

St. Mark's Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 550
3216 West Main Street
Claremont, NC 28610
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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Claremont, NC



Our Mission
To Proclaim the Gospel
To Make Disciples
To Embody Christ's Love

ST. MARKS NEWSLETTER
December 27, 2023

“We know love by this, that Jesus laid down his life for us— and we ought to lay down our lives for one another.” 1 John 3:16

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

	Greet & Usher	Read Lessons	Carry Cross (Youth or Adult)	Acolyte (Youth of Adult)	Assisting Minister
Dec. 31st @ 10:00am	Marlene Epps Judy Carpenter	Tim Carpenter	Rev. Dr. Ted Rust	Beverly Rust	Tim Carpenter
Jan. 7th @ 10:00am	Blake Sigmon Matthew Watkins	Carol Schaefer	Please call Ted to volunteer 252-675-5936	Denise Arndt	Kermit Nash
Jan. 14th @ 10:00am	Jean Cloninger	Linda Hewitt	Rev. Dr. Ted Rust	Silas Carpenter	Linda Hewitt
Jan. 21st @ 10:00am	Marlene Epps Linda Lytton	Tiffany Caudill	AJ Stephenson	Hadley Theisen	Rachael Theisen
Jan. 28th @ 10:00am	Janie Arndt	Carol Schaefer	Tamarah Hefner	Dale Sherrill	Dale Sherrill
Feb. 4th @ 10:00am	Marlene Epps	Kermit Nash	Kermit Nash	Carol Schaefer	Kermit Nash

OPPORTUNITIES TO GATHER
AT ST. MARK'S

Sundays—Worship
10:00 Service in Sanctuary
9:00am Sunday Morning Learning
10:00 Drive-Up in Front For Radio broadcast on FM 101.5

Anytime—online
www.smarklc.org
YouTube.com
Facebook.com - Links

Media
Christ in our Home devotional
Please call the church office.

A NOTE ON OUR WORSHIP
TOGETHER IN THE NAVE

MASKS ARE OPTIONAL
WE ASK THAT YOU OBSERVE SOCIAL DISTANCING FOR THE SAKE OF YOURSELF AND YOUR NEIGHBOR.

PLEASE NOTE:
Worship times and places are subject to change for the sake of safety due to COVID-19
You may view our services live on St. Mark's Lutheran Church's YouTube page. Become a subscriber by going to the page and clicking on the subscribe button. The service will remain there after each service for later viewing.

http://www.youtube.com/@st.marks
lutheranchurchclar6483

Church Staff

Rev. Dr. Ted Rust: Interim Pastor (252-675-5936)
Wendy Hefner: Family Ministries Director
wendy@smarklc.org (828-270-6008)
Emily Schuttenberg: Minister of Music (828)-459-2161
Maria Wright: Preschool Director
mw9268@gmail.com (828-234-5943)
Randy Abernathy: Preschool Director
mimab@charter.net (828-781-1702)
Deanna Butcher: Finance Secretary
deanna@smarklc.org (828-459-2161)
Debbie Smith: Administrative Assistant
secretary@smarklc.org (828-459-2161)
Larry Smyre: Church Custodian (828-459-2161)

Congregation Council

2023	2024	2025
Terry Hefner	Hilka Cox	Jean Cloninger
Denise Arndt	Kendra Hendren	Blake Sigmon
Marlene Epps	Aaron Carpenter	Jonathan Ray
Carol Schaefer	Bill Dotson	Nicky Setzer

The year denotes rotation off Council.

Congregation Council meets on January 22 at 6:30pm
The next newsletter mailing will be January 10, 2024

Church Office Hours

Monday - Thursday, 9:00am—2pm

Follow Us Online

f StMarksLutheran...Claremont, NC www.smarklc.org
YouTube St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Claremont, NC



Vol. 13, No. 24
12-27-2023



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Annual Reports
due by January 31st
for the
2024 Church Yearbook.

2024
YEAR BOOK
"A GLANCE AT 2023"

ST. MARK'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
3216 West Main Street
P.O. Box 550
Claremont, NC 28610
828-459-2161

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church is a member congregation of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.




