Welcome Visitors!
We have a gift mug for you available at all three of our entrances. Please pick one up after the service. We are glad to have you in worship today. May God bless you with His love and grace. – Board of Evangelism

In Your Prayers This Week Please Remember:

Our Sympathy
❖ To the family and friends of Homer “Mike” Russell who was called home to heaven on Sunday, December 14, 2014.

Continuing Concerns
• Marlin Brockmeyer
• Betty Ashley
• Linda Foote
• Eileen Clements
• Elijah Rabacchi
• Marcus Delre
• Debra Guebert
• Gloria Moore
• Julie Netherton
• Helen Braun
• Lynette Tillock
• John T. Foote
• Emma Ritter
• LuAnn Hartmann
• George Salger
• Marilyn Dailey
• Roy Thornton (Vicki Potter’s father)
• David Jensen (Karen Chamness’ brother)
• Caniella Patterson & newborn child, Gabriel (Emma Ritter’s cousin)
• Shannon Hohgrefe (Stephanie Diercks’ Brother)
• Kara Barreete (Nancy Higley’s daughter)
• Tiffany Troue Denyer
• Ronald Ohlau (Linda Mulholland’s step-father)
• Andy Schorr (Carol Mayer’s brother)
• Anita Shafer (Mary Reith’s mother)
• Daniel Bell (Lisa Greetting’s Brother)
• Robert Holley (Norlyn & Jane Kingsten’s grandson)
• Drew Stallman (Linda Foote’s Grandson)
• Kevin Dukes (Donna & Pr. Al’s relatives)

Care Center Residents
• Laverna Castens
• Delores Doss
• Norma Wolters
• Thelma Weaver
• Onieda Mahnken
• Shelly Fedderke
• Evangeline Wahlmann
• Judy Clasen
• Adeline Bauer
• Delores Heck
• Clara Biemann
• Rev. Wally Dressler

Military Personnel & Their Families
Justin Asbury, Richard Thompson, Kevin Kahre, Ethan Pierce, Matt Kraus, Casey Vallett, Tim Eichenseer, Bill Ingles, Andrew Grab, Bryan Gramenz, Cory Jeffers, Denny Ernsting, Heather Lee
**Mission Prayers**

Remember God’s work through the organizations the Synod works with as you pray that anger, strife and misunderstandings between partners and within organizations would end and that Christ’s forgiveness and mercy would prevail.

*We respect the privacy of our members and friends and will not pray for you publicly unless it is requested and we know we have your permission.*

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**Special Voters’ Meeting**

A Voters’ Meeting has been called for Sunday, January 4, 2015. The meeting begin immediately after the 9:00 a.m. service has ended. The agenda for the meeting will include the following items:

- Discussion of our current financial status, along with two motions to be voted on.
  1. Borrow money from the School Building Project LCEF account (Together in Faith) the amount needed if we are unable to repay the loan at First National Bank with the intent to repay the School Building Fund not to exceed $35,000 without approval from the voters.
  2. Set up a revolving line of credit up to $10,000 from the Gifts & Memorials Savings account to make payroll to be repaid.
- Presentation of proposals for Completion of Service Benefits for Pastor Janneke for the voters to approve.

**Garms Family Christmas Concert**

December 21, 6:00 p.m. St. Mark’s School

Join us Sunday evening for a concert of beautiful Christmas music and fellowship.

**Christmas Shopping Online?**

If you shop with Amazon, consider using AmazonSmile. AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you.

**December Special Envelopes**

Special envelopes in the December packet are: Advent, Christmas, District/Synod and Building/Maintenance. In the new packet, there is also a New Year Offering envelope.

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**Bible Studies**

**Bible Hour:** Wednesday, 10:00 am, Church Office Meeting Room.

**Sundays 10:15 a.m.:**

- Family Bible Study—Fellowship Hall
- Exploring Faith and Life Adult Special Needs Sunday School Class

**Bible Readings from (Lutheran Service Book) Daily Lectionary (pg. 299-304)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Scripture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, Dec. 21</td>
<td>Isaiah 42:1-25; Revelation 9:1-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, Dec. 23</td>
<td>Isaiah 43:25–44:20; Revelation 11:1-19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, Dec. 25</td>
<td>Isaiah 49:1-18; Matthew 1:1-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, Dec. 26</td>
<td>Isaiah 49:22-26; 50:4–51:8, 12-16; Matthew 1:18-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, Dec. 27</td>
<td>Isaiah 51:17–52:12; Matthew 2:1-12</td>
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</tbody>
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**Thank You!!**

Thank you, Brian Thies, for all of your hard work cleaning up the landscaping and fall leaves.

