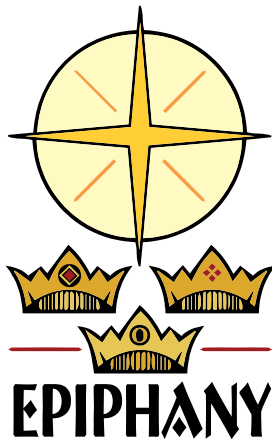


ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Messenger

“Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.” Mark 16:15

January 2022



**Come, celebrate Christ's
Epiphany on January 9**

On Sunday, January 9, St. Mark's will observe the Festival of Christ's Epiphany. On this day, we remember the account of the magi following the star to Bethlehem to worship the Christ. In that moment, we see how God made manifest the salvation of Jesus to the ends of the earth, so that we all might know His glory and believe in Him for salvation. It is a day of joy, for on it the Truth of Christ shines out before all nations.

We hope you will join us for this celebration! On this day, we will hold our Divine Service at the normal time, 9:30 a.m.



**Installation of 2022 servants
will occur on January 16**

As 2022 begins, there will be many opportunities for the members and friends of St. Mark's to serve the Lord, and to serve one another. Toward that end, several of our parishioners have volunteered to serve on boards, or in officer positions, during 2022 here at St. Mark's in order to help do the work of the church. And we are grateful for each one of you!

Pastor Vergin will be performing the Rite of Installation of Servants during the Divine Service on Sunday, January 16. Here, our volunteers--including officers, board members, musicians, altar guild, offering counters, teachers, etc.--will be invited up to the chancel to be installed in an official capacity and also to receive the Lord's blessing. We encourage our servants to take part in this rite!

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The *Messenger* is the monthly newsletter of:

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod
7979 Commerce Road
West Bloomfield, MI 48324
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Sunday

Divine Service at 9:30 a.m.
Adult Bible Study at 10:45 a.m.
Sunday School at 10:45 a.m.

Wednesday

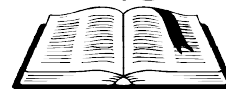
Holy Communion Service (masks worn) 4:30 p.m.

One Saturday/month

Men's Bible Study/Breakfast 9:00 a.m.

Handicap accessible

Bible Study



Be in God's Word for the building up of your faith!

St. Mark's offers several opportunities for you to delve deeper into your study of the Bible. We hope you will take advantage of one or more of the opportunities below in order to learn more about God's Word!

Adult Bible Class: The Book of Genesis

In the month of January, we will be continuing our study of the book of Genesis in our Adult Bible Class!

The book of Genesis is the first book of the Bible, and it tells the story of God's salvation from the very beginning. It starts with the creation of the world and the fall into sin, and from there it traces the promise of the Savior from generation to generation, beginning with Adam and culminating with Jacob's twelve children. It includes the account of Noah and the Flood, the Tower of Babel, the Call of Abraham, and Joseph's rise in Egypt. At every place it proclaims the steadfast love of God and His faithfulness in redeeming mankind from the guilt of our sin.

We hope you will join us for this study! This is a great opportunity to fill your week with God's Word and to grow in knowledge and faith!

Adult Bible Class meets on Sundays at 10:45am, after our Divine Service.

Men's Bible Study Will Meet on January 8

Attention Men of St. Mark's! Our next Men's Bible Study will be held on Saturday, January 8. We will gather from 9:00am-10:30am in St. Mark's fellowship hall. Breakfast will be provided, and we will be continuing our study of the book of Acts.

We hope to see you there! This is a great opportunity to be formed together as men of God in the image of Christ!

Children's Sunday School

Weekly Sunday School for kids at St. Mark's takes place each Sunday morning upstairs behind the choir loft from September through May from 10:45 - 11:45 a.m. Here, children will join with others in the upstairs outer youth room to learn the stories of the faith and the Truth of Christ in a fun and age-appropriate setting.

Please consider getting your kids or grandkids involved in this program! We'd love to have them there!

Pastor's Page

A New Year Filled with God's Grace

My friends, if someday we were to sit down with a pen and paper and try to list all the gifts of God, we would find ourselves engaged in a joyously endless task. We could go on and on. Some blessings might come to us right away and sit nicely at the top of the list: Salvation in Christ, the Holy Spirit, Family, Food, Shelter, Clothing. Other blessings might require a little more reflection, and are often overlooked: The solidity of the earth, the regularity of seasons, the capabilities of the human body, the usefulness of water and air and light.

