

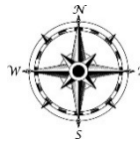
The Annual Report

St. Mark's Lutheran Church
142 Market Street
Williamsport, Pennsylvania 17701

May 14, 2017

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ARCHIVES & ST. MARK'S WEBSITE

The collection of archival material in the collection of the Church continues to grow, most particularly by way of the preservation of the memory of events through photographs and articles on our Website, www.stmarkswilliamsport.org. Also, more traditional prints of photographs have been periodically posted in the Narthex and hallways.

The digital preservation of photographs, articles and materials has multiple purposes. Our members are able to revisit events and or to view events they may have missed. At the same time, the Website serves as an introduction to the community of St. Mark's activities and ministries. Most importantly, all material included on the site is preserved for those who come after us, performing the primary function of any archive. The St. Mark's digital archive never shrinks in size.

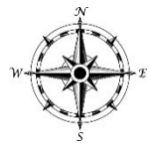
The Lion newsletter, is preserved online for all years beginning with 2005. Older newsletters have been preserved for many past years in paper form, they are not as accessible. Recently, the Publicity Committee has been issuing an email newsletter, that works hand-in-hand with the website and *Lion*. If you are not getting the emails, contact the office to add your name to the email list

The website still contains historical material: construction history, pastor biographies, annual reports, pictorial directories and much more.

We are always willing to post articles or photographs on the Website, concerning St. Mark's member activities or Church events. Give or email items to Gary Weber, gweber@stmarkswilliamsport.org.

Anyone interested in working with the History Committee, please contact me. Your Archivist would like to schedule meetings of the History Committee, if sufficient interest in working on our paper archives is expressed.

**Gary Weber,
Archivist**



From the PARISH REGISTER

BAPTISMS

Gage Pittenger.....Oct. 16, 2016
Jayden Roberts.....Nov. 20, 2016

FIRST COMMUNION

Levi Gair.....Nov. 20,2016
Hudson Ott.....Nov. 20,2016
Nolan Ott.....Nov. 20,2016
Jayden Roberts.....Nov. 20, 2016

AFFIRMATION/CONFIRMATION

Sean Jensen.....Sept. 18, 2016
Dylan Ott.....Sept. 18, 2016

RECEIVED by AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

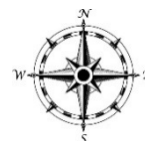
Paul Young.....Dec. 11, 2016
Sarah Young.....Dec. 11, 2016
Susan Kalabacas.....Dec. 11, 2016

MEMBER FUNERALS

Lawrence Bair.....July 25, 2016
Henrietta Tyson.....Sept. 23, 2016
Shirley Dieffenbach.....March 27, 2017

NON-MEMBER FUNERALS

Gary Rinehart.....May 27, 2016
Shuman Miller.....July 11, 2017
Mary Ditchfield.....July 18, 2016
Jack F. Bastian.....July 28, 2017



FINANCE COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Finance Committee is to proclaim Jesus Christ to each other and to all the world by managing the financial resources of the congregation.

During this past year the committee's duties included:

1. Reviewed and evaluated the monthly financial reports;

2. Met semi-annually (February & August) to review the investment portfolio with Wilmington Trust;
3. Prepared the 2016 draft budget based on budget requests provided by the various committees. Said draft budget was presented to the Congregation Council and Congregation Assembly for final action. Ordered 2016 offering envelopes;
4. Reviewed and approved proposed expenditures beyond those budgeted and made recommendations to the Council for final action.



INTENTIONAL INTERIM PASTOR

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

As you read through this collection of reports, you will note that as a congregation you have experienced a good amount of change. It was about this time last year that Pastor Elkin announced his retirement. About the time that he retired your music director resigned. Just about three months ago you got to experience “Pastor Present”, your intentional interim pastor. God willing in about a year, possibly sooner possibly later you will be getting ready to welcome your future pastor.

Some people, even Lutherans, say that we don’t like to change things. However, we do change a lot of things and we even get good at it. That is what this transitional time is about. We’re getting a bit more accustomed to seeing things from different angles. This means that we, including me, are learning how to change and adapt to the change that is all around us.

What to expect while you’re expecting the arrival of a new pastor:

We’ve gone through phase one: Getting to Know You.

Next comes the formation of the call committee. We could call this phases two and three. Once the call committee gets used to working with each other phase two is over. Third phase is gathering information from the membership and the community. You will be hearing progress reports about every other Sunday.

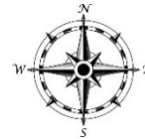
Phase three ends with the completion of the Ministry Site Profile (MSP). This is when the call committee becomes what some of you may

remember as the Call Committee of 1995/96. The Call Committee will begin interviewing candidates, arrange possible visits to where the pastor is currently serving, work toward consensus about whether this candidate or the other is the best one for the congregation, work on a compensation package with council, arrange for a congregational vote, extend a call, wait for a positive response, and finally welcome the new pastor.

