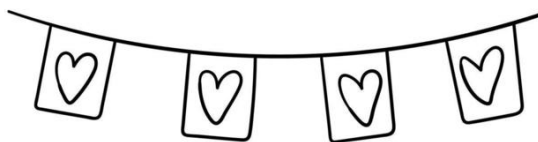


ST. MARK'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
201 N DIVISION AVENUE
POLO, IL 61064
Church Phone: 815-946-2919
Email: stmarkspolo@frontiernet.net
Website: stmarkspolo.com


February

2025



February 2025 St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Polo, Illinois (815) 946-2919

E-mail: stmarkspolo@frontiernet.net Website: stmarkspolo.com

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 9:00 Adult Bible Study 10:00 Social Time 10:30 Worship	3 Sort clothes for Second Hand Rose	4	5	6 10:00 Prayer Partners	7	8
9 9:00 Adult Bible Study 10:00 Social Time 10:30 Worship / Souper Bowl Sunday	10 5:00-6:30pm Community Meal at FUM	11	12 7:00pm Church Council meeting at St. Mark's	13 10:00 Prayer Partners	14 Happy Valentine's Day! 	15
16 9:00 Adult Bible Study 10:00 Social Time 10:30 Worship	17	18 9:00am Quilters Work Second Hand Rose February 18 th – 22 nd	19	20 10:00 Prayer Partners Deadline to submit articles for March Newsletter	21	22
23 9:00 Adult Bible Study 10:00 Social Time 10:30 Worship	24	25	26	27 10:00 Prayer Partners	28	
<u>Date</u>	<u>Worship Assistant</u>	<u>Altar Flowers</u>			<u>Tellers:</u> Julie Hoak, Phyllis Dyer, Sharon VanOosten	
February 2	Amanda Carroll				<u>Altar Guild:</u> Karen Gilbert & Joan Rienstra	
February 9					<u>Head Usher:</u> Cindy Schryver	
February 16	Beth Wiegmann					
February 23	Julie Hoak					



ST. MARK'S EVANGELICAL

LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

201 N. Division Avenue, Polo, IL 61064

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Church office: 815-946-2919

Website: stmarkspolo.com

Pastor Scott Ralston

Mission statement: *St. Mark's ELCA is a community of believers who gather to hear God's Word in Christ; worshipping, serving, and proclaiming God's love for all people and the world.*

February 9th – SOUP-er Bowl Sunday!



It's that time of year again! SOUP-er Bowl time! From now until Super Bowl Sunday (Feb 9), bring as many cans of soup to the church as you are able to carry, and they will all go to families in need!