MEMORIAL/HONORARIUM GIFTS RECEIVED TO THE GLORY OF GOD

For St. Mark’s: In memory of Exie Little given by Scott & Lisa Bedington, Donna Evans and Chris Cloninger
In memory of Tim Sigmon given by Kyle & Melanie Sigmon and Chris Cloninger
In memory of Harley Brown given by Kyle & Melanie Sigmon
In memory of Mike Evans given by Chris Cloninger

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE FOLLOWING WITH ACUTE HEALTH CHALLENGES

(Those with ongoing health challenges and extended friend and family members
of St. Mark’s are listed weekly in our Sunday worship bulletin.)

Mike Benfield Gary Carpenter Jan Carpenter Chris Cloninger Eva Cloninger Keegan Dixon Alanna Dotson	Jerry Herman Jo Marilyn Hewitt Celia Hollar Tammie Hoyle Rudy Little Gaye Morrison Glenn Morrison	George Setzer Brenda Sigmon Hal Sigmon Johnny Sigmon Ryan Sigmon Larry Smyre Dee Stewart	Please pray for COVID victims. Please pray for all front line Covid caregivers. Please pray for all those isolated, and those in Assisted Living Homes.
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January Altar Guild Blake & Janet Sigmon, Cathy Sigmon	 January Tabulators Dotty Isenhour	 January Ushers Jean Cloninger & Hilka Cox	
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“Good works do not make a good man, but a good man does good work.”
Martin Luther

Jesus Presented in the Temple

Luke 2:22-40

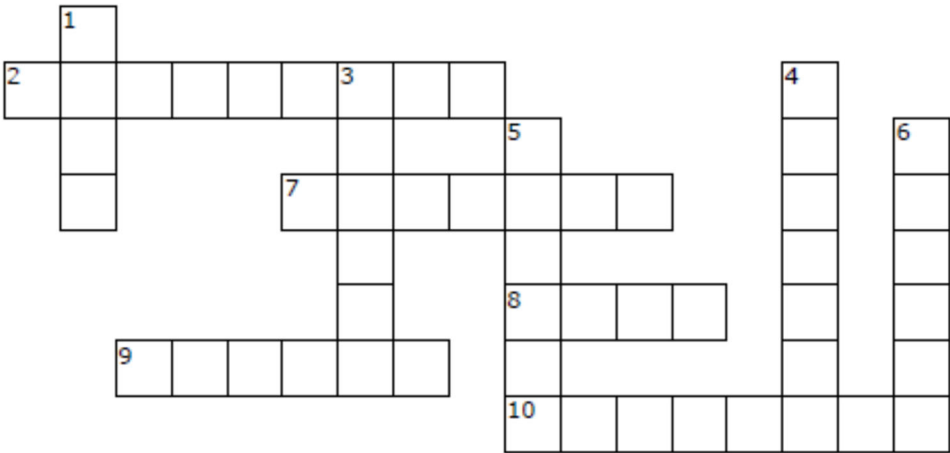
J O H I S R A E L D D L E F J
J M I A A P E H L O E O O M K
B R P W L H Z V V I I V V C K
K I K R V J P B E C G Z O E C
L G Y T A L S I Z A O H H U S
U H U E T I H I G R L U T F T
A T S M I I S M M E K E R Z Y
J E A P O E Q E O E O W D T V
E O C L N P C G D B O N H F S
S U R E O J Z R V J T N S M Q
U S I S P I R I T Z O M Q A N
S J F E P A R E N T S S H F T
P L I P P R O M I S E D E J P
B B C C K Z M A R Y P Y R P U
R O E M V M C H I L D P N O H

SPIRIT	RIGHTEOUS	PRAISED	COURTS	TEMPLE
CHILD	DEVOUT	LIGHT	JOSEPH	JESUS
PARENTS	SALVATION	ISRAEL	REVEALED	PIGEONS
SIMEON	PROMISED	DOVES	SACRIFICE	MARY



