



**FROM THE PASTOR**

By the time this newsletter finds its way from Van Wert via mail route through Toledo to your home, you are more than likely in post-Thanksgiving/pre-Advent & Christmas mode.

Are you dreaming of a white Christmas? 'White Christmas' is acknowledged as the world's most popular Christmas song in regards to sales - more than 125 million copies sold, and the biggest selling single of all time in the music industry, according to Lutheran Digest. 150+ performers have recorded this composition, from Bing Crosby to Elvis Presley to Alvin and the Chipmunks. It was written by Irving Berlin, a Jewish immigrant from Siberia, in January of 1940.

Snow on the ground in December or not, Christmas is still *Christmas*. It is the holyday celebrating the birth of the Christ, the savior of the world.

Preparing for *Christmas* is both hard work and delightful fun.

*Christmas* is also faith forming, for it is Jesus' birthday after all! As December slowly ascends above the horizon the Christmas story comes face to face with the numerous 'messiahs and saviors' we chase after: those habits, priorities and sentiments which entice us for our allegiance. Such 'messiahs and saviors' become even more luring when we designate them as off limits to Jesus rather than giving him all access.

So here is the needed question to navigate our busy yuletide preparations. Who, or what, are you most tempted to love more than Christ? Is Jesus one of many, or is he your one and only?

*"For to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord"*  
*Luke 2:11.*

May he be your Savior, Christ and Lord not just during the holydays, but every day in every habit, priority, and sentiment of your life.

Merry *Christmas*, Pr. Will



**Address Notification**

Please remember to notify the church office if you have changed your e-mail address or phone number, especially if you have given up your land line and switched to your cell phone. St. Mark's does not give out or sell member's addresses/phone numbers. The information is used internally to keep you informed.

*the Deadline is...*  
**DECEMBER 16<sup>th</sup>** for the **January 2020** Messenger. Submit your items on or before the 16<sup>th</sup>. Please have your items written/typed before you bring them.  
Meisa

**Attention Hannah Circle Members:**

Because the November and December meetings were canceled the annual Thankoffering service will not be held. If anyone wishes to contribute to this, put your money into an envelope with your name and WELCA Thankoffering on the outside. Place it into the collection plate

or take it to the church office. Any questions, contact Dot Burley.



**Need A Ride to Church?** Call

Stan Schumm

during December at 419-238-1668.

*Our sympathy to Barbie Wappelhorst and family on the passing of Barbie's father, Floyd Cole on Friday, November 1<sup>st</sup>.*

READ THE CHRISTMAS STORY IN MATTHEW 1 & 2 AND LUKE 1 & 2 TO PREPARE YOUR FAITH LIFE THIS HOLY-DAY SEASON. MERRY

**CHRISTMAS!!!**





## Notes Of Thanks

**Thank you:** Final Boiler Project Fund donations now at \$17,963! The plan was to accept donations until October 1<sup>st</sup> with a goal of \$22,000. This would be 1/3 of the project estimate of \$66,000. However, your generosity has extended way above and beyond the October 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. Besides the addition of a new and more efficient heat source for the education wing, these donations will help to maintain a healthy balance in the Property Improvement Fund. Thank God for the grace he has bestowed on you the congregation here at St. Mark's!

**Thank you** to everyone for the cards, prayers and sympathy on the passing of my son, Glenn. It is greatly appreciated. It is wonderful to know the support of my church family. Gene Goodwin

**Thank you** to the congregation for the visits, prayers and cards while I was recovering from my recent surgeries. It was a blessing to have caring people remember me and my family as I fought to get well. We are so lucky to be

part of such a gracious giving church and loving people. I'm getting better and better every day!

God Bless,

Betty Wyandt & family

**Thank you** to everyone for the cards, calls and prayers during my recent illness. Also thanks to Pastor Haggis for the visits and prayers. I am getting better and so thankful to be part of a loving church. May God bless you all.

Marlene Foss

**Thank you** to thank my church friends and family for all the cards and prayers that have been sent my way to help me through the days. It is greatly appreciated and thank you again.

Ilo Grubaugh

## HOSPITAL REMINDER



Please call the office with **ANY** information on hospital emergency visits or admissions.

## ADVENT SERVICES



Mark your calendars in preparation for the Advent. Here's what is just around the corner.

**Mid-Week Advent Wednesdays,  
December 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, & 18<sup>th</sup>.**

**12:00 p.m. at St. Mark's**

**7:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran  
Convoy.**

**Yellow Ribbons:** There is a display on the bulletin board next to the main entrance. We would like to include the names of our loved ones who are in military service on this board. Please contact the church office (419-238-6336) to have a name listed on the board.