Phase five involves planning the arrival, service of installation and the work of getting to know and work with the new pastor. Usually around time of the interviews you may notice a subtle change. Being oriented toward the future you may not even notice that Pastor Present is turning into Pastor Past. For me that is a wonderful time of realizing that something new is being born and that I got to be part of that process with you.

In the meantime, remember, our Lord is accompanying us every step of the way. Pray for me as I pray for you, always in Christ Jesus.

**The Rev. James West,
Intentional Interim Pastor**



LIAISON COMMITTEE

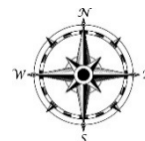
It is the task of the liaison committee to proclaim Jesus Christ to each other and to all the world by strengthening the connection between the Little Lambs Pre-School and the congregation.

Our group meets on a quarterly basis to discuss dates of mutual interest, consider requests for additional space and attach costs to space issues.

We feel we have enjoyed a wonderful relationship with Little Lambs and that having them at St. Mark’s is mutually beneficial. Little Lambs are celebrating their 30th anniversary this year – several of those years have been at St. Mark’s.

Pastor Elkin, now Pastor West, Lou DeSeau, Bernadette Jones and I meet with Holly Tillman, school director and Debbie Newbold and consult other church committees as needed.

Joyce S. Hershberger, Chairman



MEMORIALS COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Memorials Committee is to proclaim Jesus Christ to each other and to the whole world through the thoughtful use of

Special gifts to the congregation given in memory of members and friends of the parish.

Gifts have been received in memory of the following members of the parish in the past year:

*Beulah Wrede
Shuman Miller
Luella Bair
Larry Bair
Mary Ditchfield
Henrietta Tyson*

Carl & Beverly Hieber, Co-Chairs



MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE

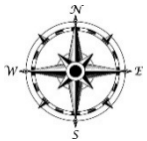
The purpose of the Mutual Ministry Committee is to proclaim Jesus Christ to each other and to the world by keeping the Pastor and staff advised of conditions within the congregation and to interpret to the congregation the ministry of the professional leaders.

During this past year the committee continued to read the book *Rebuilt* about how a parish was transformed. As we read various chapters, we discussed ways we could use some of the strategies presented in the book.

In addition to reading the book, the committee worked with the other committees in the congregation to review and edit, as appropriate, the "Working Descriptions of the Committee Functions". This was done to make sure they reflect current procedures and practices. That process was finished by the committee and was submitted to the church council for its review.

In recent months, the committee has been meeting monthly with Pastor West. We will continue to do that during his tenure at St. Mark's.

Kathy Eshelman, Chair



OUTREACH COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Outreach Ministry Committee is to proclaim Jesus Christ to each other and to the entire world by providing opportunities to share Christian love. To this end, the committee will address social needs by leading the congregation in extending Christian compassion and helpfulness to the aged, ill, orphaned, homeless and persons of all ages in need.

Fulfilling these goals would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of the

congregation. **Our outreach to the congregation included**

1. Increasing membership in the Outreach Committee. Members include Karen Boone, Audrey Comerford, Deb Holmes, Michele Owen, Barbara Thomas and Becky Miller Pryor.
2. Expanding the card ministry at St. Mark's. Congregation members regularly send cards to those who are ill and to those we do not see as often as we would wish. This committee participates with that work. Additionally we created an opportunity for the congregation to deliver a fall pumpkin and card and to mail Christmas, Valentine's Day and Easter cards to our Special Concern folks and others.
3. Reaching out to a family whose child was experiencing a catastrophic illness. We led a campaign enabling the congregation to offer encouraging cards, gift cards and monetary donations during a time of hospitalization and subsequent recovery.
4. Facilitating a monetary collection for the Reinsburrow and Wagner families after a near fatal car accident.
5. Increasing the visiting of folks on the Special Concerns list by delivering altar flowers that are arranged into small bouquets. A priority is given to folks experiencing an illness or hospitalization. Our goal is to visit one or two folks per week.
6. Organizing the annual Christmas Caroling and Visit to special Concern Folks and others. Much help was given by Bernadette Jones and Second Saturday participants in baking dozens of cookies for our visit.
7. Hosting the first annual Spring Sing with a light lunch followed by visiting our Special Concern folks and others with a small gift and singing.
8. Re-established our Soup and Bread ministry for congregation members experiencing illness or recent hospitalization. Food Service volunteers keep us stocked in homemade soup.
9. Partnering with the Christian Education Committee to collect items and pack Operation Christmas Child boxes in November 2017.

Our outreach to the community included

10. Hosting a meal packaging event at St. Mark's. This event brought participants from other Lutheran churches and throughout the community to assist with packaging. The 20,000 meals were distributed free of charge to local food banks for distribution to those in need.

