



The Lutheran Church of St. Mark

*in joy we share Christ's truth*

[www.StMarkGlastonbury.org](http://www.StMarkGlastonbury.org)

The Messenger  
December 2018



# A Message from Pastor Hoffman

In some histories of Advent it is said that Advent, at one time, was a “mini Lent” a period of 40 days of fasting, penance, and preparation ahead of feast of Christmas. This Advent time of preparation was not originally as strict as the one before Lenten as one was only required to fast on Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays. In truth there is no absolute certain history regarding the practices of Advent – neither the what nor the when, What does seem to be certain is that Advent has always been a time of preparation and that for some period of time it was longer than the current four weeks.

I, for one, am saddened that Advent has been shortened. I'm ok that we have moved from a season of penance into a season of waiting with expectation and hope. What I miss is the extra time. In a world that moves from Halloween costumes to Christmas ornaments with 19 channels of different kinds of pure Christmas music 24/7, nonstop Christmas movies, and even Christian establishments that start playing Christmas carols before Thanksgiving, it is really hard to find a space, let alone the time, to quietly prepare and make room with expectant hope for a little child.

Think of the nine months of preparation that goes into preparing for a child here on earth and the building excitement that grows in everyone as they wait for that day, THE day. This year we will have only 23 days to prepare for the birth of the Savior. Twenty-three days is hardly enough, but it is what we have so, let us make the best of it.

We can:

Take 23 seconds several times a day to stop and quiet ourselves and remember what we are really preparing for.

Make a list of 23 people for whom to pray (1 a day or all 23 every day).

Count to 23 before we lose it while waiting in whatever line we find ourselves.

Smile at 23 people each day and say hello or do 23 random acts of kindness (1 each day).

Spend 23 minutes having a face-to-face (no texting or phone) conversation with someone.

Ask God what gift(s) he has given you that he would like you to open up and share with others and then spend 1 minute each day in silence listening for an answer.

Make up you own 23 list.

However you choose to spend this Advent, may you find the time and space you need to prepare for the One who is to come; the One who will come whether we are ready or not.

Blessings,  
Pastor Hoffman

**Our Mission:**  
In joy,  
we share  
Christ's truth.

**Sunday  
Worship**

**9:00 am**



**Our Guiding  
Principles**

1. We trust in God's promises.
2. We base our actions on Christ's love and teachings.
3. We practice spiritual disciplines.
4. We welcome, nurture, and respect each other.
5. We serve our local community, and the world.

## Worship and Music Committee Update - Deb Gresens

*“Here in This Place...new light is streaming, gather us in and hold us forever, gather us in and make us your own; gather us in, all peoples together...”*

Gather us in as we prepare for Advent...a season observed in Christian churches and homes as a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus at Christmas. In many homes, a traditional Advent calendar is used, or a daily Advent devotional is read. Soon, at St. Mark's, our Advent traditions will become apparent. Each week a banner will be hung and a candle on the Advent wreath will be lit. This year we will begin a new tradition, as we decorate the Christmas tree in the Sanctuary with Chrismons made by members participating in the Intergenerational Sunday School.

As we wait and prepare, let's look ahead and participate.

# Advent

- December 2** - First Sunday of Advent Worship at 9am
- December 2** - Lessons and Carols at 4pm at Concordia in Manchester
- December 6** - Advent Evening Prayer Service at 7pm
- December 9** - Second Sunday of Advent Worship at 9am
- December 13** - Advent Evening Prayer Service at 7pm
- December 16** - Third Sunday of Advent Worship and Christmas Pageant at 9am  
followed by Christmas Tree Decorating and Caroling  
*(a volunteer is needed to organize Caroling)*
- December 20** - Advent Evening Prayer Service at 7pm
- December 23** - Fourth Sunday of Advent Worship at 9am



**JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE JESUS THIS CHRISTMAS**

- December 24** - Christmas Eve Service at 7 pm
- December 25** - Christmas Day Service at 9 am
- December 30** - Christmas Lessons and Carols at 9 am

## Christmas Flower Orders are due on December 10th!

Order forms may be found in the Sunday bulletins. If you wish to order a Poinsettia for Christmas In memory of or in celebration of someone, please complete an order form. Place it, with your money (checks made payable to the Lutheran Church of St. Mark) in the offering plate, or mail it to the church office. Last day to order Poinsettias is Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>. The cost will be \$12.00 for a 6.5 inch foiled pot with 6-8 blooms.



The Annual Women's Christmas Party and Yankee Swap will be held on Monday, December 10th at 7 pm hosted by Betsy Crayton, 129 Johnny Cake Lane, Glastonbury. No need to shop for the Yankee Swap! Find an item around your house that you no longer need but think someone else may like. Wrap it up and bring it along. Feel free to bring an appetizer or dessert (optional of course) and a friend!

