



St. Mark Lutheran Church
3307 State Street
Eau Claire, WI 54701



February 2019

I was glad when they said to me:
“Let us go to the house
of the Lord.” – Ps 122:1

February worship opportunities ...

Sundays: 8:00 & 10:30 am
Mondays: 6:30 pm

Contact Us

Church PH: 715-834-2595

- Pastor Prah: 715-878-4297, herbprahl@gmail.com
- Pastor Naumann: 715-214-7880, joel@stmark-wels.org
- Secretary Barb Krass: barb@stmark-wels.org

School PH: 715-834-5782 | FAX: 715-834-7668

- Principal Micheel: 715-835-6015 peter@smwels.org
- Mr. Gustafson: 715-600-6432, phil@smwels.org
- Mr. Sponholz: 715-835-0213, scott@smwels.org
- Mrs. Seipel: 651-210-5326, marie@smwels.org
- Mrs. Pitt: 715-577-6418, sharon@smwels.org
- Mrs. Prah: 715-878-4297, char@smwels.org
- Mrs. Riebe: 715-878-9413, jenny@smwels.org
- Mrs. Anason: 715-832-5469, connie@smwels.org
- Mrs. Knickelbein: 715-834-0254, kristin@smwels.org

ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

February 2019



This Month AT A GLANCE

1 – PTP Family Night
Shaker Center

4- Call Meeting

5 – Morning Moms
Boards meet

10 & 11 Bring Sealed
Pledges

10 – Young Couples
Event

12 - Pastors Conf -
Here
- Church Council

13 – Power Hour

14-15 No School
Teacher’s Conf.

15 – Blood Drive

19 – Morning Moms

21 – PreK/K Roundup

27 – Power Hour

28 - PTP

BELIEVE THE GOSPEL; THEN LIVE THE LAW

**Jesus went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ...
Repent and believe the good news! - Mk 1**

There’s news, and then there’s good news. Ever since the Fall into sin in the Garden of Eden, our disobedient and sin-corrupted souls have yearned for good news. And somewhere in our sin-tainted thinking the human race has developed the notion that if you obey as many of God’s laws as you can, that’s good enough to merit his favor and a place in his heaven. That is, however, “not-good-enough” news.

The good news Jesus proclaims is truly good news! His good news is that eternal life is a gift from God that he earned for us through his holy life and sacrifice into death. Jesus’ good news simply calls us to trust him – to believe him when he declares himself to be our Savior. Heaven is for the believing, not through behaving. And we don’t want to confuse the two.

Allow me to quote from a recent book that I’m reading. Entitled “*Christless Christianity: the Alternative Gospel of the American Church*” the author writes ...

The question for us all is whether we believe the church is the place where the gospel is regularly proclaimed and ratified to Christians as well as non-Christians. Like many Emergent Church leaders, Kimball invokes a famous line from Francis of Assisi that I also heard growing up in conservative evangelicalism: “Preach the gospel at all times. If necessary, use words.” Kimball goes on to say, “Our lives will preach better than anything we can say.” ... If this is so, then this is just more bad news, not only because of the statistics we have already seen, which evidence no real difference between Christians and non-Christians, but because despite my best intentions, I am not an exemplary creature. The best examples and instructions – even the best doctrines – will not relieve me of the battle with indwelling sin until I draw my last breath. Find me on my best day – especially if you have access to my hidden motives, thoughts and attitudes – and I will always provide fodder for the hypocrisy charge and will let down those who would become Christians because they think I and my fellow Christians are the gospel. I am a Christian not because I think that I can walk in Jesus’ footsteps but because he is the only one who can carry me. I am not the gospel; Jesus Christ alone is the gospel. His story saves me, not only by bringing me justification but by baptizing me into his resurrection life. ... That my life is not the gospel is good news both for me and my neighbors. Because Christ is the Good News, Christians as well as non-Christians can be saved after all. (pg 117-118)

As Lutheran Christians we have always put a heavy emphasis on teaching the good news of Christ. Not only does the gospel create a saving link with Christ and his merits, but it also empowers us to freely live his commands to his glory. God bless your hearing of the good news of Christ!

- Pastor Prah

Divine Call News

With the summertime retirements of Pastor and Char Prah drawing closer, we are seeking their replacements as the LORD guides us through the call process. On Monday, January 7, we extended a call to Pastor Timothy Gerbing, to come to us as our associate pastor. He is currently one of four pastors at Christ, Pewaukee, with his emphasis in discipleship ministry. He is 55 years old, married with four children. He writes ...

