

ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH

A congregation of the
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
welcomes you!

December 8,
2024



The Second
Sunday of
Advent

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

SATURDAY

“SHINE” CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP: 6:00 PM (*1st Saturdays - Chapel*)

SUNDAY

THE DIVINE LITURGY: 9:00AM

in-person & streaming

EDUCATION & FELLOWSHIP HOUR: 10:30 AM

105 EAST “D” STREET BELLEVILLE, IL 62220

PHONE: 618.233.9809

EMAIL: WORSHIP@STMARKBELLEVILLE.ORG

WEBSITE: WWW.STMARKBELLEVILLE.ORG

The Reverend Brian M. Robison, Pastor

PLEASE wear a **mask/face covering** *if* you are **exhibiting any upper respiratory symptoms consistent with allergies, a cold, or COVID-19** (runny nose, cough, sore throat).

To parents with small children: We are glad your family is worshiping with us today! **“Quiet Bags”** (supplies & activities for use by small children) are available in the Welcome Area. If you or your child need a break from the service, feel free to walk to the Welcome Area/narthex (the service is still audible over the speakers).

Parish Hall and Restrooms are located on the lower level of the main church building. The stairway is off the entrance foyer. A second **handicapped access** restroom is available next to the **accessibility lift** to the lower level is located in the Welcome Area. An usher will be happy to assist you with the lift.

Assistive listening devices and **low vision items** are available. Please ask one of our ushers for assistance.

PRELUDE "Reflection on Ancient Plainsong" Arr. by T. Helmore & **WELCOME**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS *Please STAND as you are able*

Blessed be that Father, Son, and + Holy Spirit – the one God who is alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Please KNEEL or remain as you are

God of mercy, **we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.**

God of might, we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.

God in our midst, we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.

A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through + Christ Jesus, whose day draws near. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN *Please STAND* "Prepare the Royal Highway" **ELW 248**



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing; your own e - ter - nal king!
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

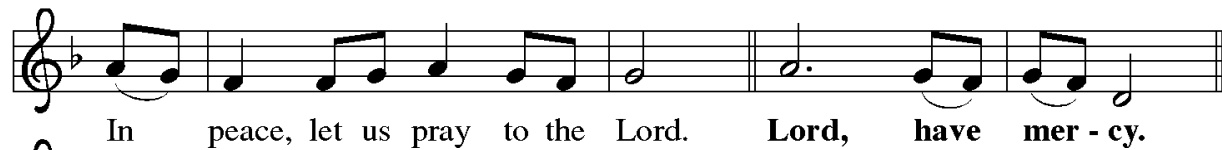


Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

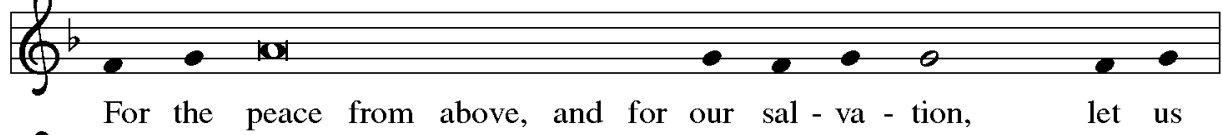
GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

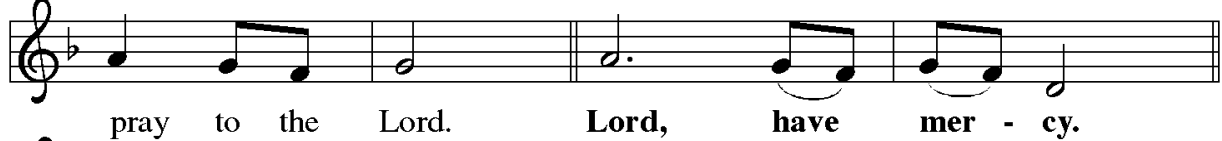
KYRIE



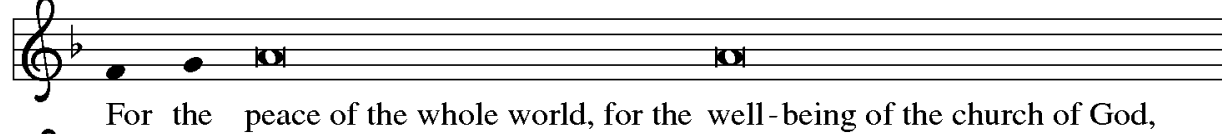
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