11. Assisting with the hosting of homeless children and their families through our association with Family Promise of Lycoming County. Many members of our congregation have made significant commitments to this ministry which occurs four times per year. We are honored to volunteer during hosting weeks.
12. Hosting the community on our front lawn for our annual July Fourth festivities under the leadership of this committee with considerable help from the congregation. We provided refreshments, information about St. Mark's, a patriotic program in the Nave and good cheer to many people.
13. Providing food and monetary donations to St. Anthony's Center.
14. Collecting non-perishable food items throughout winter, spring and summer for the UCLC Food Bank.
15. Collecting hygiene items throughout the year and making monetary donations to the Shepherd of the Streets Emergency Fund.
16. Hosting two luncheons at the most recent Habitat for Humanity build on Memorial Avenue in Williamsport.
17. Entertaining the ladies of CM-6 at the Selinsgrove Center with songs, stories, and gifts for the ladies and their caregivers. It is our opinion we are better Christians for making this trip each year to visit with this special group of ladies.
18. Providing general gifts of sweatshirts, socks, pajamas, slippers, and the like to be used as Christmas gifts to the residents of the Danville State Hospital.
19. Supporting the work of The Pregnancy Care Center, Family Promise and Daniel's Closet by providing clothing and baby items through our association with the Newberry Branch of NGA (Needlework Guild of America.)
20. Providing monthly support with clothing, food and our presence at Daniel's Closet and Redeemer Lutheran's free community meal.
21. Congregation members provide service to our community by volunteering at Daniel's Closet and UCLC worship services at local nursing homes and other institutions.

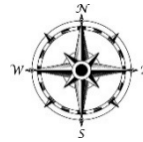
As this committee looks to the year ahead, there are goals we wish to pursue. They include

22. Partnering with the Youth and Family Ministry coordinators on Helping Hands Day tentatively scheduled for July.
23. Hosting, in partnership with the American Red Cross, a blood drive tentatively scheduled for July 21, 2017.

24. Providing assistance to any future meal packaging events in our area.
25. Considering the establishment of a free seniors' luncheon to the community.
26. Collaborating with other committees on a celebration commemorating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.
27. Recruiting additional members to this committee.
28. Partnering with other church committees on additional projects as the need arises.

We welcome the assistance of Lou DeSeau, Pastor Elkin, before his retirement, and our current pastor, the Reverend James West in any and all ways requested. We continue to be grateful for assistance from Gary Weber in posting this committee's activities on our web site. Opportunities to reach out in Christian love to our church family and neighbors exist. We encourage you to pray and answer Christ's call to serve.

**Respectfully submitted by Becky Miller Pryor,
Chairperson**



PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The committee continues to be hard at work reviewing the needs and administrative concerns related to staff. The chairman and Pastor Elkin met with and evaluated each staff member's job performance during the past year.

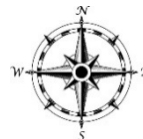
After the resignation of Pastor Elkin, the chairman began meeting with the staff for the purpose of supervising their respective job duties.

During this time the committee began searching for a church musician. This has become a difficult task since part time applicants are sparse.

The current members of the Personnel Committee are: Walt Haussmann, Ray Huff, Lorraine Barone, Gary Weber, and Pastor West.

As chairman, I am grateful to each committee member for their diligence and perseverance.

**Walt Haussmann,
Chairman**



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

To Know Christ and to make Christ known.

Our mission statement is quite straightforward and is crucial to our ministry. If what we are considering does not correlate with our mission statement, we probably need to rethink what we are considering.

We as Christians in this wonderful country are

free to worship as we please. At St. Mark's we worship in a way that we hope pleases God. Our church is not centered on what we can get out of it; it is centered on how we can worship, listen, sing, pray and share in all that God has graciously given us. We have inspirational services through which we hear the Word of God. We have excellent programs involving teaching and learning the ways of Christ and His admonition to preach the Word.

We celebrate the Sacraments in many ways. We are truly blessed to be able to commune each week. We also have home communion visitors who share the Word and Sacrament with those members who are unable to come to the church. The church comes to them.

This year certainly presented a challenge to St. Mark's. Knowing that change is the only constant, we saw two major personnel changes in the St. Mark's staff. Pastor Elkin concluded his 20-year yeoman effort in bringing so much of his talent and vision to our church family. His well-earned retirement gives him the chance to pursue his interests outside of the church. We wish him well in his retirement.

With much cooperation from the Bishop's office, we welcomed Pastor James Erwin West as our intentional interim pastor. Council was unanimous in wanting a full-time pastor who would give closure from the previous pastor and prepare the way for the call process for our new pastor. Pastor West's experience as an intentional interim pastor will aid immeasurably in our transition process. We are blessed to have had him come to us from the Navy via Colorado.

We also saw our music director leave for greener pastures. Her service to the church was greatly appreciated and we wish her well in Hummelstown. With her talent and experience, Donna Elkin has brought the music program to even greater heights while serving as our interim music director.

We have many ways in which we can provide for our brothers and sisters. At St. Mark's, we are continually looking outside of our doors to those in need in our neighborhood. In the past few years, Pastor Elkin was very active in promoting the Family Promise program, to help homeless families. We are blessed to have a quintet of coordinators: Donna Elkin, Deborah Maggs, Phil Thomas, Sally Bjornstad, and Vicki Hausmann ensure that all works smoothly during our hosting weeks.