## Minister of Music - Martin Smith

"Creator of the stars of night, your people's everlasting light ..."\*

Imagine that for 11 centuries Christians have been singing those words at this very time of year, as they and we prepare to celebrate Jesus' coming into the world! Wow! Now that's connection ...

We begin December with our Advent liturgy - one day, one week, one carol at a time as we inch toward the feast of Christmas. And as we prepare at home, one recipe, one ingredient, one tin of cookies at a time, we prepare for the fellowship of family and friends, coworkers and faith-sharers ...

Lessons and Carols of Advent will take us on a scripture-and-song journey of Emmanuel (God with us) with our neighbors from Faith and Concordia Lutheran and Saint Mary's Episcopal - THIS Sunday, Dec 2 at Concordia Lutheran at 4:00 pm. Let's make it special by OUR presence!

Come and make a difference at worship this season by adding your voice to our hymns and carols, litanies and acclamations "Alleluia! Come, Lord Jesus!" And then be ready to sing with the angels "Glory to God in the highest, and peace ... to God's people on earth!" You do, each one of you, make a difference by your presence at worship - your smile, your voice, your greeting ...

"O Christ, redeemer of us all, we pray you hear us when we call."\*

(9th c. Latin hymn)



## Stewardship Committee Update - Dave Obedzinski

### "Have you pledged for 2019 yet?"



Our Stewardship theme for this year has been and will continue to be **Growing our Ministry Together**. We've spent this Fall season educating, informing, hopefully inspiring and encouraging our members to reflect prayerfully on sharing their gifts of time, talent and treasure in a commitment for the New Year. During several weeks each Sunday had a different focus including **One Penny at a time** where we reflected on our annual giving, **One Brick at a time** where we reflected on how we as a congregation care for our building and grounds, **One Song at a time** where we celebrated music in our ministry, **One Hand at a time** where we explored how we volunteer and participate, and **One Story at a Time – Pledge Sunday** – where we brought all our lessons together and asked our members to pledge their time, talent and treasure for the new year at our Saint Mark.

Several weeks have passed since Pledge Sunday and while we are encouraged by the response to date there are still many families who have not provided our church with a pledge for 2019 and the amount pledged is still short of our 2018 totals. Pledges are first and foremost a personal statement and promise of support between you and your church. **Our members fund it's operations, programs, services, music, youth programs and so much more.** It is our responsibility to make a personal commitment to our church and that information is also important information for our church leadership so they can plan our church budget and plan programs with volunteer support for next year.

If you have pledged in the past and have not turned in your pledge card and volunteer card in the offering at the services please consider doing so as soon as possible. If you don't normally make a pledge please consider doing so. If you need one, Pledge cards are available on the usher's table. Thank you and please let me know if you have any questions or if you'd like to provide me with your confidential pledge of time, talent or treasure..



December Lunch Bunch will be on the 20th at 12:30pm, at the Birch Hill Tavern 1320 Manchester Road in Glastonbury. December's contact for reservations is Fran Kreigenhofer.

This year we will be doing a grab bag exchange, so bring along a \$5-\$10 gift (candy, gift card, cookies, anything but not more than \$10) in a bag. See you there!

The Lutheran Church of Saint Mark will post closing or delay notices on two area television stations during inclement weather. Tune in to WFSB channel 3 (CBS) or to WVIT NBC Connecticut channel 30 for closing or delay notices. Each station also posts these notices for us at their respective web sites [www.wfsb.com](http://www.wfsb.com) or [www.nbcconnecticut.com](http://www.nbcconnecticut.com). We will also post this information on our Website at <http://www.stmarkglastonbury.org/>

## Missions Committee Update - Jan Frick

### Many Thanks!!!

It is with deepest heartfelt appreciation to the whole St. Mark community for the outpouring of toys, school supplies, personal items, books, and funds for the Operation Christmas Child packing event on Sunday, November 4th. As a result of your incredible generosity, a total of 39 boxes were packed!! The boxes are now on their way to places yet unknown, and we'll await with much anticipation over the next few weeks to find out where the boxes were sent. Please continue to pray for these boxes and the children who will receive them.



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## Scrip turns shopping into giving – Linda Obedzinski

### What is “scrip” – and what’s an “electronic wallet”?



How do we make money for missions? As a non-profit organization, we are able to buy the gift cards at less than face value from the Great Lakes Scrip Center. The percentage of the card's value that goes to St. Mark ranges from 2.25% for places like Amazon.com and Target to over 15% at specialty retailers like L.L. Bean and Lands End! Browsing the hundreds of retailers at the [www.shopwithscrip.com](http://www.shopwithscrip.com) website allows you to choose restaurants and retailers that give a larger percentage of your dollars spent.