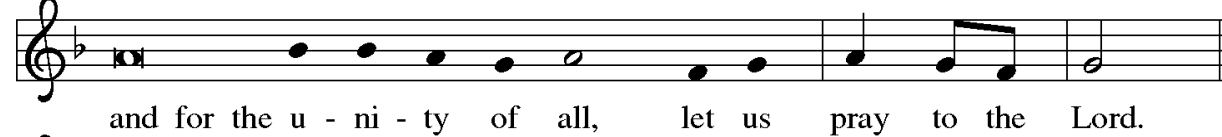
For the peace from above, and for our sal - va - tion, let us



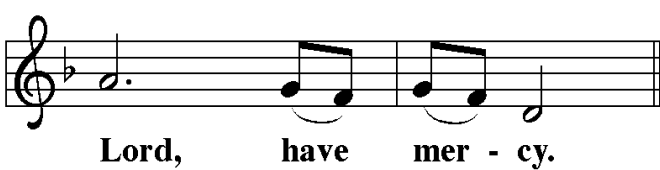
pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



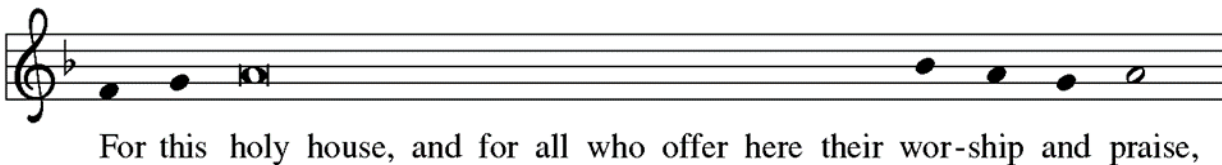
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Praise to you, O God, our salvation who is near. You hold us in our waiting and keep us awake to the world. You show up in our lives at unexpected times. Bless us as we light this candle to keep vigil for your arrival. We trust that even though we do not know the day or the hour, you hurry to gather all people to your peace. **Amen.**



“Light One Candle”

ELW 240 vs. 2



2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.

THE RITE OF HOLY BAPTISM FOR

Sawyer Kay Best

Parents: Natalie & Cody Best

Sponsors: Sarah Ott & Casey Best

PRESENTATION

The baptismal party gathers with the ministers at the font.

In baptism our gracious heavenly Father frees us from sin and death by joining us to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are born children of a fallen humanity; by water and the Holy Spirit we are reborn children of God and made members of the church, the body of Christ. Living with Christ and in the communion of saints, we grow in faith, love, and obedience to the will of God.

Sponsors present the candidate.

We present Sawyer Kay Best for Baptism.

The presiding minister addresses the child's parents.

Called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to have Sawyer baptized into Christ?

Response: We do.

As you bring Sawyer to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities:

to live with her among God's faithful people,
bring her to the word of God and the holy supper,
teach her the Lord's Prayer, the Creed,
and the Ten Commandments,

place in her hands the holy scriptures,
and nurture her in faith and prayer,
so that she may learn to trust God,
proclaim Christ through word and deed,
care for others and the world God made,
and work for justice and peace.

Do you promise to help Sawyer grow in the Christian faith and life:

Response: We do.

The presiding minister addresses sponsors.

Sponsors, do you promise to nurture Sawyer in the Christian faith as you are empowered by God's Spirit, and to help her live in the covenant of baptism and in communion with the church?

Response: We do.

The presiding minister addresses the assembly.

People of God, do you promise to support Sawyer and pray for her in her new life in Christ?

We do.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

The presiding minister addresses the parents and sponsors. The assembly may join in the responses.

I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the Church.

