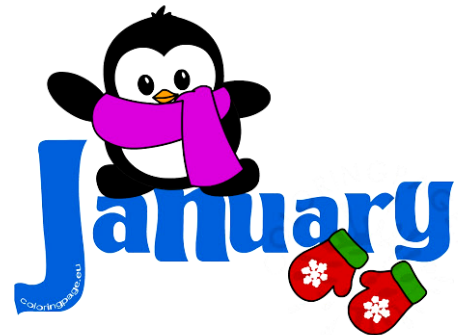


ST. MARK'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
201 N DIVISION AVENUE
POLO, IL 61064
Address Service Requested

Join us for online Worship
Sunday mornings at 9:00am!



St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Church Phone: 815-946-2919
Email: stmarkspolo@frontiernet.net
Website: stmarkspolo.com
Reverend Terrie Wilder
Pastor's Phone: 815-677-3443
Email: tfwilder@gmail.com



2021



ST. MARK'S EVANGELICAL

LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

201 N. Division Avenue, Polo, IL 61064

Email: stmarkspolo@frontiernet.net

Church office for a message: 815-946-2919

Pastor Terrie Wilder: 815-677-3443

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.*

St. Mark's Annual Congregational Meeting is on hold at this time. We are currently looking into a safe way to hold our annual meeting.

Committee leaders! – Please still submit your annual reports to the office as soon as possible. We will produce the annual report now, but will hold to the meeting when we are able to.



Indoor worship postponed

Council has decided to postpone indoor worship until at least January 14th in an effort to keep our members safe. Online worship continues!

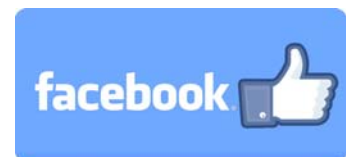
Join us for Worship on Facebook!

Sunday mornings at 9:00am

All you need to do is log on to St. Mark's Lutheran Church Polo Illinois Facebook page www.facebook.com/stmarkspolo. The website is open to the public.

Pastor Terrie will be doing a shortened message with a short sermon and then **offering communion for the community the first Sunday of the month only**. Have a piece of bread or a cracker handy along with juice or wine and we will share the Lord's Supper together virtually.

Pastor will continue to email worship on Saturday evening for Worship at home.



2021 offering envelopes are available for pickup. Lori is usually in the office on Thursdays, but please call before making a special trip to pick yours up. If you need your offering envelope box delivered to you, please call Pastor (815-677-3443) or Lori (815-440-0561).

If you are interested in signing up for electronic giving in 2021 or adjusting your current donation amount, please contact Lori.

As I begin this article passages from Isaiah 6:11 and Psalm 13 haunt my thoughts...
“How long O Lord?”

Gathering for worship occupies my mind night and day. The Hebrew people knew the importance of gathering and built the great temple in Jerusalem twice. The First Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians and the Second Temple was destroyed by the Romans. Jesus went to the temple and taught in the temple so we know the temple is important.

Reading that Jesus is also the “temple” of God today reminds me that while we wait to gather, the “temple Jesus” is with us and in us. This gives me comfort and while we ask “*How long O Lord?*” we are reassured that God is with us. Your church council has also heard your cries and is working to bring us together in a safe and calming way.

As we begin a new calendar year, we must all keep Jesus, the “temple”, as the “Joy to the World!” in our minds and in our hearts while we ask “*How long O Lord?*”

Limping along in Jesus the “temple”, Christmas and New Year blessings, Pastor Terrie

9:00am every Sunday morning - online Facebook worship.
10:00am every Thursday – Prayer Partners
Monday, January 4th 9:00am Sort clothes for Second Hand Rose
Tues -Sat January 5-9th Work 2nd Hand Rose
Wednesday, January 6th 5:00pm Worship Team Meeting
Monday, January 11th 5:00pm Finance Committee Meeting
Thursday, January 14th 7:00pm Zoom Church Council Meeting
Tuesday, January 19th 9:00am Quilters

Income	Expenses	Net Income
5,469	7,069	-1,601

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

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Council Highlights from the December Church Council Meeting

Treasurer's Report: Income for the month of November was \$5,469 with expenses \$7,069 with a deficit balance of \$1,601 for the month. Year to date deficit stands at \$10,326. The synod is facing a shortfall of \$133,000 this year. We are short about \$2500 of our congregational pledge. A motion was made to send \$750 toward our pledge contribution to the synod. This was approved. The council plans to revisit the remaining pledge at the next meeting.

