



The Lookout

December 2021-January 2022

Curiosity inside the Cradle

It has been years since Becky and I remembered the curiosity and anticipation of new birth. The curiosity of the unknown is hard to express in the anticipation of the new life that a family brings into the world when a child is born. Yet, I vividly remember with great wonder and curiosity what my children might become, how they might be in the world. My children are now 11, 9, and 6. They have, in some ways, lived into who we thought and dreamt them to be. In other ways, they have not. Such is the life of a loving parent.

In the season of advent, we take a literal pregnant pause, anticipating the birth of the Christ Child. In the midst of that anticipation, we remain curious about the cradle and this child. What will this messiah become? Will this child overthrow the oppressive governments as anticipated by some? Will this child live into the prophecies about the messiah? Will this child bring in the reign of God and make all things new? Will this child save us?

The innocence of Christ is something to marvel in this Advent and Christmas season. We not only anticipate Christ's birth but we have high hopes for who he will become. The prophet Isaiah articulated this hoped for expectation in this way:

And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His government and its peace will never end. He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David for all eternity. The passionate commitment of the Lord of Heaven's Armies will make this happen! (Isaiah 9:6-7)

The curiosity of the cradle restores some of this hope for me as I continue to experience what this Christ child means to us at the end of the year in 2021. I bring, not just my curiosity about Christ's cradle, but I bring to it the hope, the dreams, the expectations, the anticipation, the longing, and the need for a savior. As the story unfolds for us from prophecy to miracle birth, curiosity becomes reality. Christ himself will come to fulfill what God intended. The fulfillment of his call is culminated in the upcoming liturgical seasons of Christmas, Epiphany, Lent and Easter. It culminates for us in the season of Pentecost.

The season of Advent invites us to remain curious about Christ's cradle and to bring with us to worship the the hope, the dreams, the expectations, the anticipation, the longing, and the need for a savior.

Remaining Curious,
~ Pastor Andy



St. Mark's Church

424 Hyde Park Avenue
Waukesha, WI 53188
262-547-8213

Worship Services

Live on Facebook
Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

Office Hours

Monday and Thursday:
Please make an appointment
with Pastor Andy
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FOOD Pantry
OF WAUKESHA COUNTY

December and January

Our baskets would look wonderful if they were filled with **BABY FOOD!** With our thoughts on Baby Jesus let's donate to the babies of our area - the Food Pantry and Salvation Army would really appreciate the gifts. Also let's not forget other foods that are needed - any and all donations are welcome. The blue bin at the front door of St. Mark's is ready to receive all items.

Also, our **BLESSING BOX** at our sidewalk could use food. Please **NO CANNED ITEMS** until warmer weather - the canned items can freeze.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY.



"Fear not, for I am with you." Matthew 28

The Cup of Comfort Ministry welcomes **YOU** to join us as we gather to raise our spirits and support each other as we share what is on our hearts.

Through music, scripture, sharing, prayer and listening, we offer God's gifts of balm for your heart and peace for your mind.

CUP OF COMFORT WILL NOT BE MEETING IN DECEMBER

For those who will be attending the Blue Christmas we will gather briefly in the lounge for Christmas prayers after the service.

OUR NEXT GATHERING IS:

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 2022

We meet in the upstairs lounge at 10:00 am

If you have any questions or concerns about attending one of our gatherings, please call me, I would be happy to share with you.

Anne Link 414-379-4619

ALL ARE WELCOME

Ruth Circle

Ruth circle will meet Wednesday, December 15th at Mavis McGrath's house for a potluck luncheon. If you can come, please call Mavis and sign up for something to bring. We will be collecting diapers to share with organizations in Waukesha. Mary Ann Sindelar and Karen Handford will be at St. Mark's lower level to receive diapers from anybody willing to help with our collection. They are looking for larger sizes. We will be there from 3:00-4:00. If you need us to pick yours up, give us a call and we will arrange that.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, January 19th in Fellowship hall, 1:00 pm at church. Anna Miller is our hostess. Call and let her know if you are coming.

We continue to follow the guidelines of the church at the time. Hope to see you at the Circle. Call Karen Handford at 262-565-3770 or Mavis McGrath at 262-968-3160 if you have any questions or concerns.

Diaper Drive Up on December 15th

Ruth Circle is inviting diaper donations (sizes newborn or size 4, 5, or 6) for Hebron House, Women's Center, or Baby Blessings in Oconomowoc which serves southeast Wisconsin. The Diaper Drive Up will be held Wednesday, December 15th at 3:00-4:00 pm at the lower entrance of St. Mark's. For more information, contact Karen Handford or Mavis McGrath.



Let's share our blessings with others!