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

Response: **I renounce them.**

Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

Response: **I renounce them.**

Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

Response: **I renounce them.**

The presiding minister addresses the parent, sponsors, and assembly.

Do you believe in God the Father?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;**

**he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE FONT

The presiding minister leads the thanksgiving.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family, and through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you set us free from the power of sin and death and raise us up to live in you.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, the power of your living Word, that Sawyer who is washed in the waters of baptism may be given new life. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

BAPTISM

Sawyer Kay Best, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of + the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen! You belong to Christ, in whom you have been baptized. Alleluia!

Clothed with Christ in baptism, the newly baptized may receive a baptismal garment.

The presiding minister continues:

Let us pray... We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give your daughters and sons new birth, cleanse them from sin, and raise them to eternal life.



Laying both hands on the head of the newly baptized, the minister prays:

Sustain Sawyer with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever. **Amen.**

The presiding minister marks the sign of the cross on the forehead of the baptized. Oil prepared for this purpose may be used. As the sign of the cross is made, the minister says:

Sawyer, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever.

Amen.

A lighted candle may be given to a sponsor as a representative of the congregation says:

Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray... Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Following the prayer, please SIT.

WORD

FIRST READING: Malachi 3:1-4

¹⁴The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ¹⁶In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Luke 1:68-79 *spoken responsively by half-verse*

⁶⁸Blessed are you, Lord, the | God of Israel,
you have come to your people and | set them free.

⁶⁹You have raised up for us a | mighty Savior,
born of the house of your | servant David.

⁷⁰Through your holy prophets, you promised of old to save us | from our enemies,
⁷¹from the hands of | all who hate us,

⁷²to show mercy | to our forebears,
and to remember your | holy covenant.

⁷³This was the oath you swore to our | father Abraham:

⁷⁴**to set us free from the hands of our | enemies,**

free to worship you | without fear,

⁷⁵**holy and righteous before you, all the days | of our life.**

⁷⁶And you, child, shall be called the prophet of | the Most High,

for you will go before the Lord to pre- | pare the way,

⁷⁷to give God's people knowledge | of salvation

by the forgiveness | of their sins.

⁷⁸In the tender compassion | of our God

the dawn from on high shall | break upon us,

⁷⁹to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shad- | ow of death,

and to guide our feet into the | way of peace.

ALLELUIA VERSE *The assembly STANDS to welcome the gospel.*

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: Luke 3:1-6

A reading from the Holy Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as recorded by the evangelist Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'

⁵Every valley shall be filled,

and every mountain and hill shall be made low,

and the crooked shall be made straight,

and the rough ways made smooth;

⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.** *Please SIT*

HYMN OF THE DAY “No Wind at the Window” ACS 906 Tune: *Away in a Manger*

- 1 No wind at the window, No knock on the door
No light from the lampstand, No foot on the floor
No dream born of tiredness, No ghost raised by fear
Just-an angel and-a woman And-a voice in her ear
- 2 “Oh, Mary, Oh, Mary don’t hide from my face
Be glad that you’re favored and filled with God’s grace
The time for redeeming the world has begun
And you are requested to mother God’s son.”
- 3 This child must be born that the Kingdom might come
Salvation for many, and ruin for some
Both end and beginning, both message and sign
Both victor and victim, both yours and divine
- 4 No payment was promised, no promises made
No wedding was dated, no blueprint displayed
Yet Mary, consenting to what none could guess
Replied with conviction, "Tell God I say yes."

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION *The names of those for whom we pray aloud are listed below. Please read only the first names. Other prayer intentions can be found in the back of this bulletin.*

The response to “Lord, in your mercy,” is “Hear our prayer”...

Eleanor Benton, Toni Brendel, Kathy Casey, Gary Dozier, Evelyn Duncan, Carol Kugler, Bruce Martens, Dwight Ness, Mae Newsome, Kim Palmer, Tina Partelow, Marilyn Robinson, Becky Schnitzius, Larry Shurtleff, Cohen Summers, & Carol Weshinsky.

PEACE *The assembly is invited to share a greeting of God’s peace with one another. Following **the Peace**, you may be seated for a few moments*

OFFERING *Should you wish to leave an offering today, it may be placed in the wooden box on the table near the baptismal font at any point during or after the service.*

OFFERTORY “When Will He Come” by Besig St. Mark Chancel Choir, *Flute: Nick Baker*

OFFERING PRAYER

Assistant: Let us pray together... **Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

OFFERTORY**“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”**

ELW 257 v. 1

1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
un - til the Son of God ap - pear. Re-joice! Re-joice!
Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (*Chanted to the tune of “O Come, O Come Emmanuel”*)

The Lord be with you **and also with you.**

Lift up your hearts, **we lift them to the Lord.**

We give our thanks to Go-d our Lord

It’s right to give our tha--nks and praise.

Rejoice! Rejoice, Emmanuel, shall come to you O, Israel.

It’s right to praise God every time and place, through Jesus, promised gift of grace, whose advent sets God’s people free; with all creation we sing joyfully:

Rejoice! Rejoice, Emmanuel, shall come to you O, Israel.

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (*tune: O Come, O Come Emmanuel*)

Oh, holy, holy, ho--ly Lord,

the God of pow’r and Go--d of might.

Your glory fills the hea-ven and earth;

Hosanna in the high--est!

Rejoice! Rejoice, Emmanuel, shall come to you O, Israel.

Lord Jesus took and blessed & broke the bread;

“My body giv’n in love for you,” he said.

“This cup binds you in cov’nant with me;

Thus be forgiven and re-mem-ber me!

Rejoice! Rejoice, Emmanuel, shall come to you O, Israel.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to the table.

LAMB OF GOD (*tune: O Come, O Come Emmanuel*)

Oh, Jesus, wisdom, our Emmanuel,

you take away the si-n of the world.

Have mercy on us La-mb of God;

Have mercy on us, gra-nt us your peace.

Rejoice! Rejoice, Emmanuel, Shall come to you O, Israel.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION *Please SIT*

Communion is open to everyone. In this sacrament, we believe that Christ is truly present in the bread and wine. At this service, communion will be served from around the altar rail. At the usher's direction, please come forward and kneel at the altar rail.

- ✘ *After receiving the bread, you may take an individual cup or drink from the chalice.*
- ✘ *You may return to your seat after communing.*
- ✘ *Those who do not wish to commune may come forward for a blessing. Please cross your arms over your chest to indicate this preference.*
- ✘ *Reception of the Eucharist under one kind (bread or wine) is valid communion for those who must avoid either for health reasons.*
- ✘ *If you are unable to go to the altar for communion, please notify an usher or the pastor, so that communion may be brought to you in your pew.*

“Oh Lord, How Shall I Meet You”

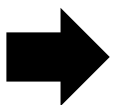
ELW 241



- 1 O Lord, how shall I meet you, how wel - come you a - right?
- 2 I lay in fet - ters, groan - ing; you came to set me free.
- 3 Love caused your in - car - na - tion; love brought you down to me.
- 4 Re - joice, then, you sad - heart - ed, who sit in deep - est gloom,



Your peo - ple long to greet you, my hope, my heart's de - light!
I stood, my shame be - moan - ing; you came to hon - or me.
Your thirst for my sal - va - tion pro - cured my lib - er - ty.
who mourn your joys de - part - ed and trem - ble at your doom.





Oh, kin - dle, Lord most ho - ly, your lamp with - in my breast
 A glo - rious crown you give me, a trea - sure safe on high
 Oh, love be - yond all tell - ing, that led you to em - brace
 All hail the Lord's ap - pear - ing! O glo - rious Sun, now come,



to do in spir - it low - ly all that may please you best.
 that will not fail or leave me as earth - ly rich - es fly.
 in love, all love ex - cel - ling, our lost and fall - en race.
 send forth your beams so cheer - ing and guide us safe - ly home.

FLUTE SOLO

Nick Baker

*After the distribution is complete, please **STAND** as you are able for the blessing.*

TABLE BLESSING

The Body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

CANTICLE AFTER COMMUNION “O Lord, Now Let Your Servant” ELW 313 v. 1



1 O Lord, now let your ser - vant de - part in heav'n - ly peace,



for I have seen the glo - ry of your re - deem - ing grace:



a light to lead the na - tions un - to your ho - ly hill,



the glo - ry of your peo - ple, your cho - sen Is - ra - el.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Assistant: Let us pray together... **Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name. Amen.**

BLESSING

God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey - Father, +Son, and Holy Spirit - bless and keep you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

“On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”

ELW 249



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounc - es
2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; make straight the
3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our ref - uge
4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, and make us
5 All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, whose ad - vent



that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,
way for God with - in, and let us all our
and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we
rise to fall no more; oh, let your face up -
has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther



for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings!
hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.
waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.
on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.
we a - dore, and Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

“Echo Noel”

L. D'Aquin/ed. D. Bish

MINISTERS OF THE LITURGY

Presider & Preacher: The Rev. Brian M. Robison + **Assisting Minister:** Greg Guenther

Crucifer: Frank Dressel + **Lector:** Jan Litherland

Chalice Bearer: Tom Partelow + **Livestream Camera:** Melanie Robison

Ushers: Rick Crosby & Rex Rothgangel + **Trained Responder:** Jan Richards

Prayer Intentions

St. Mark Members

Eleanor Benton, Toni Brendel, Kathy Casey, Gary Dozier, Evelyn Duncan, Carol Kugler, Bruce Martens, Dwight Ness, Mae Newsome, Kim Palmer, Tina Partelow, Marilyn Robinson, Larry Shurtleff, Cohen Summers, & Carol Weshinsky

St. Mark Family and Friends

Dennis Althardt, Stellamarie Bearth, Bonnie Baete, Phyllis Booker, Kathy Boxdorfer, Thomas Boxdorfer, Jim Braeutigam, Patty Brennecke, Doug Carpenter, Susan Carson, Christine, Arianna Curnes, Catherine Davis, Marilyn Dichsen, Mike Ellison, Katrina Fenner, Josh Gansmann, Marge Gardner, Christine Gass, Viv Gillespie, Joni Giordano, David Graber, Stephanie Groennert, TC Groennert, Herb Halwachs, Jamie House, Debbie Jacobs, Jimmy Jurgens, Mike Koeneman, Austin Lickenbrock, Donna Lesche, Becky Loeschner, Wyatt Madison, Christopher Martiszus, Glenda Martiszus, Bobby & Joyce McCall, Allen Martens, Janet Middendorf, Pr. Ron & Debbie Neustadt, Dean Norrenberns, Theresa Painter, Hilda Parnell, Tim & Missy Partelow, Debbie & Larry Powers, Michael Robison, Darrell Robinson, Sarah and Family, Dave Schaaf, Jill Schlueter, Becky Schnitzius, Stefanie Schroeder, David & Donna Sims, Margie Snep, Ingrid Thompson, Bob Vaughn, David Vaught, Toni Walston, Louise Wilson, Sue Witherell, Karen Woolf, Wilma Woolf, Jeanie Workman, Ken Zika, Chloe Zipperer

Members and Friends Serving in Our Nation's Military

Taiylar Foppe Merrel & John Merrel, Ryan McKenzie

Members Celebrating Birthdays This Week

Rick Crosby (12/9), Lauren Richards (12/9), Brad Geppert (12/12), and Patty Bearth (12/13)

Members celebrating wedding anniversaries this week

Mike & Randi Cardoza (12/12)

St. Mark Staff

Pastor: The Rev. Brian M. Robison

Office Administrator: Randi Cardoza + **Music Director:** Carol Kugler

Organist: Evelyn Duncan + **Parish Nurse:** Becky Schnitzius

Land Acknowledgement

St. Mark Lutheran Church is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the **Quapaw**, **Myaamia**, **Kaskaskia**, and **Kickapoo** peoples, and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.