Pastor's Report and Worship Plans: Pastor's ankle is healing very well, she can walk with a boot/brace and therapy continues several times a week. Pastor has been attending a lot of synod meetings via zoom and as well as online learning. Pastor plans to reach out and call many church members during the month of December. Online worship continues. Cheryl Goeking and Beth Wiegmann are working with Pastor for a special Christmas Eve worship online. Beth will be adding music and other pictures. Thank you to Oran, Merla, Cliff and Joey Bardell for putting out the nativity and Christmas wreaths. On Saturday December 12th at 10:30 am a virtual meeting on ways to do a congregational meeting in a pandemic will be held. Leaders may attend. It is free, no need to register program.

Hospitality: The team has been making wellness calls. 206 jars of jelly were collected for the community Christmas Basket program for the Council of Churches.

Education: Pastor will be reconnecting with confirmation students this month.

Local and Global Mission: Approximately \$500 was collected for the Honduras project. The country has been devastated by hurricanes.

Polo Council of Churches: Met by zoom November 24th and discussed the Christmas Basket program, turnover of officers in the coming year and the plight of those in Honduras we have come to know.

Property: The heating system at church has been erratic. Merla has had the Rockford Furnace people come for an inspection and it all seemed good. Then heating problems arose again so Oran purchased a new thermostat for upstairs hall and Kent helped to program. The technician was called once again to evaluate on December 10th and it appears there is a clog in the pipes between the pump and boiler. Special thanks to Merla for monitoring the temperature of the church twice a day. Sara volunteered for janitor duties for the month of January and Kent for the month of February. Also, special thanks to Gabe Booth for raking leaves and weeding the church property.

Old Business: A nomination committee as defined by our church constitution is needed as 3 council terms are expiring at the end of January: Amanda Long, Cindy Bauling and Terry Jenkins. They may continue another 3 years after prayerful consideration.

New Business: Status of indoor worship – The Council vigorously discussed the return of indoor worship and decided to stand by the previous decision of last month to continue to pause in-person worship for the remaining month of December & January with the intent to re-evaluate based on community COVID conditions at the January council meeting. In preparation for January meeting, Toni and Cindy will meet to discuss possible guidelines for safe in-person worship utilizing the Illinois Department of Public Health worship recommendations. Kent volunteered to bring forward local and state COVID statistics for January council.

Ways to Help Polo and Beyond:

- 1) Sending a check directly to the Polo Food Pantry 115 North Green Avenue .
- 2) Mailing cards to residents of care facilities is always a good idea:
Polo Rehab 703 E. Buffalo, Polo 61064 (Linda Scholl and Jessica Kimpel)
Pinecrest 414 S. Wesley Ave, Mt. Morris 60154 (Barb Bowen)
Provena Center 1372 Woodside Dr., Freeport 61032 (Hazel Pontnak)
Regency Healthcare 612 West. St. Sterling 61081 (Tammy Karrow and Trudy Karrow)
Wesley Willows Rockford 61103 (Sibyl Acker)

Here is a list of residents that would benefit from receiving cards at the Polo Rehab Center: Cecelia C., Joy F., Marjorie G., Shirley H., Grace M., and Betty W.

