

Newsletter  
November & December  
2023



ST. MARK'S  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

## SUNDAY WORSHIP

# MARKSMAN

9:30 am Worship Service  
both on-site and online on  
our YouTube channel  
*StMarksLutheranChurch*  
*WashingtonIllinois.*

Nursery provided.

10:30 am Fellowship Hour  
with coffee and donuts.

### CONTACT US

Office hours

M-F 8:30 am -3:00 pm

Phone 309.444.4618  
[office@stmarkswashington.org](mailto:office@stmarkswashington.org)

Childcare & Preschool  
309.444.4686

200 S. Main Street  
Washington IL 61571

Facebook:

*stmarkswashington*

Website:

*stmarkswashington.org*

### FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK:

Uh-oh

There are times you really, really don't want to hear "uh-oh" being said. From your hair stylist when you are getting your hair cut would be one of those times. From your town's income tax department after they stated you were getting a \$700 refund, but then "uh-oh" they failed to see one of your W-2s that you filed, so your refund instantly became an amount due instead. When you have your car being worked on and the mechanic says "uh-oh" and you see a small cloud of dense smoke coming up from under your hood. All three of these "uh-ohs" happened to me on the same morning. Not surprisingly, it wasn't a good morning. I wisely hid at home that afternoon, not answering my phone.



"Uh-oh." It's not in the dictionary. You rarely even see it in writing, but when you hear it... those four little letters have jarring significance.

But it isn't just "uh-oh" that stops you when you hear it. It is also "aha." Neither is it in the dictionary. Nor do you usually see it in writing, but when you hear it... A welcomed "aha" you whisper after having struggled with something in school or work, but then the moment of sudden lucidity. Getting lost when driving only to have somehow miraculously arrived at where you needed to be. "Aha!" Remembering someone's name when bumping into him/her in the store after years (or at least guessing correctly under pressure).

Often, we pray about our "uh-ohs" to God. An unexpected bill; a bad day at school or work. "Uh-oh, God, please help me." That we are good at. Uh-oh prayers are fine, and indeed we are to call upon the Lord when we are hurting, anxious, fearful. (Psalm 34:17-18, Matthew 11:28, Philippians 4:6-7, and et al). But what about aha prayers? "God, help me better understand this in my life. God, speak to me and help me to listen to your still voice. God, what am I to learn from this at this time and place?" Prayers for aha.

Don't be so long with your uh-oh prayers and that you are thereby short with your aha prayers. Yes, you are to call upon Lord for help, but so

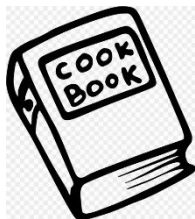
too for wisdom, understanding, faith. (Psalm 24:45, Proverbs 4:5-7, James 1:5, and et al) Pray to God for more and more “ahas” in your life. This is what life is for: for you to grow in faith, to deepen your trust in God, to experience love as a gift from God. The greatest lessons you learn in life are the lessons you learn about yourself. Uh-oh prayers really won’t get you there. They are about right here, right now. Aha prayers are about leaning on God for direction, gaining wisdom, becoming more grounded in faith and hope. They are *long* prayers: prayers about who you are becoming. Uh-oh prayers are *short* prayers. They are about reaction, while aha prayers are about new realizations because of God. So when the unwelcomed “uh-ohs” come pray short, but so too pray long for “ahas.”

~ Pastor Scott

## WHAT’S NEW

### St. Mark’s Lutheran Church Recipes and Reminiscences

A cookbook for the upcoming 150-year anniversary celebration in 2025.



This cookbook will be exclusive to St. Mark’s by featuring recipes from past members, current recipes from our congregation, and written reminiscences from members on food and fellowship past and present.

The Cookbook Team is reaching out to all members for recipes and written remembrances. The remembrances should be no longer than 50 words and can include anything regarding food ministry and food fellowship both in and outside of the church. One individual can submit many recipes.

Please submit your contributions no later than December of this year. There are three ways to submit your contributions:

1. Hard copies can be placed in the box labeled “Recipes and Reminiscences” located in the gathering space. Please include your name and a phone number you can be reached at if there is a question regarding your submittal.
2. The church office will take your submissions.
3. Email: [recipes@stmarkswashington.org](mailto:recipes@stmarkswashington.org)

## MISSIONS

### **OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD: Sending the Gospel to the Ends of the Earth!**

There’s still time to pack a shoebox for Operation Christmas Child! Stop by the table in the Gathering Space to find out how you can change a child’s life through the power of a simple gift.