**Christ Our Savior Lutheran High School**

Merry Christmas! Thank you for supporting the ministry of Christ Our Savior in 2014. We are looking forward to a joy-filled and blessed ministry to families with you in 2015.

**Holiday Hours:** On December 22, 23, 26, 29, 30 and January 2, the COS office will be open 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. On December 31, the office will be open 9:00 a.m. to noon. School and normal office hours will resume on January 5.

**Annual Trivia Night:** The annual COS trivia night will be January 30, 2015 at 7 pm. The cost is $12 per person with a limit of eight to a table. Reserve your table by calling the school.
Our Stewardship of Time, Talents and Treasures

December 20-21
Organist: Janet Wicker
Altar Guild:
  Loretta Luedemann, Debra Caby
Acolytes:
  (6pm) Chloe Gordon
  (9am) Bastian Kraus
Greeters:
  (6pm) Karen Chamness
  (9am) Scot & Sheila Alms
Elders:
  (6pm) Mark Preuss, Virgil Gramenz
  (9am) Dale Rice, Jim Zobel

December 27-28
Organist: Carl Handel
Altar Guild:
  Delma Rubach, Marilyn Wente
Acolytes:
  (6pm) Raven Masterson
  (9am) Jared Phillips
Greeters:
  (6pm) Leonard & Arlene Lampe
  (9am) Rose Bartens
Elders:
  (6pm) Ed Kerkhover, Jim Mevert
  (9am) Mark Prange

Worship Attendance: 12/13-14 Sat - 329 Sun - 171 Advent 12/17 – 117
Weekly Total - 617 Communed - 83

Christian Education Attendance: Sun. — N/A Wed. — N/A

Financial Report
Checking Balance — August 1, 2014— $  – 15,772.19
School Deposits includes $15,728 of pre-registration payments that
were deposited in the last fiscal year.
Income
  Congregational Offerings $   11,479.50 $  181,307.21
  School Deposits         5,875.62       118,876.09
Total Deposits          $   17,355.12 $   300,183.30

Expenses
  Church & Office $       4,118.06 $  61,095.41
  School                      15,655.71  211,738.60
  Parish Property             0.00       16,590.27
Total Expenses                $  19,773.77 $  289,424.28

Checking Balance — December 18, 2014— $  – 7,054.91
Loan—First National Bank.  $34,980.00

Poinsettias
In Memory of Wayne Luedeman by Loretta Luedeman & Sandy Glenn
In Memory of Ted & Nora Lampe and Ed & Hulda Luedeman by Loretta
Luedeman & Sandy Glenn
In Memory of Our Grandparents, Willard & Beulah Waltemate by Daniel,
Brandon, Brooke & AJ Smith
In Honor of Our Grandparents, Don & Carol Smith by Daniel, Brandon,
Brooke, AJ, Michaela & Makenzie Smith
In Memory of the parents of the Kuhns, Bill & Anna Kuhn and Ray &
Frieda Metz by Harry & Shirley Kuhn
In Memory of Orville Alms, Sr. by Orville, Jr., Scot, Debi & Families
In Honor of Nita Alms by Orville, Jr., Scot, Debi & Families
In Loving Memory of Paul Wagner by Irma & Family
In Memory of my husband, son & parents and other departed family
members by Jean Schroeder
In Memory of Melissa Gerlach Sauerwein by Glenn & Mary Lynn Gerlach
In Memory of Harry & Melba Harle and In Honor of the Roger Harle
Family by Roger Harle
In Honor of our parents, Si & Ann Vallett and Harold & Ruth Tiller by
Greg & Sharon Vallett
In Memory of our great-grandparents, Edgar & Lydia Biermann and
Granny (JoAnn) & Papa (Gary) Potter
In Honor of loved ones by Darl & Janet Bollman
In Memory of our parents, Herman & Verna Kingsten and Albert & Alvera
Hartmann and our infant son, Jeffrey Allan Kingsten by Norlyn &
Janie Kingsten
In Memory of Archie Wydeck, Sr. by Archie & Alice Wydeck
In Honor of our grandparents & great-grandparents, Greg & Sharon
Vallett, Glenna Thompson, Si & Ann Vallett and Ruth & Harold Tiller
by Daisy & Colin Vallett
In Memory of Albert & Alvera Hartmann by Sam & Donna Huffman
In Memory of Albert & Alvera Hartmann by Brian, Melissa & Madisyn
Murphy
In Memory of Jim Meier by Nancy, Daniel & Kourtney Meier
In Honor of Grandma & Great-grandma Opal Kraus by children &
grandchildren

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St. Mark’s Lutheran School News

Thank You!
The faculty and staff at St. Mark's Lutheran School would like to thank the parents and children for the many cards, gifts, and Christmas greetings that we received before the Christmas break. We hope everyone has a Blessed Christmas and a wonderful New Year and enjoy their time off.

