

St. Mark's Lutheran Church
302 East Pearl St.
Wapakoneta, OH 45895

St. Mark's Messenger, November 2025



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Pastor Doug's Letter

Beloved Friends,

In this month in which we celebrate Thanksgiving, I offer this to you for your reflection and for use around your thanksgiving table. It is called a ***Litany of Thanksgiving***, and it is from ***Meditations of the Heart*** by Howard Thurman, pages 147-149.

Today, I make my Sacrament of Thanksgiving.

I begin with the simple things of my days:

Fresh air to breathe,

Cool water to drink,

The taste of food,

The protection of houses and clothes,

The comforts of home.

For all these I make an act of Thanksgiving this day!

I bring to mind all the warmth of humankind that I have known:

My mother's arms,

The strength of my father,

The playmates of my childhood,

The wonderful stories brought to me from the lives of many who talked of days gone by
when fairies and giants and all kinds of magic held sway;

The tears I have shed, the tears I have seen;

The excitement of laughter and the twinkle in the eye with its reminder that life is good.

For all these I make an act of Thanksgiving this day.

I finger one by one the messages of hope that awaited me at the crossroads:

The smile of approval from those who held in their hands the reins of my security;

The tightening of the grip in a single handshake when I feared the step before me in the darkness;

The whisper in my heart when the temptation was fiercest and the claims of appetite were not to
be denied;

The crucial word said, the simple sentence from an open page when my decision hung in the
balance.

For all these I make an act of Thanksgiving this day.

I pass before me the mainsprings of my heritage:

The fruits of the labors of countless generations who lived before me, without whom my own life
would have no meaning;

The seers who saw visions and dreamed dreams;

The prophets who sensed a truth greater than the mind could grasp and whose words could only find fulfillment in the years which they would never see;
The workers whose sweat has watered the trees, the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations;
The pilgrims who set their sails for lands beyond all horizons, whose courage made paths into new worlds and far-off places;
The saviors whose blood was shed with a recklessness that only a dream could inspire and God could command.

For all this I make an act of Thanksgiving this day.

I linger over the meaning of my own life and the commitment to which I give the loyalty of my heart and mind:

The little purposes in which I have shared with my loves, my desires, my gifts;
The restlessness which bottoms all I do with its stark insistence that I have never done my best, I have never reached for the highest;
The big hope that never quite deserts me, that I and my kind will study war no more, that love and tenderness and all the inner graces of Almighty affection will cover the life of the children of God as the waters cover the sea.

All these and more than mind can think and heart can feel,
I make as my sacrament of Thanksgiving to Thee,
Our Father, in humbleness of mind and simplicity of heart.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Doug". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Pastor" and "Doug" being capitalized and prominent.

PS. I personally give thanks for all your words of appreciation and gratitude that you have given Carol and I this past month in recognition of Pastor's Appreciation Month. I am deeply grateful for all the kind comments, the thoughtful gifts, and the notes of encouragement. The challenge of being a pastor is that most of the work is long term. Transformation happens slowly, growth takes time, and an increase in faith is difficult to measure. So I appreciate the glimpses that what I do does indeed bring about the kingdom of God within you.

PSS. Following my sermon where I invited us to make sure that we are feeding the hungry who are close (family), near (Wapakoneta), and far (overseas) I was asked how to contribute locally. **Mercy Unlimited** has a food pantry for the hungry. They report that every month the need is increasing, and if the government shut down lasts past Nov. 1 no one will get SNAP benefits in November. The website where you can donate is <https://mercyunlimited.org/>.

Mission Wapak Helps Homeless Woman

The Situation: F. is homeless and is living out of her car. She has a young son with her as well. She works nights at Ferguson in Celina and she has a babysitter in Wapak that takes the child when she works. During the day she sleeps in her car while the child is at school (Wapak).

