcome:**

**Bernadette Jones  
665 Fifth Ave.  
Williamsport, PA 17701**

**Lou and Linda DeSeau  
2211 Webb Street  
Williamsport, PA 17701**

**2022 OFFERING ENVELOPE  
ALERT**

**Beginning Sunday, November 21,  
offering envelopes for 2022 have  
been available in the narthex.**

Please help us save postage by taking  
yours and the envelopes of anyone you  
know who is homebound. Please  
contact the church office at 570-323-  
4619 if you have any questions or if  
you are not receiving envelopes and  
would like to have them.

**ALL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2021  
MUST BE IN THE CHURCH  
OFFICE BY DECEMBER 31.  
THANK YOU !!**

**Crop Walk 2021**

Thank you to Michael Ochs, Pastor  
Vasey and Owen Gair for representing  
St. Mark's at the CROP walk on  
October 10. Our congregation raised  
\$920.00 and we truly appreciate all  
who donated! The sum of \$230.00  
stayed locally and \$690.00 will be  
distributed by Church World Service

nationally and internationally, to help  
people who are hungry. We walked to  
represent the millions of people who  
walk miles every day in search of food  
and water. We hope you can join us in  
2022! ~ Brenda Gair



The Outreach Committee and the Faith  
and Fellowship Committee would like  
to **THANK YOU** for the wonderful  
support of Operation Christmas Child  
this year. Due to your generous  
donations, we were able to pack **50**  
beautiful shoeboxes, as well as cover  
the \$450.00 shipping costs. Not only  
did we pack 50 shoeboxes, 12 of those  
were filled with "Grow With Me"  
shoes – a true blessing indeed! The  
impact that these gifts will 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 in their hearts.

Thank you again for your support of  
the worldwide ministry. We look

forward to working with you again in 2022!

## Outreach Committee Notes for "The Lion"

December 2021

### Be the Lifeline Patients Need:

#### Give Blood



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The Outreach Committee in collaboration with the Northcentral PA Chapter of the American Red Cross will hold a **Blood Drive on Friday, December 10, 2021 from 11:00 a.m. – 3:00p.m.in Fellowship Hall.** Please consider being a donor as the Red Cross experiences critical shortages of blood during the holiday season. Call 1-800-733-2767 or visit [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) and enter: "St. Marks" to schedule an appointment.

Work commitments and health issues prevent all of our committee members from assisting at this event. We are in need of volunteers to assist in bringing equipment into Fellowship Hall, greeting donors, serving snacks and helping to return equipment to the Red Cross van at the end of the Blood Drive. All equipment is packed in suitcases with wheels. We work in two-hour shifts. If you could lend a hand on this day, please contact Becky Miller Pryor at 570-971-4585.

## Sharing in the Caring

The Bible states, "For the poor will never cease out of the land; therefore, I command you, you shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in the land. (Deuteronomy 15:11 RSV)

The Outreach Committee has been blest with a quantity of paper Polish stars handcrafted by Lou Ann Zeigler. Her only request is that they benefit a good cause. After some thought, these stars will benefit the United Churches Food Pantry. Mona Rundio, Coordinator, states there is a need for \$5.00 and \$10.00 supermarket gift cards to be used by clients for the purchase of meat, dairy, fresh fruit and vegetables.

The Polish stars are free to anyone who wishes to have one. Our only request is that you consider making a modest monetary donation, that when combined with other donations, will be used to purchase supermarket gift cards for the United Churches Food Pantry. Stars will be available in the Narthex before each service during Advent.

Please consider supporting our other ongoing collections and projects during this special time of year.



## Ongoing Collections at St. Mark's:

- **United Churches Food Pantry:** Needed are fall/winter side dishes, pancake syrup, canned vegetables, cake and dessert mixes.
- **Shepherd of the Streets:** Needed are shampoo, conditioner, bodywash and toothbrushes for adults and children, feminine hygiene products, paper towels, Kleenex, hand and dish soap.
- **Blessing Boxes at New Covenant UCC:** Easily prepared food and non-perishable foods like Cup of Soups, individual packs of crackers and cookies, microwave mac & cheese, ramen noodles and individual boxes of cereal are needed. Socks for men, either new or gently used, are also needed
- **Sojourner Truth Ministries:** Bleach, Dawn dish detergent, aluminum foil and cooking oil are needed.