Well this month we find ourselves entering into a new year—the year 2022, if you can believe it! And this affords us a prime opportunity to consider one of these “often overlooked” blessings, a particular blessing that very few of us might ever think to add to our list: The gift of timekeeping.

Timekeeping, you might say? How is that a gift of God? Well, remember this: On the fourth day of creation, God made the heavenly lights. “And God said, ‘Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night...’ and it was so. And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars” (Genesis 1:14a, 15b-16).

But why did God create these heavenly lights? He did it for a few specific purposes. First, of course, these lights were created to shine upon the earth (Genesis 1:15a), and to separate the light from the darkness (Genesis 1:18b). But that's not the only reason God made them. These heavenly lights were also created to serve as a means of timekeeping for the human race. As God said, “Let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years” (Genesis 1:14b). In other words, these heavenly lights were created to enable mankind to keep and record time. For example, the movement of the sun in the sky allows us to mark the time of day. The phases of the moon, the months. And the angle of the stars, the seasons and the time of year. Indeed, these heavenly lights are for us a universal calendar, written in the sky by the Almighty Creator Himself.

But why should we regard this ability to keep time as a gift from God? To put it simply, it allows us to place the “mighty works of God” (Acts 2:11) concretely within the timeline of world history, for the sake of our thanksgiving and for the sake of our faith. It is a reminder that God is truly active in this world, that He has done certain things at certain points in time, and that He will continue to be active until the end. That is to say, timekeeping for the Christian is an exercise in thankfulness, for it allows us to mark and memorialize the salvific acts of God, both those that have come to pass and those that are yet to be.

(Continued next column)

We could look, first, at the story of Creation itself. Even there, God kept time. On the first day of world history—a Sunday—He made light. Then, on the second day He made the sky. On the third day He made dry land and plants. After that, the heavenly lights. Then birds and fish. And last of all, on the sixth day, God made land animals and, in His own image, mankind. Finally, on the seventh day, God rested. Knowing that God did each of these things on each of these particular days allows us to place them concretely within history. We can be sure, therefore, that it wasn't just some fable or metaphor. No, at that particular time, God lovingly worked to craft this world, over the course of seven days. If we could go back in time, we could see it happen. And today, as we go through our seven-day week, we are reminded regularly of those first days of Creation, and called to thanksgiving.

Or look at the story of Jesus. Why do you think the Holy Spirit records that Jesus was crucified on a Friday? (Mark 15:42). Or that He rose on “the first day of the week?” (Mark 16:2). Why do you think the Holy Spirit records that Jesus was hung on the cross at 9am (Mark 15:25) or that there was darkness at noon (Mark 15:33) or that Jesus died at 3pm (Mark 15:34)? All of these temporal markers allow us to place these great salvific acts precisely within history, so that we might know when they happened, be that much more confident that they did happen, and remember them regularly with thanksgiving. There Jesus saved the world—and He did it in world history, at a particular point in time!

And we could go on and on. We could mention how the Great Flood occurred in the sixth-hundredth year of Noah's life (Genesis 7:11), how the Passover occurred on the fourteenth day of Abib (Exodus 13:4), how Solomon began to construct the Temple 480 years later in the month of Ziv (1 Kings 6:1), or how the Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians on the seventh day of the fifth month in 586 BC (2 Kings 25:8). All of these great moments are marked concretely in history, that we might locate God's works within time and give thanks to Him.

But what about our lives? There, too, timekeeping is a gift for the glory of God, for there, too, we can mark precisely God's works. Just think: On what day were you born? On what day were you baptized? When did you celebrate your first communion? When were you married? When will you fall asleep in the Lord? Here, too, we can mark these dates with certainty, and rejoice in the love of God who continues to work in time for our good and for our salvation.

Indeed, my friends, our Creator is at work—at work to save us through Christ. And He does this within the timeline

(See Pastor's Page, Page 6)



We are now offering temporary Midweek Communion Services

We rejoice that even in the midst of the current surge in COVID cases many have continued to come to church and receive God’s Word and Sacrament among His people. However, we also understand that among our brothers and sisters in Christ there are special cases which prohibit attendance at the gathered assembly.