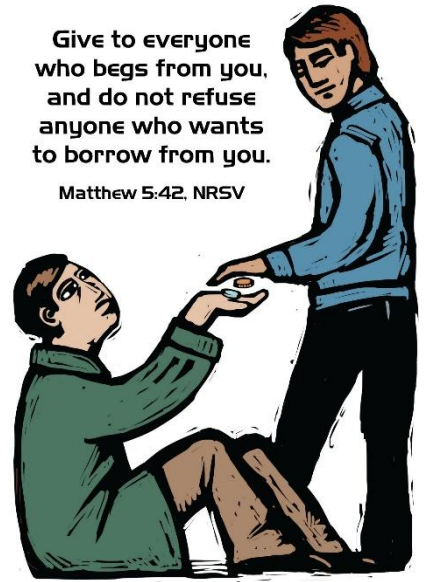
CERT recently put her up in the Holiday Inn for 3 nights to get her out of her car and WAMA is covering two additional nights, which will get her through to Monday. She has found an apartment in Wapakoneta and has saved enough to cover her security deposit.

F. is requesting help covering her first month's rent of \$875. Any amount would be helpful in speeding up her transition to stable housing.

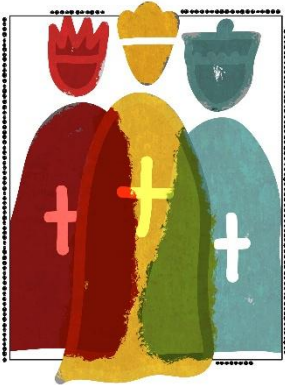
The Solution: Mission Wapak contributed \$500.

Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.

Matthew 5:42, NRSV



All Saint's Day



All Saint's Day is November 1, and we will celebrate it the first weekend in November. The church members whom we are remembering are:

Joe Landry

Jean Thompson

Jean Landry

On that day we will remember by name everyone who has died since All Saint's Day, 2024. Place the following in the offering plate or contact the church office.

Your Name: _____

Name of the Deceased: _____

Your Relationship to the Deceased: _____

Thank You Note Received

Thank you for your gift of \$315.00 to Lutheran Disaster Response.



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

"From [Christ's] fullness we have all received, grace upon grace."

—John 1:16

As a church, we are empowered to love and serve our neighbors as Christ first loved us. Your gifts to the ministries of the ELCA help people around the world feel the power and hope that flow from God's full, boundless love. Drawn together and guided by the Holy Spirit, we accomplish together what none of us could do alone, grace upon grace.

Loaves & Fishes Coordinator Needed

Laura Heitz has served as St. Mark's Coordinator for Loaves and Fishes for the past five years. She will complete her service in December, and a new coordinator is being sought. The responsibilities include coordinating with the leaders of Loaves and Fishes for what meal will be served that week, soliciting cooks, asking for cookies, and handling publicity.



Fellowship Server Needed

We could use another person willing to bring in treats and clean up after fellowship on Sunday mornings. Please contact Elaine in the church office if you are willing to serve in this important way.

Directories Ready for Pick Up

The Photo Church Directories are here and are being distributed to everyone who had their picture taken, submitted a photo, or submitted their address. We have many folks who are entitled to a directory who have not yet picked theirs up. They are sitting in the hallway outside of the sanctuary. If you cannot get to church, please let Elaine know and she will mail you one or arrange for someone to drop one off.



Pies Needed



St. Mark's has been invited to provide 15 pies for the Wapakoneta Community Thanksgiving Dinner Thursday, November 27. The request is for ready to serve pies that do not need refrigeration (as oven and refrigerator space are limited). Pies may be dropped off until 9 pm on Wednesday or from 6 to 9 am on Thursday at the St. Joseph Parish Life Center. Please call our church office if you can provide one or more pies. Thank you for your generosity.

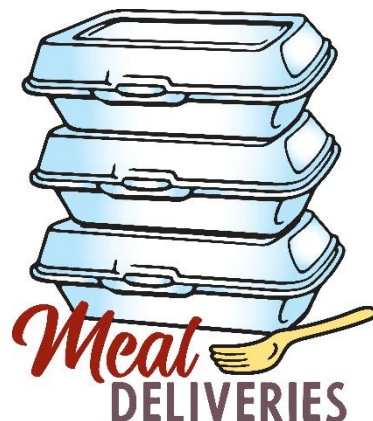
The Adult Sunday School class

The Adult Sunday School class is concluding their present series and will be exploring in the coming weeks "The Armor of God" in light of today's world and present culture. Have you or are you experiencing spiritual warfare presently in relationships, the workplace, or even within yourself? The variety of individuals in the class offer interesting perspectives and experiences. Grab a beverage in the Gathering space and join us at 9:00. Smiles and Bibles provided. Feel free to ask Julie Miars Golden any questions you might have, jgolden@bright.net.



Community Thanksgiving Dinner

The Community Thanksgiving Dinner will be served at the St. Joseph Parish Life Center from 11 am to 1 pm. Boxed carry-out meals are served starting at 12:30 pm. If you are homebound and would like a meal delivered, please let Elaine in our church office know, and she will pass along your address.



Christmas Jubilee

St. Mark's will again be participating in the Christmas Jubilee "Angel" Tree program. We will have 75 tags to fill, so be on the lookout for the Christmas tree in the hallway outside of the sanctuary that will be up from the beginning of November through mid-December. How it works: pick a tag, buy and wrap a gift with tag attached, and return it to under the tree. These gifts will be distributed to needy families this Christmas season.



Poinsettia Order Form

Poinsettias will decorate the sanctuary on Christmas Eve. If you would like to purchase poinsettias for the sanctuary in honor or memory of someone, please fill out the form below and return it to the church office with payment. Orders are due by November 30. One 6 ½" pot with a cover is \$15.

Given in Memory Of: _____

Given in Memory Of: _____

Given in Honor Of: _____

Given in Honor Of: _____

Donor's Name: _____ # of Pots: _____ X \$15 = \$_____ Total Due



Top: Pictured left to right, Ethan Jeanneret, Evelyn Oen, Ella Price, & Marlow Johnston. The youth did a modern version of Israelites complaining in the wilderness!

Bottom Right: Pictured left to right, Hans Schlegel, Laura Schlegel holding Greta Annaliese Schlegel, and Pastor Doug. Greta was born on December 19, 2024 and was baptized at St. Mark's on October 12, 2025. Her godparents are Heidi Hahn & Kelsey Swan.



Worship Services for November

Nov. 1 & 2 **God Speaks to Elijah** All Saints Sunday Communion
 Remembrance of Saints 1 Kings 19:1-18 Psalm 19:1-44 John 12:20-33

Boil, Boil, Toil and Trouble

Today is All Saint's Day, the festival on which we remember all who have died in the preceding twelve months. This year we remember St. Mark's members Joe Landry, Jean Thompson and Jean Landry, as well as many others. Our Scripture story today is the Elijah's encounter with God on the mountain top after he flees for his life in despair that God's will and work will ever take place.



Nov. 8 & 9 **Amos: Justice Rolls Down** Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost
 Amos 1:1-2; 5:14-24 Psalm 37:1-6, 25-31 John 7:37-38

Bad to the Bone

The prophets are the great voices in the Hebrew Scriptures. They are the critical voices that call for a turning from the contentment of the status quo to a radical life of following God. Amos, in particular, warns against evil in the guise of good.

Nov. 15 & 16 **Isaiah: A Child Is Born** Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost
 Communion First Communion Isaiah 9:1-7 Psalm 97 John 8:12

Universal Human Nature

We hear from the prophet Isaiah today and his vision of the fullness of the kingdom of God to come when the Christ Child is born in everyone. When it is fully present in the world, war and all violence will come to an end. Until that day comes, however, we are to live as if it is already present, for the extent to which the Christ Child is born in us is the extent to which the vision is a reality here and now.

Nov. 22 & 23 **Jeremiah's Letter to Exiles** Christ the King Sunday **God's Plan, Not Your Plan**
 Communion Youth Sunday Youth Bells Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14 Psalm 20 John 14:27

The Israelites have been forcibly taken into Exile, but Jeremiah's word to them from the Lord is not to seek to return to their homeland. Instead they are to:

1. Settle in, make a life there, and seek the welfare of the place where they find themselves,
2. Have hope for your future, short-term and long-term.
3. Call upon God, come to God, pray to God, and search for God with all their heart.

Only when they have done all of this will they be returned to their land.



Nov. 29 & 30 **Daniel: The Furnace of Blazing Fire** First Sunday of Advent
 Daniel 3:1-30 Psalm 31:1-8 John 18:36-37 **Speaking Truth to Power**

Advent begins today. These four weeks before Christmas are designed to be a season to do some spiritual housecleaning. Just like most of us spend time cleaning and decorating our homes for Christmas, there is a necessity of doing so spiritually. Old unfruitful habits and foolish ways of thinking need discarded. One area for spiritual examination is our relationship to power.

