ST. MARK EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF MECHANICSBURG
NOVEMBER 15, 2026
25th Sunday after Pentecost
HOLY COMMUNION



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES
8:30 am - Sanctuary & Zoom Worship Service
9:45 am - Sunday Church School
9:45 am – Children & Youth Sunday School
10:20 am – Youth Ensemble

Rev. Marleen Griffith-Stull, Pastor
Pastor's Cell Phone: 878-295-2173
Pastor's Email: revmarleen@stmarkmburg.com

Karen Fisher, Office Manager
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Church Office: 717-766-4482
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NOVEMBER 15, 2026
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GUESTS:
We would like to get to know you! Please complete a "Welcome to St. Mark Church" card found in the pew and place it in the offering plate at the time of the offering. Thank you!

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY
Our readings during November speak of the end times. Zephaniah proclaims that the coming day of the LORD will be filled with wrath and distress. Paul says it will come like a thief in the night and urges us to be awake and sober. Jesus tells the parable of the talents, calling us to use our gifts, while we still have time, for the greater and common good. In a world filled with violence and despair, we gather around signs of hope—word, water, bread, and wine—eager to welcome the good news of Christ's coming among us.

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS
Elizabeth of Hungary, renewer of society, died 1231
Tuesday, November 17, 2026
Born in Hungary, Elizabeth was betrothed to the son of the Landgrave of Thuringia, and at age four was taken to be raised with him at the Wartburg Castle. Ten years later they were married. She was very generous to the poor, and after her husband's death she lived in cruel hardship until her own death at age twenty-four.

PRELUDE
Trumpet Voluntary J. Bennett

GATHERING

PSALM 118:24
P This is the day that the LORD has made;
C **let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

***BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**
P In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**

P Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
C **Amen.**

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination. Please kneel or be seated.

P Most merciful God,
C **we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

P Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**

Asterisk (*) in the margin of this bulletin indicates to please stand as you are able.

*** GATHERING HYMN**

Please bring Thanksgiving food items to the altar during the singing of the hymn.

Christ, Be Our Light



Text: Bernadette Farrell, b. 1957
Music: CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT, Bernadette Farrell
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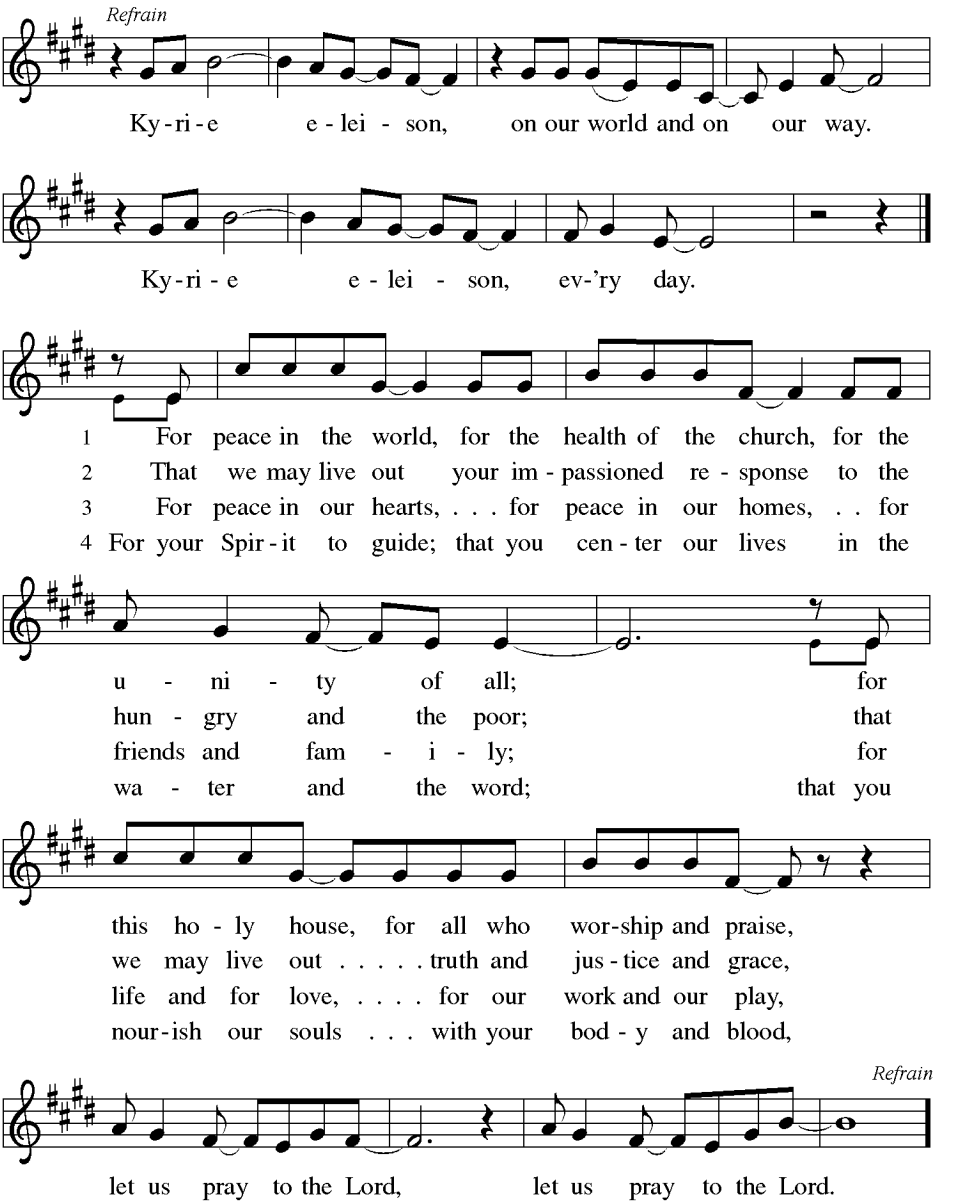
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***GREETING**

