



**St. Mark's
Lutheran**
ASHEVILLE, NC

ReMARKS

December 2023

Rituals of Light and Hope

When daylight saving time ends each fall, it's always jarring. I've got no complaints about the extra hour of sleep on a Saturday night, but I'm always shocked by how early it gets dark. It's not like this is a new phenomenon—I've lived through the fall clock change a few dozen times before. But I'm never ready for the day when I get home from work and it's already getting dark. In fact, we're almost a month beyond the time change, and I'm still not acclimated. And how could I be? Each day is shorter than the one before. Gone are the after dinner walks, outside chores, and playtime with the kids. It's just too dark.

But we know this season of shortening days will not last. In just a few weeks, the trends will reverse and the days will start getting longer and longer. Light and life will make a comeback in our neighborhoods and in our world. And in the meantime, the season of Advent (at least in the Northern Hemisphere) synchs perfectly with our experience.

In Advent we wait for what is coming. We hope in what is not here yet, but what we know is on the way: Jesus. Jesus is coming to bring in the kingdom of God. And that means that the experience we have of the world right now—the brokenness, suffering, and death—they will not last. Because the incarnate God has defeated them and judges them not worthy of the kingdom. This is the source of our hope and our joy in this season, that Jesus will restore all creation.



If you're like me and need that hope to have a prominent place in your life, put some intentionality behind your Advent practices this year. Make daily Advent devotions (available in the commons) part of your ritual. As you do, light your Advent wreath at home (ask Deacon Katie if you need one). Make plans to worship with the St. Mark's community on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. We're grateful to once again join with our ecumenical partners at St. Eugene Catholic, St. Paul's Methodist, and St. Mary's Episcopal for those Wednesday night services—a beacon of cooperation and relationship in our increasingly disconnected world. Will you join us in these rituals of light and hope in these days where the darkness grows long?

Jesus, the light and life of all people is coming.

The light shines in the darkness. And the darkness has not overcome it.

Thanks be to God.

Journeying with you,
Pastor Matt

Faith Formation

Congregational Meeting

December 3rd @ 9:45am

During the Faith Formation hour on Sunday, December 3rd we will hold our 2024 Annual Meeting in the Sanctuary. This meeting will meet in person and via Zoom. Please mark your calendars!

- Elections for Council
- Elections for Endowment Board Elections
- 2024 Budget Review



Journey through the New Testament with Dr. Mary Shore

December 10th & 17th @ 9:45 in the Fellowship Hall



Ever had hard questions about the Bible? Curious about Paul's letters, or for whom the Gospel of Luke was written? Our guest faith formation teacher, Rev. Dr. Mary Shore, taught New Testament at Luther Seminary for years, and was most recently the Dean and Rector of Lutheran Southern Seminary. She will join us for 2 more weeks to continue her introduction to the books of the New Testament and discuss how they all fit together. You won't want to miss hearing from a true New Testament scholar!

St. Mark's Kids

Christmas Pageant

Performance Sunday, Dec. 17th @ 11am

Join the children of St. Mark's on Sunday, December 17 during the 11am service as they share the Good News of Jesus, our Emmanuel. Children will rehearse for the pageant during Sunday School on December 3 and 10, as well as Saturday, December 16 at 10:00am.

Parents' Night Out

Saturday, Dec. 9th from 4pm-7:30

Children age 4-5th grade are invited to come spend a fun evening at church full of Christmas themed games, crafts, dinner, and a movie. Please email Deacon Katie to sign up, or let us know on Sign-up Central bulletin board.

Donations will be accepted to support the Youth Group.

Advent Worship and Christmas Resources

Advent Devotionals, Wreaths, and Children's Bags

Be sure to check out the table in the Commons full of Advent resources! Devotional booklets, wreaths and candles, at home wreath lighting liturgy, and children's Advent bags will be available through December 10.

Ecumenical Church Mid Week Advent Services

This year, we will be gathering with our Ecumenical Church Partners for our Wednesday Advent Worship, each of them leading a mid-week Advent worship service focused on a different Saint. We will have a time of fellowship before worship where we will share a meal of soup together, beginning at 6pm. Worship, in person, will follow beginning at 7pm.