*Congratulations to the following 6<sup>th</sup> graders who celebrated their First Communion on Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup>.*



Front row: Hayden Saunier, Joselyne Ricker, Evali Esparza

Back row: Lulu Ross, Delani Knoch, Allison Krugh and Kody Hamilton

*Merry Christmas*



## Church Cancellation Information Available

Please be advised, you may listen to the following radio/TV stations for any church service or activity cancellations due to severe winter weather conditions or look on our webpage

[www.stmarkslutheranvw.com](http://www.stmarkslutheranvw.com)

**WERT radio1220 (Van Wert)**

**WKSD radio 99.7 (Van Wert)**

**WTGN radio 97.7 (Ft. Wayne)**

**WBCL radio 90.3 (Ft. Wayne)**

**Channels 15, 21 & 33—Ft. Wayne**

**Channel 6 (Van Wert cable)**

[www.vwindependent.com](http://www.vwindependent.com)

## Wednesday Evening Cancellations



If Van Wert Schools cancel, due to fog, the

Wednesday evening youth/kids meetings WILL MEET as planned. If Van Wert Schools cancel or have early dismissal due to ice, snow, etc. then Wednesday evening meetings WILL NOT MEET.

## OFFICE CLOSED ON

### THESE DATES:

**December 24<sup>th</sup>—all day**

**December 31<sup>st</sup>—all day**

**January 1<sup>st</sup>—all day**



**Hannah  
Circle  
Meeting**

*No Meeting in December  
and January*

**Church Security**



Just a reminder that if you unlock a door to get into the church please be sure to lock it again when you leave or lock it behind you when you enter the building. The doors have been found unlocked or unlatched quite a few times. Also close any window you may open upon leaving. Please be extra careful to lock or close anything you have unlocked or opened.

*Our sympathy to  
Mary Paxson on the  
passing of her sister,  
Susan M. White on  
October 31, 2019.*



**ADVENT &  
CHRISTMAS**



It's not too early to mark your calendars in preparation for the Advent/Christmas season. Here's what is just around the corner.

**December 1<sup>st</sup>**—Stump The Pastor Hymn Sing

**December 8<sup>th</sup>**—Children's Christmas Program at 10:30 service

**December 15<sup>th</sup>**—Adult Choir Cantata at 9:30 service followed by Annual Congregational Budget Meeting

**December 15<sup>th</sup>**—Sunday School/Birthday Party for Jesus in fellowship hall at 9:30 a.m.

**December 19<sup>th</sup>**—A Light Jazz Christmas Service at 7:30 p.m. with pie & coffee after in gathering area

**Tuesday, December 24<sup>th</sup>—  
CHRISTMAS EVE  
SERVICES**

**7:30 p.m. Holy Communion  
10:30 p.m. Chimes  
11:00 p.m. Candlelight  
Worship Service**

**DECEMBER  
CONGREGATIONAL  
BUDGET MEETING**

The December Annual Budget Meeting, for voting on Church Council recommendations for the enclosed Proposed Budget of 2020 (*copies available in cloak room and elevator room*), is being held on Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup> immediately following the 9:30 service. If the worship service is cancelled due to inclement weather, the meeting will take place on the following available Sunday upon the conclusion of the 10:30 a.m. service. The recommendations, listed in order of the agenda, are as follows:

**Motion # 1.**

To approve the Current Expense budget of \$ 282,424.00. The Current Expense budget will be funded as follows:

1. Congregation Current Expense Offerings.
2. \$3,700.00 of Thrivent Funds to support the Witness and A.I.M. Committees.

**Motion # 2.**

To approve the Youth Ministry budget of \$42,385.00 to be funded from the youth program bequests after considering any direct donation to various programs and any fund raisers.

**Motion # 3.**

To approve the Adult Sunday School Budget of \$1,000.00 to be funded from Thrivent Fund.

**Motion # 4.**

Social Ministry budget of \$42,800.00 to be funded from designated bequests and giving to Bread and Bowl, Van Wert Blessings, Rice Kits and college scholarships.

**Motion # 5.**

To approve the Mission Support Budget (Benevolence Budget) of \$48,000.00 to be funded from Mission Support Offerings (Benevolence Offerings).

**Motion # 6.**

To approve the Property Improvement—Upgrade of Audio/Video System budget of \$5,000.00 to be funded by the Mary Jane Evans Fund.



## Preparing for Death: A Resource Guide:

Death can be a difficult thing to think about, but being prepared can ease the decision making process during that time. A manual has been prepared by the Health Ministry to assist congregational members in planning for death—their own or that of a loved one. The booklet includes instructions for advance directives, local information, checklist of steps, suggestions for funeral arrangements, forms for biographical information and funeral preferences. Booklets are in the cloak room and office.

## COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

The St. Mark's Lutheran Church Scholarship Committee now has made the scholarship applications available. Changes include being renewable. Scholarship renewals are contingent on funds being available after scholarships are awarded to graduating high school seniors. It is important to note the scholarships are funded by monies given to the church and specifically

designated for college scholarship. No monies are taken from current offerings. Scholarship guidelines and applications can be picked up in the church office or in the cloak room and will also be available on the church website. **\*\*Deadline for application submission is January 15, 2020.\*\***

**Quick Reminder:** Please notify the office **BEFORE** you schedule a meeting with a group or committee due to the fact we are having many different people using our facilities. If you schedule a meeting without notifying the office there may not be a place for you to meet.