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

C And also with you.

***KYRIE**



***HYMN OF PRAISE**

Listen! You Nations



Text and music © 1972 *Contemporary Worship 5: Services of the Word*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P Let us pray.
Righteous God, our merciful master, you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us all that we have. Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

ANTHEM

All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name E. Perronet
Youth Ensemble - Chimes

FIRST LESSON: Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18

Zephaniah (like the prophet Amos in last week's first reading) presents the day of the LORD as one of judgment and wrath. Descriptions of the last day in the New Testament include details taken from Old Testament accounts of the day of the LORD.

R A reading from Zephaniah.

7 Be silent before the Lord God,
for the day of the Lord is at hand!
The Lord has prepared a sacrifice;
he has consecrated his guests.

12 At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,
and I will punish the people
who settle like dregs in wine,
those who say in their hearts,
"The Lord will not do good,
nor will he do harm."
13 Their wealth shall be plundered
and their houses laid waste.
Though they build houses,
they shall not inhabit them;
though they plant vineyards,
they shall not drink wine from them.
14 The great day of the Lord is near,
near and hastening fast;
the sound of the day of the Lord is bitter;
the warrior cries aloud there.
15 That day will be a day of wrath,
a day of distress and anguish,

a day of ruin and devastation,
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness,
16 a day of trumpet blast and battle cry
against the fortified cities
and against the lofty battlements.
17 I will bring such distress upon people
that they shall walk like the blind;
because they have sinned against the Lord,
their blood shall be poured out like dust
and their flesh like dung.
18 Neither their silver nor their gold
will be able to save them
on the day of the Lord's wrath;
in the fire of his passion
the whole earth shall be consumed,
for a full, a terrible end
he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

R The word of the Lord.
C Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 90:1-12
*(Please read the Psalm responsively; Lectern side, the regular print; Pulpit side, the **bold print**.)*

Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to another.

2 **Before the mountains were brought forth, or the land and the earth were born, from age to age you are God.**

3 You turn us back to the dust and say, "Go back, O child of earth."

4 **For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past and like a watch in the night.**

5 You sweep us away like a dream; we fade away suddenly like the grass.

6 **In the morning it is green and flourishes; in the evening it is dried up and withered.**

7 For we consume away in your displeasure; we are afraid because of your wrathful indignation.

(Continued next page)

[8] **Our iniquities you have set before you, and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.**

[9] When you are angry, all our days are gone; we bring our years to an end | like a sigh.