**Please return your filled shoebox gifts to St. Mark’s by Sunday, November 12.**

We will celebrate our collection of gifts with a **Shoebox Blessing** during service. Our annual **Shoebox Brigade** will follow after service and we’ll move the boxes from the altar to Beckwith Hall to be taken to a drop off location.



## NEWS

1. **Burton House** – A committee was designated to explore the feasibility and cost of renovating the house. Due to its poor overall interior condition and the presence of lead piping and asbestos insulation, they determined the cost to make just the ground floor usable would be \$66,572 and that would be hanging ceilings, laying down flooring, and expanding the bathroom ourselves. With us contracting all the work out, it would be between \$83K to \$90K. Given the high cost of renovation (and that only being for part of the space), the committee recommended its demolition - at the cost of \$31,336 - and possibly then expanding that parking lot or creating an attractive, usable green space there. After much discussion, the council recommends the church to demo of the Burton House and make that space serve us and/or the community in a better (and economical) way. The house will be open Sunday before the meeting so anyone interested can view its condition.
2. **Council Restructuring** – Council is recommending the church restructure its council by combining and/or eliminating four positions. This would take the number of council positions from thirteen to seven. Term lengths would remain the same. This would also remove the requirement that council members chair a certain committee. Executive council will remain, but it would be reduced in the scope of its responsibility to personnel or any other sensitive matter.

Any member is welcome to discuss with any council member more specifics about one or both recommendations. There will be more information presented in church and in its publications about these things before Nov. 12 for everyone's consideration.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### HOLIDAY WORKSHOP



### "GNOME FOR CHRISTMAS" HOLIDAY WORKSHOP

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 11th  
10:00 - 2:00

ST MARKS LUTHERAN CHURCH  
200 S. MAIN ST. WASHINGTON, IL

email [suesholidayworkshop@yahoo.com](mailto:suesholidayworkshop@yahoo.com) to sign up

COST OF THE WORKSHOP INCLUDES MATERIALS, LUNCH & PRIZES

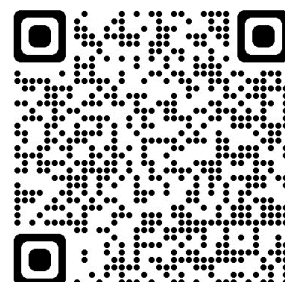


*Like to attend the workshop?*

**Email Sue Eldred at**

[suesholidayworkshop@yahoo.com](mailto:suesholidayworkshop@yahoo.com)

Use the QR code for blog link about the Holiday Workshop.





### Kindred Spirit Sisters

Sunday, November 12, 11:30 pm  
Lin Buffet; 756 W Jackson St, Morton,

For reservations or more information, please call Kathleen 309-444-2360 or Sue Madden 309-444-3096

### December's Meeting

will be a potluck at Kathleen Peters' house on Sunday, December 10 at 11:30 am

*Kindred Spirit Sisters meet on the second Sunday of the month. Widowed and single women welcome.*

### ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

Just for adults: "An Unlikely Advent," which is about the extraordinary people of the Christmas story. Join us as we ready ourselves for the Christmas season! **First class is Nov. 19** (will break the following week for Thanksgiving). Bring your coffee and doughnut to the conference room to join in the study and discussion. After Christmas, the class will continue but will explore the major biblical stories of the Bible that give an encompassing picture of God's story with us. December 3, 10 and 17



### LIVE NATIVITY

# Live Nativity

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10  
AND  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12  
4:00 TO 6:00 PM



NEW THIS 2023 CHRISTMAS  
SEASON, WASHINGTON  
AREA'S OWN OUTSIDE LIVE  
NATIVITY WITH PETTING ZOO  
AND CRECHE SCENE DISPLAY

### CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Please join us for our Christmas Eve Services on **Sunday, December 24, 2023**. We will have two evening services, **4:00 pm & 7:00 pm**. Both services will have special music, Holy Communion and lighting of the candles.