Welcome back into church No Reservations Needed for Sunday In-Person Worship

You are invited to worship in-person at St Mark's and online through Facebook Live on Sundays at 9:30 am. **No reservations are necessary.** The lower entry is open and available with elevator access. We have a Welcome Team there to help. Communion cups, Bulletins and Prayer Request cards are provided. We hope this makes it easier for you to enter, especially for those who park in the handicapped spots.

Please wear a mask and practice social distancing in the church building. Thank you for your patience and understanding. God is with us and working in our midst during this pandemic. We turn to him asking to give us compassion, grace, and faith to continue guiding us.

Get THE LOOKOUT via Email Today!

The Lookout is now a **BIMONTHLY (every other month) Newsletter.**

You can receive the newsletter by email or pick up a black/white version at the welcome desk in church or in the Blessings/Little Library Boxes outside the church. If you would like to be added to the email list, please send your name and email address to: stmarkslookout@gmail.com. Thank you! If you have questions, contact Rene Bjerke at the above email address.



Be a Christmas Angel

Once again, we are helping children of **Waukesha County** who might not otherwise have the opportunity to experience the joy of the holidays. Please bring mittens, scarves, hats, toys, books, or games, and add them to our red barrels in the church lobby. Maybe your child can pick out something special for someone who is their age. Thank you for caring and sharing. These gifts will be delivered to the **Christmas Clearing Council** of Waukesha County. Go to the link for more information: <https://www.christmasclearingcouncil.org>

Funerals and Memorials

God's Comfort and Peace for these families:

Valery Harper died on September 24, 2021. Funeral was held on October 1, 2021.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Our prayer shawl ministry had the pleasure of making fleece prayer shawls for two of our charities. They were made of fleece with fringe that was tied with knots of love. Twenty-six shawls were made for Project North Pole. The "elves" do a wonderful Christmas party for patients at **Children's Hospital** who have cancer and can come out for one afternoon to celebrate Christmas with their parents and siblings. Twenty-six shawls were made for **Healing Hearts** which is an organization that helps children ages 2-18 deal with the loss of a parent, divorce, etc. Thank you to our ladies who met and tied these knots with love. A great gift of going out!

If there are any questions, please contact Mary Jo Christensen at 414-405-4075 mjchristensen1958@wi.rr.com.



Sanctuary Flowers

There is not a Flower Sign up Chart in the narthex at this time. Please contact Barb Helling (414-378-8435) if you would like to provide flowers during 2022. It is a beautiful way to brighten up our Sanctuary.



Thanksgiving Special Offering for Local Charities

Thank you for all your special contributions to the following organizations. Please watch announcements for our totals given to these organizations: **Stone Soup Project** (thestonesoupproject.org) and **Blessings in a Backpack** (<https://waukesha.blessingsinabackpack.org>). We are helping to feed the hungry through your generosity.

Count Your
Blessings

SENIOR + CONNECTION

St. Mark's Senior Connection

Hello Again!!!

It's been a long, long time
Plans are in the making for Senior Connection to begin gathering again.

February 22, 2022 is the date!!!!

Please mark your calendars and watch the announcements for details
It will be so much fun to see your smiling faces again!!!!

Midweek Advent Services

Prepare your heart for Christmas! The Midweek Advent Services will be held on Wednesdays, December 1-22, at 6:30 pm **In-Person AND on Facebook Live**. We'll use Holden Evening Prayer Service.



Blue Christmas Service

A quiet, reflective service that creates space to acknowledge our losses and sadness in the midst of this joyous season and to allow God's presence and comfort to prepare us for Christmas. Our Blue Christmas Service will be held In-Person and on Facebook Live on Tuesday, December 7th at 11:00 am. The recorded service will be available online after December 7th. For those who are not present in-person at the service, a Drive-Up Blessing will be held in the church parking lot at Noon-12:30 pm on December 7th. Pastor and Marcia will be available to offer a blessing and prayer. Members of the Care Team will offer a gift and prayer shawls.



Does God Want all of Your giving and Generosity to be anonymous

Here are seven reasons why giving totally in secret and never talking about the reasons for your generosity is not what God wants all the time.

1. Jesus instructed us to pray in secret yet he never prohibited public prayer (in church on Sunday, in small groups and with friends and family). We should always pray and give with the proper attitude and purpose.
2. Jesus said, "Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.
3. Jesus publicly highlighted generous people. (The women who gave her last two coins, the woman who anointed him with expensive oil).
4. The Bible names generous people including: Zacchaeus, Paul's patron Phoebe, Barnabas, and the Macedonian and Philippians churches.
5. The Bible records specific amounts of money given including: Nehemiah and David's record for the specific amounts needed to build the temple.
6. We need more models of generous believers/givers. We need more examples of biblical generosity modeled for us. We are asked to let our generous light shine.
7. The next generation needs encouragement. The next generation of believers will need our stories of faithfulness and sacrifice to discover their gift and grow it.