Our efforts in the past year extended well beyond supporting Family Promise. With a strong Outreach Committee we continue to support the Shepherd of the Streets, local ministries, and those who come to the door for a chance at daily bread.

These and many other efforts will continue to be the focus of St. Mark's social outreach in our community.

We have opportunities to reach out to others in the community as well. We have many new neighbors in the community. We have welcomed new members of the community through publicity in the nearby hotels, our Fourth of July programs, and in having community presentations in the church. Visitors get a solid recognition during the service and a written communication of welcome is mailed that afternoon. The feeling is that this is our church, and we want it to be your church as well.

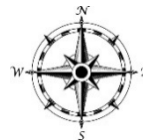
I am continually amazed at the generosity of our members. We have the usual tasks of supporting the physical part of the buildings, the grounds, and the staff. We take care of the day-to-day needs in our finances and we are quick to help whatever cause or need occurs. We have undergone two huge projects in the past two years: new boilers and roofing issues. We are not only givers; we are cheerful givers.

Over the years I enjoyed working with Pastor Elkin and now Pastor West, the staff, council and the committees, which support the congregation and its endeavors. Council has worked very hard to ensure that what we do starts with a God-centered focus. Three of our council members are Authorized Lay Worship Leaders. Their services will be needed as churches face retirements and fewer pastors to fill those positions as well as those needed for other reasons.

We are a congregational family. Families face challenges at times. Sometimes it is wise to get an outside look at what we do. The Reconciliation Team process took a lot of time, effort, and patience. The Congregational Council and Pastor Elkin have worked very diligently in following the recommendations of the Reconciliation Team. A summary of this process will be included in a separate report in this publication.

St. Mark's is alive and well. Thanks to all for their work this year. Their reports follow. Challenges face us to be sure. We face the future knowing that great things are happening at St. Mark's! Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your president for the last six years.

Ray Huff



PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Publicity Committee is to proclaim Jesus Christ to each other and to our community by using every available and prudent means of communication to invite, encourage and inform persons both inside and outside the congregation, and to promote the

congregation's activities.

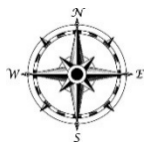
The St. Mark's Publicity Committee has risen like a Phoenix from the ashes! In recent years, Council determined that a more targeted focus should be placed on publicity efforts as part of our mission to know Christ and to make Christ known. To that end, Council approved additional hours for Michele Owen to assist with these efforts. Pam Jensen was appointed to chair the committee, and Gary Weber agreed to lend his considerable technological talents to the committee's digital outreach.

After updating the Publicity Committee's mission statement and objectives, we began work in November with publication of an article about the upcoming Christmas Carol performance in the Williamsport Sun-Gazette and the Webb Weekly. In January, we placed an information sheet in the Lion and in several Sunday bulletins, requesting updated member contact information. Michele and Laura gathered this data and updated our records as the first step to achieving our committee's first major goal, that of developing a consistent email member outreach.

Once the member database was updated, the committee designed our inaugural email newsletter, and Gary programmed the code so that it would appear consistent on varying forms of electronic media. The congregation responded positively to this new means of communication, so it was decided to continue the email newsletters on an as-needed basis at first, with a goal of developing a weekly communication. Two more email newsletters have since been disseminated, one featuring the Lenten service schedule and one highlighting Easter services and activities.

Going forward, the committee will continue the email outreach, and our efforts to have our activities advertised in local print, radio, and electronic media. We also plan to enhance the use of the St. Mark's sign, and perhaps request that Council replace this sign with a digital sign (Drew Haussmann is excited to hear that!). We encourage all St. Mark's members to get involved with publicity efforts by attending events and by alerting committee members to public outreach opportunities.

Pam Jensen, Chair



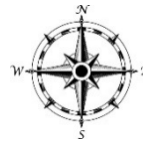
STEPHEN MINISTRY

The purpose of Stephen Ministry is to proclaim Jesus Christ to each other and to all the world by providing a process in which Stephen Leaders train, organize and supervise lay persons known as Stephen Ministers to provide distinctively Christian care to others.

St. Mark's enrolled in the Stephen series in December 1997. Stephen Ministers continue to be linked in one-one-one relationships with care receivers. Our Stephen Ministers meet for guidance, support and relevant continuing education. St. Mark's currently has 8 Stephen Ministers; and, with the assistance of the congregation, Stephen Ministry will continue to identify potential care receivers and provide support to those in need.

If you have any questions, or want more information about Stephen Ministry, feel free to contact Kathy at (570) 433-0522.

Kathy Eshelman, Coordinator



STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Our mission statement contains many elements that are crucial to our ministry.

To Know Christ, and to make Christ known.

The purpose of the Stewardship Committee is to proclaim Jesus Christ to each other and to all the world by initiating programs for the development of good stewardship attitudes in the members of the congregation concerning our time, talents, spiritual gifts, money, and other resources.

Through Stewardship we share what God has first given us so that our service and love may be shared with the community and the world. Our sharing of the Word of God with our time, talent, and possessions give us an opportunity to serve God.