St. Mark's Lutheran Church Council October 16, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Nelson Golden, Laura Heitz, Karen Lenhart, JP Metz , Corrin McBride, Shelley Schlegel, Amanda Schmerge and Marguerite Wallen. Mark Swaney and Pastor Doug were excused from the meeting.

Nelson Golden called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and led council in devotional on Matt. 6:19-24.

The Church Council read the **Motto, Mission & Vision Statements** in unison.

The September 11, 2025, Council Minutes were approved unanimously. Laura Heitz moved and JP Metz seconded.

Financial Report: JP Metz presented the Treasurer's report. Income for the month of September was \$18,949.71 with expenses at \$25,241.39. Our year to date income is \$194,004.13 with expenses at \$193,356.00 for a year to date net income of \$648.13. Nelson Golden moved to accept the report and Laura Heitz seconded; motion carried.

Paul Rogers joined the meeting to present the 2026 Budget to council. Adjustments to the budget have been proposed to accommodate the new guidelines recommended to the synod regarding the compensation of Pastors. JP Metz made a motion to present the prospective budget to the congregation on Sunday, December 7th. The motion was seconded by Amanda Schmerge and carried.

The **Social Ministry Committee** report was given by Karen Lenhart. The group will meet on September 23rd and made plans for a soup carry in on October 26th following Youth Sunday worship. The group has started sending birthday cards to members and will be planning a chili cook-off in January. After many years of service, Laura Heitz will be stepping down and the coordinator of Loaves and Fishes. Members are asked to consider serving in this role. The committee will meet again on January 6th at 5:30pm.

Marguerite Wallen gave the **Property Committee Report**. A tree was removed from the property on September 20th. Maintenance work will be completed on the boilers to fix an improper ph reading.

Pastor's Report:

The Situation: F. is homeless and is living out of her car. She has a young son with her as well. She works nights at Ferguson in Celina and she has a babysitter in Wapak that takes the child when she works. During the day she sleeps in her car while the child is at school (Wapak).

CERT recently put her up in the Holiday Inn for 3 nights to get her out of her car and WAMA is covering two additional nights, which will get her through to Monday. She has found an apartment in Wapakoneta and has saved enough to cover her security deposit.

F. is requesting help covering her first month's rent of \$875. Any amount would be helpful in speeding up her transition to stable housing. The Solution: Mission Wapak contributed \$500 in October.

In **New Business**, a concern was brought up about cars being left in the church parking lot for multiple days at the time. Nelson Golden will be reaching out the police department to have the owners of the vehicles contacted.

The Next Meeting will be on November 20, 2025 at 6PM.

Nelson Golden moved to **adjourn** the meeting and Laura Heitz seconded; motion carried.

Respectfully submitted, *Shelley Schlegel*



Braden Fisher	November 1	John Harrod	November 16
Betty Elsass	November 1	Ashley Schmerge	November 17
Laura Schlegel	November 1	Amanda Schmerge	November 17
Evelyn Oen	November 4	Corrin McBride	November 20
Brady King	November 5	Harrison Sorensen	November 22
Jeff Hunlock	November 7	Carolyn Metz	November 25
Ben Wilson	November 7	Courtney Burton	November 27
Marguerite Wallen	November 7	Jase Whetstone	November 28
Yvonne Sorensen	November 10	Kristin Doll	November 29
Meddy Ruck	November 12	Garce LaMarr	November 30
Dianne Behr	November 12		

St. Mark's Motto

Be God's Grace in Action

St. Mark's Mission

St. Mark's Mission is to fulfill the Great Commission by extending God's Grace to all people.

St. Mark's Vision

St. Mark's will transform the Wapakoneta area and the world into a community of love
by connecting the disconnected to God's grace and salvation.

We welcome, support, and care for all people.

