

ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

**December 24,
2023**



**The Fourth
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 worshipping 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 & WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS *Please STAND as you are able*

Blessed be the Father, Son, and + Holy Spirit – the one God who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation. **Amen.**

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Please KNEEL or remain as you are

Everlasting God, **you love justice and you hate wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression. We are complicit in systems of exploitation. We choose comfort over courage. We are careless with creation's bounty. Look upon us with mercy. Turn our hearts again to you. Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world. Amen.**

Hear these words of assurance: God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of Jesus Christ+, your sins are forgiven. God's covenant is eternal, and God's blessing rests upon us all. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN *Please STAND* "Hark the Glad Sound" ELW 239



1 Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior
2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's
3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing
4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of peace, your wel - come



prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -
bond - age held. The gates of brass be -
soul to cure, and with the trea - sures
shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal



pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.
fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.
of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.
arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

GREETING

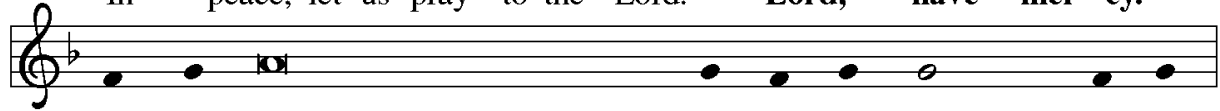
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

KYRIE



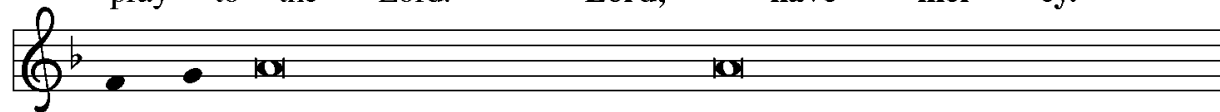
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



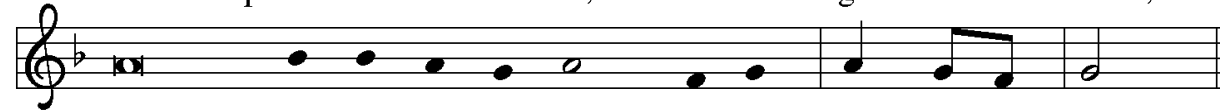
For the peace from above, and for our sal - va - tion, let us



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



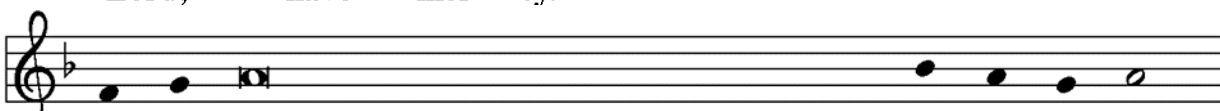
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



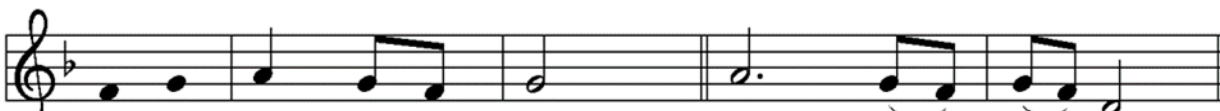
and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



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, who lives with us, sharing our flesh and bones. As Mary waited and Joseph dreamed, so we dream and wait for you. Bless us and let your face shine upon us, more radiant than these candles, and more dear than all else we seek. Restore us when we fail to refuse the evil and choose the good, and banish all our fears. We pray in the name of Emmanuel, your promised child and our Savior. **Amen.**



“Light One Candle”

ELW 240 vs. 4



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



He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray... Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Following the prayer, please SIT.

WORD

FIRST READING: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

¹Now when David the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." ³Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you." ⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. ⁷Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" ⁸Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; ⁹and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint

a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Luke 1:46b-55 *spoken responsively between leader & congregation by half-verse*

^{46b}My soul proclaims the greatness | of the Lord,

⁴⁷**my spirit rejoices in | God my Savior,**

^{48f}for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your | lowly servant.

From this day all generations will | call me blessed;

⁴⁹you, the Almighty, have done great | things for me,

and holy | is your name.

⁵⁰You have mercy on | those who fear you,

from generation to | generation.

⁵¹You have shown strength | with your arm;

and scattered the proud in | their conceit,

⁵²casting down the mighty | from their thrones

and lifting | up the lowly.

⁵³You have filled the hungry | with good things,

and sent the rich | away empty.

⁵⁴You have come to the aid of your | servant Israel,

to remember the promise of mercy,

⁵⁵the promise made | to our forebears,

to Abraham and his children forever.

SECOND READING: Romans 16:25-27

²⁵Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— ²⁷to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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 1:26-38

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

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of the Lord.

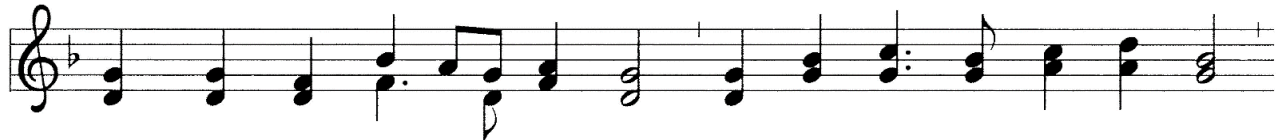
Praise to you, O Christ. *Please SIT*

SERMON

"A New Home"

The Rev. Brian M. Robison

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- 1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; vir - gin's son, make here your home.
 2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, but the mys - tic Breath of God,
 3 Won - drous birth—oh, won - drous child— from his throne, a vir - gin mild!
 4 From God's heart the Sav - ior speeds, back to God his path - way leads;



Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth: God has cho - sen such a birth.
 was the Word of God made flesh, fruit of wom - an, blos - som fresh.
 Ver - y God, and Mar - y's son, ea - ger now his race to run!
 out to van - quish death's com - mand, back to reign at God's right hand.

- 5 Now your manger, shining bright,
 hallows night with newborn light.
 Night cannot this light subdue;
 let our faith shine ever new.
- 6 Praise we sing to Christ the Lord,
 virgin's son, incarnate Word!
 To the holy Trinity
 praise we sing eternally!



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 Mark Times newsletter. The response to Merciful God, is hear our prayer...*

Eleanor Benton, Dave Brauer, Rick Crosby, Gary Dozier, Evelyn Duncan, Mary Hill, Bruce Martens, Dwight Ness, Mae Newsome, Kim Palmer, Sandy Purdy, Marilyn Robinson, Larry Shurtleff, Carol Weshinsky, Gary Weshinsky, & Barb Wurdinger

MEAL

PEACE *The assembly is invited to share a greeting of God's peace with one another. Please be respectful to those who wish to do so from a distance. Following **the Peace**, you may be **seated** for a few moments*

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.

CHOIR ANTHEM

“On Jordan's Strong Bank, I Stand” St. Mark Chancel Choir
 Follow along with the lyrics as printed on ELW #437

OFFERING PRAYER

Assistant: Let us pray together...

God our provider, by your merciful hand abundance springs up from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty. Let them be a sign of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

OFFERTORY

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”

ELW 257 v. 1

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 7/8 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The lyrics are: "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 word "Refrain" is written above the second line of the third staff.

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

In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together. Come, take your place at 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.*

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

ELW 295

1 Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten ere the worlds be -
 2 Oh, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed, when the vir - gin,
 3 This is he whom seers in old time chant - ed of with
 4 Let the heights of heav'n a - dore him; an - gel hosts, his
 5 Christ, to thee, with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly

gan to be, he is Al - pha and O - me - ga,
 full of grace, by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing,
 one ac - cord, whom the voic - es of the proph - ets
 prais - es sing; pow'rs, do - min - ions, bow be - fore him
 Ghost, to thee, hymn and chant and high thanks - giv - ing

he the source, the end - ing he, of the things that are, that
 bore the Sav - ior of our race, and the babe, the world's re -
 prom - ised in their faith - ful word; now he shines, the long - ex -
 and ex - tol our God and King; let no tongue on earth be
 and un - wea - ried prais - es be: hon - or, glo - ry, and do -

have been, and that fu - ture years shall see,
 deem - er, first re - vealed his sa - cred face,
 pect - ed; let cre - a - tion praise its Lord
 si - lent, ev - 'ry voice in con - cert ring
 min - ion, and e - ter - nal vic - to - ry

ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 ev - er - more and ev - er - more! A - men.

“The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came”

ELW 265

*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, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

SENDING

BLESSING

The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope, and the anointing of the Spirit remain upon you – Father, +Son, and Holy Spirit - now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus” ELW 254 *Tune: Holy Manna*

**1. Come, th-ou long expect-ed Je-s-us,
born to- set thy people free;
from ou-r fears and sins re-lea-se u-s,
let u-s find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and conso-lation,
hope of all the- earth tho-u art;
dear de-sire of ever-y na-tion-
joy o-f every longing heart.**

**2. Born th-y people to de-liv-er-
born a- child and yet a King,
born to- reign in us for-ev-er,
now th-y gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own e-tern--al spirit
rule in all ou-r hearts a-lone;
by thi-ne all suf-ficie-nt mer-it-
raise u-s to thy glorious throne.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL Go in peace. Keep awake. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE “*Ding Dong Merrily on High*”

MINISTERS OF TODAY'S LITURGY

Presider & Preacher: The Rev. Brian M. Robison + **Assisting Minister:** Charlie Duncan
Chalice Bearer & Crucifer: Greg Martens + **Lector:** Missy Kimbrell
Livestream Camera: Melanie Robison + **Ushers:** Kathy Casey & Nancy Guenther
Organist: Carol Kugler + **Safety Volunteer:** Mark Bearth

Prayer Intentions

St. Mark Members

Eleanor Benton, Dave Brauer, Rick Crosby, Gary Dozier, Evelyn Duncan, Mary Hill, Bruce Martens,
Dwight Ness, Mae Newsome, Kim Palmer, Sandra Purdy, Marilyn Robinson,
Larry Shurtleff, Carol Weshinskey, Gary Weshinskey, & Barb Wurdinger

St. Mark Family and Friends

Dennis Althardt, Stellamarie Bearth, Phyllis Booker, Kathy Boxdorfer, Jim Braeutigam, Patty Brennecke,
Susan Carson, Dorothy Cheek, Christine, Catherine Davis, Brian Dinges, Mike Ellison, Katrina Fenner,
Taiylar Foppe, Josh Gansmann, Christine Gass, Viv Gillespie, Joni Giordano, David Graber,
Stephanie Groennert, TC Groennert, Jamie House, Debbie Jacobs, Donna Koudelka, Austin Lickenbrock,
Becky Loeschner, Elroy Luffman, Wyatt Madison, Christopher Martiszus, Glenda Martiszus,
Bobby & Joyce McCall, Allen Martens, Pr. Ron & Debbie Neustadt, Dean Norrenberns, Theresa Painter,
Hilda Parnell, Tim & Missy Partelow, Debbie & Larry Powers, Darrell Robinson, Sarah and Family,
Dave Schaaf, Jill Schlueter, Stefanie Schroeder, David & Donna Sims, Margie Snep, Ingrid Thompson,
Kris Whitley, Louise Wilson, Elisabeth Woodrome, Karen Woolf, Wilma Woolf, Ken Zika, Chloe Zipperer

St. Mark Thanksgivings

We pray for those who celebrate their birthdays this week:

Curt Gansmann (12/26), **Danielle Tribout** (12/26), **Marilyn Robinson** (12/27),
Linda Ness (12/28), and **Brianna Kilzer** (12/28)