Consecration Sunday was on October 2, 2016. Prior to that Audrey Comerford, Matt Fortin and Joyce Hershberger gave Temple Talks. Our own Authorized Lay Worship Leader, Lou Kolb, gave the sermon on Consecration Sunday.

Our congregation's finance committee continued with the New Consecration Sunday Stewardship Program as a way to teach the biblical and spiritual principles of generous giving in our stewardship education emphasis this year.

Fifty one members signed up for the breakfast and fifty eight signed up for the lunch. More showed up for breakfast and lunch. A huge "Thank You" to the Parish Life folks and their crew for doing such a great job in not only preparation, but also in making the difficult look easy and elegant.

Pledges totaled over \$137,000.00. It has been noted that members are giving all that they can. A major hurdle is that fewer people are attending

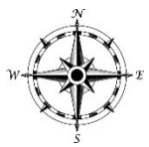
church and the other members who have in the past generously contributed have either left the church or have gone to their eternal reward.

We recognize that stewardship is much more than meeting a budget. We each have gifts of talent and time that we can give to the church, its members, and the members of the greater community.

What we need to do is to focus on what our needs are in order to serve Christ, and to work toward meeting those needs to make Him known to others. God has given us great abundance; let us give accordingly to each other.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy and Ray Huff,
Chairs, Stewardship Committee



WOMEN OF THE ELCA

The Women of St. Mark's continue to carry out the long-standing traditions of Lutheran women all over the world. We live our faith through ministry and action.

Our most exciting project this year was a very successful Bazaar/Rummage Sale in September. Again expertly headed by Becky Miller Pryor, the profit of \$1983.52 was used to send donations to twelve charities. These charities, both local and global, were Shepherd of the Streets, United Churches of Lycoming County, Camp Mt. Luther, St. Anthony's Center, Habitat for Humanity, Church Women United, Lutheran World Relief (shipping), ELCA International Disaster Response, ELCA Domestic Disaster Response, American Rescue Workers, NGA-Newberry Branch, and Family Promise.

In addition, leftover items from the sale were distributed to other local charity outlets for further aid to needy causes.

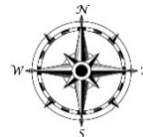
Quilting remains dear to our hearts. However, our quilting circle was only able to send 76 quilts to Lutheran World Relief last year, due to illnesses. Extra special thanks go to Ruth Sherlinski for her dedication. The other faithful members of our group are Grace Arner, Lucille Weaver, Shirley Hill, Ruth Rees, Bunny Ditchfield, Roxie Larson, Ernestine Doane, Elsie Sechler, Becky Pryor, and Audrey Comerford.

Kits and soap bars were also sent to Lutheran World Relief for distribution to people facing disaster or homelessness. These were donations from St. Mark's individuals, to whom we send thanks. \$205 was collected on Blanket Sunday to purchase blankets.

We were treated to an enjoyable Women and Children's Dinner, again organized by Bernadette and Michele. Bob Jones supervised preparing and serving a delicious meal. He was assisted by men and boys from our congregation.

As we continue our faith journey to serve Christ, we give thanks. God has blessed us with a church family who responds generously. The people of St. Mark's have supported us with donations of quilt and kit materials, soap, rummage sale items, and money. We are most grateful to you for sharing God's bounty.

Shirley Hill, Chairman
Barbara Thomas, Treasurer



WORSHIP AND MUSIC

Our mission statement contains many elements that are crucial to our ministry.

To Know Christ, and to make Christ known.

The purpose of the Worship and Music Committee by Word and Sacrament in and beyond the congregation. To this end the Committee shall see that the worship of God is conducted in good order in accordance with the Bible and the Lutheran tradition.

The Worship and Music Committee, in an oversight capacity, continued to be very busy again this year within the congregation, as well as in the community. We have two beautiful spaces for worship. The nave was sight for Sunday liturgies, weddings, funerals, concerts and other events. The chapel was utilized in many ways as was intended when it was renovated. The chapel provided a warm atmosphere for Morning Prayer, Advent and Lenten services, funeral visitations, Children's Church and more.

This was certainly a challenging year for the committee. The old year ended with Pastor Elkin's retirement and the new year saw Jungwha Kim take a music director assignment in Hummelstown. Pastor Elkin's blend of musical gifts and love of high liturgy were known throughout the area and made an unceasing impact on St. Mark's. Jungwha's musical talents, especially her mastery of the organ and piano, were outstanding as well.

The committee is pleased to recognize the musical groups serving in the church's worship: the senior choir, the adult hand bell choir, and the many groups and soloists both vocal and instrumental. Under the direction of Donna Elkin, various youth have participated during the past year as instrumentalists as well as being in the senior choir.

We are truly blessed to have some talented and giving members who share their talents and will hopefully continue for many years.

With the resignation of Jungwha Kim, we were most fortunate to have Donna Elkin assume the duties of interim director of music. Her rapport with all members of the community of musicians is most appreciated. Her mastery of the organ and ability to cheerfully improvise are marks of her professionalism and humanity. I would like to personally thank Donna Elkin for her magnificent care of our music program.

