ST. MARK EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF MECHANICSBURG
NOVEMBER 8, 2026
24th 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
Karen's Cell Phone: 717-580-7507
Church Office: 717-766-4482
Office Email: kfisher@stmarkmburg.com
Office Hours: 10:00 AM-1:00 PM – Monday through Thursday

Denise Hirn, Director of Youth Ensemble
Denise's Cell Phone: 717-802-1064
Email: denisehirn@hotmail.com

Brad Hull, Director of Music
Brad's Cell Phone: 202-738-2795
Email: bradleyjhull@gmail.com

www.stmarkmburg.com

Visit & like us on Facebook:
St Mark Lutheran Church Mechanicsburg

ST. MARK EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF MECHANICSBURG
NOVEMBER 8, 2026
24th Sunday after Pentecost
HOLY COMMUNION



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
Today the prophet Amos calls for justice to roll down like waters. Paul urges us to encourage one another with the promised coming of the Lord. Jesus tells the parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids. Surrounded by the faithful of every time and place, we celebrate Christ's coming in our midst in the word of life and the feast of victory—the marriage feast of the Lamb.

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS
Martin, Bishop of Tours, died 397
Wednesday, November 11, 2026
Martin's pagan father enlisted him in the Roman army. Approached by a beggar, Martin cut his cloak in half and gave part to the man, whom he later understood as representing Christ. He asked to leave the army, but was jailed instead. After his release, he became a preacher, and later a bishop.

Søren Aabye Kierkegaard, teacher, died 1855
Wednesday, November 11, 2026
Kierkegaard was a Danish theologian whose writings also gave rise to the modern philosophy of existentialism. He frequently attacked the complacency of the state church of his day, as well as its desire to be accepted by polite society rather than be a stumbling block.

PRELUDE
I Need Thee Every House/Be Thou My Vision Arr. P. Coutera
St. Mark Bell Choir

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**

Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying



(Continued next page)



Text: Philipp Nicolai, 1556-1608; tr. composite
Music: WACHET AUF, Philipp Nicolai
Text © 1999 Augsburg Fortress.

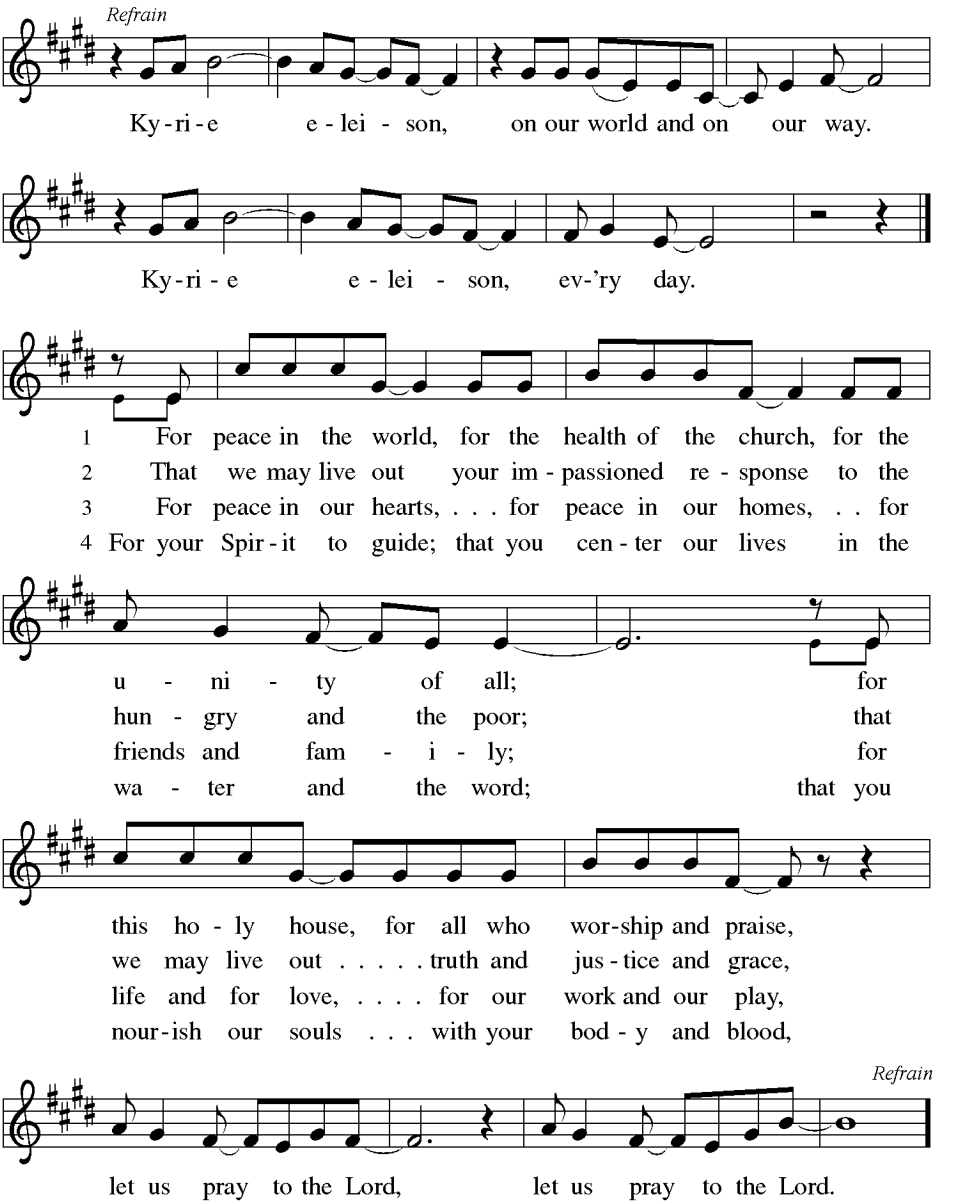
Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

