

# St. Mark's Lutheran Church

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**Reminder:** Masks /  
face shields are required for  
everyone's safety.

**Please Note:** The **second**  
**and last** Sunday of each  
month attendees will be  
required to wear their mask /  
face shield during the **entire**  
worship service.

## **Upcoming Events**

Mon., Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> - 6:00 p.m. – Church Council  
Mtg.

Thurs., Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> – 7:30 p.m. –  
Candle Light Christmas Eve Service;  
**Please Note: face covering required  
during the entire worship service.**

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### **Council Members:**

President – Diane France  
Vice President – Georgia VanDyke  
Secretary - Lori Roney  
Treasurer - Debbie Palmatier  
Members - Jim Brigadier, Lisa  
Bartholomew and Deb Roberts

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### **Thought for the Day:**

When you walk in the light of Christ,  
you have one foot on earth and one  
foot in heaven.

## **Prayers Concerns**

Family of Peg McLaughlin  
Family of Jeff Kingsbury  
Michelle  
Pete Rossi  
Austin Roney  
Judy Berard  
Nancy Barbera  
Billy Dyer  
Fred Mooney  
Stan Fancher, Jr.  
Andreana Blesser  
Georgia VanDyke  
Jackie  
David Cassell  
Eli & Barb Elder's Son

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## The Most Wonderful Time of the Year

What time is it? It's Christmas time, which is sung about as the most wonderful time of the year. What makes it so wonderful? The song tells us that "it's kids jingle bell'ing, and everyone telling you 'Be of good cheer!' with holiday greetings when friends come to call. Parties for hosting, marshmallows for toasting, caroling out in the snow and tales of the glories of Christmas's long, long, ago. There'll be much mistletoe'ing and hearts will be glowing when loved ones are near. Yes, the most wonderful time of the year." All of those pieces help make it a very festive time and have created many a fond memory. This year some of those pieces will be more difficult to include in our celebrations. Will it still seem like the most wonderful time of the year for us? In yet another seasonal favorite, "It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas", the song describes decorations glistening and toys in every store. The hopes and wishes of boys and girls are for the gifts that will be under the tree and for their moms and dads, it will be for school to start again.

For those who celebrate Christmas and other holiday festivities during this year, it will be very different. The typical gatherings that help make it one of the most wonderful times of the year will be restricted or prohibited. With less parties and feasting and holiday greetings, it may be hard to "be of good cheer". Still it is the holiday music that helps me achieve the hope and joy that makes this time of year wonderful. One of the musical pieces that helps for me is ***Christmas Eve/Sarajevo 12/24*** by Trans-Siberian Orchestra. It is reportedly based on the stories of musicians who played in the streets and bombed out buildings of war torn Sarajevo during the Bosnian war in the early 90's. One musician the instrumental piece focuses on is a famous cellist who returns home to Sarajevo to find it in ruins due to the conflict between the people of his own country. Some labeled him as foolish, for rather than go to a bomb shelter, this man sat on the rubble piles in the village square with his cello and played Mozart, Beethoven, and forgotten Christmas carols such as "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" and "Carol of the Bells". When asked why, he replied that he played to both sides of the conflict amid the rubble and devastation of the city he loves. That it was his way of proving that despite all evidence to the contrary, the spirit of humanity was still alive in that place.

The musical piece that leads us into Advent and up to our Christmas Eve is "O come, O come, Emmanuel". In its verses it describes being held captive, mourning in lonely exile, Satan's tyranny, the gloomy clouds of night, and the path to misery. Its theme, our plea, is for Emmanuel - God with us - to come, to appear, to ransom us from the depths of this hell, the grave, and death's dark shadow, to make safe the way that leads on high and open wide our heavenly home. Yes, "it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas; soon the bells will start, and the thing that will make them ring is the carol that you sing right within your heart!"

### **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, o Israel.**

I can assure you that this is the most wonderful time of the year. No matter how the events of the current world affect our lives this Christmas, the greatest event in the world is still true. *Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. May the songs in our heart herald this true reason for the season, and may we proclaim: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"*

Merry Christmas to all, and to all God bless.

In God We Trust / Love and Prayers, Pastor Dave and Melody



# St. Mark's Lutheran Church

## Outreach Blessings

The pandemic has created many changes in the way we do things, but it has not hindered us from following God's leading to bless others.

Our Phoebe's have been busy working at both the church and at their homes designing, sewing, blindsiding and knotting many quilts. The results:

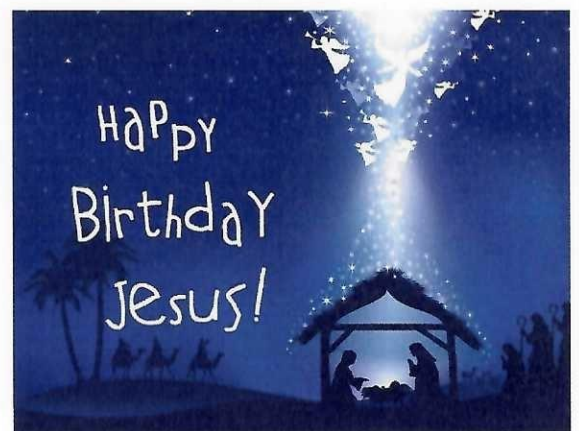
- September and October - a total of 25 quilts were delivered to Schenectady City Mission.
- November - 24 quilts were given to Schuyler Inn Homeless Shelter.
- Over the past three weeks, 36 quilts were sent to Pastor Vaughn Chichester for the Ebenezer Methodist Church in Bennettsville, SC, who will deliver them to an area nursing home with their Christmas baskets.