[10] **The span of our life is seventy years, perhaps in strength even eighty; yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow, for they pass away quickly and we are gone.**

[11] Who regards the power of your wrath? Who rightly fears your indignation?

[12] **So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.**

SECOND LESSON: 1st Thessalonians 5:1-11
Though we do not know and cannot calculate the day of Christ's return, we live faithfully in the here and now as we anticipate the day when we will be given eternal salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

R A reading from 1st Thessalonians.

[1] Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. [2] For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. [3] When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! [4] But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; [5] for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. [6] So, then, let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober, [7] for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. [8] But since we belong to the day, let us be sober and put on the breastplate of faith and love and for a helmet the hope of salvation. [9] For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, [10] who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. [11] Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

R The word of the Lord.
C Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



***GOSPEL: Matthew 25:14-30**

Jesus tells a parable about his second coming, indicating that it is not sufficient merely to maintain things as they are. Those who await his return should make good use of the gifts that God has provided them.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 25th chapter.
C Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to the disciples: [14] "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; [15] to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. At once [16] the one who had received the five talents went off and traded with them and made five more talents. [17] In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. [18] But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. [19] After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. [20] Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' [21] His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' [22] And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.'

(Continued next page)

[23] His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you
have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many
things; enter into the joy of your master.’ [24] Then the one who had
received the one talent also came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that
you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering
where you did not scatter, [25] so I was afraid, and I went and hid your
talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ [26] But his master
replied, ‘You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap
where I did not sow and gather where I did not scatter? [27] Then you
ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I
would have received what was my own with interest. [28] So take the
talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. [29] For to all
those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance,
but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken
away. [30] As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness,
where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ”

P The Gospel of the Lord.
C Praise to you, O Christ.

MESSAGE FOR YOUTH

SERMON

***APOSTLES CREED**

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.*
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
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. Amen.

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

A United with the great cloud of witnesses, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A God, in your mercy,
C hear our prayer.

P Into your steadfast love, faithful God, we entrust all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus, your beloved.
C Amen.

***PEACE**

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.
C And also with you.

P Let us greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light K. Thomerson

***THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE**

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful

Offering Song



Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980
Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923
Text and music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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***OFFERTORY PRAYER**

A Loving God,
we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of Jesus through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever.

C Amen.

***PREFACE**

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

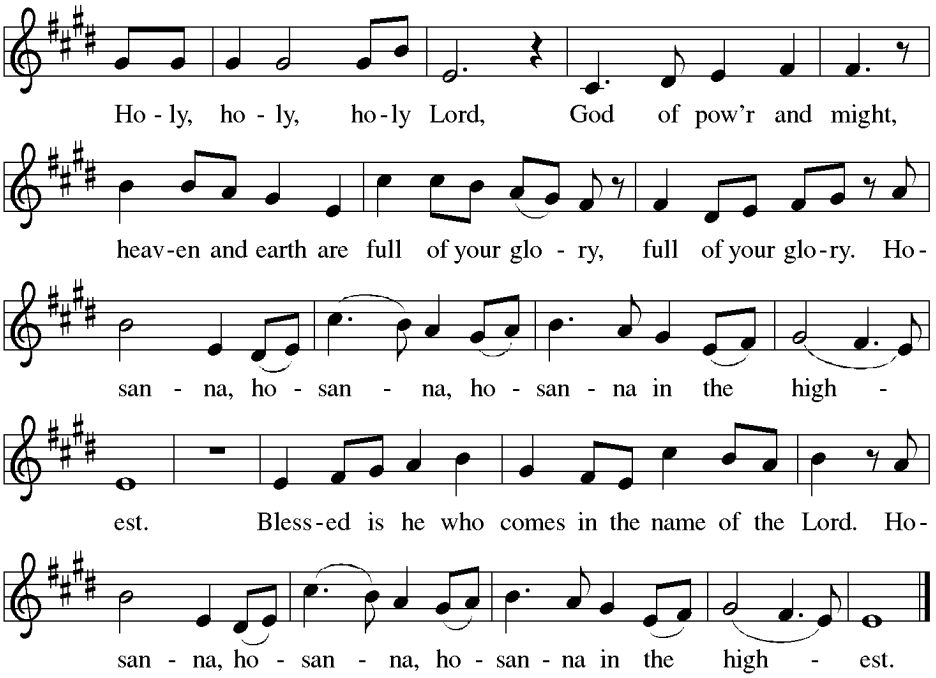
C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give God thanks and praise.