Children's Ministry Page

Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

- 2. Deliverance from the penalty of sin
- 7. Something you said that you would do
- 8. The organs for seeing in the faces of humans and animals
- 9. A building dedicated to religious ceremonies or worship
- 10. The town where Mary, Joseph, and Jesus lived

DOWN

- 1. The mother of Jesus
- 3. The homeland of the Jewish people
- 4. A person who is not Jewish
- 5. The man who was promised he would not die until he had seen the Messiah
- 6. The earthly father of Jesus

TEMPLE	SALVATION	MARY	NAZARETH	ISRAEL
SIMEON	JOSEPH	GENTILE	PROMISE	EYES



St. Mark's children's group joined St. John's Lutheran church to do some Christmas caroling at Trinity Village. A fun time was had by all.



St. Mark's Preschool Christmas program



Sipe's Orchard Home
4431 County Home Road • Conover, North Carolina • 28613 • (828) 256-5056 • www.sipesorchardhome.org

December 15, 2023

St. Mark's Lutheran Church
PO Box 550
Claremont, NC 28610

Dear Friends,

I want to thank you for your recent gift to Sipe's Orchard Home. We received your "noisy offering" donation of \$273.00 on 12/8/2023.

Sipe's Orchard Home is celebrating its 80th anniversary this year. This is an accomplishment that few non-profits achieve. One of the things I am most proud of is that we are serving more children and youth in more ways than we ever have before. We offer a driving education program, to help our youth get their licenses, which is virtually essential to a successful adult life. We have our Young Adults in Transition program, which helps our youth when they are ready to move into their own apartment and stays in touch with them after they move to help them with the inevitable bumps in the road they encounter.

Most of our teens come to us through child welfare. They come from foster care or group homes. In their late teens, they are aging out of the system, but unprepared to live independently. Others fall through the cracks in the bureaucracy. We are working with two teens who are couch-surfing or homeless. Both have experienced significant abuse, so are understandably slow to trust others. Suzy ran from an abusive home as a teen and has been on her own for about two years. She wants to complete school and has started a job even though transportation is difficult. Ivanna is homeless, with a significant mental health history. She is afraid of crowds, so she doesn't want to go to a shelter. She is smart, quiet, and wants to finish school. We will be working with both to stabilize their housing, find employment and begin working towards other goals. It is the support of donors like you that makes it possible for us to help Suzy, Ivanna, and all the other teens we serve.

Thank you for your support!

Jamie Brown
CEO

Sipe's Orchard Home is a 501-(c)-3 non-profit organization and provides no goods or services in exchange for donations. Financial information about Sipe's and a copy of our license are available from the State Solicitation Licensing Branch at 1-888-830-4989. The license is not an endorsement by the State.



Preparing children and youth for their BEST FUTURE!



TELLING THE GOSPEL CONFIDENTLY
ANNOUNCING THE REIGN OF GOD
SUMMARY BY REV. DR TED RUST

1. Telling the Gospel confidently means **“the kingdom of God has come near to you.”** (Luke 10:11) Share this good news.
2. Telling the Gospel confidently means putting into practice the **actual speaking to others** that God loves them completely through Jesus Christ.
3. Telling the Gospel confidently can be learned and practiced through church witness teams and other spiritual groups.
4. Telling the Gospel confidently means to point out God’s presence and activity in our lives and announce the reign of God the way the Lord’s followers did in the Holy Scriptures.
5. Telling the Gospel confidently involves a **more intentional awareness** of God’s presence and work in every day and in every experience and a willingness to share this with others.
6. Telling the Gospel confidently means we are **“not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone.”** (Romans 1:16) Our confidence is not in ourselves and in our abilities, but in God’s power and love which can change lives.
7. Telling the Gospel confidently is to answer this question—**“where did you notice God at work in recent days?”** This must be shared and communicated with others in a loving way, but with a sense of urgency.
8. Telling the Gospel confidently is to imagine what God is doing at a particular time and place and to share this in an authentic and merciful way with others. **“For God so loved the world.”** (John 3:16)
9. Telling the Gospel confidently begins with a passion and desire to improve one’s awareness of God’s work in daily life and improve one’s ability to communicate this good news. **Just do it and don’t worry about how worthy you are to do it.** Trust in God’s ability to use you as an instrument of his love and kingdom.
10. Telling the Gospel confidently means to see life in a new way...always surrounded by God’s grace and mercy and to begin to communicate effectively that God’s reign is breaking into our lives.
11. Telling the Gospel confidently is to share forgiveness, love, and hope with someone who is hurting.
12. Telling the Gospel confidently is to always focus on life and new possibilities rather than on death and despair. Jesus came **“that we may have life, and have it abundantly.”** You will be a positive witness to Christ’s life, death, and resurrection at all times and places...even if you stand alone.