Therefore, so that we might all be able to receive the strength of Christ in the Sacrament, we have started holding special midweek communion services at St. Mark’s. These services are being held weekly on Wednesday afternoons at 4:30 p.m. and are meant for those who unable to attend or are uncomfortable attending the Divine Service on Sunday morning. The services are brief (~15 minutes) and those who attend are asked to wear masks. This is a temporary addition to our weekly worship schedule. (Please note that we will not hold this midweek communion service on December 29.)

We hope you will all come to receive God’s Word and Sacrament, either on Sunday morning or during these midweek services, for there God gives us what we truly need through Christ: forgiveness of sins, His Holy Spirit, and everlasting life! This is how God strengthens us and carries us through these evil days in faith!

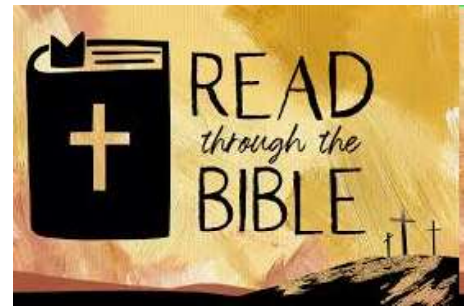


A thank you note from Pastor

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, on behalf of myself and my family, I would like to express my deepest gratitude for the gift you collected for us this Christmas. What a generous embodiment of the love of Christ from so many! It will certainly be a big help to us as we move into the next year.

We are filled in Christ with brotherly love for you all! It’s a joy for us to be here with you, serving you with God’s Word in the name of Jesus! We give thanks to God for you, and pray His blessings upon you in every way!

Pastor, Mandy, Evy, Naomi, Selah, Isaiah, and Gabriella Vergin



Read through the Bible in 2022

The Apostle Paul, referring to the Scriptures, once said, “Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope” (Romans 15:4). Therefore, so that we might learn the Scriptures better and might abound in hope in Christ, in 2022 St. Mark’s Board of Elders will be leading a Bible reading program, in which we will be going through the entire Bible in a year. Reading plans are available on the table at the back of the sanctuary, and weekly readings will be printed in the bulletin throughout 2022. Please consider participating!



Please participate in our Advent Pledge Drive

When we give offerings to Church, we do it because we love the Word of God and want to see it proclaimed in our community for years to come. Indeed, such giving is our Christian duty.

Therefore, St. Mark’s is currently holding an Advent Pledge Drive. Here, we are asking all congregation members to consider whether the Lord has positioned them to increase their giving going forward, and to pledge to give accordingly as long as circumstances allow. Pledge forms, with accompanying instructions, can be found at church outside the elevator near the sanctuary doors. All received pledges will be presented to the Lord with thanksgiving on Sunday, January 2. Please consider participating, as we celebrate the coming of Christ, who has freed us to be generous by His blood!

 IN OUR 
Thoughts and Prayers

MORE URGENT PRAYER'S:

Joan Freeman—has multiple health issues.
John Freeman—needs prayers for health issues.
Chris Gerard—is recovering from bronchitis.
Helga Gonzalez—is having some medical issues.
Dean Hyrkas—is having medical issues.
Barbara Jewell—is recovering from shoulder replacement surgery; also in pain from a kidney stone.
Mike Lockwood—needs extra prayers right now.
Nancy McInnis—is undergoing chemotherapy.
Rod Oehring—is recovering at home from having pneumonia.
Angela Peters—is recovering from COVID-19.
Marlene Steck—needs extra prayers for memory issues.
Marilyn Turner—needs extra prayers.
Art Vermeersch—is having health issues.
Danielle White-Davis (O'Brien)—is undergoing tests.
Larry Whitehead—is recovering from foot surgery.
Carolyn Achimov's cousin's great-granddaughter, **Kennedy Shallal**—diagnosed with Leukemia at age 4; is undergoing treatments.
Joe Boway's wife, **Glendora**—is having health issues.
Cathy Fitzgerald's friend, **Randy Collins**—is very ill.
Joan Freeman's brother, **Ernie Sampson**—is recovering from a 2nd heart surgery.
Friend of St. Mark's, **Erika Williams**—needs prayers for guidance.
Dante Hilton's dad, **Dan Hilton**—has bronchitis.
Barbara Jewell's niece-in-law, **Peg Fieler**—is having eye problems & recently fell.
Barbara Jewell's nephew-in-law, **Carl Fieler**—has health issues.
Barbara Jewell's friend, **Joanne English**—will be undergoing neck surgery soon.
Barbara Jewell's friend's brother, **Johnny**—is battling cancer.
Barbara Jewell's sister-in-law's sister, **Carol**—is undergoing radiation.
Debbie LoCascio's brother, **Bob Tippett**—diagnosed with liver issues and is in pain.
Debbie LoCascio's friend, **Betty Ebejer**—is struggling with COPD.
Debbie LoCascio's friend, **Judy Miller**—has health issues.
The LoCascio's friend, **Rhea Thomas**—is receiving chemotherapy.
The LoCascio's neighbor, **Laura Jones**—is battling cancer.
Mary Ann Lockwood's friend, **Sharon Richards**—is battling cancer.
Mary Ann Lockwood's sister, **Sandra Kempisty**—has issues.
The Lockwood children's (Anna, Christian, Michael) grandfather, **Milton Javery**—
is battling cancer.
Taylor Lockwood's aunt, **Patti Hodges**—is battling breast cancer.
Cindy Parks' friend, **Linda**—is battling breast cancer

