

The Country Church Herald

...Proclaiming the Word of God

ST. JAMES UCC
13312 Pioneer Road
Newton, WI 53063
920.693.8100



ST. MARK'S UCC
W1307 Orchard Road
Cleveland, WI 53015
920.693.8361

PASTOR: Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz

JANUARY, 2024

January 7th —

St. Mark's: 9:00am Worship
Sunday School 9-10 at both churches
St. James: 10:30am Worship Service

January 21st —

St. Mark's: 9:00am Worship
Sunday School 9-10 at both churches
St. James: 10:30 Worship, followed
by **STJ Annual Meeting**

January 14th —

St. James: 9:00 Worship
Sunday School 9-10 at both churches
St. Mark's: 10:30am Worship, followed
by **STM Annual Meeting**

January 28th —

**Installation of Consistory Members
at both churches**
St. James: 9:00am Worship
Sunday School 9-10 at both churches
St. Mark's: 10:30 Worship

Epiphany

- January 6th coming twelve days after Christmas.
- Epiphany is derived from the Greek word meaning to show or reveal, when Christ was revealed to non-Jews.
- This time also celebrates the arrival of the Magi (Three Wise Men) who visited Jesus. As the Magi were non-Jews, Christians see their visit as a sign that Christ's message is for all nations.



Sunday bulletins & links to prayer requests are posted under the 'Messages' link on our church website: <https://www.stmstjucc.org/>

Worship Services are recorded weekly and uploaded to our church
YouTube channel: St. Mark's & St. James UCC

From the Desk of

Pastor Patrick:



Each year Brenda and I receive a multitude of Christmas cards and letters from all around. The furthest being Australia and the nearest, right here in Cleveland. Most of these tell us of family events, graduations, marriages, trips, moves... They sometimes tell us of the passing of a loved one, whom they miss dearly.

And I thought to myself, if I were to write a Christmas letter to my churches what would I include? I would certainly want to capture the moments of the Children's Christmas Programs. The grown-ups, parents and Sunday Schol teachers put such tremendous effort into these and showed great patience throughout the rehearsals and actual programs. It was a joy to see the smiles on the children's faces and their proud looks of accomplishment as they told us the Christmas Story through their own eyes.

I would want to mention baptisms. We've had a number of newborn babies over the last year, and I have been blessed to officiate over two baptisms: Blair Alyssa Sheldon and Payton Beck. They bring us smiles of pure joy when they join us on Sunday mornings. Speaking of children – St. James has so many newer born, toddlers, and little ones that our sanctuary fills with chirps and squeals, laughs and cries, and the occasional “Yeah!” which I assume is really a spirit filled “Amen!”

I would tell you of our loved ones who have joined Christ in eternal life and how much I miss them. Like Ronnie Henschel – whom I loved to visit and just talk about stuff with. Or Mary Ellen Schnelle – just up the road from me as she shared the history of the area with me. Kenny Dirks right across the road – my “neighbor” and his cousin Wayne Grunwald – both such a joy to spend time with. And Keith Sixel – he was a rascal at times and loved to talk. It is the character of such who give depth and richness to our churches, and I am thankful for them.

I would tell of the awesome Knoxville KY mission trip this last summer and give you a glimpse of the upcoming mission trip to Elliot County KY in the summer of 2024. Or of the excitement of events and activities our youth group is involved with. They are so very helpful during the times of our Chili or Ham dinners, Mission Fest. And they have such a great time learning and playing games on Youth Nights. They don't want their time together to end! And I love seeing them on Sunday mornings – all our youth! They fill my heart with great joy of things to come and promises met and kept. They are a blessing to so many.

From the Desk of Pastor Patrick...continued...

Of course, there is our volleyball team winning both league and tournament trophies this year! Thank you, Coach Bill!

I wouldn't want to leave out the new members we've added to our churches: Roxi and Mike Bernhardt, Dave & Ann Adams, Dianne Kaczmariski, Allen Jones, and Keith, Lynn and Justin Strysick.