Elks Hoop Shoot Results
St. Mark's students participated in the Elks Hoop Shoot on Saturday, December 13, at Murphysboro High School Gym. The hoop shoot is a free throw shooting contest for boys and girls in three age groups. Those who placed in their age group were: 12/13-Dalton Hornberger-2nd place & Karley Kothe; 10/11-Jack Knop & Kadence Bockhorn-2nd place; 8/9-Cayton Cratch. Congratulations to all shooters!

St. Mark’s Sports
Sat., Jan 3 B BB "5th" Grade Tournament @ St. John, Chester TBA

Need a Christmas Present?
How about one of our church cookbooks. They are $17 each and all the money goes to paying on the school roof fund. These books make an excellent gift. We’ve hit the $7,000 mark in profits, let’s try to hit $9,000 by Christmas.

Outreach Opportunities
To seniors—by delivering lunch on the first, third, and/or fifth Friday, and/or the fifth Tuesday of each month. A front desk volunteer position is also available—either one day each week or for a couple of hours one day each week. Bless you for contacting Becky Kiehna @ (618) 965-3134 X5, (618) 965-9479, or stvloffc@egyptian.net to offer your help!
To outpatients of Hopewell (http://hopewellcenter.com/), near Cardinal Glennon Children's Medical Center in St. Louis—a project of a psych clinical group of which Ashley Mines, a St. Mark's member, is part. Adult-sized clothes/coats/scarves/gloves, blankets, and hygiene items are being gathered. Thank you for leaving them in the receptacle in the narthex.

2015 Church Envelopes
The 2015 Church Envelopes are in the fellowship hall ready to be picked up. The numbers are the same as last year. There is a booklet on the table with the list of names and number in it. Check the second column for your name in alphabetical order to find your number. Any member over 500 does not have envelopes per your request. If you have questions contact me.

Prayer Request - Prayer Chain - Confidential
If you have a special prayer request, our prayer warriors (the St. Mark's Prayer Chain) will continuously raise your request before the LORD. Confidentiality is always respected. Call the church office (965-3192).

Peace Meal from Peacemaker Ministries
For Unto Us a Child is Born
When I resort to an escape response [in dealing with conflict], I am generally focusing on "me." I am looking for what is easy, convenient, or non-threatening for myself. When I use an attack response, I am generally focusing on "you," blaming you and expecting you to give in and solve the problem. When I use a peacemaking response, my focus is on "us." I am aware of everyone's interests in the dispute, especially God's, and I am working toward mutual responsibility in solving a problem.

Food for Thought
The great pronouncement of the prophet Isaiah concerning the Messiah—" For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given" (Is. 9:6a, emphasis ours)—takes on special meaning this time of year as we reflect on the words, above.

By definition, Christmas can never be fully celebrated by "me" as a "personal family time with loved ones." If we celebrate in this way, we duck the piercing challenge of Christmas. We embrace the left side of the Slippery Slope and seek only that which is "easy, convenient, and non-threatening."

But Christmas is very threatening indeed. It is good news, but it is the kind of good news that cuts through "easy, convenient, and non-threatening" like a sword. Christmas is a stubbornly "us" celebration.
Unwanted Junk Becomes Cash Income for the Church
Recycle your metals for St. Mark’s general fund to help pay all the bills at the church and school. We can recycle any metal item, such as: Cans, Buckets, Air Conditioners, Electric Appliances (no glass tubes), Pots, pans, Motors, etc. Call for info or pickup (Mike Vallett 618-317-1058 or Jim Pierce 618-615-0650).

PeaceMeal Continued . . .

Just as Jesus redefined "neighbor" in the parable of the Good Samaritan, Christmas redefines "us" and insists that that definition--and the celebration of Christmas--must include those we’d rather not see around the tree on Christmas morning. In Jesus' Christmas celebration, our enemies are there--those who slander us and curse us and steal from us. Total strangers are there, for whom we now can and must care because God has cared for us. And even those who simply hurt our feelings unknowingly are there--those against whom we may presently be harboring tiny seeds of bitterness in our heart.

How and where will you celebrate Christmas this year? Will it be an "easy, convenient, and non-threatening" celebration spent entirely with loved ones? (One can almost hear Jesus' question in Matthew 5:47, "Do not even pagans do that?")