(continued next column)

Cindy Park's mom, **Rose Mielke**—has health issues.
Stephanie Reynolds' mom, **Pam Williams**—has health issues.
Stephanie Reynolds' son, **Emmett Reynolds**—has Autism.
Jean Swainson's friend's son, **Connor Donahue**—is in intensive inpatient rehab after being hit by a car.
Carolynn Taylor's grandson's wife, **Stephanie Payton**—is battling breast cancer.
Lynn Thomas' good friend, **Kristy Fresh**—has been diagnosed with a very rare form of cancer.
Mike & Kyle Tolman's grandpa, **Dave Scroggie**—Alzheimer's is worsening; has Stage 3 kidney disease.
Mike Tolman's wife's uncle, **David**—is recovering from a stroke.
Mandy Vergin's father, **Bruce Ketcher**—health issues have gotten worse.
Rob Wheeler's dad, **Rick Wheeler**—is recovering from a brain bleed.
Larry Whitehead's cousin, **Leonard Pittaway**—was diagnosed with bladder cancer.
Lori Whitehead's friend, **Vickie Tucker**—is battling cancer.
Lori Whitehead's great niece, **Morgan Duggin**—needs prayers.

ONGOING PRAYERS:

Friend of St. Mark's, Thisvi Steiger—has health issues
Barbara Jewell's nephew-in-law's daughter, Tammy—will be having knee replacement surgery soon
Barbara Jewell's niece's son, Tim Bridges—has medical issues
Barbara Jewell's sister-in-law, Phyllis Tharp—has lung cancer
Barbara Jewell's neighbor's grandson—confined to home
Barbara Jewell's neighbor, Ed Perez—having health issues
Barbara Jewell's friend, Pam Perez—has health issues
Julie Kosmalski—her cancer is in remission
Debbie LoCascio's cousin, Cheryl Tippett—has health issues
Debbie LoCascio's father, Bob Tippett—has memory issues
Tom LoCascio's cousin, Angelo Barduca—has health issues
Mary Ann Lockwood's cousin's kids—Abigail and Amelia List—are ill
Kim Olsen—needs extra prayers
Cindy Parks' sister, Jeane Schaefer—has health issues
Cindy Park's brother, Jerry Mielke—has health issues
The Salo's daughter-in-law, Joni—has health issues
receiving therapy
Mike & Kyle Tolman's grandma, Margaret Scroggie—needs extra prayers
Dorothy Vermeersch's cousin, Gloria Maire—has health issues
Lynne Welty—has health issues
Larry Whitehead's daughter, Tracy Whitehead—prayers for wisdom and guidance



January Birthdays

- 2 Naomi Vergin
- 8 Charlette Benson-Frost
- 12 Marcy McConnell
- 21 Sarah Dwyer
- 24 Cathy Fitzgerald, Leslie Oehring
Mike Tolman
- 27 Sandy Krus, Gabriel Peters
- 31 Tom Kaufman

Please remember these folks in your prayers

Those shown below have lost loved ones this past month. Please keep them and their families in your prayers.