I might share a bit about the study groups we've had on Mondays. I host them twice – once in the morning and once in the evening. The main group and I have explored knowing Christ and understanding the Bible by walking through three seasons of The Chosen. We are excited about the fourth season which is being released in February. We've also spent time with several 4-week video-based studies centering on Fears, Forgiveness and Big God Questions. We typically have over 20 people joining us and wonderfully enough around half of those attending are members at other churches (of varying denominations) and nominally churched.

We have enjoyed outdoor services, a dance at Daniel and Katie Kleinhans', Bunco night with the women, cornhole with the men, and have been blessed in having Rev. Kim Henning in the pulpit a number of times this last year.

Our virtual presence has increased on our YouTube channel with 9 new subscribers, 3,339 views of posted messages, 198 uploads and 12 likes.

I might mention this is my second year of helping to plan the Wisconsin Conference Annual Meeting and how much I enjoy working with my colleagues and the conference office. But, most assuredly I would give thanks to God for the blessings he has graced us with while serving St. Mark's and St. James. This has been an exciting, rewarding, challenging time and it is hard to believe I'm beginning my sixth year as pastor here. Each day is grace filled and each night I give thanks for the multitude of gifts God has given me and my family.

This is what I would write in my Christmas letter to my churches.

I'll see you on Sunday, my friends. God bless you.



ST. JAMES CONSISTORY

December 4, 2023 6:30 pm

The meeting was called to order by President Jackie Mueller. Members present were Jason Riesterer – Vice-President, Sheila Hemb – Treasurer, Tammy Serketich – Secretary, Jamey Binversie, Wendy Meyer, Scott Henschel, and Pastor Patrick Schultz.

- Absent: None
- Prayer led by Pastor
- Motion to approve the Secretary's Report made by Jamey and seconded by Jason
Motion carried.
- Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report made by Tammy and seconded by Jamey
Motion carried.
- Pastor's Report:
Mission/Vision Committee – Meeting scheduled 12/2 was canceled and will hopefully be rescheduled for Saturday December 9th. The next and last set of surveys will be regarding Church involvement.
Home Visits: No new visit requests. Pastor continues his regular visits
- Building and Grounds:
Steeple Repairs: Jason will contact Luebke Roofing for an estimate
Fire Inspection -Our 5-year contract with Johnson Controls expired. After discussion, regarding coverage, furnaces etc., we decided to renew the contract. Motion made by Jamey, seconded by Jason, Motion carried. Sheila will take care of renewal.
- Committee Reports:
Vision of Hope: Approve Minutes/Constitution Amendment; Motion made by Jamey, seconded by Wendy to approved minutes, Applications for funding and amendment as presented. Motion carried.
Stewardship Committee: Next meeting 12/13 at 5:30
Christian Board of Education: Met 11/12; Emma Russart will help with the program, which will be held 12/17. No Sunday School 12/24 or 12/31. Jamie's term is up.
Service Committee: - Nothing new to report
Audio Visual: New microphones will be ordered and installed before the Childrens Program
Social Committee: Bunco Ladies will not meet again until late next spring. We will be hosting a Sheepshead tournament at St. James for men/women on Sunday, February 25, 2024. More details will follow. Possible women's advent gathering NEXT year.
- Old Business:
Safe Sanctuary helper – Pastor will ask Karen to put a flyer in the bulletin. St. James needs an adult volunteer to attend the high school youth group meetings. Please consider getting to know our HS youth and volunteer. Youth will meet Friday, December 22 at 6:00 pm for their Christmas Party. Scott volunteered to attend. Thank you, Scott!
Snowplowing: Bill is willing to snowplow the church parking lot again this year. \$40 per time. Thank you, Bill!
Consistory Nominees: We continue to contact members. A few members are considering and we hope to hear back in the next week or so.

ST. JAMES CONSISTORY MINUTES CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE....

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(ST. JAMES DECEMBER CONSISTORY MINUTES CONTINUED....)