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

***SANCTUS**



***EUCHARISTIC PRAYER**

P Holy, mighty and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

(Continued next page)

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

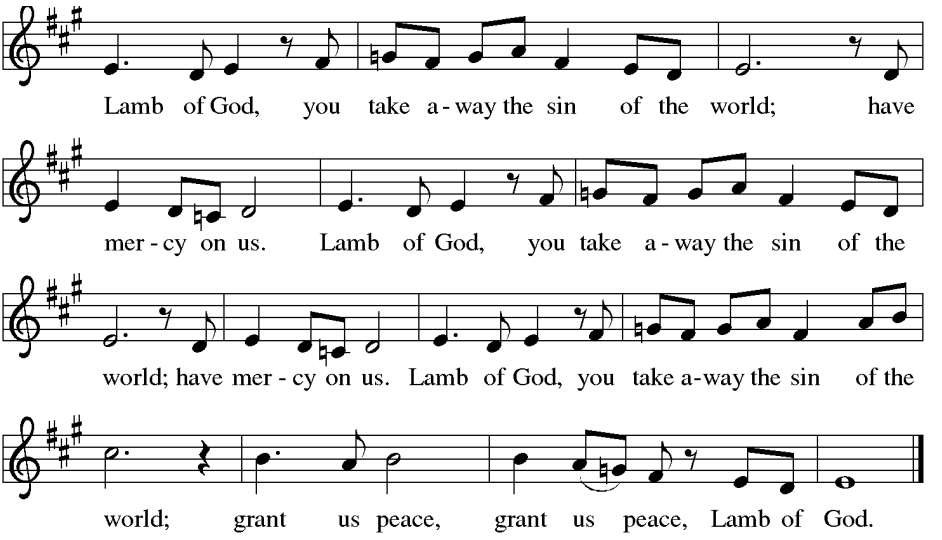
C **Amen.**

***THE LORD'S PRAYER**

C **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.

***COMMUNION**

P Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them. Come to this meal of mercy.



COMMUNION

All baptized, communion Christians are welcome to partake of the Holy Sacrament. We have gluten-free bread available and white grape juice (in addition to our traditional homemade bread and red wine) for those who need or prefer those. Simply let the pastor or assisting minister know if you prefer something other than bread and wine. Remember that we are promised that Christ is truly present in, with, and under each element.

P The body of Christ, given for you.
C Amen.

A The blood of Christ, shed for you.
C Amen.

PLEASE SING THE FOLLOWING HYMNS DURING THE DISTRIBUTION

-HYMN OF THE DAY-

Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us



Text: Eliza S. Alderson, 1818–1889, alt.
Music: HYFRYDOL, Rowland H. Prichard, 1811–1887

-COMMUNION-

Let Us Break Bread Together



Text: African American spiritual
Music: BREAK BREAD TOGETHER, African American spiritual

(Please stand as you are able.)

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

C Amen.

***POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

A Let us pray.

A O God, through this meal you have strengthened us and appointed us to be your servants. Send us to do good and to share our possessions with all in need. We ask this in Jesus' name.

C Amen.

***BLESSING**

P God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end, Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead, and the Holy Spirit, our advocate and peace, ☩ bless you now and forever.

C Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN**

Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus



Text: Sigismund von Birken, 1626–1681; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*, alt.
Music: LASSET UNS MIT JESU ZIEHEN, Georg G. Boltze, 18th cent.
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(Please be seated for announcements.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***DISMISSAL**

A Heaven has come near. Go share the good news!

C Thanks be to God.

***POSTLUDE**

We Gather Together F. Peeters



In memory of Donald Adams by John and Connie Kuntz.