**\*Note:** There will be no regular service on Sunday morning.

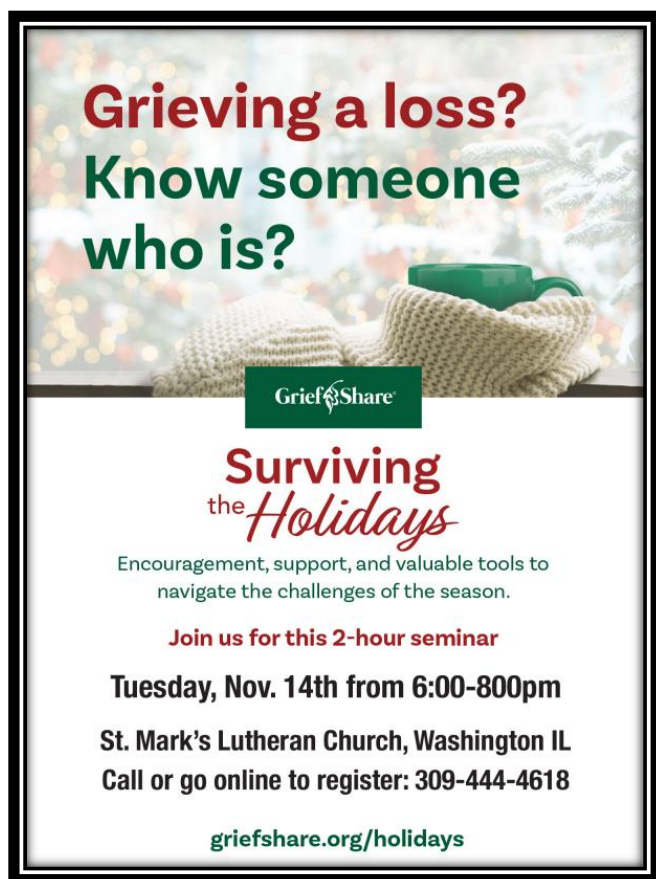


## NURSES CORNER

### REGISTER FOR THIS FREE EVENT!

When you are grieving a loved one's death, the holiday season can be especially painful. Our Surviving the Holidays seminar helps participants discover:

- How to deal with emotions
- What to do about traditions
- Helpful tips for surviving social events
- How to find hope for the future



**Grieving a loss?  
Know someone  
who is?**

**GriefShare**

**Surviving  
the Holidays**

Encouragement, support, and valuable tools to  
navigate the challenges of the season.

**Join us for this 2-hour seminar**

**Tuesday, Nov. 14th from 6:00-8:00pm**

**St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Washington IL**  
**Call or go online to register: 309-444-4618**

[griefshare.org/holidays](http://griefshare.org/holidays)

### BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENINGS

St. Mark's Parish Nurse is offering blood pressure screenings in the Gathering Space during fellowship hour on these Sundays:

November 12  
December 10

~ Mary Hills  
Parish Nurse



## LIBRARY

Looking for a good family movie or book? Check one out in St. Mark's Church Library!

Stop in and visit our church library and check out our selection of great Christian books. We also have audio CD's and DVD movies for all ages.

What would you like to see added to our collection? Let us know what you are interested in. Send your ideas for how we can improve our library experience to Marlene Meegan at [marmeeagan@comcast.net](mailto:marmeeagan@comcast.net).

*Thanks for supporting our church library!*



## CHILDCARE & PRESCHOOL

This is a busy time of year for St. Mark's Childcare and Preschool! After our Halloween parties, we go right into OCC packing party time. Following learning about giving to others, we dive into Thanksgiving and then Christmas. We plan to pack approximately 55

boxes for Operation Christmas Child. It's such a wonderful ministry for our littles to be able to participate in and understand that we have so much to be thankful for. One of the things you may have noticed that we are thankful for down in our part of the church is our new playground! We do have one more large item coming in the spring, but for the most part, our new playground is looking good! Looking forward to December, we will also have our annual Christmas program. It's such a wonderful time of year to remember





that we have a Savior who loves us and provides us with unmeasurable blessings.

~ Ellie Gramm and Amanda Stuart  
Childcare and Preschool Co-Directors



## CHILDREN & FAMILY

### CROSS TRAINERS HALLOWEEN PARTY

This year I decided to throw a Halloween party for Cross Trainers in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade on Wednesday, October 25<sup>th</sup>. This was such a fun party! We had chocolate covered pretzels, witches brew (fruit punch), scary themed brownies, a variety of treats, craft projects, games and so much more! We had a blast, and I am so thankful for this program and how dedicated the kids are to coming each week.



### THE CLUBHOUSE

The Clubhouse has been successfully running since September and we are lucky enough to have 15 – 25 kids each Sunday attend worship service in The Clubhouse.