**Walking Program:** We have reached Berlin, Germany with a total amount of 11,247 miles walked as of November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019.



*Now it is on to Paris, France, 655 miles away! Only 480 miles left to Paris, France!* Mark your I Worship Slips with how many mile(s) that you have walked each week. Any questions, contact Nancy Wolverton, Deb Russell or Alicia Hickerson.

Miles walked as of  
11-17-19 to Berlin= 175



On November 10, during the 10:30 worship service, we welcomed Brooke Staley as a new member of St. Mark's.



## BREAKFAST AT THE MANGER:

Join in the fun Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon. We invite all pre-school through 5<sup>th</sup> grade and their families to come and celebrate the birth of Jesus. This FREE event will be fun for the whole family including Christmas Crafts, Cookie Decorating, and your Family Portrait taken at the Manger Scene (costumes included). Pancake breakfast will be served.

Start this Christmas season with Jesus at the center of your activities. For more information contact the church office at 419-238-6336 or visit our website at

[www.stmarkslutheranvw.com](http://www.stmarkslutheranvw.com). Our win for Breakfast At The Manger is "to provide an irresistible environment where families are introduced to the Christmas story in a safe, fun, and creative setting".



**STUMP THE PASTOR**

**HYMN SING: DECEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup>**

On your I Worshiped Today we are encouraging you to write down any Advent or Christmas hymns (hymn numbers 239-300) that you are hoping we sing. Then, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December, rather than singing 3 hymns plus the hymn sing, we are going to spread the hymn sing out. We will open the service with one or two hymn suggestions pulled from a bowl, where the hymns written on the I Worshiped Today will have been added. Have the Bible readings. Sing a few more, have the Creed and prayers. Sing a few more, do the offering and Lord's Prayer. Finish out with a few to end the service. The idea is to sing some favorite or unusual songs, give Pastor a chance to flex his Bible muscles, and include more people.



## Christmas Cantata Rehearsal Schedule

### December

The choir will not be singing during the worship service. Children's Program @ 10:30 service on Dec. 8<sup>th</sup>. **Rehearsal will be in the choir room 9:15 AM.**

Thursday, Dec. 12<sup>th</sup>

7:15-8:30 PM Sanctuary

Saturday, Dec. 14

10:00 AM-noon

Choir rehearsal

with Chamber Orchestra

Sunday, Dec. 15

8:45 AM Choir Rehearsal

9:30 AM Worship Service

with Cantata

### FUMC Food Pantry:

A reminder that items are collected the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of every month. The next Sunday for collection is



**Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup>.** Some specific items that are always needed are: **fruits, vegetables, paper products (toilet paper, paper towels, Kleenex, etc.) Oil, flour, SUGAR, SPICES, cereal, box meals, canned meats, etc.** Any and all items are greatly appreciated. *Dot Burley delivers in December.*



**As the Thanksgiving and Christmas Seasons approach, please consider donating non-perishable food or personal hygiene items to our Blessings Box Community Outreach. There are donation baskets placed by the church doors for your convenience. Thank you in advance for your generosity with this community outreach.**

**The AIM Committee**



## Our Anchor Youth Community Blanket Service Project



for Christmas this

year is a blanket collection for area students. Our goal is to collect a minimum of 40 (new and still in original packaging) blankets or throws. Blankets should be twin size and throws should be of heavier weight and a minimum size of 60" x 70". The collection will be at the church now through December 8<sup>th</sup>. On December 15<sup>th</sup> the blankets collected will be blessed at both church services and then distributed that week. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Juli Hamilton or Cary Roehm. Thank you in advance for considering to support this community service project!

**THANK YOU, THANK YOU,**

**THANK YOU:** As of Wednesday, November 20, we have received 53 blankets for our community service project! This is very exciting news and we are so grateful to our congregation for your unwavering support! Even though we have exceeded our goal of 40, we know that the need for more will be there

come mid December. If you are still interested in donating a blanket we will gladly keep collecting them until December 8! Thank you again for your prayers, love, and support!

## Parents of St. Marks!!!



Do you find it difficult to find childcare so you can go

Christmas shopping? The High School Anchor Youth group, with adult supervision, is offering a FREE childcare service! Lunch and fun filled activities will be offered here at the church on Sunday, December 8, immediately after the 10:30 service with pick-up time by 4:30pm. This FREE service is for any family that attends St. Marks and is for children ages infant to 10 years old. If interested please indicate that on the "I Worshipped Today". You will also need to complete an Emergency Medical form for safety purposes which can be found at both entrances and in the Gathering Area of the church! If you want to make a donation, please consider purchasing a blanket for our blanket project! If you have questions, please contact Juli Hamilton or Cary Roehm.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS**