

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



JANUARY

2025

May **GOD** be with you
through **NEW YEAR**

and fill your life with
COMFORT, LOVE and **CHEER.**


May this day and the days ahead,
Hold many **BLESSINGS**
for you and yours.

Happy New Year!



January 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 10:00 Prayer Partners	3	4
5 9:00 Adult Bible Study 10:00 Social Time 10:30 Worship	6 Sort clothes for Second Hand Rose	7	8 7:00pm Church Council meeting at St. Mark's	9 10:00 Prayer Partners	10	11
12 9:00 Adult Bible Study 10:00 Social Time 10:30 Worship	13 5:00-6:30pm Community Meal at FUM	14 Work Second Hand Rose January 14 th - 18 th	15	16 10:00 Prayer Partners	17	18
19 9:00 Adult Bible Study 10:00 Social Time 10:30 Worship	20	21 9:00am Quilters	22	23 10:00 Prayer Partners Deadline to submit articles for February Newsletter	24	25
26 9:00 Adult Bible Study 10:00 Social Time 10:30 Worship Annual Meeting after Worship	27	28	29	30 10:00 Prayer Partners	31	

<u>Date</u>	<u>Worship Assistant</u>	<u>Altar Flowers</u>		<u>Tellers:</u> Evelyn Meyer, Mark & Sandy Stahler
January 5	Trish Patterson			
January 12	Beth Wiegmann			<u>Altar Guild:</u> Cliff & Amy Bardell
January 19	Julie Hoak			<u>Head Usher:</u> Patty Callahan
January 26	Kent Anders	Steve & Suzanne Sorenson		



ST. MARK'S EVANGELICAL

LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

201 N. Division Avenue, Polo, IL 61064

Email: stmarkspolo@frontiernet.net

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.*



For surely I know the plans I have for you,
says the Lord, plans for your welfare
and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.
JEREMIAH 29:11



St. Mark's Annual Meeting
Sunday, January 26th after
Worship



Thank you to all our volunteers during 2024!!

We appreciate and thank all who have donated their time during 2024 for altar guild, tellers, church council, head usher, and all the many tasks around the church that people take care of.

Sign ups are out on the table for 2025. We hope you will volunteer your time where you are able. There are openings for Head Usher, Greeter, Altar flowers, Social Time and Altar Guild. If you have not done something and would like to learn, just ask and we can show anyone!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,

Driving again... marveling at the hoarfrost on the trees and bushes early in the morning, enjoying visits with folks in nursing homes, buying gifts, wrapping, wrapping, wrapping, and then I finally stop to take a breath and once again contemplate Christmas. A blessing to all of us, bringing hope to the struggling, peace to the hurting, and love to us all. This time of year brings memories of loved ones, long car rides to bring us together, carols sung on front porch steps, working hard to find the perfect gift... and maybe receiving one too, and sharing meals with family and friends. It is a time for Christmas school programs and hopefully some renewal and refreshment, and although Christmas day has passed (when you receive this) its impact still resonates.

In the church, Christmas continues on for two more weeks and then we change seasons into Epiphany, the time in the church where we celebrate the revelation of Christ to the people of the world. Epiphany is celebrated as we recall the magi's adoration of the newborn baby Jesus in which the star in the sky pointed the way, the baptism of Jesus by John in the Jordan and the descending of the Holy Spirit as a dove announcing the Son to the world, and lastly revealed by his mother as she points the servants at the wedding in Cana to the one who can do all things including turning water into fine wine. Epiphany is a great time for the revealing of the power and glory and presence of Jesus Christ, and it is still happening today.

But before we move smoothly on into Epiphany, linger with me for a moment and remember the reason why we are celebrating. Into our fragile broken world, God sent his Son, because He knew we could never, no matter how many good deeds we had done, ever save ourselves. So at Christmas we celebrate the birth of the Son, who would do what we could not, take our sin unto himself so that we might stand washed clean before our Creator... A gift beyond price. As it says in John 3:16-17, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him." God loves us so much that he sent his own Son to die that we might be saved and have eternal life.

Beloved as we continue on through the rest of our Christmas season into Epiphany remember the gift we have been given and the love surrounding that gift. This gift was given with love and care so deep and profound that it really needs to be shared. So this Christmas and Epiphany remember this greatest of gifts, and remember it's a birthday we are celebrating, what gift can you give the one who gave himself for you... feed the hungry, clothe the naked, care for the sick, and love one another! Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Remember, God Loves You and So Do I.

Peace and Blessings to you and yours,
Pastor Scott

Annual Reports due!

If you are part of a committee, please make sure to have your annual report submitted to the office to be included in the annual report/meeting in January.

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
January 13th at Faith United Methodist
5:00-6:30pm.

Polo Lifeline Food Pantry Needs:

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

St. Mark's Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes Nov 13th, 2024 7pm

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

Attendance and Quorum: Yes

Opening Prayer – by Renee

Secretary's Report – Trish makes a motion to approve. 2nd by Cindy.

Treasurer's Report – Renee makes a motion to approve. 2nd by Cindy.

Old Business: Council member needed – reminder that those going off the council at the end of this year need to be seeking a replacement candidate.

Church boiler is up and running and changes made to the piping as asked for by the State inspector are completed.

New Business: Sunday school 1st Sunday of the month starting in January? Lisa had talked to Trish about this.

86 folding chairs – Cindy Sullivan is going to post on Facebook market place to sell. Hold off on selling the puppet stand for now.

Council members – is it ok to reduce from 7 to 6 people? Discussion was done. What is in our constitution? Will have to have an amendment done?

Committee Reports:

Pastor Scott – Visits are ok. Central conference meeting was in Compton today. Confirmation went well at both churches.

Finance - Renee - work on a budget with Faith.

Worship n Music - Trish – upcoming meeting on Nov 20th

Hospitality - Hailey – not here to report

Fellowship – Fall supper on Nov 16th

Education - Renee – Lisa to start Sunday school again the 1st Sunday starting in January, 2025? Lori can put something in the newsletter. Trish to talk to Lisa about this.

Memorial - Cindy – nothing new to report

Property - Steve – a verbal estimate for the painting of all the church windows is around 12,000. This does not include any any repair or replacement of window wood framing that is bad. A more definite estimate can only be made by using mechanical lift and visual inspection for each window. Discussion was done and we would like to have 2 more bids to have something to compare it to.

Polo Council of Churches - Christmas boxes with the food pantry

Liaison - Trish – next meeting Nov 18th at Faith Lutheran

Annual reports will be due to Lori by December 15th.

Next Meeting Wednesday Dec 11th, 2024 7pm

Vote to Adjourn Meeting/Prayer – Trish makes a motion to adjourn. Pastor 2nd. Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm

November Finance Report

Income	Expenses	Net Income
9,679	7,879	1,800

.....

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

.....

If you are missing a pan or dish that you brought food to St. Mark's in, there are several in the basement small kitchen. Help us find their owners!

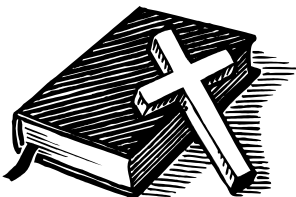
Our fall supper this year was a great success! We appreciate all who donated their time and/or food to make this possible. Special thank you to Lisa Hinrichs for all her planning and help. St. Mark's raised over \$2,400!

Congratulations to church member Tess Kurschner who was hired by the First State Bank Shannon-Polo as a Relationship Banker!

Thank you!

- ~ Thank you to all who decorated our church for the Christmas/Advent season!
- ~ Thank you to Krista (Betty Obendorf's daughter) for a box of beautifully handmade Christmas cards for our card ministry.
- ~ Thank you to all the families that helped during Advent by reading the weekly prayers and lighting the Advent candles.
- ~ Thank you to anyone that donated money toward Christmas Baskets through the Polo Food Pantry. St. Mark's raised over \$640!
- ~ Thank you to Lorin and Joyce Gatz for the *many* years they served as tellers!
- ~ Thank you to Marilyn Nelson for applying & receiving a Thrivent grant as start up money for our Fall Supper.
- ~ Thank you to Marla Buskohl, Randy Hayes and Cheryl Goeking for special music in December.
- ~ Thank you to Cindy Sullivan and Marilyn Nelson for helping to sell our extra metal chairs. So far we have sold 38 chairs to raise \$190.