- 3) Make checks payable to Lutheran Disaster Response (if designated to a specific disaster, please indicate in the memo line):
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
ELCA Gift Processing Center
P.O. Box 1809 Merrifield, VA 22116-8009
Give by phone Call 800-638-3522 to make a donation with a credit card. Operators are ready to assist you Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Central Time.
- 4) **Continue sending offerings to St. Mark's by mail or dropping in the mail slot at the north front door. THANK YOU TO ALL WHO ARE SENDING OFFERINGS**



We would love to have everyone on our email list for faster communication.
If you need to be added to have changed your email please call the church office and leave a message or email the church at stmarkspolo@frontiernet.net

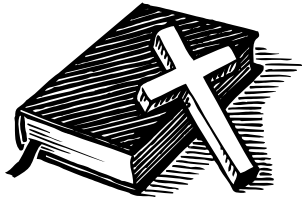
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Happy Anniversary

Happy 70th Wedding Anniversary to Ed and Marian Schnulle on December 31st! If you wish to send them a card, their address is 2039 N. Valentine Rd. Polo, IL 61064.

Thank you

- ~ Thank you to those who donated jelly for the Christmas Baskets this year! Also thank you to those who helped, receive, count and deliver them.
- ~ Thank you to Oran, Merla, Cliff and Joey Bardell for putting out the nativity and Christmas wreaths.
- ~ Thank you to those who donated money for Honduras! We were able to send them about \$500 to help this cause.
- ~ Thank you to all who sent cards to Shebi and Richard Hose for their 65th Wedding Anniversary.
- ~ Thank you to Beth and Alan Wiegmann for the wonderful Christmas Eve worship video from our Sanctuary! Many hours of loving labor made it possible.
- ~ Thank you to everyone who made our 150th Anniversary Books happen! A special Thank you to Becky Patterson for donating the cost of our Anniversary books!



Prayers for Healing: Merla Brooks, Lisa Miller and Brad Shippert **Prayers for those in care facilities:** Sibyl Acker, Barb Bowen, Tammy Karrow, Trudy Karrow, Jessica Kimpel, Hazel Pontnak, Jeanne Scholl, Linda Scholl, Ed and Marian Schnulle. **Prayers for those in military service:** Logan Albrecht, JJ Bardell, Bryan Connell, Dustin Knapp, Brad Reigle and Travis Roop

January Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

1 John Engel
2 David Shuman
4 Sara Thorngren
5 Michael Smith
6 Pastor Terrie Wilder
7 Larry Slager
11 Mark Stahler
Gabriele Booth
12 Sydney Gunder
13 Linda Hose
Emily Gabaldon
14 Tess Kurschner
19 John White
Alan Wiegmann

20 Wyatt Patterson
Drew Benner
21 Teresa Barnhart
22 Tyler Merdian
Tom Rienstra
24 Melody Reap
26 Laurel Smith
27 Zachary Grobe
Brent Shipman
28 Matthew Sullivan
Theresa Rogers
29 Stephanie Gilbert
Nancy Grossnickle
30 Amy Merdian