Christmas Schedule 2023

Christmas Eve – Sunday, December 24

6:45PM – Pre-Service Music

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

Christmas Day – Monday, December 25

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

1st Sunday of Christmas - Sunday, December 31

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



MARK TIMES NEWS & NOTES FOR DECEMBER 24, 2023

THE WEEK AHEAD

Tonight 12/24: 7:00PM Christmas Eve Festival Divine Liturgy

Monday 12/25: 10:00AM Christmas Day Divine Liturgy *with St. George's*

Sunday 12/31: 10:00AM 1st Sunday of Christmas Liturgy of Lessons & Carols *w/St. George's*

Angel Tree Project

THANK YOU to everyone who participated in St. George's and St. Mark's joint Angel Tree Project Christmas Drive through Lutheran Child and Family Services this year. A picture is worth a thousand words – just look at how many children we helped have a great Christmas!!



SHARE THE WARMTH Project

Inspired by Phillip's Wish in the movie **5000 Blankets**, our collection of **GENTLY USED or new blankets, hats, mittens, gloves, scarfs** for the homeless in our community will run thru January 31.

The collection bin in the Narthex/Canterbury Room has overflowed several times and we are almost to our 125-blanket goal!



As of December 14, the following donations had been received:

101 blankets; 99 hats/ear covers; 68 pairs of gloves; 43 neck scarves/mufflers; 72 pairs of socks

Donations have been distributed to:

St. George/St. Mark Food Pantry; Union United Methodist Church homeless program; Belleville Christian Center; Moms on a Mission in Dupo; Violence Prevention Center of Southwestern Illinois

Check your closets to see how many blankets you have that will help keep our homeless a little warmer this winter! A collection can is in the Narthex.

Do you or someone you know have the talent of knitting and/or crocheting? FREE yarn is available to anyone (member or non-member) to make hats, mittens, gloves, scarves for this project. Contact Peggy Anderson 618 791-0992 for your FREE yarn.



Neighborhood Watch Opportunity for St. Mark & St. George's

The Joint Safety Committee has identified a neighborhood need our churches might be able to help with. St. George's has begun the process of organizing a Neighborhood Watch (NW) program, and they have invited St. Mark to participate. Beyond wanting to be helpful to the neighborhood, we have our own interest in neighborhood safety and health. Organizational leadership, facility support, and hosting quarterly meetings are just a few of the ways our churches could support a NW program. Anyone interested in serving to implement this endeavor, please contact Mark Bearth, mark.bearth@gmail.com.



Thanks Carol Singers!

THANK YOU to the 19 members who brought some Christmas cheer to several of our homebound members on December 17. Your efforts gave much joy to those folks who cannot get out-and-about as they might like.

Chocolate & Coffee!

Did you forget a gift for someone? Need something quick, easy and available THIS MORNING?? Head down to the Parish Hall before or after worship and pick up some **fair trade coffee & chocolate** for sale. These products are not only delicious but **good for workers & the lands they farm.**



St. Mark T-Shirts

Inspired by imagery from the popular *Indiana Jones* film series, the winning design from our t-shirt contest is ready to order!

Adult shirts sizes S-XL are \$19.50 including tax 2XL, 3XL, 4XL & 5XL are \$22.75 including tax. *Payment is required when the order is placed.*



Orders **must** be placed through **Rich's Stiches**

<http://www.richsstichesemb.com>. When the webpage opens, scroll down to **Online Stores**, then scroll down and click on St. Mark Lutheran Church. **The ordering window will remain open until January 31, 2024.**



For those who are not computer oriented, you may contact Sherri Foppe at 618 791-6148 with your order and payment information.



Living Lutheran Magazine

If you haven't done so, please pick up the latest Living Lutheran (formerly *The Lutheran*) magazine from the St. Mark table in the Narthex. The current November/December issue is the last printed magazine that they will produce, so please take advantage of it. The magazine will continue, but in an online-only format.

St. Mark Offerings for 12/17: General Fund: **\$7,980.11** (*incl. online offerings received by 12/22*); Food Pantry: \$5; Christmas Flowers: \$25