It's easier than ever to sign up to participate! If you're interested, please send your email address to me, Linda Obedzinski, at [ReachLindaO@cox.net](mailto:ReachLindaO@cox.net). I'll have the Great Lakes Scrip Center send you an email link so you can sign up and be affiliated with the St. Mark program. Signing up this way also means you can receive weekly message informing you about promotions. As an example, for a short time, Chili's will be giving 19% of the cards purchased – much more than they usually offer.

If you don't like to keep track of plastic gift cards, many retailers now offer “scrip now” – the ability to purchase an electronic gift card. And the Great Lakes Scrip Center helps you manage these e-cards in an easy-to-use electronic wallet. I find this convenient, plus it's quick to find the remaining balance on the card – something I'm not always sure of when I carry partially spent plastic cards in my purse. As long as my mobile phone is with me, the cards in my electronic wallet are available! Note: To take advantage of scrip now and e-gift cards, you must link your personal checking account to your account with the Great Lakes Scrip Center. It's a simple process, and I'd be happy to tell you more about it.

As we approach the holiday shopping season, please think about making your gift card purchases through St. Mark! Orders are due on the first Sunday of the month, and gift cards are delivered to you at church two Sundays later.



**St. Mark Family Celebrations**

**December Birthdays**

12/4 Stephanie Taff	12/9 Mark Crayton	12/26 Audrey Raabe
12/5 Mathieu Cote	12/10 Kerstan Mahland	12/29 David Ashford
12/6 Craig Hackbarth	12/12 Andrea Clark	12/29 Jessica Thompson
12/8 Donald Orend	12/23 Stephen Stenger	12/29 Katie Thompson

**December Anniversaries**

**12/9** David and Linda Obedzinski

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**St. Mark Congregational Council & Lay Leadership**

**Officers**

President	Karin Reinhardt
Vice President	Mike Davis
Secretary	Carol Weber
Treasurer	Jackie Howson

**Staff Support Committee**

Andrea Clark  
Mark Gresens (chair)  
Ronald Kraatz

**Ministry Committee Chairs**

Education/Youth	Elizabeth Christensen
Fellowship	Linda Hilliard
Financial Secretary	David Taylor
Missions	Jan Frick
Outreach	Greg Reinhardt
Property	Dave Rutz
Stewardship	David Obedzinski
Worship	Deb Gresens
Member-at-large	Carol Weber



The Lutheran Church  
of St. Mark  
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Pastor - Cheryl Hoffman  
Minister of Music - Martin Smith  
Sexton - Scot Butler  
Office Manager: Joal Lentz  
Ministers- The people of St. Mark

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# St. Mark Event Calendar

# DECEMBER

2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 6-7a Goodness Prayer Service 8:30a AA Meeting
2 <b>Advent 1</b> 9a Worship 10:30a Sunday School 4p Lessons and Carols @ Concordia in Manchester 11:30p Goodness Church	3 6:30p AA Meeting 8p AA Meeting	4 1-3:00p ESL	5 7p Committee Meetings	6 12-3p ESL Classes 6:30p Executive Council Meeting 7p Advent Evening Prayer Service 7:30p Choir Rehearsal	7 6:30-9:30p AA meeting	8 6-7a Goodness Prayer Service 8:30a AA Meeting
9 <b>Advent 2</b> 9a Worship 10:30 Sunday School 11:30p Goodness Church	10 6:30p AA Meeting 8p AA Meeting	11 12-3:00p ESL 5:30p Confirmation Class	12 7p Congregational Council Meeting	13 12-3p ESL Classes 7p Advent Evening Prayer Service 7:30p Choir Rehearsal	14 6:30-9:30p AA meeting	15 6-7a Goodness Prayer Service 8:30a AA Meeting
16 <b>Advent 3</b> 9a Worship with Christmas Pageant 10:30 Tree Decorating 11:30p Goodness Church	17 6:30p AA Meeting 8p AA Meeting	18 12-3:00p ESL	19	20 12-3p ESL Classes 12:30p Women's Lunch Bunch 7p Advent Evening Prayer Service 7:30p Choir Rehearsal	21 6:30-9:30p AA meeting	22 6-7a Goodness Prayer Service 8:30a AA Meeting
23 <b>Nativity of our Lord</b> 9a Worship 10:30 Sunday School 11:30p Goodness Church	24 <b>Nativity of our Lord</b> 7p Worship 6:30p AA Meeting 8p AA Meeting	25 <b>Christmas</b> 9a Worship	26	27 7:30p Choir Rehearsal	28 6:30-9:30p AA meeting	29 6-7a Goodness Prayer Service 8:30a AA Meeting
30 9a Worship 11:30p Goodness Church	31 <b>New years Eve</b> 6:30p AA Meeting 7p Diabetes Support Group 8p AA Meeting					

Merry Christmas!





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please contact the Church Office, (860) 633-1188 or email:  
[ChurchOffice@StMarkGlastonbury.org](mailto:ChurchOffice@StMarkGlastonbury.org)



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