

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., Jan. 18th - 6:00 p.m. – Church Council Mtg.

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:

The path of peace is paved with prayer!



Prayer List for Dec.

Family of Richard Whittaker
Family of Fred Mooney
Family of Sarah Peek
Family of Ethel Cater
Family of Shyanne Stanley
Family of Charlotte Johns
Jack
Polly
Marie Czysczon
Pat Costello
Harry Amendola
Liz Mosier
Sarah Killpatrick
Ron Becker

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Plans are being made to hold our Annual Congregational meeting on **Sunday, February 7**, immediately following our worship service. Please submit your annual report to the Church office no later than January 17th so we will have time to compile and reproduce them for the meeting. **Note:** Facial coverings will be required and we will continue to observe physical/ social distancing. (Sadly, no covered dish meal this year.)

From Vision to Diversion

Last January I wrote the about “Vision for the New Year” making a play on the year of 2020 and how that number makes a statement about vision and how well we see. I focused on our need to have light in our lives to enable us to see clearly the path ahead and how to deal with the stumbling blocks that we may encounter. The light that we need is clarified in *Psalms 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.* Looking back, this past year appears to have been darker and more blurred than we had hoped for. We just celebrated Christmas and the gift that was sent down from heaven, the light of the world. One has to ask then, has the light lost its illuminating power? NO! Absolutely not. One thing the world has become good at is filtering the light. We can reduce the lumens of the lights that we have made. Shaded filters or covers have been made to change or impair that light as well. We have shades and sunglasses to reduce and filter the natural light of the sun. To me, the actions and changes in our world and in its cultures have attempted to reduce and impair the natural light of the “Son” as well.

In many instances and circumstances, that lack of light is creating a darkness which has diverted us from the path, the course, the Lord desires us to follow. The Bible tells us that we were created in the image of God. We are created to be in relationship with God and with each other. In doing so we are to glorify God through our lives and how we fulfill those responsibilities. The Bible also tells us: *John 1:1-5 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.* It makes me wonder then, if something cannot be comprehended, is it the popular reaction to eliminate or delete it?

2 Chronicles 7: 14 If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land. As we enter a New Year, while still in the darkness of the past year, let us assess what *the Word* means to us. What does the light and being in it mean to us? How are we doing in our relationship with God and with each other? How have we allowed the darkness to affect our answer to each of these questions?

Yes, our nation and our world are in need of healing...not just healing from viruses and aggression which continues to threaten and divide us. We are in need of *spiritual* healing...healing for our inner being; that which was created in the image of God; that which lies within us has incredible abilities and strength when it is powered by the *Light of the World*. Let us work on powering up by plugging into the source of all power through worship and prayer. Let us allow the Word to guide our path: *Romans 12:12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.* *1 John 5:14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.* To stop the diversions and the divisions, we must be obedient to the Word, the Word which will illuminate our paths to His righteousness. AMEN.

May your New Year be like a cup overflowing with hope, faith, joy, and peace which is freely given by Jesus Christ for those who believe in His light and His love.

In God We Trust / Love and Prayers, Pastor Dave

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Servers for January

Jan. 3rd:

Reader – Ron
Prayer – Ron
Counter – Diane

Jan. 10th:

Reader – Sandi
Prayer – Beth
Counter – Carrie

Jan. 17th:

Reader – Peggi
Prayer – Carolyn
Counter – Deb P.

Jan. 24th:

Reader – Nannette
Prayer – Georgia
Counter – Diane

Jan. 31st:

Reader – Deb B.
Prayer – Chris
Counter – Carrie

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**HAVE A BLESSED
AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

January Birthdays:

Helen Ruland	Jan. 1
Brenda Varella	Jan. 4
Tom Nesbitt	Jan. 5
Ted Langenbahn	Jan. 11
Lisa Bartholomew	Jan. 20
Anne Hartnell	Jan. 21

January Anniversaries:

Dennis/Carrie Foland	Jan. 2
Chris/Beth Cash	Jan. 8
Tom/Sharon Nesbitt	Jan. 17



Being the Hands and Feet of Jesus....

Our Phoebe's enjoy making their quilts with which to bless others, but rarely do we get to see the happiness others receive from their gift. We wanted to share with you the joy on the faces of those who received quilts during this past Christmas.



Thank you to all who so selflessly serve our Lord by blessing others with your talents.



As we come to the end of a year, we look forward to new beginnings in the year ahead. This is especially so for our own Pastor Dave Houck in 2021 as he embarks on a new adventure in his life.

At 7:00 a.m. on December 30, 2020, Dispatcher Dave signed off for the last time at the Schoharie County Communications Center to begin his retirement. Many of us listened for his voice on our scanners, knowing he would treat all he served with compassion, calm and professionalism... all characteristics that display the same kind of love for others Jesus has. Thank you, Pastor Dave, for being an example of our Lord to your co-workers and all whose lives you touched as you served the community.

May God bless Pastor Dave (and Melody) in his retirement.

CONGRATULATIONS, PASTOR DAVE!