



SAINT MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

"THE LION"

of ST. MARK'S

A Monthly Newsletter by and for the members of St. Mark's

*To know Christ and to
make Christ known.*

February

2025



Pastor's Lion Message for February 2025

The whole law is summed up in a single commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Galatians 5:14)

Some years ago a high school student enrolled in Catechism asked me, "Pastor, how do you read your bible?" I wrestled a long time with how to answer.

People have been asking this question for a very long time; even before the bible was committed to writing. The leaders of the early church often advised believers to start with the clear and obvious parts of scripture and interpret the more difficult parts- often called the hard sayings; those considered more difficult to hear- in light of the first. Lutherans have traditionally called this approach, "using scripture to interpret scripture". When the apostle Paul writes that the whole of the law may be summed up by loving neighbor, he is following a tradition that extends back to Jesus' own teaching: Love summarizes the whole law of God (Matthew 22:35-40).

At the core of the bible is God's love for all and our commandment to love one another. If your interpretation of scrip-

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STAFF OFFICE HOURS

Pastor: The Rev. Brian Vasey
 Mon-Thu 9 a.m.-1 p.m., & by appointment

Church Organist: Sam Robinson
 Summer Mon 1-3 p.m. & by appointment

Sexton: OPEN
 By appointment

Bookkeeper: Jackie Baysore
 By appointment

Administrative Assistant: OPEN
 Tuesday through Friday 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
jbaur@stmarkswilliamsport.org



Serving Christ in the Williamsport Community
 since 1852
 142 Market Street
 Williamsport, PA 17701



JOIN US FOR SUNDAY
WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY.
ALL ARE WELCOME!!

ture does not increase within your love for others, love for God and love for yourself, you probably have not grasped the message the bible proclaims. The bible is a "love letter" from God to the world. The law given to Moses simply expands on this theme and the command to love.

We are to love one another. Care for one another. Pray for one another. As followers of Jesus our approach to living life is not how much money we can make; how we can get ahead; how we can make sure that we are "number one" and nobody else. We are children of God. We are to look at others as brothers and sisters in the family of God. That is our mantra and label.

February is here. Traditionally February is called the month of "Love": Romantic Love and Love between Family Members (Valentine's Day); Love of Country (Presidents' Day); Love of Good Health and Well Being (Healthy Heart Month). The most important act of love is that of love of God and love of neighbor- taking seriously the message of scripture that we Christians say we adore and pledge to live by.

"Pastor, how do you read your bible?" After some thought and reflection I answered, "I take my cue from the apostle Paul, 'The only thing that counts is faith working through love.'" (Galatians 5:6).

*Grace+Peace,
Pastor Vasey*

**February 2, "The Presentation of Our Lord"
(The day that Jesus was presented to God in the Temple according to Jewish Law)**

**Holy Communion, 8 am
Sunday School, 9:15 am
Holy Communion, 10:30 am**

February 9, The Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

Souper Bowl of Caring
**Holy Communion, 8 am
Sunday School, 9:15 am
Holy Communion, 10:30 am**

February 16, The Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany

**Holy Communion, 8 am
Sunday School, 9:15 am
Holy Communion, 10:30 am**

February 23, The Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany

**Holy Communion, 8 am
Sunday School, 9:15 am
Holy Communion, 10:30 am**

***LOOKING AHEAD TO MARCH, 2025:
SHROVE TUESDAY, MARCH 4***

6 pm Devotion and Fastnachs, Fellowship Hall (Our time together with St. Luke Lutheran will include the traditional burning of palm fonds in preparation for Ash Wednesday).

ASH WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5

*12:05 pm Holy Communion, Chapel
7:00 pm Holy Communion, Nave
(ashes will be available at both services)*



When you or a family member are ill, have a crisis of faith, or have a personal concern of which you wish to make the pastor aware, please contact him directly by church office telephone (570-323-4619) or email (bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org). Do not assume the pastor will know of your need any other way.



When you or a loved one has a change of address, telephone number or email, please contact the church office at 570-323-4619 or stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org. Please direct your intentions whether or not to share this information with our church family.



If you have any information that needs to be updated, please send an email to jbaur@stmarkswilliamsport.org or call the church office at 570-323-4619, Tuesday through Friday 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.

The office is working on an updated Church directory so please update any information ASAP to insure the directory is up to date.



Do you enjoy reading? Do you have an interest in exploring the variety of materials found in our church library? Would you be willing to write a short synopsis of a church library book you read for The Lion? If so, the Faith Formation Committee wants YOU! Please see Vicki Haussmann, Sally Bjornstad, or Bob Campbell if you would like to be featured as a

guest columnist in The Lion! We will gladly assist you in finding the perfect book to read for this newly established (although not yet named) column. We look forward to discovering more about the materials found in our library through you. Thank you for sharing your talents in this exciting way!

February Worship Leaders

Please arrange for a replacement if you cannot serve.



Communion Assistants

February 2

8:00 AM Drew Haussman

10:30 AM Matt & Wanda Fortin

February 9

8:00 AM Brian Jackson

10:30 AM Shelby & Gary Weber

February 16

8:00 AM Nikki Jackson

10:30 AM Ralph & Lou Ann Zeigler

February 23

8:00 AM Becky Prior

10:30 AM Deb Buckman & Mindy Wentzel



Lectors

February 2

8:00 AM Brian Jackson

10:30 AM Karen Mariano

February 9

8:00 AM Nikki Jackson

10:30 AM Gary Weber

February 16

8:00 AM Candy Dewar

10:30 AM Linda Rosini

February 23

8:00 AM Becky Prior

10:30 AM Mary Ann Stiller



Ushers

February 2

8:00 AM Miller / Poff

10:30 AM Maggs-Reitz Team

February 9

8:00 AM Miller / Poff

10:30 AM Weber Team

February 16

8:00 AM Miller / Poff

10:30A M Fortin Team

February 23

8:00AM Miller / Poff

10:30AM Albright Team

Altar Guild

Shelby & Gary Weber



Please join our Sunday School classes beginning at 9:15 AM.

Our Adult Class meets in the chapel. We are studying the Book of Psalms. We do know there will be no shortage of discussion, learning and laughter as Pastor leads this dedicated class in study.

We look forward to sharing this time of fellowship and study and hope to have you join us! All are welcome!



WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY BEGINNING MARCH 12

12:10 pm, Fellowship Hall

Our study this year will be discovering what the bible teaches about our reconciliation with God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ

(Atonement). Our study will feature the 5 Traditional Atonement Theories of the Church. All are welcome! Light snacks will be served.

FAMILY PROMISE hosting dates for 2025:

March 2-9

June 15-22

Oct 5-12

Nov. 16-23



Please note these on your calendar. If you have not participated in providing meals for Family Promise in the past, please consider participating in this ministry.

February

Birthdays

Doebler, Margie	2/8
Greevy, Gloria	2/10
Wright, Charlene	2/10
Newcomer, Emily	2/13
Owen, Michele	2/13
Sechler, Elsie	2/13
Robertson, Rick	2/17
Vasey, Rev. Brian	2/26
Clark, Gary	2/27
Kline, Jane	2/29
Zeigler Jr., Ralph	2/29

February

Anniversary

Vincent & Diane Bardsley 2/18





Council Minutes

January 2025

Minutes

St. Mark's Council meeting- January 20, 2025

Call to Order: 6:00 pm

Council recited the Defining Mission Statement

Vicki Haussmann opened the meeting with a prayer.

Secretary's roll call:

Members present: Debra Buckman, Cathy Fenderson, Vicki Haussmann, Ray Huff, Nikki Jackson, Richard Miller, Cindy Todd, Lou Ann Zeigler, Pastor Vasey. Excused: Donna Clark, Wanda Fortin, Richard Reitz, Helen Schramm,

Minutes of the December and Annual Congregational meetings were reviewed and approved as submitted.

Deb Buckman delivered the Treasurer's Report. The report was accepted and filed for audit.