Dear pastors and members of St Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church,

I thank your congregation for the opportunity to deliberate on the call you extended to me to serve as your associate pastor. There is no doubt in my mind as to the great importance of your gospel efforts in Eau Claire and its surrounding communities.

After much discussion and prayer, I have been led to decline the call to serve as your pastor, and to remain as discipleship pastor here at Christ, Pewaukee. I pray that the Holy Spirit provide you with patience, strength and faith, knowing the Lord of the Church will produce the right man with the gifts to serve his kingdom work among you.

In the name of Christ,

Pastor Timothy R Gerbing

There will be another call meeting on Monday, February 4th after the Monday night service.

On January 21 our voters met and extended call to Emily Klammer to serve as half-time first grade teacher for the 2019-2020 school year. She writes ...

Dear Members of St. Mark,

I am writing to acknowledge that I have received the call to be half-time first grade teacher here. I am humbled by the fact that the Holy Spirit led you to extend this divine call to me, and I ask you to keep me in your prayers as I look to the Lord for guidance in considering whether the Lord would have me serve in this way.

In Christ's service,

Emily Klammer

Upcoming Events

- **BLOOD DRIVE** St. Mark is hosting the winter blood drive on Friday, **Feb. 15 1:00-6:00 PM**. You can help out by donating blood, providing goodies for donors and/or staff, or by helping the staff run the drive. Signup sheets are on the member center counter. There is an emergency need for blood. Please give!

EARLY CHILDHOOD

ROUNDUP We will get advance notice of Pre-K and Kgn enrollments for the fall when we have our roundup on Thursday evening, Feb 21. Contact the church office for details.

Lenten Services will start March 6th with services at 11:00 & 6:30. Lenten Suppers at 5:00. Watch for more information to come.

St. Mark H I L I T E S

PUBLIC USE OF THE MEANS OF GRACE:

- **Worship:** We averaged 318 per weekend in the month of December. The Lord's Supper was administered to 582. We averaged 210 at each of the three midweek Advent services. All Christmas services were well-attended. May the Light of Christ shine brightly in your life in 2019!
- **We released** Lynn Phillips and her children Catie and Derek, as well as Lorelei Ernster and her children Lindsey Sherman and Eden, also to their own spiritual care.

QUARTERLY VOTERS' MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

- Ratified council appointment of Jon Koestler to Board of Education
- Approved CMO (Congregation Mission Offering) commitment for 2019 at the current level of \$60,000
- Increased pay for Teacher's Aide and "Before- and- After- School Care Coordinator" (two separate positions) (from \$10/hr. to \$11.hr beginning with the 2019-2020 school year. This position is self-funding.
- Approved "wrap-around care" for the 2019-20 school year (providing a safe and supervised environment for pre-K and K children who need afternoon care)
- Increased 4K from three half day mornings to four half day mornings and adjusted Mrs. Anason's call from 33% to 43%, effective next school year.
- Approved new book fees/tuition schedule for 2019-20 school year
- Issued a Divine Call for a half-time first-grade teacher to replace Mrs. Prah. The Holy Spirit led the voters to choose Ms. Emily Klammer to consider the call. It is for the 2019-20 school year. (1 year call)
- Approved Elders to give final approval on the new church/school website.
- Approved installing hand rails on both curved side walls in the altar area
- Approved updating the phone system. The current phone units may still be used but the "motherboard" is outdated and must be replaced at a cost of \$2,000.

the Big Picture

Dear Members of St. Mark Ev. Lutheran Church:

" You've supported the work of Institutional Ministries with your donation, your encouragement, and your prayers; you did because it's the kind of thing that God's family members do, and you weren't looking for any kind of acclaim – I get that. But I'm still going to say it, because you need to hear it:

Thank you, on behalf of...

- Brian, who repeatedly says, "These groups have been helping me stay sober for the past 18 years."
- DeAndre, who tells me, "When you come here to prison and lead these Bible studies, you give me a time when I feel safe to let my guard down and be honest."
- Daniel, who tells me, "I didn't understand God's grace before, but now I'm starting to understand that God really means it when he says he forgives me completely and that he wants me to call him Father."

I keep hearing expressions of gratitude like this and I want you to hear it too. Your gifts are helping people in prisons, hospitals and other institutions where Institutional Ministries staff and volunteers go.

These people are grateful to God and people like you who make it happen. "

In the name of our gracious God,
Chaplain Phil Merten