- ✝ The DeVita family as Barb Allen's friend, Bart DeVita, passed away on 12/14.

Liberia Lutheran School water well update

St. Mark's continues to host fundraisers in order to raise the \$3,000 needed to install a water well at the Ziah Town Lutheran School in Liberia. So far, through can/bottle collections and private donations, we have received \$2,400. We're getting close!

Thanks so much to everyone that has donated to this worthy project that will not only provide clean drinking water to the school, but also to Ziah Town and the small villages nearby.



Help undecorate St. Mark's on January 8

On Saturday, January 8, starting at 10 a.m., we will be "undecking the halls" here at St. Mark's and could use your help to do it! All of our Christmas decorations will need to be put away so that we can be prepared to celebrate our Lord's Epiphany that will be observed on Sunday, January 9. Many hands make for light work, and so we hope you will join us!



January's special decade birthdays

This month, we have two church members that are celebrating *special decade* birthdays. We wish the Lord's richest blessings upon Marcy McConnell (1/12) and Cathy Fitzgerald (1/24).

As always, we can't tell you which decades, but we know all of you will join us in praying that our Lord will continue to bless them with faith, peace, strength and happiness throughout 2022.

Pastor's Page

(Continued from Page 3)

of history. Long ago, He created us. Later, He redeemed us. Now He works daily in our lives to grant us His salvation through faith. And soon the day will come when Jesus will return and reveal His kingdom in glory. Timekeeping allows us to mark and memorialize all of these moments, and calls us to see all history as a record of God's goodness toward His creation.

So as we enter a new year, look at that blank calendar and give thanks. For who knows how God will bless you each day? Who knows what good things He has in store? But whatever lies ahead, we know that God will be working through all of it to bless us with His salvation. And if you should ever doubt—just look back in history and remember all He has done!

Special Fund Donations

We thank those listed below who made special donations in **November**:

Joe Boway/Liberian Lutheran School: Rod & Leslie Oehring, Kim Olsen, Lynn Thomas, Bill & Debbie Vergin.

Memorials: Sharon Katterman (for Barbara & Derald Katterman), Dean & Sherry Hyrkas (for Frank Salo & Sharon Williams).

Remodeling - Sanctuary: Nancy McInnis

Thanksgiving Envelopes to Lutheran World Relief: Jennie Kaufman, Mary Lockwood, Stephanie Reynolds, Lori & Larry Whitehead, Joanne Wisti.

Vacation Bible School: Lynn Thomas



Council Meeting Minutes - Summarized November 23, 2021

In attendance: Pastor Vergin, John Reardon, Debbie LoCascio, Debbie Sidelinker, Tom LoCascio, Darryl Swainson, Karen Kaufman, Jim O'Brien

Call to Order at 7:03 by Tom LoCascio

Opening Prayer and Devotion: Isaiah 40:27-31 by Pastor Vergin. Per Pastor, the world is suffering from emotional tiredness. But God never gets weary. Through Christ, God brings rejuvenation to us. So we wait on the Lord, especially during Advent.

Vice President's Report per John Reardon

- It's been a privilege to serve as St. Mark's Vice President all these years (this was his last Council meeting). Council thanked John for his 9 years of service as V.P.
- Surveys show that people are returning to spirituality, but not to Christ.

Pastor's Report per Pastor Vergin

- Thanksgiving Eve Service tomorrow at 7 p.m.
- Advent Midweek Services beginning on Dec. 1 (Remember: Visiting Pastors)
- Financial situation for next year & proposed plan to address (e.g. Pastoral letter, Advent Pledge Drive, closer look at 2022 budget).
- Organ repairs likely needed—some memory features don't work plus amplifier issues. Estimate for repair is \$2,700 or more. Pastor will discuss needed repairs with Rob Wheeler to see what he thinks.

BOARD REPORTS

Elders per Darryl Swainson

- Discussion with Pastor/Council regarding Pastor's recommended raise by the elders. Pastor wants to forgo a raise in 2022 for 1 extra Sunday off (total of 4 Sundays) and an extra week's vacation. Tom made a motion that instead of a raise for 2022, we give Pastor 1 extra Sunday and 1 extra weeks' vacation. Darryl seconded. All approved. Motion carried. Elders also recommended a raise for Rob Wheeler of \$5 per play.
- Elders are wrapping up annual reviews for our church workers
- Held an Elders' Conference in November. It went well and the attendees can't wait to do it again next year!

(Continued next column)

Family & Youth per Debbie LoCascio

- Plan to have quarterly devotion packet mailed to parents starting in January. Will include a letter explaining why parents are receiving the packet, a monthly family activity for them to do together, and a youth devotion booklet. Debbie L. will work to complete the project in December.
- Plan to have children participate in the Christmas Eve service—singing and possibly reading parts of the service. Debbie L. is working with Mandy and Pastor on this.

Gospel Outreach per John Reardon

- The board hopes to restart in 2022.
- Other circuits in our area have expressed an interest in attending "Everyone His Witness" classes if St. Mark's decides to offer them.

Human Care per Karen Kaufman

- They are seeking volunteers to help with the Adopt-A-Family for Christmas program. Karen to put a sign-up board in the lobby.
- They'll be hosting another Can/Bottle Drive on December 5. Proceeds to go to Joe Boway/Liberian Lutheran Church to dig a new well there.

LWML per Pastor Vergin

- The ladies met for their Rally. They might go to Frankenmuth in the future.

Properties per Jim O'Brien

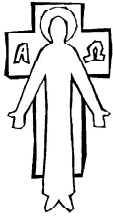
- Parking lot maintenance is already needed. It has several cracks; a few weeds coming up in the corners. Jim spoke with contractor who said they'll come back out in the spring and fix these.
- There is money available to make the entryway aesthetics look better. Per Jim, we should create a committee to review décor options/expenses and they can present those to Council in 2022.

GENERAL BUSINESS

- Treasurer's Report per Kari Kosmalski – To date, contributions are less than expenses by \$23.

(See Council Minutes, Page 9)

St. Mark's Lutheran Church



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Website: www.stmarkwb.org

Address Service Requested

For the latest church news, visit our website



What types of information can you find on St. Mark's website (www.stmarwb.org)?

- Monthly church calendars
- Sunday bulletins
- Weekly announcements
- Monthly newsletters
- About St. Mark's
- Event Registration Forms
- Those on Duty (scheduled to help out at church)

...and more! Check it out for all of your worship/church needs!



Biblical resolutions

Hold firmly to your faith (Hebrews 4:14)
Assemble with the saints (Hebrews 10:25)
Pray and thank God earnestly (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18)
Petition God for great blessings (Malachi 3:10)
Yield not to temptation (1 Thessalonians 5:22)

Notice opportunities to serve others (Galatians 6:10)
Examine yourself daily (2 Corinthians 13:5)
Work diligently for the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58)

Yearn for righteousness (Matthew 5:6)
Exercise godliness (1 Timothy 4:7)
Aim for sinless perfection (Hebrews 6:1)
Redeem the time, living wisely (Ephesians 5:15-16)

—Gus Nichols (adapted)



We are, once again, so thankful for our many volunteers

Much was accomplished here at St. Mark's during the month of December and none of it would have been possible without our wonderful volunteers. And so we offer a heartfelt "thanks so much" to all of the kind and generous people who gave of their time and talents during Christmastime including:

- ◆ Those who helped decorate St. Mark's for Christmas on November 27
- ◆ Our Board of Human Care for overseeing this year's Adopt-A-Family for Christmas program through the Open Door Outreach Center in Waterford. St. Mark's adopted, and purchased gifts for, multiple families. Our church then served as a distribution point for ALL gifts that were purchased not only by us, but by other area churches and non-profit agencies in the lakes area. Several needy families were able to have a much brighter Christmas last month due to this very successful program! And keeping it 100% organized was our own Karen Kaufman. Great job!
- ◆ Our Board of Parish Fellowship that provided a delicious breakfast here for the Pastor's Winkel on December 14.
- ◆ Those who joined Pastor Vergin to Christmas carol in the neighborhood behind our church. They sang at about a dozen homes and were able to share Christmas joy with several neighbors who came to their doors and windows to listen.
- ◆ Everyone that helped provide special church music for our Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Christmas I church services. This includes our organist, Rob Wheeler; the entire Vergin family for singing & Mandy Vergin for playing guitar, as well as the 3 oldest Vergin girls for helping to read the Gospel on Christmas Eve; the handbell choir--David Drake (Director), Grace Hurley, Sophie Hurley, Karen Kaufman, Lexi Powell, Debbie Sidelinker & Lori Whitehead; and vocal duet Debbie LoCascio and Sandy Esse (Debbie's sister). Everything sounded just wonderful!

Again, thanks so much everyone! We truly appreciate you!

Council Minutes

(Continued from Page 7)

- Human Resources – how are employee reviews going? Per Tom LoCascio, the reviews have all been written, just need to discuss them with the workers.
- Public Relations – any advertising needed for upcoming events? Pastor to put out our street sign advertising the Thanksgiving Eve Service.
- Technology Grant has been approved by MI LCEF for \$2,500. Debbie L. submitted the expense voucher and all receipts so we can receive reimbursement. All A/V equipment has arrived except for one video cable that is on back-order. The WiFi in the sanctuary and basement have been installed and both are working well. In the near future, a WiFi transmitter will be installed on the outdoor southwest corner of our building that will provide WiFi to two outdoor security cameras—one on the south side of our building, the other on the west side.
- Tom hopes to go digital in 2022 for all church meetings so less paper will be used (cost savings)
- Reviewed 2022 nomination slate. Per Pastor, we still have some open spots. Per Jim, his schedule won't allow him to attend many evening meetings in 2022, and he can't commit to continuing on the Board of Properties. Per Tom, let's bring that up at the Voters' Meeting and ask for additional volunteers then.
- 2022 Budget Numbers per Debbie L. – Draft of 2022 budget presented. Discussion ensued.
 - Debbie L. doesn't want a raise for 2022. Council approved an extra week of vacation in lieu of a raise.
 - A motion was made to approve the 2022 Budget with changes: additional Sunday off and extra weeks' vacation for Pastor; additional weeks' vacation for Debbie L.; increased Rob's per play salary by \$5/play. Council approved the budget.

Next meeting: The Voters' meeting on Sunday, December 5 following the Divine Service

Adjourned at 8:12 p.m. followed by **The Lord's Prayer**

Voters' Meeting Minutes – Summarized

December 5, 2021

of Voters in Attendance: 22

Call to Order at 11:01 a.m. by Tom LoCascio

Opening Prayer by Pastor Vergin

Pastor's Report per Pastor Vergin

- Rejoice: God has blessed us and upheld us and is granting us growth!
- New 6-Year Vision Statement: *"God's redeemed people active in love for the Word, the Prayers, the Fellowship, and the World"* (Congregational survey to come early 2022, then re-survey every 2 years afterward)
- Midweek Communion beginning this week (Wednesdays at 4:30 p.m.)
- Challenge: Need people for Board of Properties
- Challenge: Loss of contributions as the Lord has brought several of our beloved members to Himself over the past 12 months

BOARD REPORTS

Elders per Darryl Swainson

- Have been working on employee reviews and the elders' 2022 budget
- Held a Circuit Elders' Conference at St. Mark's last month. It was very successful. Hope to have one again next year.

Family & Youth per Mandy Vergin

- VBS & the Trunk-Or-Treat event went really well.
- Working on creating quarterly mailings to parents that will include a 3-month devotional kids' book, kids' craft, and a letter from the board encouraging church attendance and explaining Christian practices, e.g. baptism, Holy Communion, etc.
- Working with Pastor to have the kids assist in the Christmas Eve service

Gospel Outreach per John Reardon

- The board hasn't done much since Sharon Williams passed away. They're hoping that additional church members will volunteer to be on the board in 2022.

Human Care per Karen Kaufman

- Christmas Adopt-a-Family program is going well. Thanks to all that volunteered to help!
- Overseeing the Joe Boway Liberian Well Fundraiser. Organizing Can/Bottle drives as fundraisers. Once the well funds are obtained, will host fundraiser to

help buy school supplies for the Liberian Lutheran school children.

- Have selected 2 dates in 2022 to serve dinner at St. Paul, Pontiac

LWML per Gail Hardy

- The Quilting Group made 22 quilts for Lutheran World Relief. Will do the same thing for next year. The Stecks and Debbie Sidelinker donated a huge amount of material. Need volunteers to help cut out squares.
- Didn't host a Craft Show in 2021, but might in 2022

Parish Fellowship per Jennie Kaufman

- Will be serving breakfast foods during Pastor's Winkel on Dec. 14. Will need volunteers to help with this. See Jennie or Mandy Vergin to help.

