

**The Second Sunday of Advent
December 4, 2022**

*A Visit from St. Nicholas
in the 169^h Year of the Parish*
St. Mark's Lutheran Church

142 Market Street, Williamsport, PA 17701

stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org

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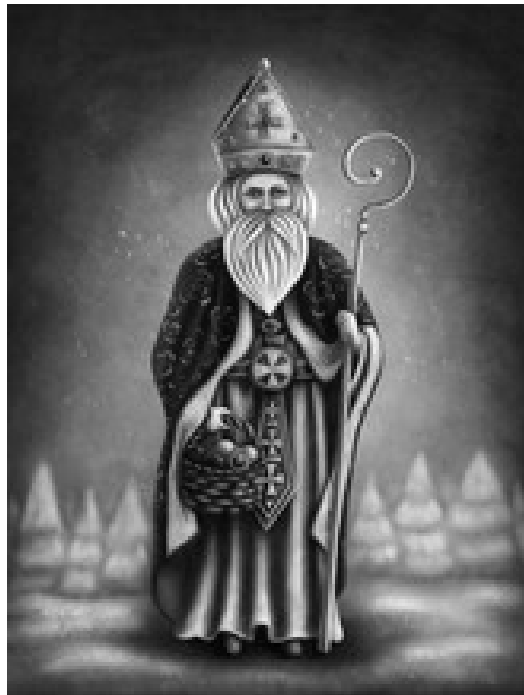
Rev. Brian D. Vasey, Pastor

bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org

Welcome to Saint Mark's!

This is Christ's church. There is a place for you here. Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

Our Mission: *“To know Christ and to make Christ known.”*



Our COVID-19 Guidelines:

Hand sanitizer is available for your use.

Face masks are optional.

Offerings may be received by way of baskets as you enter or leave.

Please continue to observe social distancing when passing the peace.

A guide to hymnal use: LBW, Green Book; WOV, Blue Book

**Please stand as you are able.*

PRELUDE *Comfort, Comfort, Now My People* E. Hovland, G. Near

WELCOME/ANNOUNCING THE DAY/ANNOUNCEMENTS

***BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their baptism

P Blessed be the Lord ✠, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.

C **Blessed be God's name forever. Amen.**

P Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep.

Let us confront our sins,

and confess them to the one who is merciful and just.

The congregation may kneel. Silence is kept for reflection.

P God of new beginnings,

C **we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign.**

We have strayed from your paths.

We prepare for war instead of peace.

We dishonor one another and your creation.

Purify us with your refining fire

and set us again on your way of love,

that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance,

and welcome your coming among us.

Amen.

The pastor stands and speaks the following:

P People of God,
a new thing is growing in our midst,
a tender branch,
a living sign.
By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder.
You have put on † Christ,
and your sins have been washed away.
Rejoice in the way of the Lord.

C Amen.

***HYMN On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry LBW, "Green" 36**

***THE GREETING**

P The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

***KYRIE**

Musical notation for the first line of the Kyrie. It consists of two measures. The first measure is labeled 'Cantor' and the second is labeled 'All'. Both measures contain a melodic line in G major with the lyrics 'Lord, have mer - cy.' written below.

Musical notation for the second line of the Kyrie. It consists of two measures. The first measure is labeled 'Cantor' and the second is labeled 'All'. Both measures contain a melodic line in G major with the lyrics 'Christ, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy,' written below.

Musical notation for the third line of the Kyrie. It consists of two measures. The first measure is labeled 'Cantor' and the second is labeled 'All'. Both measures contain a melodic line in G major with the lyrics 'Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.' written below.

***LIGHT ONE CANDLE (stanza two)**

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home - ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate - way for the King of glo - ry.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954
Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune
Text © 1984 Fortress Press, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray. Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

INTRODUCTION TO TODAY'S READINGS

At the heart of our Advent preparation stands John the Baptist, who calls us to repent and make a new beginning. As the darkness increases we turn toward the approaching light of Christ. For Christians he is the root of Jesse, the righteous judge who welcomes all, especially the poor and meek of the earth. We wait with hope for that day when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and there will be no more hurt or destruction. From the Lord's table we are sent in the spirit of John the Baptist to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of God has come near.

THE FIRST LESSON.....Isaiah 11:1-10

1A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

2The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

3His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;

4but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

5Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

6The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.

7The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

8The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

9They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

10On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM 72:1-7, 18-19

1Give the king your jus- | tice, O God,
and your righteousness to | the king's son;

2that he may rule your | people righteously

and the | poor with justice;

3that the mountains may bring prosperity | to the people,
and the | hills, in righteousness.

**4Let him defend the needy a- | mong the people,
rescue the poor, and crush | the oppressor.**

5May he live as long as the sun and | moon endure,
from one generation | to another.

**6Let him come down like rain upon | the mown field,
like showers that wa- | ter the earth.**

7In his time may the | righteous flourish;
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall | be no more.

**18Blessed are you, LORD God, the | God of Israel;
you alone do | wondrous deeds!**

19And blessed be your glorious | name forever,
and may all the earth be filled with your glory. A- | men. Amen.