Thank you to my volunteers that have dedicated their time to helping during worship service. The Clubhouse ensures the youth of St. Mark's are receiving an educational and fun format of worship services just for them!





## SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

The Sunday School Christmas Program is quickly approaching, and the kids have been busy practicing their music with our very talented Pam Marcoline Griffith. We are so thankful that every year Pam excitedly prepares our youth for this wonderful program. This year the program will take place during worship service – that way no one will miss it!



## TRUNK-OR-TREAT

Trunk or Treat this year was a scary success! Thank you to everyone that helped make Trunk or Treat happen from behind the scenes, trunks, food, and more – I couldn't have done it without my St. Mark's family!







Questions or want to volunteer? Please contact Shannon Boynton, Director of Children and Family Ministry or call (309)-444-4618. or [childrens.director@stmarkswashington.org](mailto:childrens.director@stmarkswashington.org)



## YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT

It has been a wonderful fall for the Youth and Young Adults of St. Mark's! We played paintball, had game nights, attended confirmation retreats and much more! We laughed together, prayed together, and ate meals together and I, for one, loved every minute of it. However, the year is still young! We have a lot of fun stuff planned over the coming months and I am really excited for what is to come!



**November 5** – Escape Room at Escape 60 in Peoria @ 5:00pm

**November 8** – Confirmation - 6:30pm

**November 15** – Confirmation - 6:30pm

**November 17-19** – Central/Southern Illinois Synod Youth Gathering at Lake Williamson Retreat Center

**November 22** – No Confirmation (Thanksgiving Break)

**November 29** – Confirmation - 6:30pm

**December 3** – Bowling and Laser Tag @ Plaza Lanes in Washington – 5:00pm

**December 6** – Confirmation – 6:30pm

**December 13** – Confirmation – 6:30pm

**December 17** – Youth Group Christmas Party at St. Mark's– 6:00pm

**December 20** – No Confirmation (Christmas Break)

**December 27** – No Confirmation (Christmas Break)

### LOOKING AHEAD



QUAKE is coming! That's right! We will be returning to the Wisconsin Dells Quake this year! The dates for Quake are February 16-18 and we hope to take a big group to this life-changing event! The theme for this year's Quake is "Breathe" based on Matthew 11:28 which says, *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."* This year, the main speaker is Bob Lenz, who is an amazing and inspiring speaker, and the musician is Lynn Stoneking. We will be getting more information to you about this event in the next couple of weeks so be sure to keep an eye out for that.

Questions? Please contact me at 309-409-8325 or [jlafary@stmarkswashington.org](mailto:jlafary@stmarkswashington.org)

~ Pastor Jeremy Lafary  
Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries



## WOMEN OF THE ELCA

### WOMEN OF THE ELCA REPORT

#### KITCHEN CLEANING

Thank you to the ladies who cleaned the Family Life Center kitchen on October 9. Charlotte Jasper, Linda Keys, Diana Lindahl, Marsha Rigg and Barb Spring.

#### BLESSING OF THE QUILTS

The annual Blessing of the Quilts was Sunday, October 22. The quilts were then packaged and distributed worldwide through Lutheran World Relief.

***Piece and Comfort Quilters Group needs donations of clean, gently used sheets for the backing fabrics to make the quilts and fabrics to make the quilts.*** If you can help with donations, please contact Linda Keys at 309-472-2483 or drop off in the Beckwith Hall Collection Center on the left side cabinet.

#### WELCA FALL GATHERING

All St. Mark's women are invited to the WELCA Fall Gathering on **Saturday, November 11, 2023**, in the Family Life Center. A continental breakfast will be served at **9:30 a.m.**, followed by a talk by Roger French on the history & architecture of Westminster Abbey. A free-will offering will be taken for WHIP.

#### WHIP COLLECTIONS (*unexpired items only*)

November – peanut butter

December — jelly

The August collection yielded 198 items. 434 families were served, with 23 new families registered. In September, 128 items were collected. 347 families were served, with 19 new families registered.

#### THANK OFFERING SUNDAY

Thank Offering Sunday is **November 19, 2023**. Our speaker will be Nancy Hodges of Washington Weekend Snackpac Program. The Washington Weekend Snackpac Program provides free sacks of nonperishable food throughout the school year to children who suffer from food insecurity in our Washington

schools. Special offering envelopes will be provided for donating to this worthy charity.