- **New Business:**
Christmas Eve morning Caroling Service – St. James will hold a Christmas Eve service Sunday Morning based on “A night like no other” Jackie is working with Randy/Cindy. We will pass out water bottles with red bows. Pastor will participate.
Gifts for Volunteers – discussion held regarding annual gifts for church volunteers. While we very much appreciate everyone’s time and donations, due to our financial situation, we are limiting financial gifts and sending Thank You’s.
Korean New Year’s Eve Service: Jackie will check with Koreans if they will be having a New Years Eve service at 11:00 PM and if so, plan for church to be opened and locked
- Congregation concerns: A few concerns discussed and will be considered.
- Next meeting date: January 8, 2023 6:30 pm
- Motion to adjourn made by Tammy and seconded by Scott. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Tammy Serketich, Secretary



A sincerest THANK YOU to one and all who contributed to the Gifting Tree again this year. It was so exciting to see the gifts multiply at church and know that this year, five special individuals will have their Christmas Wish lists fulfilled.

As you witnessed, the requests were basic and modest. Think about the joy you have just provided to others through this simple act.

God works through us all and we are most grateful!!

Happy holidays!

Deb La Duke



ST. MARK'S CONSISTORY MEETING

St. Mark's Consistory Meeting- December 7, 2023

The meeting was called to order on December 7, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. Members present were Glenn Grunwald, Judy Steinbeck, Linda Schroeder, Ben Grunwald, Julie Herrmann, Pastor Schultz, Janell Davis and Larry Perronne. Pastor led us in prayer.

Judy presented the financial report. Larry made a motion to accept the financial report as presented and Janell seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Larry made a motion to accept the Secretary's report as presented and Ben seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Judy will check to see if more candles need to be purchased for the candelabras.

We reviewed the seating and food purchased for mission fest and decided to order less food for next year. Also acknowledged all the work that Dave and Cindy Call do for the event. Thank you Dave and Cindy, we appreciate all that you do!

Jan Marcheske will no longer be a member of the altar committee and we are in need of someone to volunteer to help out.

We would like to form a landscape committee to take care of raking leaves, trimming bushes and maintaining the church grounds. Will post in the monthly newsletter that we are looking for help.

We reviewed the candidates for the replacement of consistory members for next year.

Candy bags will be prepared for the children and shut-ins to be handed out at the children's Christmas program on Sunday, December 17th.

Consistory members will place the stable in church for the children's program and it will be taken down the first week in January.

When the parking lot lines are done we will paint lines for an accessible handicapped stall near the basketball hoop.

Janell made a motion to research the purchase of a programmable thermostat and an automatic door closer for the church office and Linda seconded the motion. Motion carried. Larry will research options for the thermostat and Glenn will research the auto door closer. This will allow the office to not be heated continuously and be a cost savings when no one is there.

Judy would like a replacement for her role on the rural church fellowship committee. This committee meets four times a year to assist with mission trips, crop walk and other activities to get rural churches together.

Lynn, Keith and Justin Stryck will be joining our church on Sunday, December 10th. Cake and ice cream will be served.

The member list was completed with eight new members at St. Mark's this year.

Plans were made for setting up communion on December 24th for the 4:00 and 7:00 services.

ST. MARK'S CONSISTORY MEETING, CON'T

(ST. MARK'S DECEMBER CONSISTORY MINUTES CONTINUED....)

It was mentioned to be sure the youth are not in the balcony during non church times due to the expensive camera equipment.

Judy suggested inviting the Call2Praise band to perform during a church service. Pastor will contact them to get more details.

We went through the annual report and made changes for 2024 preparation for the annual meeting.

An email will go out to remind members of the month that they signed up to be a greeter/usher. The consistory members will take turns in sending emails.

Budget and hourly increases for church employees were discussed.

Linda made a motion to approve changing the suggested giving amount to \$1,100 per member for the general fund in 2024. Ben seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Our next meeting is scheduled for January 4, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

Janell made a motion to adjourn. Larry seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Herrmann
Consistory Secretary



St. Mark's is in need of a few people to help maintain the church grounds for spring clean up, trimming bushes in the summer and fall clean up.

Please let a consistory member know if you are interested.



Thank you to Janice Marcheske for all of her time & talent on St. Mark's altar committee. We appreciate everything she has done for so many years for our church family!

We are looking for a new member for the committee so let us know if you are interested.



A special thank you to Dave & Cindy Call and all their efforts for another successful Mission Fest meal!

We appreciate all those that helped but are especially thankful for the leadership of Dave and Cindy.

We appreciate all that you do!