Ralph Zeigler gave a heartfelt message as his term on council ended. Council acknowledged his many contributions and leadership.

Consent Agenda:

CC2025.01.01. (Zeigler/Todd) To elect Vicki Haussmann as President. Adopted.

She gave remarks on becoming President. We have lots of positive things at St. Mark's; we also may have difficult decisions in the future. She thanked Ralph for the agenda.

CC2025.01.02 (Buckman/Huff) To table election of Vice President until the February 17, 2025, meeting. Adopted.

CC2025.01.03 (Todd/Jackson) To elect Ray Huff as Secretary. Adopted.

CC2025.01.04 (Haussmann/Zeigler) To elect Deb Buckman as Treasurer. Adopted.

Pastor's report included having council supply cookies for the Redeemer Dinner in September and giving Pr. Runser a \$150.00 purse as a gift for his service. He will leave o/a January 24.

Council Minutes Continued

Pastor relayed a request from Evangelism and Fellowship to ask for two people to serve as co-hosts with the Red Cross for a blood drive in July. This would mainly involve seating arrangements and snack distribution.

Pastor also provided a Covenant of Conduct for council members.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Evangelism and Fellowship: This may be the last Fall bazaar.

Faith Formation: The congregation donated 793 items to local agencies. The committee will assemble hygiene kits on February 2 and sponsor the Souper Bowl Sunday event on February 9. Next meeting: February 13, 10:45 AM.

Finance: No report.

Little Lambs: Fire alarm testing Monday, January 26 around 10:00 am.

The lease was signed with a change of dates to January 1 for any future rent increase, with an effective date of September 1 of the same year.

An additional room request (311 and 312) for expansion is still in conversation.

Nominating: No report.

Personnel: No report.

Property: CC2025.01.05. (Property) Approve \$2,500.00 to the Cholin Corp., Inc. to design the required Smoke Detector & Fire Alarm System and, if necessary, first hire Paul Albert, Architect LLC to prepare the required scale drawings. Adopted.

Publicity: No report.

Safety: No report.

Worship and Music: Ray thanked everyone for their help during the Advent and Christmas seasons. He also complimented Sam Robinson for his leadership in bringing wonderful choral contributors to the worship service, especially on Christmas Eve. Next meeting: February 2 following the late service.

Signup sheets were distributed for devotions and offering collection.

Evangelism and Fellowship Committee

February 2025

Valentine's Day Greetings

The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee needs the congregation's help in sending Valentine's Day greetings to our Special Concern Folks and others we do not see as often as we would like.



Cards will be available in the Narthex on Sunday, February 9, 2025 before and after each service. Please add a cheery message, affix a stamp and mail in time for Valentine's Day. Thank you for any assistance you can provide.

Card Ministry

The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee thanks members of the congregation for their assistance with this outreach. A volunteer is still needed to send cards in July. Everything is supplied but you! A sign-up sheet is available in the Narthex or speak with Becky Miller Pryor. Thank you, Jackie Kinney for sending cards in January.



Help Needed for Parish Life

The Center City Pastors, a group of twelve, meet the second Thursday of the month at St. Mark's at 1:00 PM. The Parish Life Committee prepares and serves a light lunch for them. During the months of February and March we are in need of a dessert for each luncheon. Speak with Becky Miller Pryor if you can assist in providing a dessert.

The Parish Life and Evangelism and Fellowship Committees make sandwiches for New Covenant UCC's Blessing Boxes on these dates in February; February 5, 10, 19 and 24. Please join us at 9:00 AM if you would like to help assemble sandwiches.

The above committees are always in need of supplies like rolls, bread, meat and cheese. Speak to Becky Miler Pryor if you can donate an item on one of the dates in February.

Monetary donations are also needed to cover expenses related to this outreach. Checks may be made payable to St. Mark's with the memo line indicating Parish Life.

Ongoing Collections at St. Mark's:

United Churches Food Pantry: The most needed items are pancake mix and syrup, beef and shrimp ramen noodles, canned fruit (all kinds,) Spam, Vienna sausages, tuna fish and 64 oz. bottles of apple juice.