ST MARKS CALENDAR –January 2024

January

- 1/1 HAPPY NEW YEAR! Offices Closed
- 1/3 Music Rehearsal 6:30pm
- 1/7 Adult Bible Study & coffee with Pastor Rust 9:00am
- 1/7 Baptism of our Lord 10:00am Worship Service in Sanctuary/Noisy Offering**
- 1/7 Women of the ELCA & Women of the Vine Meeting at Nobia Summer’s home 3:00pm
- 1/8 Outreach 11:00am
- 1/8 Youth/Learning Team 6:00pm
- 1/9 Congregation Care 6:00pm
- 1/9 Property Team 6:30pm
- 1/10 Music Rehearsal 6:30pm
- 1/10 Newsletter Mailed
- 1/14 Adult Bible Study & coffee with Pastor Rust 9:00am
- 1/14 2nd Sunday of Epiphany 10:00am Worship Service in Sanctuary/Installation of New Council & Altar Guild Members/Council meeting following worship service**
- 1/15 Worship/Music Team 6:00pm
- 1/15 Stewardship Team 6:30pm
- 1/17 Music Rehearsal 6:30pm
- 1/21 Adult Bible Study & coffee with Pastor Rust 9:00am
- 1/21 3rd Sunday of Epiphany 10:00am /ECCCM Food Collection**
- 1/21 Children & Youth Snowtubing, details to be announced later
- 1/22 Executive Team 6:00pm
- 1/22 Congregation Council 6:30pm
- 1/24 Music Rehearsal 6:30pm
- 1/24 Newsletter Mailed
- 1/28 Adult Bible Study & coffee with Pastor Rust 9:00am
- 1/28 4th Sunday of Advent 10:00am Worship Service in Sanctuary**
- 1/31 Music Rehearsal 6:30pm



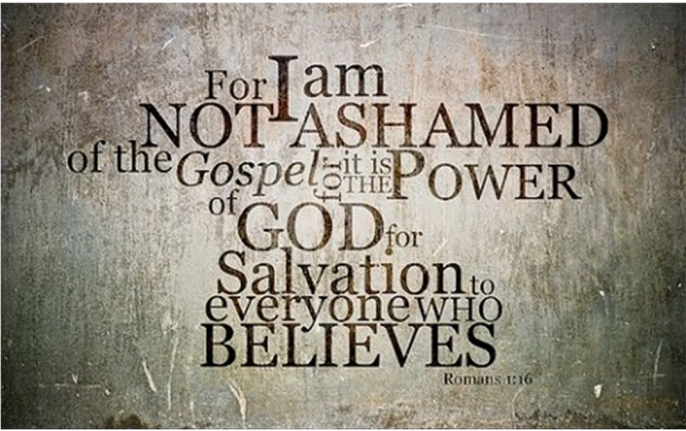
1/1 Steve & Kay Deal
 1/25 Mike & Cindy Baker



1/1 Cathy Sigmon
 1/2 Logan Bumgarner
 1/4 Tiffany Caudill, Carolyn Sigmon
 1/5 Elaine Simmons, Tenley Bohn
 1/7 Jo Marilyn Hewitt
 1/8 Judy Smyre
 1/9 Eva Cloninger
 1/10 JoAnna Sigmon
 1/15 A.J. Stephenson

1/16 Lorrie Catoe
 1/18 Caroline Huret
 1/20 Melanie Herman, Timothy Hoke
 1/21 Donna Sigmon
 1/22 Aaron Carpenter
 1/23 Macie Hefner, Joyce Pharr, Emily Pearl Moose
 1/24 Brenda Deal, Sue Karen Falls
 1/26 Brandon Hedrick, Caitlin Winters

