



MARK TIMES

December 24, 2017 + The Fourth Sunday of Advent



From Brother Martin...

Among his many roles—theologian, reformer, professor, scholar, exegete, hymnodist, and prolific author—Martin Luther probably considered his role as preacher to be most important. Biographer Roland H. Bainton writes, "Luther is at his best and most characteristic in his sermons on the Nativity," and then excerpts one of them in which Luther unfolds the familiar story of Joseph and Mary traveling to Bethlehem:



The inn was full. No one would release a room to this pregnant woman. She had to go to a cow stall and there bring forth the Maker of all creatures because nobody would give way. Shame on you, wretched Bethlehem! The inn ought to have been burned with brimstone, for even though Mary had been a beggar maid or unwed, anybody at such a time would have been glad to give her a hand. There are many of you in this congregation who think to yourselves: "If only I had been there! How quick I would have been to help the baby! I would have washed his linen! How happy I would have been to go with the shepherds to see the Lord lying in the manger!" Yes you would! You say that because you know how great Christ is, but if you had been there at that time you would have done no better than the people of Bethlehem. Childish and silly thoughts are these! Why don't you do it now? You have Christ in your neighbor. You ought to serve him, for what you do to your neighbor in need you do to the Lord Christ himself.

Martin Luther loved Christmas. The joy he derived from the festival each year not only overflowed in his own composition of such familiar carols as "From Heaven Above to Earth I Come," but also recharged his spirit for the many struggles in his continually challenged life.

– Paul L. Meier, Christianity Today, Dec. 2008

December 24/Advent 4 Service

This morning we are pleased to celebrate the Fourth Sunday of Advent with our friends from St. George's with a **joint service of Advent Lessons & Carols at 9:30AM** in the chapel.



Christmas Services

- + TONIGHT, December 24, 7:00PM:
Festival Christmas Eve liturgy *w/children's pageant*
- + Monday, December 25, 9:00AM:
Christmas Day liturgy
- + Sunday, December 31, 9:00AM:
Liturgy with Christmas Lessons & Carols



Chocolate & Coffee!

Did you forget a gift for someone? Need something quick, easy and available THIS MORNING?? Head down to the Parish Hall before or after worship and pick up some **fair trade coffee & chocolate** for sale. These products are not only delicious but **good for workers & the lands they farm.**



Thanks Carol Singers!

THANK YOU to our MANY members who brought some Christmas cheer to 8 of our homebound members on December 10. Your efforts gave much joy to those folks who cannot get out-and-about as they might like.



Thank you Lunch Packers!

Janet J. reports that our St. Mark crew **packed 84 lunches** this past Tuesday to help provide additional meals over the Christmas break to the 12 especially needy children at Franklin School. She said, "the secretaries were so thankful and told me how much they appreciated what our church does for their children." What a blessing it is to share with others!

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

Monday, 12/25	9:00AM	The Divine Liturgy for Christmas Day
Monday - Tuesday		Office Closed
Sunday, 12/31	9:00AM	Liturgy with Christmas Lessons & Carols
	10:20AM	Coffee & Fellowship
		No Education Hour

Offerings for December 17, 2017

Sunday worship attendance:	98
General Fund Donations	\$5,020
Christmas Flowers	\$45
Food Pantry	\$5
Coffee Fund	\$7
Sunday AM Coffee	\$37

Date	Offerings	Expenses	Difference
12/3-12/9	\$3,379	\$172.48	\$3,506.52
12/10-12/16	\$2,046	\$633.35	\$1,412.65
12/17-12/23	\$5,020	\$11,183.06	-\$6,163.06
YTD	\$156,500.70	\$169,687.29	-\$13,186.59

Food Pantry Needs...

The food pantry spotlight items for December are **soap products**. Bar soap, dish detergent, and laundry detergent are needed. You can bring donated items to the Welcome Area on Sundays or to the church office during the day. Thank you!



Trivia Night 2018!

Shake off the holiday fog at Lutheran Campus Ministry's annual trivia night on **Saturday, February 3** at 6:30PM! Register at <http://lcmstl.org/trivia/> \$20 per person or \$160/table of 8.



105 East "D" Street, Belleville, IL 62220
 Office: 618.233.9809 Fax: 618.233.4090
 Pastor Brian's cell phone: 314.363.6784

Email: office@stmarkbelleville.org
pastor@stmarkbelleville.org
 Website: stmarkbelleville.org

Sunday, December 31, 2017

LOOKING AHEAD

LESSONS:
 Genesis 22:15-18
 Micah 5:2-5
 Luke 2:8-16
 Matthew 2:1-11
 Luke 14:1a, 7-14
 John 1:1-14

WORSHIP SERVERS
Co-President: The Rev. Brian M. Robison
Assisting Minister: Greg Guenther
Acolyte: Grace Moeller
Crucifer: Rex Rothgangel
Chalice Bearer: TBD
Lector: Don Muller
Ushers: Don Muller & Nancy Guenther

LST at St. Mark

The next course from the Lutheran School of Theology in St. Louis offered HERE at St. Mark is titled "**CHRIST AND CULTURE REVISITED.**"



In this 4-week class, the **Rev. Dr. Warren Crews** explores the question, "**How does our faith relate to all that is going on in our country and our world?**" In 1951 H. Richard Niebuhr published *Christ and Culture*, a classic on the ways Christians have applied their faith to the issues arising in the culture around them. But our culture has changed dramatically since Niebuhr's time when Christianity was firmly established in culture. Crews will present Niebuhr's five models to allow the class to evaluate how well they work today and then he will offer some new approaches.

DATES: Tuesdays, January 23 through February 20, with no class February 13. 7:00 - 9:30 p.m.

Tuition:

\$59 by January 10, \$64 after

Register at www.lststl.org/courses, by phone to LST at 314-918-2556 or by email to registrar@lststl.org.