Shepherd of the Streets: Needed are shampoo, conditioner, bodywash, tooth paste and tooth-brushes for adults and children, feminine hygiene products, paper towels, Kleenex, hand and dish soap.

Blessing Boxes at New Covenant UCC: Easily prepared foods like Cup of Soups, individual packs

of crackers and cookies, microwave mac & cheese, ramen noodles and individual boxes of cereal are needed. Travel size hygiene items are also needed.

Sojourner Truth Ministries: Boxes or bags of sugar, brown paper lunch bags, dessert-size paper plates and raspberry or peach ice tea mix.

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 Coat Room.

Ongoing Events at Redeemer Lutheran:

Community Dinner on Thursday, February 13, 2025 beginning at 5:00 PM until all meals are distributed. This is a take-out meal available at the curb. All are welcome.

The Parish Life and Evangelism and Fellowship Committees provide desserts each month to support Redeemer's dinner. This month Jim and Susan Newcomer will provide Valentine brownies for dessert. Thank you, Jim and Susan for your generous help. **For desserts in March,** we are requesting boxes of TastyKakes of any kind. We will begin accepting them starting on Sunday, February 23, 2025.



Daniel's Closet Distribution of winter clothing is **Saturday, February 22, 2025 from 8:30 AM – 11:00 AM.** Winter weather brings the need for warm clothing and sturdier shoes and boots for adults and children. Blankets, bedding, throws / afghans are also needed.



This month's clothing drop off is Thursday, February 20, 2025 from 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM.

If you have a large quantity of clothing, please call Redeemer's office (leave a message) at 570-322-2333 to make an appointment. Smaller quantities of clothing may be placed on the stage.

Got Stuff?



The Evangelism and Fellowship Committee and the Women of St. Mark's are still in need of donations for our annual Fall Sale which will occur in September 2025.

We are accepting holiday decorations, housewares, linens, toys, small working electronics, gadgets, dishes, jewelry, lamps, art work and the list goes on. **If you don't want it, we probably can sell it.**

We cannot accept anything broken or in poor condition, VCR tapes, text books, encyclopedias, computers, televisions, large gym equipment, cribs or mattresses.

Please place your donations in boxes small enough for us to lift and move to and from the Bazaar Room. If you cannot get to the basement, leaving them on the second landing in the back stairwell is helpful.

Parish Life Monthly Activities

February 2025

The Monday sandwich crew will make, package and deliver **24 assorted sandwiches** on the following dates. We will make a combination of meat and cheese and PBJ sandwiches.

Monday, February 10

Monday, February 24

The Center City Pastors' luncheon will be Thursday, February 13, 2025 at 1:00 PM. Our menu will consist of hamburger BBQ, macaroni salad, chips assorted fruit cups, cake and beverages.

Redeemer Lutheran's Community dinner is Thursday, February 13 @ 5:00 PM. This month Jim and Susan Newcomer will provide Valentine brownies.

The Wednesday Sandwich Crew will make, package and deliver **16 assorted sandwiches** on the following dates. We will follow the same menu options as the Monday crew.

Wednesday, February 5

Wednesday, February 19



SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

The football season is drawing to a close, and Super Bowl Sunday is quickly approaching.

Whether you are a football fanatic or are just in it for the snacks, "Souper Bowl Sunday" gives us a wonderful opportunity to also think about others in our community. This year "Souper Bowl Sunday" is February 9th, which means there are 2 full weeks in February to collect cans of soup. Our "Famous Football Tubs" will be in the Narthex ready to accept your donations of soup (or other non perishable food) on Feb. 2nd and Feb.9th. If you prefer, monetary donations may also be made (checks should be earmarked for Souper Bowl of Caring). Monetary donations will be used to purchase grocery store gift cards.

Please pray this simple prayer that started the Souper Bowl of Caring 30+ years ago: Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat.

We are looking forward to coming together as a congregation to see what we can do together to help fight hunger here in Williamsport. On the count of three, 1-2-3- St. Mark's!



We continue collecting items for our Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes with the goal of packing 75 shoeboxes in 2025.