**Forgiveness saves the expense of anger
the high cost of hatred,
and the waste of energy.**

~St. James Stewardship Team

MISSION VISION TEAM UPDATE

The Church Ministry and Pastoral Assessment survey results will be published in the Annual Report and discussed at the Annual Meeting.

The Mission Vision team would like to thank everyone who participated in the surveys.

One final Church Involvement survey will be distributed in early January, to help assess the level of congregational involvement.

Mission Vision Team:
Clarence Belitz, Deb LaDuke,
Bruce Mansker, Jason Riesterer,
Sandy Perronne, Pastor Patrick

RCF

Judy Steinbeck would like a replacement for her role as St. Mark's rep. on the Rural Church Fellowship committee. This committee meets four times a year to assist with mission trips, crop walk and other activities to get rural churches together.

Please contact Judy for details.

ST. JAMES CHOIR

Rehearsal will be held:

Wednesday, Jan. 17th, 6:30pm

Wednesday, Jan. 24th, 6:30pm

Wednesday, Jan. 31st, 6:30pm



ST. MARK'S CHOIR

Rehearsal will be held:

Wednesday, January 31st, 7pm

Welcome...

Mejcowe...

To St. Mark's new members,
Lynn, Keith and Justin Strysick!
We are happy you joined our church
family on December 10th!

(Justin is not pictured)



A Special Thank You...

We are so thankful for the love, compassion, and support from Pastor Patrick and the congregation of St. Mark's and St. James Church, especially upon our taking membership vows this Sunday.

We became members of St. Mark's UCC on Sunday, December 10, 2023, and were deeply grateful and humbled by the wonderful welcome everyone shared with us.

We did so enjoy visiting with so many, and unfortunately did not get to speak with everyone. We apologize to those we missed and look forward to visiting with you in the future!

Thank you all for making us feel so welcome. We look forward to officially being part of such a wonderful, loving church. and will do all we can to support this ministry.

In His Love,

Keith, Lynn, (& Justin) Strysick



**St. James
Sunday
School
Christmas
Program!**





To the St. Mark's Congregation and Consistory:

We all want to truly thank you for the beautiful card and gift of money we received after the Children's Program on Sunday evening!

As many of you know, a lot of time and effort goes into the Christmas Program and please know we felt all the love and prayers while prepping these amazing kids in our church!

Bravo to the hard work and dedication of the kids (and parents) we have in our church, they did a fantastic job!!

We hope you all had a wonderful holiday season!

With love and blessings,

Your Sunday School staff

HS YOUTH—FROM BRENDA SCHULTZ— Happy New Year! We are looking forward to another retreat at Daycholah Center January 26-28: this time it is geared toward high school and college age students. Here is an excerpt from the website: "High schoolers and college-age young adults, join us for an experience that transcends the ordinary—because your weekend deserves to be extraordinary. Press pause on the stress of school life and get ready for a weekend of relaxation, camaraderie with friends, and an infusion of winter camp excitement that will recharge your spirits and take your faith journey to new heights! Ages 14-23."

The cost is \$240.00 with a \$50.00 deposit going toward that fee IF registering before January 7.

After that, the fee is \$250.00 total. I am looking into scholarships with the Northeast Association of the UCC and we will be fundraising either before or after the retreat.

ANYONE in that age group that is a member of St. Mark's/St. James is eligible to attend. You do not have to be a regular youth group attendee to come to this retreat and we would welcome your presence! You can register here: <https://ucci.org/events/winter-soulstice-retreat/>

We will be shooting for a trip to Sunburst at the end of February, final details to be ironed out soon!

IF we get any snow in January, we will try to schedule a sledding trip (followed by hot chocolate and other treats at church) to Vollrath Bowl in Sheboygan, but that is weather dependent of course, therefore I do not yet have a date.

January 7 we will get together at St. Mark's for our meal/lesson/game session, and on January 21 at St. James for the same. Looking forward to a fun-filled snowy month! If you have any questions, please contact Brenda Schultz.