From God's perspective, love is the most important factor in determining when to give in secret and when to share your giving stories.

Remember the Blessing Box



courtyard entrance to help others. **Thank you!**

Winter has arrived! It's time for us to place gloves, hats, scarves, and school supplies in the box. **Please do not put canned foods in the box during the winter. Food products should be only items that can handle the changing temperatures.**

Please place item donations directly into the Blessings Box located near the sidewalk at the



New Devotional Booklets Available

Looking for a way to connect with God daily? Try [the Word in Season](#) devotional booklets. They are a **FREE** quarterly resource that provides a brief Scripture reading, message, and prayer for each day. Their small size makes it easy to place in a pocket or purse. They are available at the entry stations and in the Blessings Box and Little Library at the church.

From Deacon Marcia Marquardt

"Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means 'God is with us.'" Matthew 1:23

Dear St. Mark's Family and Friends,

The hustle and bustle of the Holiday season can be distracting for me. Even the activities that I enjoy within the season can be stressful if I'm busy and behind schedule. How about you? What do you look forward to as you approach this Advent and Christmas? How will we approach the activities, responsibilities, and opportunities packed within this season?

Let's take Jesus with us wherever we go and whatever we do. Instead of compartmentalizing our relationship with Jesus to a special time or place, let's include him in every opportunity before us. Can you imagine taking Jesus with you as you shop for presents or prepare a meal? Can you imagine Jesus riding with you as you travel to gatherings and events? Wouldn't the reminder of Jesus' help and presence even in the midst of the most mundane or the most special activity enable us to be blessed and to be a blessing? Wouldn't the reliance on Jesus through each step of the season help us experience the deepest, most meaningful parts of this season?

Jesus, this is your birthday! Come with us through each step of our preparations and celebrations so that we get to know you more through it all. Amen.

In His Service,
Marcia



Women's Retreat

This year's retreat was held on October 29th-31st. What a wonderful way to learn where to find true joy and contentment.



Conversations about Weight Loss

Monday, December 6th
Monday, January 3rd
at 3:30-5:00 pm

Ready for a conversation to encourage you in your journey toward weight loss and healthy living?

The Weight Loss Conversation is reading a book that shapes our thinking and strengthens our faith in the midst of weight loss challenges.

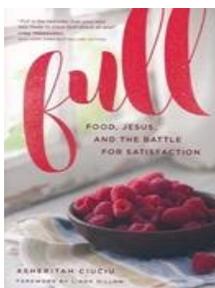
There is no homework. We read the book together in the Conversation. **Copies of the book are available FREE of charge (while supplies last).** You may have a copy even if you don't want to or can't participate in the monthly Weight Loss Conversation.

Marcia Marquardt will lead the conversation.

Zoom: 817 7030 6574

Contact Marcia for the passcode.

Mark your calendar for more Conversations on February 7th and March 7th



Bible Study Wednesdays on Zoom Thursdays on Zoom AND In-Person

Renew your faith, learn more about the Bible, and prepare for worship on Sunday! Come to Bible Study!

Wednesdays at 3:45-5:15 pm on Zoom only
Thursdays at 10:00-11:30 am on Zoom **AND**
In-Person in the fellowship hall

**We'll meet on December 1st & 2nd,
8th & 9th, and 15th & 16th
all Wednesdays and Thursdays
in January.**

Zoom meeting ID number:

817 7030 6574

Contact Marcia for the passcode.



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St. Mark's Quilters

The quilters have been busy in October and November since we have resumed quilting every Monday. Our stock of quilting material was shrinking, and we could see the bottom of our buckets when a miraculous donation of material appeared. Many thanks to Marlene Stanley and Linda Stark for organizing this substantial donation of cotton fabric. Thanks also to St. Mark's members and other members of our group that have purchased material for backing and matching patterns.



Last month a dozen quilts were donated to the Afghan refugees through the Milwaukee office of Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. Quilts also went out to the Homeless Veterans Initiative and the Waukesha Christmas Clearing Council. Donations were made to the Community Smiles Dental fundraiser, the Blessings in a Backpack Dinner and Auction and the Hope Center Dinner and Auction. Two quilts were donated to the Zonta Club of Milwaukee Fashion Show and Fundraiser. This global organization supports leadership and empowerment programs for women and girls.

There will be no quilting on Monday, December 20th and 27th. We will resume our weekly schedule on January 3, 2022. Join us for an hour or for the morning. We meet Mondays 8:30-noon. We would be happy to teach you how to help us in our mission to provide warmth and comfort to members of our community and the world.

We have quilts available to give away during the holidays. If a need is found anywhere in the community, please let us know. Any questions, call Vickie at 262-549-4825 or (cell) 414-333-4331 and be sure to leave a message.