Please let us know if someone needs a thank you.



Prayers for those in need of healing: Kent Anders, Ron Bardell, Darlene Barnhart, Karen Fetterman, 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.

January Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

<p>1 John Engel 2 David Shuman 4 Sara Thorngren Anderson Carroll 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</p>	<p>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</p>
---	--

Anniversaries

<p>19 Robyn & Phyllis Dyer 20 Bob & Kathy Mitchell</p>



***The beautiful poinsettias decorating the sanctuary
 this year have been given by:***

Presented in loving memory of Annie Pfeiffer by Kent Anders.

Presented to the Glory of the newborn King by Merla Brooks.

Presented in loving memory of our granddaughter, Maverick Dee Mumford, by Phyllis and Robyn Dyer.

Presented in loving memory of our son, Steve, by Lyle & Barb Grobe.

Presented to the church to the Glory of God by Andy, Lisa and AJ Hinrichs.

Presented in loving memory of Lyle Printz by Marica and Kim Printz.

Presented in loving memory of Lyle & Chad Reap by Melody, Trish, Carly and Mallory.

Presented in loving memory of Dave & Ruth Mickley, Gale & Ruth Rienstra and sister Susie, by Leo & Joan Rienstra & family.

Presented in loving memory of Jerry and David by Priscilla Schwingel and family.

Presented in loving memory of Sherwood Shank, loving husband, father and grandpa, by Linda Shank.

Presented in loving memory of our parents, Mildred & Robert Clothier, Irene & Russell Peterson and Eloise & Kenneth Smith, by Laurel & Ken Smith.

Presented in loving memory of Fran & Millie Sorenson and Alva Robertson by Steve & Suzanne Sorenson.

Presented to the glory of God by Steve & Suzanne Sorenson.

Presented in loving memory of our grandmother, Connie Stahler, by Brittan & Brinley Mullens and Henry & Harper Hickerson.

Presented in loving memory of our mother, Connie Stahler, by Allison and Andrea Stahler.

Presented in loving memory of Sibyl Acker by Amy Tamura.

Presented in loving memory of loved ones by Alan & Beth Wiegmann.

A Prayer for the New Year

Lord, please bless the coming year. Help me to use my time wisely and strengthen my resolve to consistently do all of the following:

Never stop praying (1 [Thessalonians 5:17](#))

Lord, teach me to pray without ceasing. Remind me to make prayer my first response rather than a last resort. Conform me to the image of Christ, that I might with Him pray, "Not my will, but Thine be done."

Encourage one another (1 [Thessalonians 5:11](#))

Lord, open my eyes to the needs of those around me. Help me to love my neighbors as I love myself and to put their interests ahead of my own. May every word I speak edify and uplift and point others to You.

Work without complaining ([Philippians 2:14](#))

Place a guard on my mouth. God, that I might not grumble about the tasks I've been given to do. Help me to serve others with gladness and do my work heartily and cheerfully, as a sacrifice of praise unto You.

Yearn for Christ's return ([Mark 13:32-33](#))

Lord, keep me mindful of the fact that my hope is not rooted in social movements or political reform, but in Christ alone. Speed the day of His return and let me be found faithfully doing His work when He appears.

Evangelize the lost ([Mark 16:15](#))

Give me a heart for those who don't know You, God. May I boldly and urgently proclaim the gospel of grace and forgiveness of sins that is freely available to all who confess Jesus is Lord and believe You raised Him from the dead.

Acknowledge Him ([Proverbs 3:5-6](#))

Don't let me outlive my love & devotion to You, Lord. Let my life serve as an example of what it means to trust You fully. May all I do and say and hope and think bring glory and honor to Your precious, holy name.

Redeem the time ([Ephesians 5:15-16](#))

"Lord, teach us to number our days, that we might apply our hearts to wisdom." Don't let me squander my time on earth. Show me how to invest it wisely in activities and pursuits that will bear fruit for all of eternity.