*Acknowledgements: Reprinted from Words for Worship, copyright 2024 Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission. Scripture quotations (except psalms) from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989 Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Liturgy reprinted from Evangelical Lutheran Worship. Used with permission of OneLicense #SBL07861. Songs and hymns reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-729176: "Prepare the Royal Highway" © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship, admin. Augsburg Fortress; "Light One Candle" © 1984 Fortress Press; "No Wind at the Window" ©1992 Iona Community / WGRG (North America); "O, Lord, Now Let Your Servant" Text: © 1925, Augsburg Fortress; Tune © 2006, Augsburg Fortress; "Lift High the Cross" Text & Tune © 1974 Hope Publishing Company. **Choir Hymn:** "When Will He Come" ©2008 Shawnee Press; Contributors: Besig / Price. All other printed hymns used are in the Public Domain.*

A Word to Advent from *Bishop Greg Busboom*

What word are we speaking into Advent this year?

The word that John the Baptist speaks into Advent is nothing less than the word of God, a word that comes to John in the wilderness.



The gospel-writer Luke intentionally locates the word John is called to speak in the context of the political and religious structures of the day. “In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son Zechariah” (3:1-2a). The word John is called to speak does not ignore the earthly realities whirling around him but rather is a word that speaks directly into them.

The specific word John speaks is a word from Scripture, the words of the prophet Isaiah from Isaiah 40. In stark contrast to the empty claims offered by the earthly and religious leaders of the day, the word John speaks is the word of salvation, not just for some, but for all — “and all flesh shall see the salvation of God” (Luke 3:6). While the promises offered by the earthly leaders benefitted only some, the salvation of God would be revealed to all. Not unlike today, this word was a radical word, a costly word, a word that would ultimately lead John to a platter and Jesus to a cross.

It can be tempting during the busyness of the Advent season to gloss lightly over the words of Advent. Avoid the temptation. The words of the lectionary readings, the words of the liturgy, and the words of the hymns all speak a word of stark contrast to the empty promises offered by both the secular celebrations of the season and so many of the political and societal structures in which we find ourselves. Read these words. Sing these words. Dwell in these words. And, for the love of God, preach these words, even when doing so is uncomfortable. They are words that lead us to Jesus, the only true Word, the Word that brings salvation not just for some, but for all.

His is no earthly kingdom; it comes from heav'n above.

His rule is peace and freedom and justice, truth, and love.

So let your praise be sounding for kindness so abounding:

Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's word! (ELW #246)

Centered in Christ +

Bishop Busboom



Advent & Christmas Schedule 2024

Wednesdays in Advent – December 11 & 18

6:00PM – Soup supper *Parish Hall*

7:00 PM - Holden Evening Prayer *Church*

Christmas Eve – Tuesday, December 24

6:45PM – Pre-service music

7:00PM – The Divine Liturgy *with candle lighting*



Christmas Day – Wednesday, December 25

10:00AM - Joint Divine Liturgy with St. George's Episcopal

1st Sunday of Christmas - Sunday, December 29

10:00AM - Joint Service of Lessons & Carols with St. George's Episcopal

2nd Sunday of Christmas - Sunday, January 5, 2025

9:00AM The Divine Liturgy with Holy Communion

The Feast of the Epiphany – Monday, January 6

6:00AM - Joint Divine Liturgy with St. George's Episcopal



MARK TIMES

NEWS and NOTES for December 8, 2024

This Week at St. Mark:

Monday, Dec. 9:	9:30AM	Health & Wellness meeting – conference room
Wednesday, Dec. 11:	6:00PM	Advent Soup Supper
	7:00PM	Holden Evening Prayer
Thursday, Dec. 12:	6:15PM	Bell Choir Rehearsal
	7:00PM	Voice Choir Rehearsal
Saturday, Dec. 14:	9:00AM	Hanging of greenery, trees & wreaths

Annual Meeting

Thank you to all who attended and contributed to last Sunday's annual meeting, and special thanks for those who have agreed to serve in various elected positions.