ST. JAMES USHERS

January

****Brian and Sheila Hemb
Rieck & Sandy Beiersdorf
Kim Grotegut
Tom Kleinhans
Amy Christianson
Alyssa Grotegut
Ashley Grotegut
Christopher Grotegut**

February

*** Richard & Sarah Lutze
Jamey Binversie
Sadie Koenig
Cole Binversie
Joe & Cindy Klapperich
David Lutze
Matthew Lutze**



VISION OF HOPE-ST. JAMES

"Application for Funding" forms are available in the narthex, from VISION OF HOPE Committee members, or under "More" on our church website. We welcome specific requests as well as your suggestions for using our semiannual gifts from the Wagner Foundation.

STUDENTS! Use this form for tuition help (currently \$1,000) each year.

ST. MARK'S USHERS

JANUARY

**Bruce Mansker
Karen Mansker
Chris Schnelle
Brenda Miota**

FEBRUARY

**Linda Schroeder
Jon Herrmann
Julie Herrmann
*(one more person needed)***

READERS

**Jan. 7 — Sandy Perronne
Jan. 14— Scott Siekman
Jan. 21— Lori Roelse
Jan. 28— Jacob Grunwald**

HOSPITALITY

**Jan. 7 — Sandy Perronne
Jan. 14 — available
Jan. 21 — Margene Reyer
Jan. 28 — none needed**

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

St. James

St. Mark's

54	Dec. 3	45
54	Dec. 10	58
	Dec. 17	
89	(program during worship at STJ)	
*	(morning worship)	57
*	(STM program-5pm)	64

ST JAMES JANUARY CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Karen Krause
- 7 Jim Becker II
- 8 Aubriana Peterson
- 17 Andrew Nye
- 21 Scott Henschel
Williem Langenhahn
- 24 Henry Langenhahn, Jr.
- 25 Gavin Marcoe
- 29 Allyson Wasmer

ANNIVERSARIES

None



If you or a family member are in need of pastoral care, please contact Pastor Patrick at 920-693-2858 or leave a message on the church's answering machine at: 920-693-8361.

Pastor Patrick has designated Tuesdays & Fridays as his day of Sabbath and his day out of the office. During those two days each week, you may contact him in case of an emergency only at 608-352-9544.

Confidentiality laws make it difficult for pastors to obtain information about anyone in the hospital. If you or a loved one will be in the hospital, please call the church office 920-693-8361 or contact Pastor Patrick at 920-693-



REPORTS TO GO INTO THE CHURCH ANNUAL REPORTS ARE DUE:

St. Mark's—Tues., Jan. 2nd
(meeting is Jan. 14)

St. James—Tues., Jan. 9th
(meeting is Jan. 21)

The documents should be sent to me ready to be published — just the way you want it.

Email them to:
stmstjoffice@gmail.com

ST MARK'S JANUARY CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

- 5 Terri Grunwald
- 7 Corey Vandoske
- 9 Scott Siekman
- 11 Azalea Heling
- 12 Margene Reyer
- 14 Brenda Miota
Tim Schueler
- 16 Andy Schnelle
Warren Vandoske
- 18 Hailey Hermann
- 23 Ray Brickner
Jason Bramstedt
- 29 Nancy Sixel

ANNIVERSARIES

- 10 Kevin & Betty Kellner
- 14 Gary & Sheri Kaestner

Please report any corrections or additions on the birthday and anniversary lists to Karen in the church office:
stmstjoffice@gmail.com



HELP SUPPORT OUR 2024
MISSION TEAM AT...

Culver's

SHARE NIGHT

Monday, Jan. 15th: 4pm. - 8pm.

Please present our share slip or mention our name (St. Mark's, St. James, & Immanuel U.C.C.) so that a % of all sales will go toward our mission trip to Elliot County, Kentucky.

Valid only
at Culver's
Hwy. 42!

**The slip to present at Culver's on Monday, January 15th is on the next page.
Feel free to make copies, be sure it remains a full-page in size
(Culver's requirement)**

Share Night Slips



Culver's®

A portion of the sales raised from this slip will go to
(St Marks / St James U.C.C/ Immanuel Mission Trip)

Amount: \$ _____

No additional coupons or discounts to be applied. Good only
on (January 15th). Valid only at Culver's on 4225 State HWY 42

Feel free to make extra copies and hand them out! ☺