THE SECOND LESSON.....Romans 15:4-13

4Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. 5May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, 6so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. 8For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, 9and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles,
and sing praises to your name”;

10and again he says,

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people”;

11and again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise him”;

12and again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the Gentiles;
in him the Gentiles shall hope.”

13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

***THE HOLY GOSPEL.....Matthew 3:1-12**

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the third chapter.

Glo-ry to you, O Lord.

1 In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, 2 “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” 3 This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.’”

4 Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, 6 and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

7 But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bear fruit worthy of repentance. 9 Do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. 10 Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

11 “I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I

is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

The gospel of the Lord.



***THE SONG OF ST. NICHOLAS (To the tune of “Jolly Old St. Nicholas”)**

Once upon a long ago
Very far away,
In the town of Bethlehem
Lying in some hay,
Jesus came for you and me
Bringing heaven’s love
As a gift for us to have
From the Lord above.

In the town of Myra once
Also long ago,
Lived good Bishop Nicholas
Hair as white as snow.
Nicholas loved Jesus who
Loved and helped us all.
“I will do the same,” said he
“Helping great and small.”

Thankful Bishop Nicholas
Friendly, good and wise;
When he could he helped the poor
Always by surprise
People came to Nicholas
Bringing wealth to share
So it could be sent to those
Living in despair.

We should be like Nicholas
Friendly, good and kind,
Loving those who need our help
All the ones we find
Jesus and Saint Nicholas
Taught us how to give:
Share but never seek rewards,
That is how to live!

ST. NICHOLAS SPEAKS

The sermon for today, “St. Nicholas Speaks” is a dramatic monologue based on the life, ministry and legend of the historic St. Nicholas, the fourth century bishop of Myra.

***THE NICENE CREED**

P Living together in trust and hope, we affirm our faith:

C **We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

After each petition, "Lord, in your mercy/Hear our prayer."

***THE PEACE**

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

*The ministers and congregation greet one another with these or similar words,
and/or gestures of peace, limiting physical touch and contact with one another.*

***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and ever-living God. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes again to judge the world

in righteousness. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

1 Cantor
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and God of might.

2 All
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and God of might.

3 Cantor
Heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.

4
Ho-san - na in the high - est, ho-san-na in the high - est.

5 All
Ho-san - na in the high - est, ho-san-na in the high - est.

6 Cantor
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

7
Ho-san - na in the high - est, ho-san-na in the high - est.

8 All
Ho-san - na in the high - est, ho-san-na in the high - est.

P Holy God, mighty Lord, Gracious Father:
 Endless is your mercy and eternal your reign.
 You have filled all creation with light and life;
 heaven and earth are full of your glory.
 Through Abraham you
 promised to bless the nations.
 Through the prophets you renewed your promise;
 and, at this the end of all the ages, you sent your Son,
 who in words and deeds proclaimed your kingdom
 and was obedient to your will,

even to the giving of his life.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

As often as we eat this bread
and drink from this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death,
until he comes.

**C Christ has died, Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.**

Therefore gracious Father,
with this bread and cup
we remember the life our Lord offered for us.
And, believing the witness of his resurrection,
we await his coming in power
to share with us the great and promised feast.

C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

P Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit,
the spirit of our Lord and his resurrection,
that we who receive the Lord's body and blood
may live to the praise of your glory and receive
our inheritance with all your saints in light.

C Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

P Join our prayers with those of your servants of every time and place, and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest until he comes as victorious Lord of all. Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

C Amen.

***OUR LORD'S PRAYER**

P Let us pray in the words our Savior gave us:

C **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen**

***LAMB OF GOD**

Cantor

Je sus, wis - dom and might - y Lord, you take a way the sins___ of the
 Je - sus, true branch of Jes - se's Tree
 Key of Dav - id and Day - spring from on high.
 De sire of na - tions, our Em - man - u - el,

2 **1.2.3.** **All**

world: have mer - cy on us. Have mer - cy on us.

3 **4.** **All**

world: Grant us___ peace. Grant us___ peace.

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Persons may come forward to the chancel to receive Holy Communion. This format will be more “continuous” noting the following procedure:

- *Communicants as directed by ushers are asked to come forward by way of the center aisle, take a cup from the tray provided and receive the bread.*
- *Once receiving the bread, communicants will proceed to one of two stations (left or right) to receive wine from the pouring chalice.*
- *After receiving wine, communicants will place the empty cup in the designated tray and return to their pew by way of the side aisles.*

Please do not kneel at the rail.

P Rejoice! Come to the feast of Emmanuel.

C **Thanks be to God.**

THE COMMUNION

***AFTER COMMUNION**

P The body and blood of Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C **Amen.**

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P Faithful God,
 in this meal you have remembered your mercy,
 bringing heaven and earth in the body and blood of Christ.

As we await the day when all your promises will be fulfilled,
sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery.
Guide us toward your promised future,
coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.
C Amen.

***THE BLESSING**

P Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.
C Amen.