TODAY'S ASSISTANTS

Assisting Minister:	Dee Bernatos
Lay Reader:	Amy Gimbel
Acolyte:	Katie Stull
Ushers:	Marlin Brown, Sandy Brown
Altar Guild:	Joan Murphy, Andrea Sassaman
Zoom Operator:	TBA
Council Money Duty:	Barb Yost, Amy Gimbel

THIS WEEK AT ST. MARK

Sunday, November 15	**25th Sunday after Pentecost** **Christmas Food for New Hope**
8:30 am	**Worship Service—Communion**
9:45 am	**Sunday Church School**
9:45 am	**Sunday School**
10:20 am	**Youth Ensemble**
12:00 Noon	**Iglesia Dios Con Nosotros**
Monday, November 16	**REMARKER DEADLINE**
2:45 pm	**Violin Lessons**
7:00 pm	**German Group**
Tuesday, November 17	
6:30 pm	**Church Council**
Wednesday, November 18	
11:00 am	**Bible Study**
6:00 pm	**Bell Choir**
7:00 pm	**Vocal Choir**
Thursday, November 19	
2:45 pm	**Violin Lessons**
7:00 pm	**Iglesia Dios Con Nosotros**
Friday, November 20	
2:45 pm	**Violin Lessons**
Saturday, November 21	
4:00 pm	**Video Gaming Night**
Sunday, November 22	**CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY** **Pastor Marleen-Vacation;** **Rev. Eric Anderson officiating**
8:30 am	**Worship Service—Communion**
9:45 am	**Sunday Church School**
9:45 am	**Sunday School**
10:20 am	**Youth Ensemble**
12:00 Noon	**Iglesia Dios Con Nosotros**
LESSONS:	**NOVEMBER 22, 2026**
FIRST READING	**Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24**
PSALM	**Psalm 95:1-7a**
SECOND READING	**Ephesians 1:15-23**
GOSPEL	**Matthew 25:31-46**

-ANNOUNCEMENTS-

MONTHLY SUNDAYS TO BENEFIT NEW HOPE MINISTRIES
Based on information received from New Hope Ministries, we have updated the items that are needed and the dates. Here are the items for November 2026 through February 2027:

November 15: FOOD FOR CHRISTMAS BASKETS
Turkey or Ham, Potatoes, Stuffing, Canned Yams, Canned Corn, Canned Green Beans, Cranberry Sauce, Gravy, Aluminum Roaster pan, Pumpkin Pie Mix, Boxed Potatoes, Canned Fruit Cocktail, Boxed Stuffing, Dry Beans, or anything you would like to give

January/February 2027
Soup-er Bowl—Chicken Noodle and Tomato Soup

BE A SANTA TO UNDERPRIVILEGED ADULTS—CONTRIBUTIONS AND SHOPPERS NEEDED
Over the past 15 years, we have purchased and delivered Christmas gifts to residents of the American House Apartments and Brethren House Apartments located in the Borough of Mechanicsburg. These facilities are designed for underprivileged individuals or individuals who are disabled. The residents are on a limited income; many with no or estranged families, and most of the residents do not own or drive a car.

The Social Ministry Outreach Committee, along with help from many of our friends, will continue to provide Christmas to these individuals as well as a luncheon on the day of their party.

We are requesting "wish lists" from each of the residents. We have been blessed with a wonderful group of shoppers and a wonderful group of individuals who donate and help with the shopping.

If you are interested in making a financial contribution to help defray the expenses, please mark it "Social Ministry" no later than Sunday, November 15. If you would like to help with the shopping, please contact Karen Fisher at 717-580-7507 or email at kfisher@stmarkmburg.com.

COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING DINNER
We are planning on celebrating Thanksgiving dinner at St. Mark this year on **Thursday, November 26, 2026, at 1:00 PM in Fellowship Hall.** Helpers are needed to set up, serve, clean up, and help wash dishes. We are soliciting donations of any kind of dessert. **To defray the cost of the meal, we are requesting donations of any amount.** Please make checks payable to St. Mark and write *Thanksgiving dinner* on the **outside of your envelope with the amount of your contribution. Please use the sign-up sheets at entrances to our church no later than November 16** or contact the church office at 717-766-4482 to make a reservation. For additional questions or additional information, please contact Keith Hensel at 717-319-1199.

REACHING OUT TO OTHERS TO PREPARE FOR CHRISTMAS
On **Saturday, November 28**, there are two opportunities for our young people to prepare for Christmas by being generous to others. **We will gather at 9:00 am to bake cookies for the Truck Stop Ministry.** We bake for the Carlisle Truck Stop Ministries so truckers and travelers can get a taste of Christmas while they are away from home. If you cannot join us but would like to donate premade cookies, bring them to the church by November 29.