#### MITTEN TREE

The mitten tree will be put up the Sunday before Thanksgiving. Cold weather items such as warm hats, gloves, and scarves will be collected for area children in need.

#### CHANGE FOR CHARITY

November 26 Change for Charity collection is for Threads, Hope and Love, a local collection agency of clothes and household goods available to those who need help. Their mission is "to do whatever God wants us to do as we continue to be His hands and feet, and we will always be here for those that rely on us to assist in times of need."

#### LSSI CHRISTMAS PROJECT

WELCA will be sponsoring a Christmas project again this year with LSSI. The congregation will have the opportunity to choose a name and purchase gifts for a local child in need. Monetary donations are also accepted. More details will be provided in the Weekly Buzz and Sunday bulletins a little closer to time.

~ Linda Wetzel and Pam Ripley





## SUPPORTING OUR CHURCH

### 2023 Financial Report

YTD Ending August 31, 2023

#### General Fund

Total income: \$489,408.54  
Expenses: \$478,582.31  
Net Income \$10,826.23

### 2023 Financial Report

YTD Ending September 30, 2023

#### General Fund

Total income: \$550,093.37  
Expenses: \$542,259.48  
Net Income \$ 7,833.89

## CHRISTIAN BOOKCLUB

### A DIFFERENT KIND OF BOOK CLUB

Book Club is going strong on **Tuesdays at 10:00 am** at church. We have also added a second Book Club meeting on **Saturdays at 8:30 am**. We meet for breakfast at area restaurants.

There is no reading a book ahead of time. We bring the books to the meetings and read a chapter together and then discuss it. We are reading He Still Moves Stones.

Questions or would like to come to a meeting?  
Please contact the church office 309-444-4618  
or [office@stmarkswashington.org](mailto:office@stmarkswashington.org)

*We would love to have you join us!*

## SPECIAL DATES

### BIRTHDAY'S 80 PLUS YEARS

#### NOVEMBER

Barb Appleby	11/01
Judy Branson	11/06
Ron Bradley	11/07
Cookie Marshall	11/18
Gary Reents	11/19
Marilyn Carlson	11/27
Robert Wiese	11/30

#### DECEMBER

Lyle Shaw	12/02
Robert Hierman	12/08
Carol Blye	12/22
Jane Kent	12/23
Charlene Iverson	12/25
Ron Zimmerman	12/28
Pat Essig	12/28
Paul Gerken	12/28
Donald Shay	12/29

### ANNIVERSARIES 50 PLUS YEARS

#### NOVEMBER

Ed & Linda Anglin	11/22
Dean & Joyce Zobrist	11/22

#### DECEMBER

Russell & Janet Winkler	12/08
Charles & Connie Bradle	12/13
Jerry & Terrie Lamprecht	12/23



## MISCELLANEOUS

### SAVING MONEY, SAVING THE EARTH

The church has been exploring two energy saving options at the church: installing solar panels (either on the church or on its farmland) and replacing interior lighting with all LED lights. There is a large upfront cost with both options, but the church continues to look at viable options to reduce our operating costs, especially those which would also help the environment.

### DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS

Don't forget to set your clocks **BACK** one hour Saturday night, December 4 so you are not early Sunday morning for worship.



### HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

The church office will be closed for Thanksgiving on Thursday, November 23 & Friday November 24.



## THANK YOU

Dear St. Mark's,

Thank you so much for your continued support of Mom's Who Care. I know I've said this before but we couldn't give to our kids without your giving to us.

Blessings,

~ Sandy Tunnell

### 204 QUILTS!

That is how many quilts the women of the Piece & Comfort group of St. Mark's made this year to be distributed by Lutheran World Relief globally wherever the need is the greatest. That is a lot of time and effort to help those we don't know, but we know of their need. Thank you ladies for all the love and good you quilted!

~ Pastor Scott





Thank you to Nick & Pam Ripley for hosting a Bonfire/Weiner Roast on October 8!!





## CHRISTMAS 2023 POINSETTIA ORDERS

It's time to order poinsettias to beautify our sanctuary on Christmas Eve! Turn this form into the church office or mail it, 200 S Main St, Washington 61571. Please enclose payment with form. Cost is \$25.00 each. Extra forms are available at the church.

Name:

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In Memory of:

---

In Honor of:

---

Number of plants: \_\_\_\_\_

Poinsettias may be picked up after Christmas.