Then, on the Sunday of the Super Bowl, wear your favorite jersey to church!!!



~~~~~  
In January, we welcomed new member  
Noelle Lynn Carroll  
through Holy Baptism

Parents are John & Amanda Carroll  
Sponsors are Andy & Sydney Bartelt



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*We are looking for youth interested in receiving their First Communion. Please let Pastor or the office know if you have a child that would like to participate in this gift.*

*Pastor's thoughts ...*

Hello St. Mark's Lutheran,

Welcome to another day held gently in the loving arms of God! What a blessing it is to be alive, well, and part of such an amazing church. If you were to but take a few steps outside I'm sure you'd agree, this year is off to a chilly start, but St. Mark's is welcome and warm, and we have Good News to share.

I want to get this off to a start with some scripture that kind of parallels what we heard in church this 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany.

This comes from **Hosea 10:12**, "Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap steadfast love; break up your fallow ground; for it is time to seek the LORD, that he may come and rain righteousness upon you."

Elyse and I read that in our devotion for the other day and it got me thinking how it parallels the story of the wedding at Cana and how they were emptying out the clay jugs and then filling them with fresh water. Through which God worked a miracle turning the water into the best wine. In my sermon I talked about how sometimes we need to empty out/get rid of some of the stuff we hold out into in our life: pride, resentment, anger, sorrow to make room for God's new life for us. God wants to fill us up to overflowing with hope, love, and joy. SO we need to LET GO (of the bad stuff) and LET GOD fill us with blessings.

I read a story about some farmers clearing land that helped me with this idea too. The farmers were clearing some new land for a new hayfield. First they cut the timber and cleared the stumps with a dozer, then they burned the stumps and brush. Then went and walked the ground to pick up any extra wood chunks before it could be plowed and planted. But the work doesn't stop there... the ground has to be kept up. A neglected field reverts back to weeds and brush.

I think our hearts are like that field. They take a lot of clearing of useless things before they become productive for God's use. The Good News is that when we are graced with God's salvation, God clears and plants his Spirit in us so that we can be productive for Him. But our hearts/our spiritual life needs constant care so that those weeds, brush, junk don't creep back in. Our Christian life isn't a one and done decision it is a lifelong commitment, a journey together.

Beloved, all we have been given is from God. And I pray that this year we turn all of those things we have been holding onto over to Jesus and trust that our amazing loving God will fill our lives to overflowing with hope, love, and joy. Beloved then you will see that holy, joy filled; newness and life overflow into the lives of the people around you! And together we'll be wrapping this whole world in the loving arms of God.

Peace and Blessings now and always,  
Pastor Scott



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**Lent is coming soon!**

We are looking for a couple volunteers to do a reading during our Wednesday Lent services that are held in Polo. These would be at 6:30pm Wednesdays March 5<sup>th</sup>, March 19<sup>th</sup>, and April 2<sup>nd</sup>. Please let Lori know if you would like to have a reading part in these services.

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**St. Mark's Lutheran Church**  
**Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Dec 10<sup>th</sup> 2024 7pm**

Members Present: Cindy Schryver, Renee Boyle, Trish Patterson, Pastor Scott

Not Present: Steve Sorenson, Mary Calderon, and Hailey Walker

Attendance and Quorum: Yes

Opening Prayer: Pastor Scott

Secretary's Report: Cindy makes a motion to approve. Trish 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Treasurer's Report: Electricity bill is higher in Nov. Why? Renee to ask Lori. Renee makes a motion to approve. Pastor Scott 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Old Business: Council members needed/Annual committee reports due Dec 15<sup>th</sup>  
for church secretary to put in 2024 Annual Report

Trish and Steve renewing in Jan 2025. Need 4 people by the end of Jan 2025.

New Business: Go over proposed joint services with Faith Lutheran:

Proposed dates for joint services are: in Polo: May 4<sup>th</sup> and Sept 21<sup>st</sup> in

Forreston: July 20<sup>th</sup> and Nov 16<sup>th</sup>. Trish makes a motion. Pastor 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Committee Reports:

Pastor - Visits are going well. Central conference meeting is Dec 11<sup>th</sup> at Payne's Point.

Finance - Renee – We went over proposed budget for 2025.

Worship n Music - Trish – they met on Nov 20<sup>th</sup> and discussed advent

Hospitality - Hailey – not here to report

Fellowship – Lisa – nothing at this time

Education - Renee – nothing at this time

Memorial - Cindy- nothing at this time

Property—NE fellowship entrance room ceiling is still in need of repair due to  
Water damage...but no action is recommend until it is determined  
why and how the water came. We have had no water seepage for  
2 years. Recommend remove loose ceiling plaster and repair.

Polo Council of Churches -

Liaison - Trish – We met on Nov 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at Faith Lutheran.

Proposed dates for joint services are: in Polo: May 4<sup>th</sup> and Sept 21<sup>st</sup> in

Forreston: July 20<sup>th</sup> and Nov 16<sup>th</sup>.

Motion to adjourn: Trish makes a motion to adjourn. Renee 2<sup>nd</sup>. Meeting adjourned at 8:30  
pm

Closing Prayer: Pastor Scott

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 7:00 PM

December Finance Report

| Income | Expenses | Net Income |
|--------|----------|------------|
| 18,515 | 8,652    | 9,863      |

**Minutes from November 2024 Polo Council of Churches Meeting**

President Jeff Davidson called the November 24, 2024 meeting to order at 6:00pm at Crossroads Church. Those in attendance were: David Poole, Marilyn Schwartz, Marla Buskohl, Suzanne Sorenson, Don Hay, John Barry, Merla Brooks and Suzanne Stout.

Pastor Jeff led devotions from Dana Castle and a passage from Luke 21.

Secretary’s minutes were approved. Updated 2025 schedule was given to attendees.

Treasurer's report shows a balance on hand of \$3586.83.

Second Hand Rose plans are: Christmas festival participation with \$5 fill a bag and Christmas gifts for children.

Lifeline food pantry- food trucks have been delivering supplies but as always, funds are requested to purchase food.

There will not be a December "our table" meal. it will resume on January 13, 2025 with Pine Creek and FDC, serving food.

Pastor Suzanne Stout from the Pine Creek Church shared her experiences from a Florida hurricane disaster zone. Volunteering time, talent and faith is so worthwhile in the world.

Christmas basket project: Kathy Wragg and the Polo pantry will be open on December 3, 7 and 10th for pick up of the boxes. Volunteers from all churches are needed. Delivery will be on December 7 to those who have signed up at the pantry. All churches are being asked to make monetary donations for this project. Each box of food has a cost of \$20.

Christmas star project: Pine Creek Church will spearhead this project again in December. More information will be available in December.

Marla Buskohl, secretary

Pine Creek Church, January 28, 2025 at 6:00 pm next meeting: note change of venue

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**2025 Offering envelopes are ready for pickup. If you did not receive a box and would like one, let Lori know and she will get you one.**

**Polo Community Meal**

The next community meal will be held February 10<sup>th</sup> at Faith United Methodist 5:00-6:30pm.

**Polo Lifeline Food Pantry Needs:**

Sugar, soap, toilet paper, any frozen food, and cash donations.

If you would like a Devotional book for February, March, please let the office know. One will be sent or dropped off at your home.



If you have a Thrivent life insurance policy, there are ways you can receive financial support for our church events at no cost to you. If you have any questions – please talk to Marilyn Nelson (815-499-1411) and she can help you through getting funds for St. Mark’s.

*Thank you!*

- ~ Thank you to everyone who helped take down our Christmas decorations
- ~ Thank you to anyone that has helped with shoveling sidewalks and putting salt out.
- ~ Thank you to Ryan Nelson for plowing snow at the church.

*Please let us know if someone needs a thank you.*



**Prayers for those in need of healing:** Kent Anders, Ron Bardell, Darlene Barnhart, Phyllis Dyer, Linda Gall, Shelby Hose, Pat McPherson, Mary Ann Olson and Laurel Smith. **Those in care facilities:** Tammy Karrow, Trudy Karrow, Beulah Nelson and Marian Schnulle. **Those in Military service:** Dustin Knapp, Brad Reigle, Travis Roop and Nathaniel Yingling.

**February Birthdays & Anniversaries**

**Birthdays**

**Anniversaries**

- 1 Sandy Stahler  
Kaci Hall
- 2 Abigail Yingling  
Karen Fetterman
- 4 Cory Nelson
- 5 Pam Jenkins  
Connor Lincoln
- 6 Kim Bowman  
Deborah Slager
- 9 Alicia Garrett  
Merla Brooks

- 11 Harold Folkers  
Tim Rienstra  
Amy Sikyta
- 15 Oran Wilder
- 16 Amanda Carroll
- 18 Alek Slager
- 19 Amy Schmidt
- 23 Mark Rienstra  
Casey Thacker
- 24 Carter Merdian

- 5 Jay & Amy Schmidt
- 14 Stacy & Sara Morrison