**Many of the items requested for these ministries are perfect for use in the Advent bags.**

**Donations to the Food Panty, Shepherd of the Streets, the Blessing Boxes or to Sojourner Truth Ministries may be placed on the tables in the narthex.**



## Ongoing Events at Redeemer Lutheran:

- **Community Dinner** on Thursday, December 9, 2021 beginning at 5:00 p.m.  
All are welcome. This is a take-out meal available at the curb.
- **Thank You for Dessert:** The Outreach Committee thanks members of Church Council and the Personnel Committee for their donations of dozens and dozens of cookies for Redeemer's November Community Dinner. We are certain those who came for a meal enjoyed not only the meal but also the dessert.
- **Daniel's Closet** Distribution of free seasonal clothing on Saturday, December 18, 2021 from 8:30 – 11:00 a.m. Winter weather brings the need for warmer clothing and sturdier shoes for adults and children. Blankets and afghans are also accepted.

**Please note this distribution is one week earlier due to Christmas.**

- **Donated Clothing** may be dropped off at Redeemer on Thursday, December 9, 2021 from 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. This is the same date as the community dinner. If you have a large quantity of clothing that cannot wait until the monthly drop off, please contact Barb Horn at 570-974-3744 to arrange a time to meet at Redeemer Lutheran.

### **Gifts for Danville State Hospital**

As we have done in years past, we will be collecting Christmas gifts for the residents of Danville State Hospital. 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. This need is greatest for those residents who arrive at the hospital in November or December.

**Items being requested this year for both men and women include socks, hats, gloves, scarves, PJ's, nightgowns, packs of batteries (size AA and AAA), inexpensive wallets and watches. Clothing in sizes large and up are needed for both men and women.**

**Regular sizes of body wash, shampoo, conditioner and body lotion 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.

**Donations for Danville State Hospital are due Sunday, December 5, 2021.**

### **Christmas Party at the Selinsgrove Center**



For the second year in a row, our annual in-person Christmas party for the Ladies of CM-6 at the Selinsgrove Center has been cancelled due to the pandemic. As disheartening as this 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 cozy slipper socks, 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.

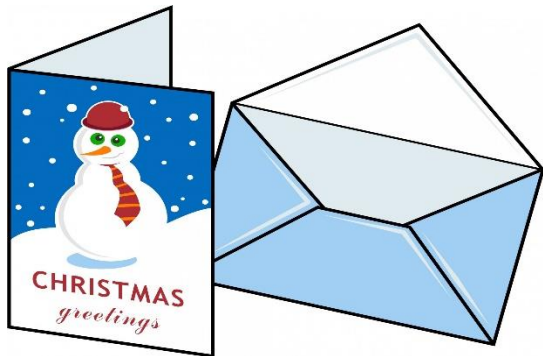
Monetary donations may be made payable to St. Mark's with the memo line indicating "Selinsgrove Party." Thank you in advance for any help you are able to give.

**Donations for the Ladies of CM-6 are due by Sunday, December 12, 2021**

### **Christmas Greetings for Special Concern Folks**

The Outreach Committee will provide Christmas cards on Sunday, December 12, 2021 to congregation members to mail to our Special Concern Folks and others we do not see as often as we wish.

Please consider taking a card or two from the table in the narthex, write a brief message, sign your name, apply postage and send it in time for Christmas. Thank you in advance for any assistance you can give.



## DEVOTIONAL MATERIALS

### AVAILABLE

December has arrived and with it the season of Advent! A variety of devotional materials may be found in the Narthex and as you exit the Nave to help prepare our hearts and minds for the birth of Christ Jesus. We encourage you to take one of these booklets home to use daily during this month of preparation. We pray that these devotions may guide your heart and quiet your soul throughout this crazy, hectic, but most importantly, Holy season.

### Musical Events at St. Mark's

West Branch Chorale presents *Beautiful Savior* – Brian Scott Director and Kristin Ivers, Pianist. The concert will be Monday, December 6 at 7:00p.m. in the nave. Masks are required and a free-will offering will be taken.

The Williamsport Civic Chorus presents “*A Rutter Christmas*”, the music of John Rutter on Friday, December 17 at 7:00 p.m. in the nave. Tickets are \$12 at the door for general admission and \$10 for students and seniors.