THE SAINTS OF ADVENT



Ecumenical Midweek Advent Worship
6:00pm - Soup and Sandwiches
7:00pm - Worship

November 29- St. Eugene Catholic Church
December 6 -St. Paul's United Methodist Church
December 13 - St. Mary's Episcopal Church
December 20 - St. Mark's Lutheran Church

If you are able to bring soup, sandwiches, or dessert on 12/20 when St. Mark's host, please sign up on the bulletin board or contact the church office.

Christmas Eve Worship Services 2024

There will be four opportunities to worship on 12/24

- **11:00am Morning Prayer Service**
Led by Rev. James Aydelotte and Judy McKay.
Communion will not be served during this service.
- **4:00pm Family Service**
This service is geared towards families & children and will include communion and candlelight.
- **7:00pm and 10:00 pm Festival Services**
These will be our traditional Festival Services.
Both of these services will include communion and candlelight. Music will begin 30 minutes prior to the 7pm & 10pm services.

Christmas Day Worship

Monday, Dec. 25th @ 10:00am

Join us as we celebrate the birth of our Savior on Christmas Day, Monday, December 25 at 10:00am. Worship will be followed by cinnamon buns and coffee in the fellowship hall.

The St. Mark's office will be closed 12/25-1/1 as all staff will be on vacation.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year



May you be blessed this Christmas Season and end the year on a cheerful note, making way for a fresh, bright, and healthy New Year.

Pastor Matt, Deacon Katie, Pastor Linda, Cantor David, Steve, and Danielle

GIVING TREE

Saint Mark's Tree of Gifts is waiting for you in the Commons. There are gift tags for kids of the Claxton School and Christine Avery School, tags for "Our Voice", and tags for the ELCA farm animals. Please read carefully the instructions on the tags for the children's gifts, especially regarding the due date.



**ELCA
GOOD
GIFTS**
CATALOG



If you wish to purchase an ELCA animal, please write your check out to Saint Marks, and put which animal you want on the designation line of the check. Your check can be placed in the offering plate. You may keep the animal tags!

Stewardship

Financial Report

Below you will find October's financial report for both the Operating Fund and the Building Fund. Thank you for your continued contributions.

Financial Report

Operating Fund

subject to change from treasurer's report

Income budgeted

<u>October</u>	<u>YTD</u>
\$41,530	\$415,303

Gifts received

<u>October</u>	<u>YTD</u>
\$39,047	\$438,724

Expenditures

<u>October</u>	<u>YTD</u>
\$40,774	\$423,644

Surplus/(Deficit)