Anniversaries

19 Robyn & Phyllis Dyer
20 Bob & Kathy Mitchell

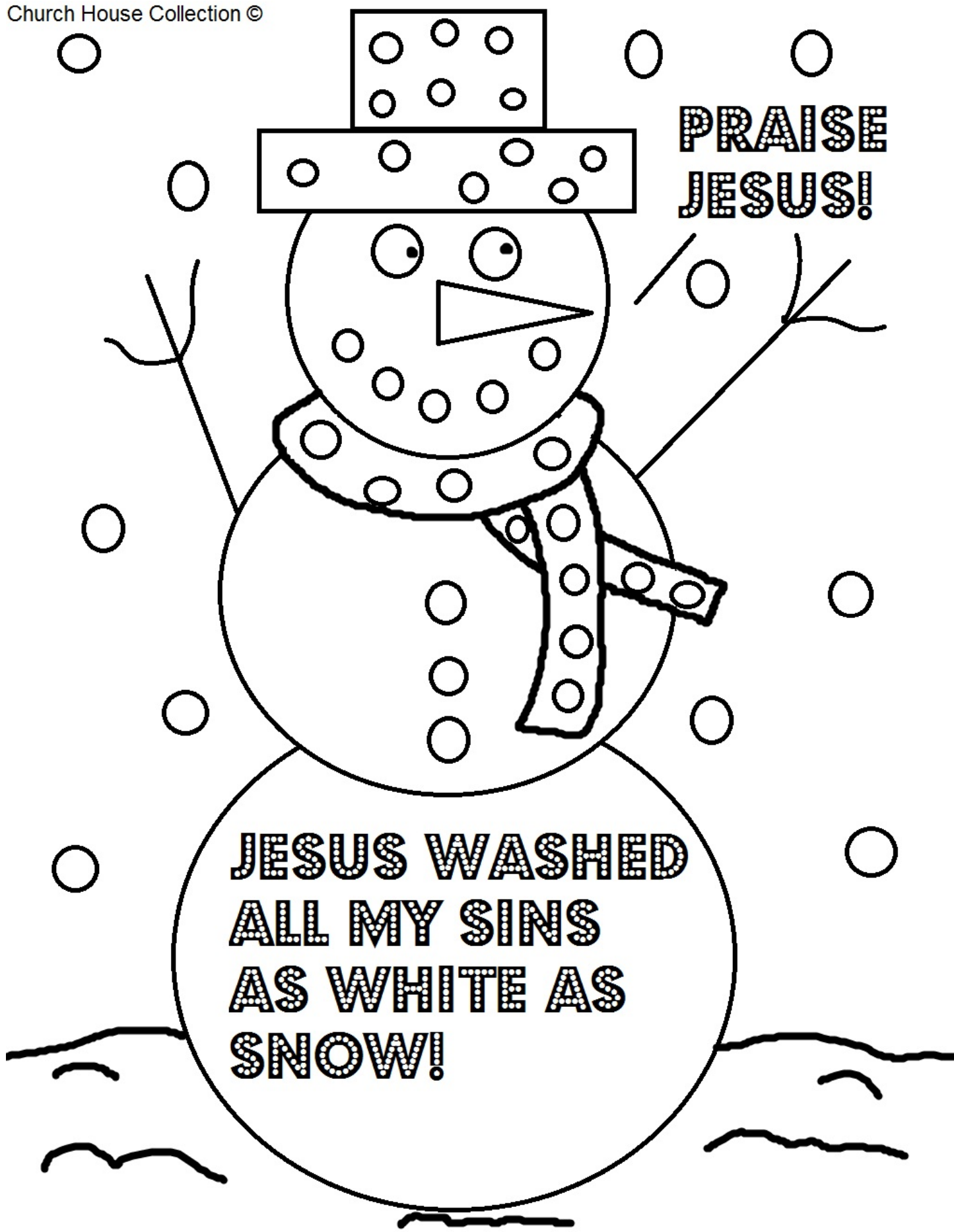


Gift Your Household With A Safer Time Away Household Getaway - Special Opportunity

Bring your household away for a couple of nights and enjoy the peaceful surroundings of prairie and forest. **Our Freedom Tree Village accommodations are decorated for the season and feature new games and puzzles** from a giant "Jenga" to board games like Scrabble and Clue. Your household will enjoy time away warming up at the fireplace (Freedom Tree Village only) or hiking the trails to discover God's creation.

We have also added special options like a candlelit night hike (featuring cocoa and cookies), popcorn over fire and new activities. You are welcome to stay!

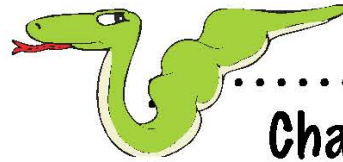
Visit <http://lomc.org/family-getaway/>



Guess Who

Bible Review for young children.

Match the Bible Character(s) with the Bible story. Each letter is used once.



- _____ 1. He builds a huge boat.
- _____ 2. He is a shepherd who used a slingshot to stop a giant.
- _____ 3. They are thrown into a fiery furnace.
- _____ 4. He delivered the Ten Commandments from God.
- _____ 5. She is the mother of Jesus.
- _____ 6. He is Esau's twin brother.
- _____ 7. She talks to a snake.
- _____ 8. He walks on water.
- _____ 9. He is a king known for his wisdom.
- _____ 10. He is swallowed by a great fish.

Characters

- A. Mary**
- B. Jacob**
- C. Noah**
- D. Jonah**
- E. Jesus**
- F. 3 Hebrew Boys**
- G. David**
- H. Moses**
- I. Eve**
- J. Solomon**