Properties per Jim O'Brien

- Technology Grant from Mi. Lutheran Church Extension Fund – St. Mark's was approved for \$2,500 for upgrades on A/V equipment. WiFi was installed in the sanctuary and basement which will come in handy for future presentation needs.
- Jennie Kaufman volunteered to continue with de-weeding the church's flower beds
- The entrance door key isn't working well in the lock. Debbie LoCascio called for a locksmith to repair it.
- Per Jim O'Brien, the facilities seem to be in good working order right now. The attendees thanked Jim for his service on the Board of Properties as he will not be able to continue in 2022.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS ITEMS

- Parking Lot update per Tom LoCascio - We have several cracks that will need to be repaired. Jim O'Brien contacted the contractor who said he'd be out in the spring to fix the issues.
- 2022 Election Slate – Per Pastor, we have some open positions that need to be filled. Chris Gerard and Trent Johnson volunteered to be on the Board of Properties. With that, the election slate was approved.
- 2022 Budget – Larry Whitehead made a motion to approve the 2022 budget as submitted. Charlie Powell seconded. Discussion ensued. Following the discussion, all voted in favor of the 2022 budget as presented. Motion carried.

(continued next column)

Adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 11:56 a.m.

January 2022

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Sunday Divine Service 9:30 a.m.

Sunday Adult Bible Class 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School for Kids 10:45 a.m.

Wednesday Holy Communion Svc. (masks worn) 4:30 p.m.

Men's Bible Study/Breakfast - One Saturday per mo. 9 a.m.

For live, up-to-date versions of ANY St. Mark's calendar, visit our website at:
www.stmarkwb.org.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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ALTAR GUILD: Barb Allen
COUNTERS: Marvann Lockwood & Jean Swainson

						1 New Year's Day
2 2nd Sun. of Christmas Elder on Duty: Darryl Swainson 9:30am Divine Service 10:45am Adult Bible Class 10:45am Sunday School	3 Pastor's Day Off	4 7pm - Bd. Of Elders Mtg.	5 4:30 Holy Commun. Svc.	6 The Epiphany of Our Lord Pastor out of office in p.m.	7	8 9am Men's Bible Study 10am Undecorate the Church 2pm Olivia & Jacob's Wedding
9 Epiphany of our Lord (obs) Elder on Duty: Tom LoCascio 9:30am Divine Service 10:45am Adult Bible Class 10:45am Sunday School	10 Pastor's Day Off	11	12 4:30 Holy Commun. Svc.	13 Pastor out of office in p.m.	14	15
16 2nd Sun. after Epiphany INSTALLATION OF SERVANTS Elder on Duty: Darryl Swainson 9:30am Divine Service 10:45am Adult Bible Class 10:45am Sunday School	17 Martin Luther King, Jr Pastor's Day Off	18 7pm - Council Mtg.	19 4:30 Holy Commun. Svc.	20 Pastor out of office in p.m.	21 DEADLINE TO SUBMIT NEWSLETTER ARTICLES	22
23 3rd Sun. after Epiphany Elder on Duty: John Sidelinker 9:30am Divine Service 10:45am Adult Bible Class 10:45am Sunday School	24 Pastor's Day Off	25	26 4:30 Holy Commun. Svc.	27 Pastor out of office in p.m.	28 DISTRIBUTE NEWSLTR.	29
30 4th Sun. after Epiphany Elder on Duty: Tom LoCascio 9:30am Divine Service 10:45am Adult Bible Class 10:45am Sunday School	31 Pastor's Day Off		ACOLYTES:	GREETERS:	USHERS:	VIDEO TECH:
			2 TBD 9 TBD 16 TBD 23 TBD 30 TBD	2 Mary Lockwood 9 Sue Ingram/Judy S. 16Carolynn Taylor 23 Jennie/Karen Kaufman 30 Tom/Deb LoCascio	2 John Reardon 9 Matt Maier 16 Tom Kaufman 23 Trent Johnson 30 John Reardon	2 Charlie Powell 9 Karen Kaufman 16 Charlie Powell 23 Debbie Sidelinker 30 Karen Kaufman