After cookie baking, **we will be shopping for gifts for New Hope Ministry's Blessing Express. The group will have lunch together as well that day. Please contact Pastor Marleen at 878-295-2173 so that we know who is joining us that day.** Friends are always welcome to join us!

GETTING READY SUNDAY
Get ready for Advent by joining us in Fellowship Hall on **Sunday, November 29**, **at 9:45 am for Advent crafts and packing cookies for delivery to Carlisle Truck Stop Ministry to help share some Christmas joy.**

If you bake cookies for us to pack, please place them in the refrigerator or freezer labeled ***Truck Stop*** **by November 29** or bring them fresh that day. If you would like to package your cookies ahead of time, place 5-6 cookies in each Ziplock bag and label them ***Truck Stop***.

CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS EXPRESS
Christmas will be here before we know it. It is hard to believe that it is the time of the year when we are starting to plan for the upcoming holiday season. Our Christmas Blessings Express tree is located at the back entrance of St. Mark. W**e are collecting gifts (mostly for teenagers) through Sunday, November 29.** Copies of the New Hope

Ministries Wish List are located at each entrance of St. Mark as well. Or pick an ornament(s) from the tree. Return your UNWRAPPED gift with the ornament attached and place in the containers or area around the tree. THANK YOU!

OPERATION WILDCAT (OW) NEEDS
Operation Wildcat is collecting basic household tools to help families in the Mechanicsburg School District. Operation Wildcat receives quite a few requests for simple, everyday tools. If you have extras or are looking for a reason to clean out and scale down, they would love to put them to good use. OW volunteers will be assembling tool kits for the families. A separate collection box is located at the back entrance of St. Mark.

We are currently looking for:

- Small toolboxes
- Hammer
- Tape Measure
- Screwdriver Set
- Pliers
- Adjustable Wrench
- Utility Knife
- Level
- Allen Wrenches

MIDWEEK ADVENT WORSHIP AT ST. STEPHEN
Advent is a busy time for everyone. We have many things to do to get ready for Christmas, but we never want to miss the more important preparation for the coming of Christ. **Join us on Wednesdays at St. Stephen Lutheran Church, 30 W. Main St., News Kingstown,** to prepare for Christ's coming. **We will gather for worship at 6:00 pm with a light soup supper after worship**. This year we will continue our tradition of using Holden Evening Prayer as our liturgy. Our topic is Preparing in Christ's Presence. On **December 2,** we will ponder how we can "Do Less" as we prepare for Christmas. On **December 9,** we will "Experience Wonder" as we share some pictures of the wonder of God's works. On **December 16,** we will "Hold onto Hope" in the midst of the world's troubles.

We can use your help. Look for the wonder of God's works then take a picture of the wonder you find. Share your picture and one sentence about how this wonder inspires awe in God's works. Then send it to me via email so that we can all see your pictures when we worship together. Please email me at revmarleen@stmarkmburg.com by December 1 to have your picture included. See you as we prepare together for the Advent of our Lord!
Pastor Marleen Griffith-Stull

DECORATING THE CHURCH
On **Saturday, December 5,** we will be getting our church ready for Christmas. Many hands make light work. Please mark this date on your calendars and plan now to **join us starting at 9:00 am** to trim the trees, hang the wreaths, and set up the Nativity. We chose December 5 in hopes that it will be a less hectic time for folks to come to help.

Please note, we want to keep the first few weeks in December focused on Advent, so while the trees are up, we will not be lighting them until Christmas Eve. The lighting of the trees will symbolize the welcoming of Baby Jesus.