The Altar Guild was extremely active again this year with the many scheduled and unscheduled activities to keep the church supplies and articles in proper order.

Acknowledgment must be made for the diligent service of our committee members, musicians, the behind-the-scene helpers and those who share in the worship leadership roles. Without the assistance, leadership and contributions of all of them, our services to the Lord would not be as fulfilling. Again, the committee would like to express our sincere appreciation and thankfulness to Pastor Elkin for his past leadership in these roles. Likewise, we express our appreciation to Donna Zierdt Elkin and our Intentional Interim, Pastor James West, for their continuing roles and leadership in our worship and music experience.

Additional communion assistants, assisting ministers, and acolytes were introduced this year. The service opportunities are always expanding and the need for volunteers to fill these roles is always present.

We marked two firsts this year- a single-summer service and a Youth Service. Each of these ideas was generated from the findings of the reconciliation process. The committee considered the recommendation, approved it, sent it and received council approval.

We are blessed with talented youth who give of themselves on any given Sunday. The committee felt that their having a major part in the worship service would give them a chance to give of their talents in a larger way during the worship service. We will continue that program this year.

The single-summer service had a bump or two in the beginning but settled in nicely as the summer continued. Many of our members were pleased that we all had a chance to worship together and stayed later after the service to enjoy each other's fellowship. There are some concerns about Sunday School, but no change is without drawbacks. Council has approved our recommendation for the single-summer service to continue this year. It will begin on June 4.

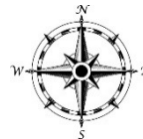
Children's Church continues to occur during

the late service on the second Sunday of every month. The children do a terrific job in taking turns at leadership in their service. The service is completed in time for the children to join all in the nave for Holy Communion.

Thanks are due for those who so graciously help in the many duties to keep things flowing throughout the entire year, especially the committee members: Roxie Larson, Sally Bjornstad, Cindy Huff, Connie Shaible, Michele Owen, Karen Boone, Lou Kolb, Walt Haussmann and Dan Ziegler.

Challenges continue each year, mainly in the areas of volunteerism, meeting parishioners' needs, and increasing our active membership. It may not be obvious to some, but it truly takes a host of people to keep the church, music and worship services ministering properly. This is most evident during the seasons of Advent and Holy Week, but the need continues every day during the year. There exist many opportunities for volunteer ministry at St. Mark's. Please feel free to contact any member of the Worship and Music committee or Pastor West if you are able to share in any of the various volunteering capacities. Together we all will continue to praise and proclaim Jesus Christ through His Word and Sacrament.

Ray Huff



YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY

The purpose of the ministry of these Coordinators is to proclaim Jesus Christ to each other and to the entire world by planning and administering the total educational program of the parish, as well as its youth and family ministry program. To this end, the Youth and Family Ministry Coordinators supervise educational opportunities, celebrations and fellowship activities for all youth and adults, in and beyond the congregation, in the Christian faith as found in the Bible and the Lutheran tradition.

1. The Christian Education Committee, Vicki Haussmann, chair, is instrumental in assisting Michele and Bernadette with plans, hands-on help, and new ideas. Gregg Dancho, Mindy Wentzel, and Audrey Comerford are also on the committee.
2. Bernadette and Michele are focused on keeping lines of communication open with our new pastor as far as informing him of events and their procedures and making themselves available as a resource regarding our congregation and community.

Christian Education:

3. For Sunday School curriculum, we use

- Sparkhouse's WHIRL program which is lectionary based. The materials are very "user friendly" and reinforce each Sunday's lesson with the children.
4. Our children were divided into the following configuration based on numbers, age, and/or grade level: preschool (2 year olds—K; grades 1 & 2; grades 3—5).
 5. Our middle school class of 6-8 graders continues with the *To Know, to Live, to Grow* program by Augsburg Fortress.
 6. The confirmation class includes six members who meet on the third Sunday of every month with their families, mentors, Pastor and Bernadette. They follow the *Making Disciples* program and do a Bible study, this year the Gospel of Luke. They all have been involved in a variety of service projects.
 7. Karen Boone teaches the high school class. The curriculum has involved topics on CDs and is currently discussing the book, "The Case for Christ." The class is consistently attended by 5-7 youth.
 8. The monthly rotation schedule for teachers continues to be successful, although volunteers are sparse.
 9. Pastor Elkin led the adult class in the Crossways room.
 10. Pastor West leads a discussion group in the Nave between services.
 11. The Middle Lounge Class for adults is led by Kathy & Gregg Dancho on a variety of subjects.
 12. For Vacation Bible School in 2016, we again joined forces with Trinity Episcopal Church to bring two counselors up from Camp Mount Luther to lead music and Bible studies for the camp. It was held here the first two nights, at Trinity for the third & fourth, and at Loyalsock pool for the last. By doing this, our cost was less than getting materials for our own, we were responsible for only two days of meals and craft supplies. Adults from both congregations led groups of children and our youth turned out in force for the entire week, leading games each night. Roughly three dozen children attended, with 12 of our teen assistants and 11 adults in teaching/support positions.
 13. A film series was presented in the Crossways Room each Sunday through the summer: *Patterns of Evidence: Exodus* and *Woodlawn*. Discussion ensued after each installment. Attendance was lower than expected, impacted by the single service.
 14. We hosted Lutheran Shared Ministry's School of Religion in October.
 15. We organized and hosted the Seventeenth Annual Youth Retreat for confirmands in January.
 16. The Way, a process of faith formation, continued this year under the direction of Mel Wentzel and Pr. Elkin, with two candidates and their sponsors in attendance.
 17. Four young men received instruction for and received Holy Communion this year.
 18. One young man took classes and was baptized this year. One of our confirmation students was his sponsor.
 19. Children's Church continued on a once a month schedule during the school year. Donna Elkin was a great help in providing music leadership for this. Once she took the post of Music Director for the church, Ben Haussmann played for the last several services.
 20. A celebration for all Sunday School attendees, choir, and all others who wished to attend was held in Fellowship Hall during the Sunday School hour at Easter. Youth and adults created woven paper Easter baskets to go to our shut-ins.
- Youth and Family Ministry Activities:
1. Passing on Faith remains a keystone of our family ministry at St. Mark's. Milestones celebrated this year: Receiving blankets for newborns; Baptismal hospitality with faith chests for recently baptized; The Blessing of the Keys for youth who became new drivers; "Progressions," the milestone for those young adults leaving for college, the military or business and their parents was celebrated; 70+, Single, and Still Praising God has become an annual event honoring our senior parishioners. The Wedding Anniversary celebration was held for four of our couples.
 2. Bernadette planned Pr. Elkin's retirement dinner.
 1. Michele planned the annual Fishing Derby at Doebler's farm.
 2. The Annual Church Picnic was held at Montoursville's Indian Park, by the river. Reservations are made for it to be there again this year.
 3. A dinner/pool party was held for first and second year confirmands, their families and mentors.
 4. A fifth annual Helping Hands Day (open to youth and adult volunteers) was held, during which volunteers collected donations for the bazaar and/or Daniel's Closet.
 5. Two of our youth were confirmed on the first day of Sunday School, 2016. A reception for families and friends was held afterward.
 6. Teen Movie Night continues for our youth on the fourth Sunday of every month. There is a consistent attendance on these evenings.
 7. Our Pack'n'Wrap for Operation Christmas Child was held in conjunction with Redeemer Lutheran Church in November. Participants packed many shoe boxes with small gifts for needy children around the world. Money was donated toward the

- \$7/box shipping.
8. Family Advent Wreath Making & Luncheon was attended by about 30 people on the first Sunday of Advent.
 9. Kids' Night Out was well attended. About 10 of our youth assisted.
 10. The participants attending the Christmas Cookie-Baking event produced the cookies sent for our shut-ins.
 11. Christmas Caroling and cookie delivery was conducted by our volunteer carolers. Visits were made later in the week for those whom we were unable to reach on that day.
 12. Deb Buckman directed this year's production of "A Christmas Carol." Proceeds went to United Campus Ministry at Penn College.
 13. Winter warmers, scarves, hats, and gloves were collected for those in need. Deb Buckman made sure they were all delivered to NGA.
 14. Michele planned the Remembrance Service.
 15. Bread-baking this year was led by Bernadette: our kitchen was once again filled with laughter and the wonderful smell of baking bread.
 16. Ed Gair continues crafting our Faith Chests for the Baptism Milestone. We still have a few ornaments and keepsakes for various milestones from John & Ruth Burkholder. Bernadette woodburns details on some and creates others.
 17. We trained four new acolytes in February.
 18. 117 cans of soup and \$132 were collected for "Souper Bowl Sunday," held in February.
 19. This year's Catechetical Trip is to Gettysburg. Students will write accounts of their visit.
 20. Second Saturday continues in the kitchen. This is when cooks of all ages and experience levels gather in the kitchen for a seasonal cooking project.
 21. For the third year, Bernadette has planned and executed the Seder meal.
 22. The Annual Easter Egg Hunt was held during Easter hospitality on April 16, 2017: Eggs were hidden inside due to inclement weather.
 23. The St. Mark's Old Fashion Church Family picnic is scheduled for Sunday, June 11, 2017.
 24. Bernadette and Michele continue to plan the women's dinner.
 25. Sara Jones and Devin Owen trained acolyte volunteers.

Community/Continuing Education:

1. Bernadette attended Little Lambs Open House with flyers about St. Mark's and Sunday School.
2. Bernadette again acted as host at St. Mark's for the CROP Walk, providing cookies and beverages for the walkers.
3. The joint VBS venture with Trinity Episcopal continues to be a success. Plans are made for St.