Or will your Christmas celebration take you to visit a home you'd rather not visit? Will it cause you to pick up the phone and dial a number you've long since quit dialing? Will it draw you outward to bring good news to a modern-day "shepherd" watching flocks by night (a convenience store clerk on Christmas Eve, perhaps; or on-duty police officer or fire fighter)? Will it cause you to proclaim "good tidings of great joy for all the people"--to a stranger that you might otherwise pass without a word?

If so, then you will be swept up into the great prophecy recorded in Isaiah 9:7: "Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end" (emphasis ours).

Early Retirement Announcement
Rev. Dr. Alan Wendel Janneke
Dec 7, 2014

Thank you for remaining a few minutes after worship for this announcement.

I have served St. Mark’s Lutheran Church as Senior Pastor for eighteen years. Many of you know that I also served my vicarage (seminary internship) here some 35 years ago. In September, an attempt to remove me from office did not receive the necessary two-thirds majority needed for passage. I had hoped that, with President Scharr’s guidance, we could continue to work together under Christ’s love and forgiveness. Some early attempts at reconciliation seemed fruitful. In the last few weeks, however, it has become clear that the enmity against me has grown even stronger. Therefore, the worship service we have just shared will be the last time I will lead worship here as your pastor.

I have decided to apply for early retirement benefits at a reduced rate from Concordia Retirement Plan. I will begin receiving the reduced benefit payments in about 90 days. Because the conflicts that have divided Christ’s church here remain unresolved, I do not believe it would be helpful for me to continue in office after this announcement of my intention to retire. My ministry at St. Mark’s ends with this announcement.

Tomorrow I will start removing my personal belongings from the church and school. It may take some time, because I will also be discarding old files that I no longer need and destroying all confidential counseling and pastoral care notes. Today I will not be teaching an Adult Bible Class, but I will be going to the fellowship room — in case anyone would like to speak with me there.

I will continue to pray for God’s blessing on the ministries of St. Mark’s Church and School, for each of you as my brothers and sisters in Christ, and for my adversaries. The future is uncertain for Donna and I, as we wait on the Lord, so we request your prayers as well. We can know for certain that as long as He gives us life and strength, He will also provide for our needs through meaningful work and service in His kingdom.

Our only hope for peace is in the Prince of Peace, Jesus. We pray that you will find peace in Him. In John 14.27 Jesus himself promises: “My peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid” (John 14.27).

The Peace of the Lord be with you always. Amen.
Weekly Calendar

Sat., Dec. 20  Food Pantry Donations
            . . . . 6:00 PM  St. Mark’s School Christmas Program

Sun., Dec. 21  Food Pantry Donations
            . . . . 9:00 AM  Worship w/Communion
            . . . . 10:15 AM  Bible Class/Sunday School
            . . . . 6:00 PM  Garms Family Christmas Concert

            . . . . 1:00 PM  Manor at Craig Farms
            . . . . 2:00 PM  Three Springs Nursing Home

Tues., Dec. 23

Wed., Dec. 24  . . . . 6:00 PM  Christmas Eve Service of Lessons & Carols
            . . . . 10:30 PM  Candlelight Communion Service

Thurs., Dec. 25  . . . . 9:00 AM  Christmas Day Service w/Communion

Fri., Dec. 26

Sat., Dec. 27  . . . . 6:00 PM  Worship with Communion

Sun., Dec. 28  . . . . 9:00 AM  Worship Service
            . . . . 10:15 AM  Bible Class

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Roof Fund Envelopes

The school roof repairs have been completed. The Board of Stewardship has placed “ROOF FUND” envelopes in the pews and at each church entrance. Prayerfully consider giving a special gift or gifts toward this Fund by using the envelopes.

To date $55,819.10 has been collected for the school roof fund (final cost $56,800). We only have $980.90 left to finish paying for the roof repairs. This week we received another $1,000 check from the cookbook committee and a $2,000 donation from CentiMark (the company that replaced the roof at the school). These generous donations mean that we are very close to having raised all of the money for this project. Thank you to everyone who helped us reach this goal.

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The Mission Statement of St. Mark’s Lutheran Church

Our mission is to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ through worship, education, outreach, fellowship and service.

Worship Schedule

Saturday evening 6:00 p.m.; Sunday morning 9:00 a.m.;
Next Handicap Accessible Service – January 8th, 10:00 a.m.

Holy Communion is celebrated every weekend, the first, third and fifth Sundays of the month at the 9:00 a.m. service and at the 6:00 p.m. Saturday evening service before the second and fourth Sundays of the month.

Because those who eat and drink our Lord’s body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the sacrament, are asked first to speak with the pastor or an elder.