13. Telling the Gospel confidently will often include listening, sharing, helping, welcoming, accepting, forgiving, being bold, and being inspired by people in scriptures who stepped out of their comfort zones.
14. Telling the Gospel confidently involves getting information from a person tactfully. One uses casual conversation rather than direct questioning. “Since moving to the area have you found it possible to attend church regularly?” Look for common bonds and interests.
15. Telling the Gospel confidently means to approach every person and home in a **prayerful stance** and never “apologize” for your visit. You are doing the Lord’s work. Be friendly and speak with enthusiasm about God’s Church, God’s work and Kingdom.
16. Telling the Gospel confidently is more than just “talking about Evangelism.” It is actually doing Evangelism. It is listening to another person with a loving heart and clearly announcing the reign of God and His love in their life. We seek to connect the person with God’s Church and God’s work.
17. Telling the Gospel confidently will include obeying Christ’s Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20: **“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”** If God is with us, how can we be afraid and lack confidence?
18. Telling the Gospel confidently involved **re-discovering our primary purpose which is to reach those who are not a part of Christ’s Kingdom or Church.** We are called to reach those who do not know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. We must not forget our true Biblical purpose for existence as a Church. We do not have 10 or 20 purposes in the Church—only one—to **share God’s love with others and help them become disciples in Christ’s Church. We announce God’s reign and love today! (not someday).**
19. Telling the Gospel confidently will require we follow God’s Holy Spirit and Word. The Gospel is **not** about us (and our abilities or lack of abilities), it is about God’s love, God’s kingdom, and God’s promise of everlasting life. **God’s Spirit will guide us to recapture our purpose and, once again be the Church...telling the Gospel confidently...and announcing the reign of God.**





January 2024



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<div>1</div> <div>Offices Closed</div> <div>Happy New Year</div>	<div>2</div>	<div>3</div> <div>6:30pm Music Rehearsal</div>	<div>4</div>	<div>5</div>	<div>6</div>
<div>7</div> <div>9:00am Adult Bible Study & coffee with Pastor Rust</div> <div>10:00am Baptism of our Lord Worship Service/Noisy Offering</div> <div>3:00pm Women of the ELCA & Women of the Vine meeting at Nobia Summer’s home</div>	<div>8</div> <div>11:00am Outreach</div> <div>6:00pm Youth/Learning</div>	<div>9</div> <div>6:00pm Congregation Care</div> <div>6:30pm Property Team</div>	<div>10</div> <div>6:30pm Music Rehearsal</div> <div>Newsletter Mailed</div>	<div>11</div>	<div>12</div>	<div>13</div>
<div>14</div> <div>9:00am Adult Bible Study & coffee with Pastor Rust</div> <div>10:00am 2nd Sunday of Epiphany Worship Service</div> <div>Installation of the New Council & Altar Guild members/Council meeting following worship service</div>	<div>15</div> <div>6:00pm Worship/Music</div> <div>6:30pm Stewardship Team</div>	<div>16</div>	<div>17</div> <div>6:30pm Music Rehearsal</div>	<div>18</div>	<div>19</div>	<div>20</div>
<div>21</div> <div>9:00am Adult Bible Study & coffee with Pastor Rust</div> <div>10:00am 3rd Sunday of Epiphany Worship Service/ ECCCM Food Collection</div> <div>Children & Youth Snowtubing Details TBA</div>	<div>22</div> <div>6:00pm Executive Team</div> <div>6:30pm Congregation Council</div>	<div>23</div>	<div>24</div> <div>6:30pm Music Rehearsal</div> <div>Newsletter Mailed</div>	<div>25</div>	<div>26</div>	<div>27</div>
<div>28</div> <div>9:00am Adult Bible Study & coffee with Pastor Rust</div> <div>10:00am 4th Sunday of Epiphany Worship Service</div>	<div>29</div>	<div>30</div>	<div>31</div> <div>6:30pm Music Rehearsal</div>			