### **Anniversaries**

PRYOR, Becky Miller & Tom 12/21

### **Birthdays**

ELKIN, Maria	12/01
JONES, Sara	12/01
OTT, Rob	12/02
MILLER, Robert	12/03
SCHRECKENGAST, Laura	12/07
ELKIN, Emma	12/09
LARSON, Ernest	12/12
COMERFORD, Alverda	12/14
KAUFMAN, Betty	12/16
GILBERT, Derek	12/17
VOLLMER, Marlene	12/17
CLOKEY, Ryan	12/18
JENSEN, Michael	12/18
HOPLER, Martha	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



# Church Council Minutes

## November 15, 2021 6:00 p.m.

### Treasurer's Report:

- Jackie Kinney provided statement of activities through the month of October as well as copies of the proposed 2022 budget.
- A condensed budget sheet will be provided for the annual report.
- Discussion on specified uses for Welker Fund.
- Jackie announced her resignation as treasurer effective at the end of this year.

### Coronavirus Update:

- Worship will continue with safety procedures that are in place.

### "Lion" Distribution:

- Decision regarding electronic mailing of "The Lion" was revisited.
- **M (Herb Poff — 2nd by Ralph Zeigler) SC: CC: 21.11.1** Motion approved to continue to distribute "The Lion" to all members of the congregation through bulk mailing. "The Lion" will also be available online on the St. Mark's webpage.

### Pastor's Report:

- Discussion regarding a contact person for the Billtown Brass concert on Nov. 20. Herb will open the doors on Saturday morning.
- \*\* A plan is needed when outside groups use our facilities.**

### Communications:

- Caulking of the stained glass windows in the Nave is on hold.
- Deb Buckman was given the floor to voice thoughts and concerns.

### Committee Reports:

**Safety Committee:** No update at this time.

**Property Committee:** Update provided by Ed Gair

- Working on repairs for out-of-order toilets.
- Estimates received for tree removal of 6 trees.
- Meeting with Jeff Fox on details for all snow removal, including sidewalks.
- Ice maker serviced and back in use.
- **M (Herb Poff — 2nd by Ed Gair)**

**SC: CC: 21.11.2** Motion approved to accept Connie Shaible's donation of a White Kousa Dogwood tree to be planted in memory of Bob Shaible on the North side of the building.

- **M (Property Committee — 2nd Pam Jensen) SC: CC: 21.11.3**

Motion approved to hire Eagle Janitorial for a deep cleaning of our building.

**Property Committee:** Update provided by Herb Poff

- Four parking spaces will be taken and used as space for snow removal in our parking lot. Parking spaces will be reassigned as needed.
- Waiting on additional quotes for updating the sound system.
- Proposals received from Anderson Signs and Stetts Signs regarding replacing our current signboard with an LED, full color signboard, same size as what we currently have.

- **M (Ray Huff — 2nd Vicki Haussmann) SC: CC: 21.11.4**

Motion approved to present the replacing of the sound system and the outside signboard during the December 12th congregation meeting contingent on incoming prices.

**Motion Withdrawn (Ray Huff — 2nd Pam Jensen)**

**- M (Property Committee — 2nd Ray Huff) SC: CC: 21.11.5**

Motion approved to reallocate capital funds from air conditioning to wireless sound system.

**Faith and Fellowship:** Update provided by Vicki Haussmann

- 50 shoeboxes were packed for Operation Christmas Child
- Advent wreath making Nov. 28th at 9:15 a.m.

**Outreach Committee:** Update provided by Becky Pryor

- Card Ministry continues. Congregation will send Thanksgiving and Christmas cards provided by the committee to special concerns folks.

- Cookies will be provided for Redeemer's/St. Michael's Dec. Community Dinner.

- Christmas collections for Danville State Hospital and the Selinsgrove Center will take place.

- Blood Drive scheduled for Dec. 10th in Fellowship Hall.

**Personnel Committee:** Update provided by Becky Pryor

- Staff evaluations have been completed.
- Need for temporary custodial service is being looked into.

**Worship and Music:** Update provided by Ray Huff

- Advent Bible study to meet Wednesdays at 12:15 beginning Dec. 1.

- Envelopes are available for ordering Christmas flowers.

- Christmas Eve services will be at 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.

- Dec. 26th will be a single service beginning at 9:30 a.m.

- Discussion on moving to a single service tabled.

**Constitution Committee:** Update provided by Pam Jensen

- Will be meeting in the near future.

**Nominating Committee:** Update provided by Linda Rosini

- Search is ongoing.

**Reminders:**

- Annual Congregational Meeting is December 12, 2021. There will be a single service at 9:30 a.m.

- Next Council meeting Dec. 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 a.m.



**In Loving Memory**

To the glory of God in loving memory of John Robert “Bob” Shaible, a White Kousa Dogwood Tree has been planted on the north side of St. Mark's Lutheran Church. We thank the Shaible family for suggesting this “living memorial” in Bob’s honor.