- Mark's to host this year, with Trinity hosting the next.
4. Our involvement with United Campus Ministry continues.
 5. Bernadette and Michele attend weekly Bible study.
 6. LSM's School of Religion was again held at St. Mark's. This year, Bernadette led a Bible study gleaning Christian themes in "A Christmas Carol."
 7. Bernadette and Michele both continue to be active with FPLC hosting in overnight and evening/dinner hosts, respectively.
 8. Bernadette ended her term as president of Lutheran Shared Ministry, but continues to organize many of their programs.
 9. Michele regularly collects clothing donations left here by congregation members and delivers them to Redeemer for Daniel's Closet.
 10. Michele and Becky Miller Pryor the lead in organizing a Food Packaging event here at St. Mark's. Many volunteers have signed up.
 11. College care packages were sent to our college students for finals in December.
 12. Bernadette and Michele try to stay on top of our social media outlets.
 13. The new Publicity Committee with Pam Jensen, Gary Weber, and Michele has been a great help informing people of events at St. Mark's. To that end, we provide them with text and photographs of our events.
 14. Bernadette is liaising with Lamar Advertising in regard to our use of the electronic billboard twice a year and designs the copy for our advertised events.

Christian Education Committee Goals

1. Increase Sunday School attendance and participation at all grade levels (youth and adult).
2. Create Christian Fellowship between generations through a variety of activities.
3. Maintain Milestone Ministries and look for opportunities to create new milestones if deemed appropriate.

**Bernadette Jones and Michele Owen
Youth and Family Ministry Coordinators**

**ST MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
FINANCIAL REPORT
YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2016**

GENERAL FUND:

INCOME:	ACTUAL	BUDGET
Envelope: Pledges	\$ 240,815.80	\$ 220,000.00
Other Religious Income	\$ 12,228.94	\$ 10,000.00
Parking Lot/Rentals	\$ 27,491.00	\$ 28,190.00
Transfer From Investment Fund	\$ 116,741.10	\$ 61,298.00
Welker/Capital-General	\$ 29,796.60	\$ 31,500.00
Welker/Benevolence-General	\$ -	\$ -
Heat Envelope Income	\$ -	\$ -
Synod Donations	\$ -	\$ -
Bequests	\$ -	\$ -
Total Income	\$ 427,073.44	\$ 350,988.00

EXPENSES:	ACTUAL	BUDGET
Staff	\$ 234,636.61	\$ 228,293.00
Administration	\$ 11,513.74	\$ 14,125.00
Worship & Music	\$ 23,304.05	\$ 9,295.00
Christian Ed/Youth	\$ 4,330.43	\$ 4,500.00
Property	\$ 55,489.09	\$ 72,550.00
Capital Improvements	\$ 81,342.00	\$ -
Benevolence & Charity	\$ 20,444.01	\$ 22,225.00
Total Expenses	\$ 431,059.93	\$ 350,988.00

INCOME LESS EXPENSE	\$ (3,986.49)	\$ -
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DEDICATED BENEVOLENCE INCOME:	
Hunger, Food, Blankets, G Missions, St. Anthon	\$ 3,654.25
Shepherd, Thanks-Offering,	\$ 280.76
Mossy Foot, Misc,	\$ 3,108.75
Capital Income	\$ 3,490.00
Organ Fund	\$ 35.00
Theological Fund	\$ 515.00

MEMORIAL FUND:

Balance as of January 1, 2016	\$ 13,031.71
Gifts	\$ 4,461.00
Disbursements	\$ (3,755.00)
Balance as of December 31, 2016	\$ 13,737.71

INVESTMENT FUND:

Balance as of January 1, 2016	\$ 1,166,415.74
Income:	
Gifts, Various Transfers & Reclassifications	\$ 2,324.72
Interest/Dividends	\$ 25,953.30
Total Income	\$ 28,278.02

Expenditures:	
Fees	\$ (12,532.81)
Various Transfers & Reclassifications	\$ (86,728.90)
Total Expenditures	\$ (99,261.71)

Market Value Change	\$ (35,380.49)
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Balance as of December 31, 2016	\$ 1,060,051.56
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**WOMEN OF THE ELCA/ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH/APRIL 21, 2017
(ANNUAL REPORT)**

<u>SAVINGS ACCOUNT/PREVIOUS BALANCE 4/9/16</u>	\$2181.96	
Interest adjustment	.16	
SAVINGS BALANCE 5/3/2016	2182.12	
SAVINGS WITHDRAWAL (to checking acct)	2182.12	
BALANCE / SAVINGS / 5/3/2016		.00
<u>CHECKING ACCOUNT/PREVIOUS BALANCE 4/9/16</u>		34.46
<u>INCOME/DEPOSITS</u>		
Savings closeout (5/3/16)	\$2182.12	
Women's Dinner	144.72	
Bazaar profit	2210.02	
Misc	18.76	
<u>TOTAL INCOME</u>		\$4555.62
		\$4590.08
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
Entertainment- Women's Dinner	90.00	
Women of the ELCA/3 quarters 2016	150.00	
Women of the ELCA/ 4 quarters 2017	200.00	
Women if the ELCA SWO Convention (2016 and 2017)	200.00	
Charities (12)	1800.00	
Stamps	9.80	
<u>TOTAL EXPENSES</u>		\$2449.80
TOTAL BALANCE 4/21/2017		\$2140.28

Prepared by Barbara R. Thomas, Treasurer