President:	Keith Kniepkamp	Vice-President:	Mike Murakami
Evangelism/Social Min.:	Sherri Foppe	Financial Secretary:	Kathy Evans Nancy Guenther

Synod Assembly Voting Members:

Adult Male:	Greg Martens	Adult Female:	Danielle Tribut
-------------	---------------------	---------------	------------------------

“Angel Tree” Project with Lutheran Child and Family Services (LCFS)

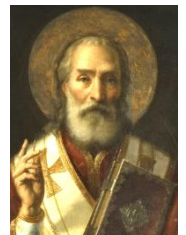


TODAY, Sunday, December 8 is the **last day to return the Angel Tree gifts** purchased for needy families and children. We will be delivering all the gifts to LCFS tomorrow/Monday.

Please contact Sherri Foppe 618-791-6148 cookinsherri2@gmail.com or Ann Martens 618-530-8679 if you have any questions. Monetary gifts will be accepted for those who prefer not to shop, and may be given to Ann or Sherri. Donations for gifts may also be made electronically at https://secure.myvanco.com/L-YT91/campaign/C-14EWR?access=tile_direct.

Today's Adult Forum – St. Nicholas, Part 1

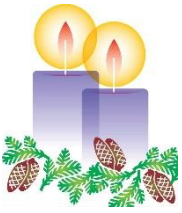
Next Sunday's Adult Forum will feature the first half of the video documentary, *St. Nicholas – The Real Story*, led by Dr. Mark Wilson, one of the lecturers at the Bible and Archaeology Fest that Pastor Brian attended.



Christmas Caroling Today!

TODAY, Sunday, December 8, you're invited to join a group of us to sing Christmas carols to the residents of two local long-term care facilities, including some of our own church members. We will meet at **12:30PM** at **Colonnade Senior Living** in O'Fallon for our first stop. **All ages are welcome!**





Advent Evening Prayer & Soup Suppers continue this **Wednesday, December 11**. Plan to come enjoy a hot meal of soup and salad at 6:00PM in the Parish Hall before joining us in the church for Holden Evening Prayer.

Get a group together and host one of the soup suppers! A sign-up sheet is in the Parish Hall near the coffee stand.

Ladies Lunch Bunch This Week!

The LLB will meet at **Joe's Pizza and Pasta** (4628 N Illinois St, Fairview Heights) **THIS Wednesday, December 13 at 12 noon**. Please let Sherri Foppe (618 791-6148) know if you are planning to go!

Proclaim Christ's birth with flowers!

Anyone wishing to donate should watch for a special envelope in the pews, fill out the front portion and return it, with a check/cash, to the offering plate or the office by 12/18 with "Christmas Flowers" in the memo line. *Online donations may be made through VANCO at <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-YT91/campaign/C-ZMGD>. All dedications will be published in the Christmas bulletin.



Advent Lessons & Carols

Please join us **Sunday, December 15 at 5:00PM** for our annual service of Advent Lessons & Carols with St. George's. This traditional service is a wonderful way to celebrate the season, with beautiful hymns and scripture passages that guide and focus us in our time of preparation for Christmas and the Lord's return. The service is especially appropriate for inviting friends and family, particularly those who might be searching for "something more" this holiday. A wine and cheese reception will follow.

Yoga at St. Mark!



Interested in **Yoga**? Whether you are a beginner or experienced, come to a **Meet and Greet** on **Thursday, December 19 at 6:15PM** in the **Parish Hall** to **meet the instructor** and **ask any questions** concerning the practice of yoga, the class itself and items you may need. **Formal classes will be held for 45 minutes on Thursday evenings at 6:15PM beginning on January 2, 2025** in the Parish Hall. A **donation of \$5.00** is asked for **each session**. Please **bring your own mat and water bottle** for classes.

Practicing yoga can help with body flexibility, strength, mobility, and balance. It also requires you to shift into a more relaxed state, which can help decrease stress, increase focus, and promote a stronger connection with yourself. You can't ask for a more pose-ative experience!

St. Mark Offerings for 12/1:

General Fund: \$2,249.11;

Food Pantry: \$1000;

Angel Tree: \$242.40;