***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.

P O God of justice and love, you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, and awaken us to the needs of others, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

ANTHEM

In a Twinkling of an Eye D. Agnerman and M. Bennet

FIRST LESSON: Amos 5:18-24

In the days of Amos, people thought that the day of the LORD would be a time of great victory, but Amos announced that it would be a day of darkness, not light. He said liturgy is no substitute for obedience. The LORD demands justice and righteousness in the community.

R A reading from Amos.

18 Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord!
Why do you want the day of the Lord?
It is darkness, not light,
19 as if someone fled from a lion
and was met by a bear
or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall
and was bitten by a snake.
20 Is not the day of the Lord darkness, not light,
and gloom with no brightness in it?

21 I hate, I despise your festivals,
and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
22 Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings,
I will not accept them,
and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals
I will not look upon.
23 Take away from me the noise of your songs;
I will not listen to the melody of your harps.
24 But let justice roll down like water
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

R The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 70
(Please sing the Psalm in unison.)



[1] **Be pleased, O God, to de- | liver me;**
O LORD, make | haste to help me.

[2] **Let those who seek my life be ashamed and altogeth- | er dismayed;**
let those who take pleasure in my misfortune draw back and | be disgraced.

[3] **Let those who say to me "Aha!" and gloat over | me turn back,**
because they | are ashamed.

[4] **Let all who seek you rejoice and be | glad in you;**
let those who love your salvation say forever, "Great | is the LORD!"

[5] **But as for me, I am | poor and needy;**
come to me speedi- | ly, O God.

[6] **You are my helper and | my deliverer;**
O LORD, | do not tarry.

SECOND LESSON: 1st Thessalonians 4:13-18
Some of the Thessalonians are worried that dead Christians will be excluded from the resurrection to eternal life when Christ comes again. Paul reassures them with the word of hope that all Christians, living or dead, will be raised into everlasting life with Christ.

R A reading from 1st Thessalonians.

[13] We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. [14] For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. [15] For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who

(Continued next page)

are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. [16] For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. [17] Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will be with the Lord forever. [18] Therefore encourage one another with these words.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



***GOSPEL: Matthew 25:1-13**
Jesus tells a parable about his own second coming, emphasizing the need for readiness at all times.

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

[Jesus said to the disciples:] [1] "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten young women took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. [2] Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. [3] When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, [4] but the wise took

(Continued next page)

flasks of oil with their lamps. [5] As the bridegroom was delayed, all of
them became drowsy and slept. [6] But at midnight there was a shout,
'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' [7] Then all those
young women got up and trimmed their lamps. [8] The foolish said to the
wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' [9] But the
wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had
better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' [10] And while they
went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went
with him into the wedding banquet, and the door was shut. [11] Later the
other young women came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' [12] But he
replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' [13] Keep awake, therefore,
for you know neither the day nor the hour."