Cathy Hernandez and Vickie Friedeck



Another year of catechesis, instruction for faith, or widely known as confirmation is starting again. This faith formation is open to all ages but it is intended for families of ages 12-15. An informational meeting is scheduled for January 9th after worship to meet with pastor and engage in an upcoming schedule for faith formation field trips, regular learning times, and opportunities to meet your fellow travelers in this journey.



Baptism

We welcomed this child into the body of Christ.

Sunday, October 3rd

William Bennett Manvilla, child of Tristan and Jennifer Manvilla, grandchild of Dave and Joan Hojnacki



Sunday School

Sunday School meets during worship on the first and third Sundays downstairs.

Contact Suzanne Lorenz at sfl@cmhlaw.com or 262-510-8849 with any questions or concerns.



Be A BLESSING during The Season of Giving

The year 2021 is quickly coming to an end. The season of giving is upon us. If you are among those who have been blessed and are able to be a blessing to those less fortunate, the Stewardship Committee has some suggestions for your end of year giving.

Hope Center of Waukesha - www.hopecenterwi.org

The Hope Center's vision is to provide hope and resources to help people survive. They provide clothing, minor medical services, a Day Center, a meal plan, Project Move and also help the unemployed apply for jobs.

Healing Hearts of Waukesha - www.healingheartsofwaukeshaco.org

Healing Hearts provide for local peer groups to welcome children, youth, and families who grieve loss due to death, divorce, addiction, incarceration, deportation, or military deployment.

The Women's Center - www.twcwaukesha.org

The Women's Center provides safety, shelter and support to empower all impacted by domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse and trafficking.

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) - www.namisoutheastwi.org

Dedicated to serving individuals, families, and loved ones affected by mental health conditions across Milwaukee, Waukesha and Jefferson counties,

White Stone Warriors - www.whitestonewarriors.com

White Stone Warriors focus on helping the homeless, those living on the streets by serving hot meals and providing necessary items to those in need.

The Food Pantry of Waukesha County - www.waukeshafoodpantry.org

Provides food, hope and dignity to county residents in need.

Lutheran Social Service of WI - www.lsswis.org

LSS provides many services to empower individuals, families, and communities to find healing through courage and a path to sharing their God-given gifts to the world.

Lutheran Disaster Response-Evangelical Lutheran Church in America -

www.elca.org/Lutheran-Disaster-Response

Their vision is God's Work. Our Hands. They bring God's hope, healing and renewal to people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the US and around the world.

Check out these organizations serving our community and others. Pray about how you may bless others with your time or donation of dollars. You can give online within the web site for each organization by clicking on "Donate" or "Give". Thank you for considering a year end gift to BLESS others.





Office Volunteers Needed

Could you offer one or two hours on Mondays or Tuesdays to help in the church office? Contact Pastor Andy for more information.

Weekly Email Blast

Stay current with Happenings at St Mark's by receiving the weekly email blast. Contact Marcia Marquardt (marcia1@wi.rr.com) to get signed up.



Open office hours:

Pastor Andy will host open office hours on Wednesdays 10:00-11:30 am at **Mountain Top Coffee**. Please drop by to say hello, ask any pressing questions, have a cup of coffee or simply check in.

Reach Out and Say Hello

We need care and concern in a time of social distancing. Pick up the phone and call someone to say hello. Think about the people who normally sit in the pews around you and give them a call. Think about those who live alone or in assisted living and give them a call. Contact Pastor or Marcia if you need a phone number.



PRAYER CHAIN

Do you have a Prayer Chain request? Others will pray for you! Contact the office for details at: **welcome2stmarks@gmail.com** or by phone at **262-547-8213**.

New Zoom Meeting Numbers

We will be using the church's Zoom account for online meetings and small group gatherings in the future. Here are the numbers:

Faith Formation Gatherings, including Bible Study

Zoom: 817 7030 6574 Pass: 945456

Church Meetings

Zoom: 823 2326 4353 Pass: 830997



"Blessed to be a Blessing" Videos

How has God blessed you? For what or whom do you extend the blessing? We are "Blessed to be a Blessing." Send a short video (up to 1 minute) to Pastor Andy, **GOpastorGO@gmail.com**. Keep it simple! He will put together the videos for us to celebrate God's work in and through us.



Weekly Communion Offered

Holy Communion will be offered every Sunday for those who are worshipping in-person and for those worshipping at home through Facebook Live. Those at home may use their own elements of bread/cracker and fruit of the vine.



Online Giving Available!

Are you interested in the convenience of online giving for your church contributions? It's easier than ever to begin! Contributions can be taken directly from your bank account or credit card on an ongoing or individual basis. Please contact the office for details at: **welcome2stmarks@gmail.com** or by phone at **262-547-8213**.