November 21	Video Gaming Night
November 26	Thanksgiving Dinner at St. Mark
November 28	Youth Cookie Baking and Christmas Shopping
November 29	Getting Ready Sunday—Advent Crafts and Packing Cookies
December 2, 9, 16	Advent Svc. at St. Stephen
December 5	Decorate for Christmas
December 24 December 24	Lighting of the Luminaries Christmas Eve Services
January 6, 2027	Epiphany, Waffle Wednesday, Chicken & Waffles
February 10	Ash Wednesday
March 25	Seder Meal
March 28	Easter

-WORD SEARCH-

Second Coming

V U O Z M S A Z W H S O R H G J W
E Q P B J R A K G R A B J K C L B
F T S G R E V V R H V D O Y Q T M
V U U U A B I W E E I K J V I O I
Z I O X F J P U A A O U A S A R R
G E T R E A D Y T V R G Q L B V A
T H O U S A N D Y E A R S W I D C
R S L U R D H D D N C Q H D N S L
I I H E X W W R Q L K X X U A W E
S G A G I O I E W Y B G L T F Y S
C N Y V G N Q A B P T T G I W Q N
V S J N W D C D B O R G L O R Y H
D J C H K E V F R W Q G P B O E L
P R E P A R E U D E O B R Q Y P Y
Q N Z X H S A L K R W N R V B W K
U E K X X J E S U S C H R I S T G
X A S E C O N D C O M I N G T J C

heavenly powers
Jesus Christ
miracles
savior
signs
thousand years
get ready
prepare
glory
Second coming
dreadful
wonders
great

POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS



If you would like to sponsor a poinsettia(s) to be placed in the chancel for Christmas or donate money to Mechanicsburg Area Meals on Wheels, please complete the form below. The cost of each poinsettia is **$13.00** for a red poinsettia in a 6" pot that will have at least four blooms. **The deadline for ordering is Sunday, December 6. Separate checks** should be made to St. Mark Lutheran Church and be sure to put **Altar Guild on the memo line**. Please place your check with your order in the offering plate.

PLEASE BE SURE TO CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOX

☐ **POINSETTIA** ☐ **MEALS ON WHEELS**

☐ **In honor of** _____

☐ In **memory of** _____

☐ **To the Glory of God**

~~~~~~

Presented by _____

☐ **Deliver to Shut-in**

☐ **Will pick up after worship service on Christmas.**

_____**Total number of Poinsettias ordered**

Amount of Check _____
~~~~~~

SPONSOR A LUMINARY FOR CHRISTMAS EVE
DECEMBER 24, 2026



We are offering you the opportunity to sponsor a luminary for $5.00. Every dollar collected will be donated to Mechanicsburg Area Meals on Wheels.

We will place your name on the luminary bag(s) along with the information you provide below.

We will begin the lighting of the luminaries at 3:15 pm on Christmas Eve. You are welcome to join us and light the luminaries that you sponsor, or we will light them for you. Worship services will be held at 4:00 pm (special music starting at 3:45 pm) and 9:30 pm (special music starting at 9:00 pm).

PLEASE BE SURE TO CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOXES

Total number of luminaries sponsored _____

☐ **I will come and help light luminaries at 3:15 pm.**

☐ **In honor of _____**

☐ **In memory of _____**

☐ **To the Glory of God**

Sponsored by _____

Check amount _____

Please make checks payable to *St. Mark Lutheran Church* and note "*luminary sponsor*" on the memo line no later than December 6.

LECTIONARY 33

POLITICS, RELIGION, AND MONEY

A strong impulse to avoid discussing certain contentious subjects exists within many communities. Perhaps you have heard the conventional wisdom to avoid talking about politics or religion at a dinner party, for instance. Or maybe you have been in family or social relationships in which money was never discussed. Sometimes we even prefer not to engage these aspects of our lives through the lens of faith.

Throughout the gospels, however, Jesus challenges his followers not to avoid difficult topics. He challenges systems of economic and political inequality, overturning the tables of temple money changers and dining with those who lived on the margins of society. He has conversation after conversation with religious leaders whose views differ from his own. And in the parable of the talents, he tackles matters of wealth head-on. These events and stories in the life of Jesus invite us not to shy away from challenging topics of faith and life.

Are there aspects of our lives—within ourselves or in our community—that we would prefer to exclude from deeper examination? What is it about those parts of our lives that makes us wary of deeper introspection and conversation? The life of faith involves the *whole* of our lives, including our political action, religious convictions, and financial choices. Just as the enslaved ones in this parable were charged with carefully stewarding the resources entrusted to them, we are invited to probe our own choices around money and wealth through the lens of faith. Nothing is outside the bounds of our call to live faithfully!

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