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

When The Role Is Called Up Yonder J. Black

***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.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

***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**

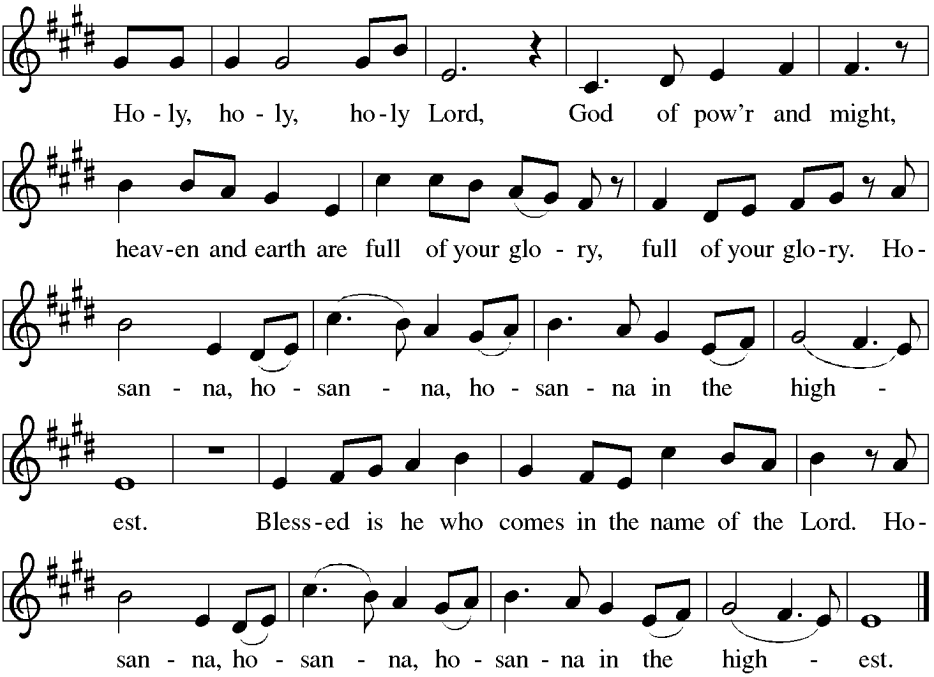
P The Lord be with you.
C And also with you.

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.

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.

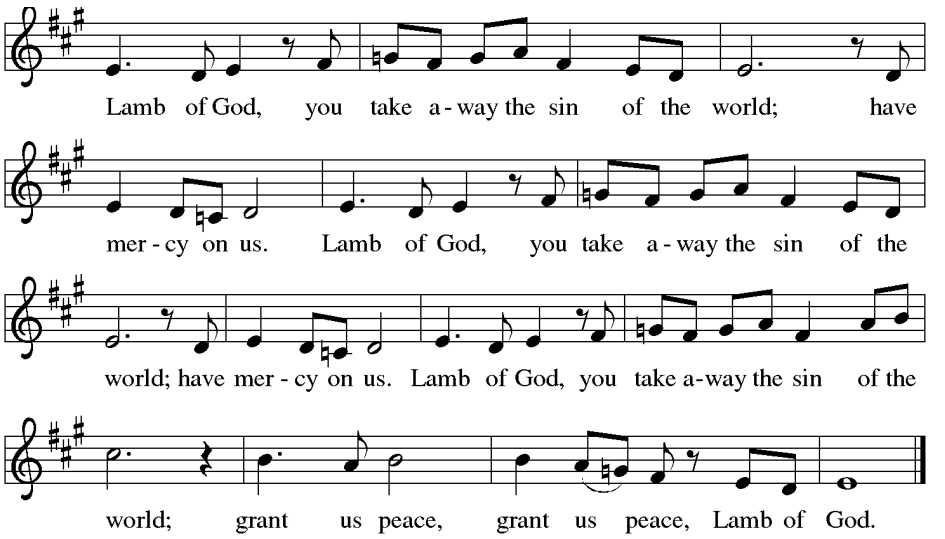
C Amen.

***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-

Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning



Text: African American spiritual
Music: KEEP YOUR LAMPS, African American spiritual

-COMMUNION-

When Peace, like a River

It Is Well with My Soul



Text: Horatio G. Spafford, 1828–1888
Music: VILLE DU HAVRE, Philip P. Bliss, 1838–1876

(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**

Blessed Assurance



Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820–1915
Music: ASSURANCE, Phoebe P. Knapp, 1830–1908

(Please be seated for announcements.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***DISMISSAL**

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

C Thanks be to God.

***POSTLUDE**

When The Role Is Called Up Yonder J. Black



In honor of my twins, Philip and Barbara, on their November 7th birthday by Charlene Albert.