Our February collection will be:

Toothbrushes/Toothbrush Holders

Washcloths (preferably dark in color)

Knit Hats

***T-shirts** (cute or plain, long sleeve or short, any will do)

***Underwear**

Choose one, choose all! Donations may be placed in the red, OCC bin located in the Narthex. As always, thank you for your continued generosity!

*Just a note, the age ranges for the boxes we fill are 2-4, 5-9, and 10-14 (both boys and girls)

Both the Faith Formation and Evangelism and Fellowship Committees send a **HUGE** Thank You to the members of St. Mark's for your participation in this year's Reverse Advent Calendar Collectiton.

We were able to deliver **Seven Hundred Ninety Three** items to 4 local agencies helping those in need.



498 individually packaged items were split, with half going to the Blessing Box at New Covenant and half going to the Code Blue Ministry at First Church.

108 personal care items were delivered to Shepherd of the Streets.

20 cake mix/frosting combos are ready to be made into "Celebration Bags" for the UCLC Food Pantry.

Your generosity is truly amazing! Thank you for helping to "Make Christ Known" to those in need this New Year!



Now is the time of year to watch for the sales for bath towels and hand towels.

Remember when shopping at Goodwill, church sales, etc., gently used items, such as baby clothes and receiving blankets, are also acceptable for the kits.

Quilts must be twin size, made from cotton fabric, and may not have any religious or patriotic themes.

If you do not want to assemble kits yourself, please place your items in the tub in the narthex.

For more information contact Deb Buckman at dabuckman65@gmail.com or 570-323-1707

Upper Susquehanna Synod Youth

February - Trivia Night February 16th

This event will be from 2-5pm at Milton Lutheran Church. (1125 Mahoning st.) There's no cost, snacks will be provided as well as a mini prize for everyone participating.



Hungry for camp but can't wait until the summer? Always wanted to try camp but not sure you'll like it? **Camp Mount Luther** has an event for you!

On February 23, 2025, from 2:00-4:00 p.m., you can get a **Taste of Camp!** Enjoy songs, food, games, a campfire program, information on the 2025 program, and more! Those who attend will get Camel Bucks to spend in the camp store this summer.

This year's summer camp season will begin on June 15 and run until August 1. There are programs for all ages from elementary to senior high, and for adults and families. If you're looking for a place where your child can grow in faith and have fun doing it, Camp Mount Luther is that place. Don't settle for second-rate summer programs. Camp Mount Luther has been giving kids fun, exciting, faith-filled, outdoor experiences for over 60 years. If you have questions about our summer programs, feel free to reach out to us at cml@campmountluther.org!

Camp Mount Luther's Summer 2025 registration is now open! Find out more and register at www.campmountluther.org/summer.



**Become
Part of
Our
Church
Family**

WANT TO EXPLORE WHAT IT MEANS
TO BE A LUTHERAN CHRISTIAN?
ADULTS WISHING TO UNITE WITH ST.
MARK'S IN CHURCH MEMBERSHIP ARE
INVITED TO CONTACT PASTOR VASEY.

Pastor Vasey has a new cell phone Number: 272-788-0161. Please use this number as his primary telephone number when he is not available by the church telephone or the church email. Thank You!

February 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 8:00AM Holy Communion 9:15AM Sunday School 10:30AM Holy Communion	3	4 5:30 PM Evangelism/Fellowship	5	6	7	8
9 8:00AM Holy Communion 9:15AM Sunday School 10:30AM Holy Communion	10 9:00AM Sandwich Making	11 9:30AM West Branch Conference (Chapel)	12	13 10:45AM Faith Formation 1:00PM City Pastor's Lunch	14	15
16 8:00AM Holy Communion 9:15AM Sunday School 10:30AM Holy Communion	17 6PM Council	18	19 9:00AM Sandwich Making 2:00PM Holy Communion at Williamsport Home	20	21	22
23 8:00AM Holy Communion 9:15AM Sunday School 10:30AM Holy Communion	24 9:00AM Sandwich Making	25	26	27	28	