## **Workers for God – December**

### **Communion Assistants**

#### **8:00 a.m.**

12/05/21 Becky Pryor  
12/12/21 Drew Haussmann  
12/19/21 Becky Pryor

#### **9:30 a.m.**

12/26/21 Drew Haussmann

#### **10:30 a.m.**

12/05/21 Ken & Laura Schreckengast  
12/12/21 Carl & Audrey Albright  
12/19/21 Deb Buckman & Mindy  
Wentzel

### **Christmas Eve**

12/24/21 (7:00 p.m.) Ray Huff & Gregg  
Dancho  
12/24/21 (10:00 p.m.) Gregg & Kathy  
Dancho

### **Lectors**

#### **8:00 a.m.**

12/05/21 Becky Pryor  
12/12/21 Vicki Haussmann  
12/19/21 Ruth Rees

#### **9:30 a.m.**

12/26/21 Drew Haussmann

#### **10:30 a.m.**

12/05/21 Pam Jensen  
12/12/21 Deb Buckman  
12/19/21 Mel Wentzel

### **Christmas Eve**

12/24/21 (7:00 p.m.) Ray Huff  
12/24/21 (10:00 p.m.) Ray Huff

### **Ushers**

#### **8:00 a.m.**

12/05/21 Miller/Poff  
12/12/21 Miller/Poff  
12/19/21 Miller/Poff

#### **9:30 a.m.**

12/26/21 Miller/Poff

#### **10:30 a.m.**

12/05/21 Jensen Team  
12/12/21 Fortin Team  
12/19/21 Albright Team

### **Christmas Eve**

12/24/21 (7:00 p.m.) Maggs Team  
12/24/21 (10:00 p.m.) Jensen Team

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### **Ushers:**

Gary Weber-Head Usher

### **Albright Team:**

Carl Albright, Captain: Brenda, Owen and  
Levi Gair

### **Maggs Team**

Tim Maggs, Captain: Carl Hieber, Charlie  
Fortin

### **Jensen Team**

Mike Jensen, Captain: Gary Weber, Sean  
Jensen, Shelby Weber

### **Fortin Team**

Matt Fortin, Captain: Glenn Yaple, Bud  
Doebler

**STAFF OFFICE HOURS**  
**Pastor: The Rev. Brian Vasey**  
 Mon-Thu 9a.m.-12p.m. & by appointment  
**Church Organist: Sam Robinson**  
 Summer: Mon 1p.m.-3p.m. & by appointment  
 appointment  
**Sexton: Lou DeSean**  
 Sun, Mon, Wed, Thu 8:30a.m.-1p.m.  
**Bokkeeper: Jackie Baysore**  
 Tue 8a.m.-12:00p.m.  
**Secretary: Mary Beth Lingle**  
 Mon-Thu 9a.m.-1p.m.  
**Friday Church Office is Closed**

**Church Office 570-323-4619 Fax 570-323-2452**  
**Website: stmarkswilliamsport.org**  
**Main e-mail: [stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org](mailto:stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org)**

Rev. Brian Vasey, Pastor  
[bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org](mailto:bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org)  
 570-323-4619 or 570-323-1415

Sam Robinson, Church Organist  
[srobinson@stmarkswilliamsport.org](mailto:srobinson@stmarkswilliamsport.org)  
[jbaysore@stmarkswilliamsport.org](mailto:jbaysore@stmarkswilliamsport.org)  
[stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org](mailto:stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org)

Lou DeSean, Environmental Serv.  
[stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org](mailto:stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org)  
[l10152@yahoo.com](mailto:l10152@yahoo.com)  
 home 570-971-4585

Linda Rosini, Council President  
 Becky Miller Pryor, Vice-President  
 Wanda Fortin, Secretary (council)  
 Jackie Kinney, Treasurer  
 Matt Fortin, Stephen Ministry  
 Janet Jones, Parish Life  
[jmacookie@comcast.net](mailto:jmacookie@comcast.net)  
 Debra Buckman  
[dbuckman@pct.edu](mailto:dbuckman@pct.edu) or [dabuckkman65@gmail.com](mailto:dabuckkman65@gmail.com)  
 Family Promise Coordinator  
 Prayer Chain-coordinator needed  
 Sally Bjornstad, Altar Flowers  
 5 70-494-6637

**ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**142 MARKET ST.**  
**WILLIAMSPORT, PA 17701**

Address Service Requested

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