***HYMN It Came Upon the Midnight Clear LBW, “Green”, 54**

***DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace. Christ is near.
C Thanks be to God.

NO POSTLUDE DUE TO ANNUAL MEETING

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**ANNUAL MEETING IS TODAY IMMEDIATELY
FOLLOWING WORSHIP!**

Prayer List: Victims of COVID-19 and their families, Liz Ruesskamp, Grace Arner, Diane Damaska, Vanessa Morgan, Gary Clark, Charles Miller, Jerry Miller, Patricia Alexander, Diana Zeigler, Richard Ritter, Ashton Ott, Lucille Sider, April Clark, Lenny Sherlinski, Ruth Sherlinski, Gary Cable, Elsie Sechler, Virginia Pulaskie, Susan Kalabacas, Bunny Ditchfield, Judy Fortin, Roy and Gloria Meyer, Mary Lou Doebler, the people of Ukraine and Eastern Europe, Storm and Hurricane Victims, Ezra Buckman, Sheila Brassard, Kevin Rosini, Kathy Eshelman, Micah, Connie Shiable.

WORSHIP LEADERS (December 4, 2022)

Lector	9:30 a.m.	Pam Jensen
Communion Assistants	9:30 a.m.	Deb Buckman and Mindy Wentzel
Guest Organist		Carol Waltz

WELCOME CAROL WALTZ! We welcome and thank Carol for sharing her organ talents with us today! Thank you Carol!

Liturgist	9:30 a.m.	Walter Haussmann
Ushers	9:30 a.m.	Carl Albright-Captain, Brenda, Owen

and Levi Gair.

Altar Guild

December

Bev Hieber and Audrey Albright



READ ANY GOOD BOOKS LATELY? Faith and Fellowship has temporarily “moved some books” from our church library to the Front Lounge in order to make them more accessible. Stop by the Front Lounge and take a look!

OUR STEWARDSHIP (11/27/22)

Regular Offering	\$2,157.45
Plate Offerings	10.00
Thanksgiving	40.00
Miscellaneous	48.00
Food Pantry	20.00
Sunday School Offering	11.00
Christmas Flowers	44.00
Flower Memorials / Tributes	90.00
Pastor’s Discretionary Fund	50.00
GRAND TOTAL	\$2,470.45



ALTAR FLOWERS today are given to the glory of God:
+In Loving Memory of Larry Lundy on his birthday by the family.
+In Honor of my sisters; Barb, Karen and Diane and In Loving Memory of my sister, Peggy by Jackie Kinney

MID-WEEK ADVENT SERVICES

On Wednesdays in Advent - November 30 and concluding December 21.



Join us in our chapel from 12:15 - 12:45 p.m. as we explore the witness of “Advent Saints”

December 7, Ambrose of Milan (pastor and Hymnwriter)

December 14, John of the Cross, Renewer of the Church

December 21, Katharina von Bora Luther, Renewer of the Church

ALL ARE WELCOME!



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Saturday, December 24, The Nativity of Our Lord

“Children's and Family Holy Communion”, 7 pm

“Traditional Candlelight Holy Communion”, 10 pm

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

Sunday, December 25, The Nativity of Our Lord (Holy Communion, 9:30 am)

Only one worship time this Sunday. No Sunday Church School



The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee in collaboration with the Northcentral PA Chapter of the American Red Cross will hold a **Blood Drive** on **Friday, December 9, 2022 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. Call 1-800-733-2767 or visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter: "St. Marks" to schedule an appointment.

Work commitments prevent all of our committee members from assisting at this event. We are in need of one or two 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.

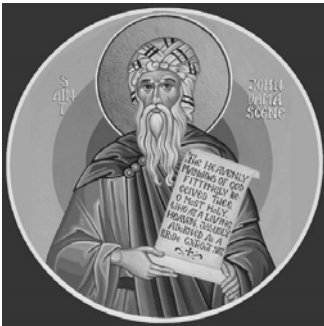
Christmas Greetings for Special Concern Folks



The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee will provide Christmas cards on **Sunday, December 11, 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 for helping us send more Christmas cheer.

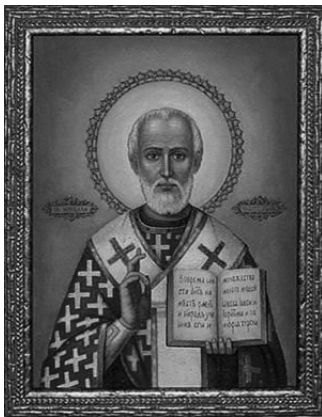
COMMEMORATIONS



John of Damascus, theologian and hymnwriter, died around 749

Sunday, December 4, 2022

A monk in an abbey near Jerusalem, John wrote many hymns as well as theological works. One of his works, *The Fount of Wisdom*, remained influential for centuries.



Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, died around 342

Tuesday, December 6, 2022

Little is known about Nicholas, except that he was a bishop in present-day Turkey. According to legend, he was famous for his giving to the poor, and so has become a symbol of anonymous gift-giving. Our present day Santa Claus is based on the life and ministry of Nicholas.



Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, died 397

Wednesday, December 7, 2022

While a governor of northern Italy, Ambrose was elected bishop of Milan on the same day he was baptized. He was a famous preacher, a writer of hymns we still sing today, and helped lead Augustine (4th Century Bishop of Hippo) to faith.