<u>October</u>	<u>YTD</u>
\$(1,727)	\$15,080

Financial Report

Building Fund

subject to change from treasurer's report

Income budgeted

<u>October</u>	<u>YTD</u>
\$4,207	\$37,863

Gifts received against Pledges

<u>October</u>	<u>YTD</u>
\$5,650	\$43,957

Loan Payments

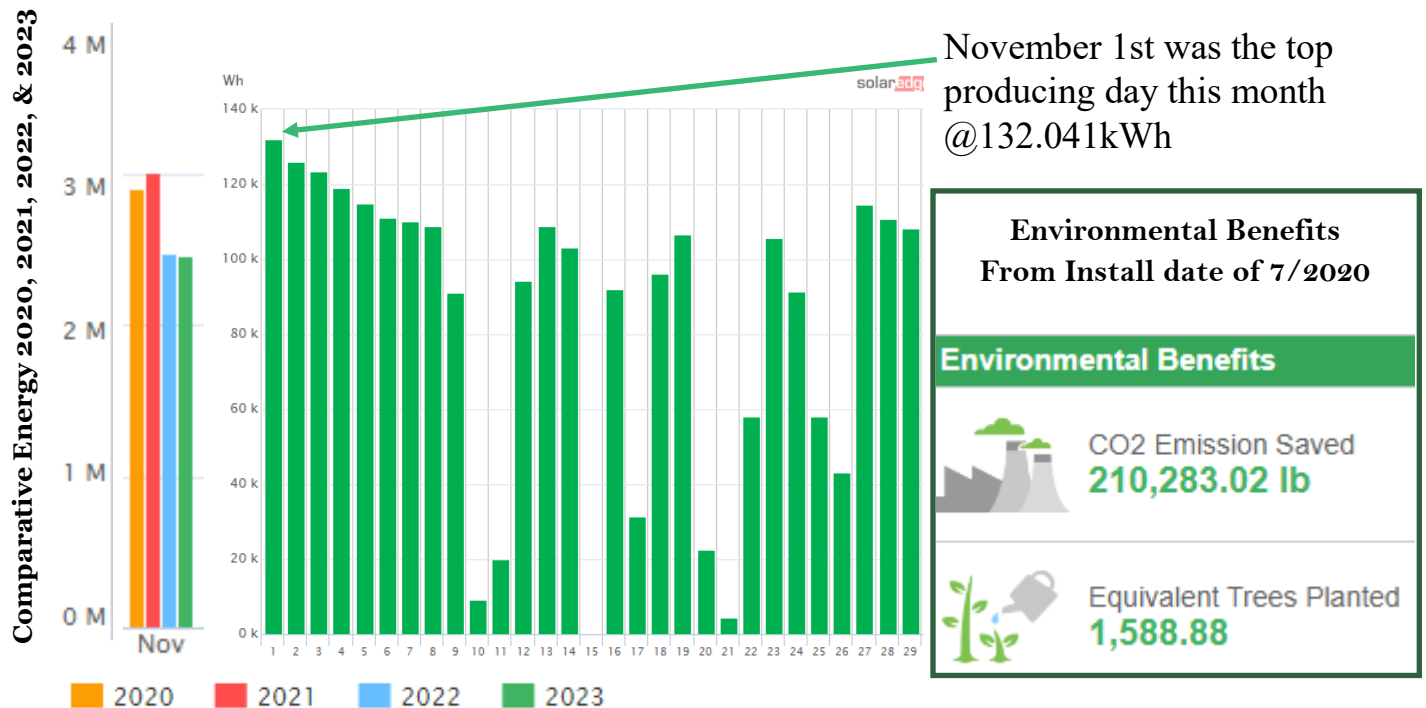
<u>October</u>	<u>YTD</u>
\$5,351	\$53,011

Surplus/(Deficit)

<u>October</u>	<u>YTD</u>
\$299	\$(9,054)

Caring for God's Creation

November Solar Report (as of 11.29.23)



December Worship Assistant Schedule

8:30am Worship Schedule

8:30 AM	Greeter 1	Greeter 2	Usher 1	Usher 2	Altar Guild	Acolyte	Assisting Minister	Reader	Communion Assistant	Live Steam Operator
December 3	Dan Dudde	Mary Dudde	Ken Lane	Deborah Lane	Ken Clark	Sawyer Miller	Amy Zellers	Diane Hughes	Diane Hughes	Chris Miller
December 10	Henry Ulrichs	Barbara Ulrichs	Mike Bradley	Linda Kinsinger	Sharon Herrmann	Marcus Smith	Carolyn Bradley	Connie Chaplin	Nancy Dodenhoff	George Hahn
December 17	Linda Kinsinger	Amy Zellers	Walter Hitch	Ken Clark	Debbie Layne	Julia Volk	Mary Brady	Liza Volk	Anne Sites	Debbie Layne
December 24	Christmas Eve Worship Assistant Schedule									
December 31	JD Slater	Catalina Slater	Tom Stewart	Brenda Stewart	Amy Zellers	Isa Slater	Katie Rivers	Dan Dudde	Linda Kinsinger	TBD

11am Worship Schedule

11:00 AM	Greeter 1	Greeter 2	Usher 1	Usher 2	Altar Guild	Acolyte	Crucifer	Assisting Minister	Reader	Communion Assistant
December 3	Alice Silver	Deanna Jordan	Scott Baumann	Dave Epley	Bonnie Morris	Cindy Lauster	Erick Smith	Randy Warren	Eileen Cram	Vickie Hauser
December 10	Eric Van Tassel	Susan Van Tassel	Dave Schuetze	Ali Schuetze	Bonnie Richards	Eileen Cram	Christian Wikoff	Natalie Haynes	Susan Denne	Bonnie Morris
December 17	Alice Silver	Cindy Lauster	Tom Biltz	Beth Biltz	Susan Van Tassel	Christian Wikoff	Erick Smith	Dave Epley	Natalie Haynes	Susan Van Tassel
December 24	Christmas Eve Worship Assistant Schedule									
December 31	Evelyn Wikoff	Anne Blackwell	Alice Silver	Scott Baumann	Donna Turnbaugh	Katie Rivers	Christian Wikoff	Beth Korb	Randy Warren	Eileen Cram