It is indeed more blessed to give than to receive so **THANK YOU** to all who gave from their heart by filling shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child, purchasing gift cards for Wings As Eagles children's Christmas presents and donating food for Joshua Thanksgiving Dinner Project. May God bless you for your generosity.

## CHRISTMAS CARD "POSTAL CRATE"

Exchanging Christmas cards is a wonderful way to let others know they are remembered. With all of the changes incurred in 2020, it is even more important to stay in contact with each other.

What better way to say "you are in my thoughts" than through a Christmas card. If you are being led to send a greeting to your brothers and sisters in Christ, please consider placing a card in our "postal crate" for them ... and please don't forget to pick up any cards that are being sent to you. ("Postal crate" is located in the back of the sanctuary.)



# St. Mark's Lutheran Church

## December Birthdays:

Terry Minton	Dec. 1
Bessy Korth	Dec. 2
Jim Nattress	Dec. 3
Edna Lower	Dec. 5
Deb Palmatier	Dec. 11
Niles McCoy	Dec. 13
Greg Davidson	Dec. 15
Holly Pierce	Dec. 16
Ellen Langenbahn	Dec. 18
Todd Bartholomew	Dec. 31

## December Anniversaries:

Mary / Jerry Bowman	Dec. 1
Pat / Skip Becker	Dec. 17
Bonnie / Bill Morton	Dec. 28
Sharon / Harry Amendola	Dec. 31

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### *If you look for Me at Christmas*

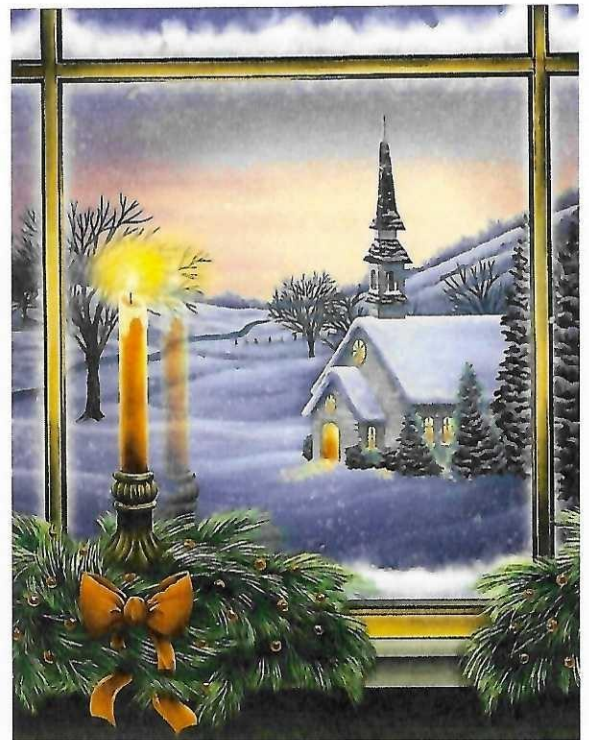
you won't need a special star –  
I'm no longer just in Bethlehem,  
I'm right there where you are.

You may not be aware of Me  
amid the celebrations –  
You'll have to look beyond the stores  
and all the decorations.

But if you take a moment  
from your list of things to do  
And listen to your heart,  
you'll find I'm waiting there for you.

You're the one I want to be with,  
you're the reason that I came,  
And you'll find Me in the stillness  
as I'm whispering your name.

*Love, Jesus*



*It takes just one candle  
to spread a ray of light,  
to split the darkness with its flame  
and quell the black of night.*

*It takes just one whisper  
to speak to God in prayer,  
to draw near to His presence  
and find peace and comfort there.*

*It takes just one Savior  
to save the world in need,  
A holy God wrapped in flesh  
to heal, to guide, to lead...*

*It takes just one candle  
to spark the memory  
of the night the Light of heaven  
came to change our lives with love.*



# St. Mark's Lutheran Church

## Servers for Dec.

### Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>:

Reader – Bob Muenier

Prayer – Carolyn

Counter – Sharon N.

### Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>:

Reader – Lori

Prayer – Beth

Counter – Carrie

### Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>:

Reader – Marie

Prayer – Georgia

Counter – Diane

### Dec 24<sup>th</sup>:

Counter – Sharon N.

### Dec 27<sup>th</sup>:

Reader – Sharon N.

Prayer – Chris

Counter – Carrie



Please keep our Armed Forces  
in your prayers during this  
special time of the year.