Pastor	Doug Pretorius	PastorDougP@gmail.com	419-512-4491
Administrative Assistant	Elaine Hawkins	StMarksWapak302@gmail.com	
Church Musician	Melissa Grunden		
Custodian	Amanda Wilder		
Technology Coordinator	Dustin Jeanneret		

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church

302 East Pearl Street, Wapakoneta, OH 45895

Office Phone: 419-738-3122

Office Cell Phone: 567-356-6799

Website: www.StMarksWapak.Org



November 2025 – St. Mark's Calendar



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 8a- Men's Bible Study 5p Communion
2 9a- SS for All 10:15a- Communion	3	4 9a- Preschool Chapel 12:15p- Preschl. Chapel	5 10:30a- Gardens 6:45p- Catechism 7p- Choir Practice	6 9a- Preschool Chapel	7	8 5p Communion
9 9a- SS for All 10:15a- Worship	10 7:30p- Property Meeting	11 8p- Finance Meeting	12 6:30p- Handbell Practice 7p- Catechism 7p- Choir Prac.	13 10:30a- Otterbein Worship 6p – Council Meeting	14	15 8a- Men's Bible Study 5p Communion
16 9a- SS for All 10:15a- Communion TSC Taping	17	18 9a- Preschool Chapel 12:15p- Preschl. Chapel	19 10:30am Gardens 7p- Catechism	20 9a- Preschool Chapel	21	22 5p Communion
23 9a- SS for All 10:15a- Worship Youth Sunday	24	25	26	27	28	29 5p Communion
30 9a- SS for All 10:15a- Worship				Thanksgiving		

November Who Does What?

10:15am Sunday	2-Nov	9-Nov	16-Nov	23-Nov	30-Nov
Greeters, Pearl St	Cindy Klosterman, Deb Osborne	Kim Waltz, Tina Waltz	Howard & Carol Garber	Bostyn & Drexler Dobie, Landon Baeumel	Tim & Kathy Schneider
Greeters, Seltzer St & Offering	Mike & Courtney Burton	Beth & Rod Miller	Mandy & Lyla Wilder	Evelyn Oen, Marlow Johnston	Kim Waltz, Tina Waltz
Bulletins & Offering	Paula Schmerge Ashley Schmerge	Shawn & Celeste Rose	Willie Winter, Ethel Shawver	Ella Price, Jennings McEvoy	Beth & Rod Miller
Reader	Courtney Burton	Karen Lenhart	Taryn Newman	Ethan Dickey	Julie Miars Golden
Candle Lighter	Ethan Dickey	Ella Price	Avery Newman	Avery Newman	Evelyn Oen
Cross Bearer	Evelyn Oen	Marlow Johnston	Kelsey Schneider	Ethan Dickey	Ethan Jeanneret
PowerPoint	Amanda Schmerge	Chad Doll	Mike Burton	Jacob Hicks	Nelson Golden
Communion	Meddy Ruck,	X	Barb Srisongkham,	X	X
Servers	Jeanne Clark		Paul Rogers		
Song Leader(s)	Julie Miars Golden	Jen Garber	Kristin Doll	Kaylee Dickey, Kenzie Schneider, Evelyn Oen, Avery Newman, Ella Price, Marlow Johnston, Susie LaMarr	JP Metz
Fellowship	Shelley Schlegel	Karen Lenhart	Elaine Hawkins	Brittani McEvoy	Jen Garber
Sound Tech	Chris Sorensen	Rich Garber	Chad Doll	Blake Rogers, Trent Lisi	Rod Metz
Video Tech	Rich Garber	Dustin Jeanneret	Ryan Schneider	Elaine Hawkins	Dustin Jeanneret
5:00pm Saturday	1-Nov	8-Nov	15-Nov	22-Nov	29-Nov
Greeter	Marguerite Wallen	Dianne Knipp	Alex Rompilla	Mark Swaney	Barb Srisongkham
Bulletins	Dianne Knipp	Marguerite Wallen	Connie Rompilla	Sandy Swaney	Laura Heitz
Reader	Melissa Grunden	Sue Jeanneret	Mark Swaney	Carol Pretorius	Alex Rompilla
Communion	Terry Shoup	Carol Pretorius	Alex & Connie	Mark & Sandy	Laura Heitz
Servers	Betty Elsass	Dianne Knipp	Rompilla	Swaney	Barb Srisongkham
Singer	Carol Pretorius	Carol Pretorius	Carol Pretorius	Carol Pretorius	Carol Pretorius
Musician	Melissa Grunden	Melissa Grunden	Melissa Grunden	Melissa Grunden	Melissa Grunden
Altar Guild for the Month of November: Ruth Doll, Mark Swaney, Tina Waltz					