Updated Church Office Hours

Monday-Friday 8:30am-2:30pm

The current office hours at St. Mark's are Monday-Thursday 8:30am-4:30pm and Fridays 8:30am-12:30pm. Moving forward, the church office hours will be Monday-Friday 8:30-2:30pm. During this time, you will be able to reach Danielle or access the building using the call button. Outside of these hours, please call before you visit Pastor Matt, Deacon Katie, Cantor David, or Steve as they may or may not be in the building based off of their schedules.

NEW OFFICE HOURS

8:30AM-2:30PM

Monday-Friday

The St. Mark's office will be closed 12/25-1/1 as all staff will be on vacation.

Sunday Calendar

December 3rd - The 1st Sunday of Advent

Scripture Readings:

Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

8:30am.....Worship
9:45am.....Congregational Meeting
11:00am.....Worship

December 10th - The 2nd Sunday of Advent

Scripture Readings:

Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a, Mark 1:1-8

8:30am.....Worship
9:45am.....Faith Formation
11:00am.....Worship

December 17th - The 3rd Sunday of Advent

Scripture Readings:

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28

8:30am.....Worship
9:45am.....Faith Formation
11:00am.....Worship & Christmas Pageant

December 24th - Christmas Eve

Scripture Readings:

Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14

11:00am.....Worship
4:00pm.....Family Service
6:30pm.....Prelude Music
7:00pm.....Festival Service
9:30pm.....Prelude Music
10:00pm.....Festival Service

December 31st - The 1st Sunday of Christmas

Scripture Readings:

Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Psalm 148
Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40

8:30am.....Worship
9:45am.....Faith Formation
11:00am.....Worship

Additional Calendar Dates

Congregational Meeting.....12/3
Midweek Advent Services12/6, 12/13, 12/20
Dinner @ 6pm, Worship @ 7pm (St. Mark's is hosting on 12/20)
Parents' Night Out.....12/9
Christmas Pageant.....12/17
Christmas Day Worship.....12/25

Birthdays

Dec 1 Joan Galvin
Dec 3 Brittany Kittel
Dec 4 Sawyer Miller
Dec 6 Brett Davis
Dec 7 David Van Tassel
Dec 8 Bear Davis
Dec 9 Susan Morgan
Dec 10 Sierra Kindley,
George Kroncke, Xayvria Noel
Dec 11 Elaine Pope
Dec 14 Becky Knight
Dec 15 Riley Kelling, Carol Mott
Dec 17 Ray Polasky
Dec 20 Gage Hampton
Dec 22 Rob Hubler, Raven Robinson
Dec 23 McKenna Hunkele
Dec 24 Chris Brown, Paula Whitener,
Natalia Gohdes, Karl Sturm
Dec 25 Susan Van Tassel
Dec 26 Scott Hendrix
Dec 28 Sarah Dawson
Dec 29 Bruce Atkins
Dec 31 Kari Warren

Anniversaries

Dec 6 Mark & Gloria Fritch
Dec 16 Albert & Susan Morgan
Dec 30 Bill Chalmers & Mary Brady

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

*10 N. Liberty Street
Asheville, NC 28801*



Our Vision:

Making disciples by loving Christ, growing in faith, serving all people

Our Mission:

Transforming lives through God's grace as an inclusive, intergenerational congregation through Worship, Outreach, Learning and Fellowship

Staff

Pastor:

Reverend Matthew Smith

Director of Discipleship & Faith Formation:

Deacon Katie Rivers

Cantor:

David Anderson

Parish Administrator:

Danielle Barker

Pastor of Caring Ministries:

Reverend Linda McHenry

Facilities Manager:

Steve Henry

Contact Information

Physical and Mailing Address:

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admin@stmarkslutheran.net

Website:

www.stmarkslutheran.net

Office Hours:

Monday—Friday 8:30am-2:30pm