In loving memory of Charles Ditmer, Jr. by Susan Ditmer.

TODAY'S ASSISTANTS

Assisting Minister:	Karen Heath
Lay Reader:	Dave Harnish
Acolyte:	Audrey Johnston
Ushers:	Tyson Murphy, Joan Murphy
Altar Guild:	Connie Kuntz, Michele Connor, Phyllis Mihalich
Zoom Operator:	Katie Stull
Council Money Duty:	Barb Yost, Amy Gimbel

THIS WEEK AT ST. MARK

Sunday, November 8	**24th Sunday after Pentecost**
8:30 am	**Worship Service—Communion**
9:45 am	**Congregation Meeting**
9:45 am	**Children & Youth Sunday School**
10:20 am	**Youth Ensemble**
12:00 Noon	**Iglesia Dios Con Nosotros**
Monday, November 9	
2:45 pm	**Violin Lessons**
7:00 pm	**German Group**
Tuesday, November 10	
1:00 pm	**Book Club Read**
6:30 pm	**WinGS**
Wednesday, November 11	**VETERANS DAY**
11:00 am	**Bible Study**
1:00 pm	**Finance Committee**
6:00 pm	**Bell Choir**
7:00 pm	**Vocal Choir**
Thursday, November 12	
9:00 am	**Property Committee**
1:00 pm	**Fellowship**
2:45 pm	**Violin Lessons**
7:00 pm	**Iglesia Dios Con Nosotros**
Friday, November 13	
2:45 pm	**Violin Lessons**
Saturday, November 14	
Sunday, November 15	**25th Sunday after Pentecost**
	Christmas Food for New Hope
8:30 am	**Worship Service—Communion**
9:45 am	**Church Sunday School**
9:45 am	**Children & Youth Sunday School**
10:20 am	**Youth Ensemble**
12:00 Noon	**Iglesia Dios Con Nosotros**
LESSONS:	**NOVEMBER 15, 2026**
FIRST READING	**Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18**
PSALM	**Psalm 90:1-12**
SECOND READING	**1st Thessalonian 5:1-11**
GOSPEL	**Matthew 25:14-30**

-ANNOUNCEMENTS-

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
A congregational meeting will be held **TODAY, November 8, at 9:45 am following worship service in the Sanctuary. Refreshments will be served in Fellowship Hall after the meeting.** The agenda includes approval of the 2027 Budget and election of council members for 2027. Evangelism will lead a discussion on the church's future.

BOOK CLUB READ
The Evangelism Committee is hosting a book club read on **Tuesday, November 10, at 1:00 pm in the parlor**. The book is entitled, *"Theo of Golden,"* by Allen Levi. It is a "#1 New York Times Bestselling Phenomenon."

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, contact the church office.

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.**

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!

Upcoming Events

November 8	**Annual Congregational Meeting**
November 10	**Book Club**
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 24	**Lighting of the Luminaries**
December 24	**Christmas Eve Services**
January 6, 2027	**Epiphany, Waffle Wednesday, Chicken & Waffles**
February 10	**Ash Wednesday**
March 25	**Seder Meal**
March 28	**Easter**

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 the Holiday season. 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.



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 32

THE CHALLENGE OF WAITING

For many of us, waiting is not a pleasant experience. Whether our waiting is mundane, like waiting in a long line at the grocery store checkout counter, or profound, like waiting for a medical diagnosis or for a new stage of life to begin, we often feel anxious or uneasy, impatient or frustrated, longing for the wait to be over. Over the course of our lives, we get plenty of experience with waiting but might never learn to be patient, even amid the frustration.

As uncomfortable as waiting may be, it is a necessary aspect of the life of faith. We live in the days between Christ's coming at his birth and his return, that longed-for day of hope and promises fulfilled. Seasons of our liturgical life train us in the art of holy waiting. We wait during Advent for Christ's birth, longing for the joy of his arrival as a child in Bethlehem. We wait during Lent for the bright joy of resurrection, abstaining from "alleluias" and quieting ourselves with prayer and fasting. Just as the young women in today's parable had to continue their daily living until the bridegroom returned (all of them, even the wise ones, went to sleep that night!), in all seasons we go about our lives faithfully, even as we wait with eager longing.

Many generations after the telling of this parable, how are we living as people prepared for the coming of Christ? How are we opening our daily lives to the possibilities that Christ will come among us at any moment? We are invited to live with eager expectation, watchful for the grace and love of God through Jesus Christ, which meets us when we least expect it.

Copyright © 2026 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS004360.

New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.