

# 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

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## January 2026

### January 4th -

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

### January 11th -

St. James: 9:00am Worship  
Sunday School 9-10 at St. James  
St. Mark's: 10:30am Worship  
\*Annual Meeting following shortened  
Worship Service at St. Mark's

### January 18th -

St. Mark's: 9:00am Worship  
St. James: 10:30am Worship Service  
Sunday School 9-10 at St. James  
\*Annual Meeting following shortened  
Worship Service at St. James

### January 25th -

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

Visit our Church Website: <https://www.stmarksstjamesucc.org>  
Worship Services are recorded weekly and uploaded to our church  
YouTube channel: St. Mark's & St. James UCC  
Visit & follow:  
Facebook: St. Marks & St. James UCC  
(Invite your family & friends to our Facebook page)

## *From Pastor Patrick....*

I say this more and more as I get older, but wow! did last year fly by. Here we are already – January 1<sup>st</sup>. This day is a signpost; a reminder of the gift given to us of a new day, a new year, a new beginning right here before us. We can leave behind the low points and whatever we might think are our failures of 2025 and begin again. We can build upon our high points and our successes as each day brings new and endless opportunities.

Michael Bublé would sing it this way:

It's a new dawn, it's a new day

It's a new life, for me

And I'm feeling good

I'm feeling good.

Some of us are starting anew after losing a spouse or child. Some of us are entering a new phase of our career or starting over with a new job. Some have just moved – into a first ever house, a larger or smaller house, an assisted living home, or back in with family. Many of us will once again begin our January diet.

You know that diet, don't you? It and I are intimately acquainted. We meet up each January 1<sup>st</sup> and renew our old friendship. We smile and slap each other on the back reminiscing about olden days making new promises for the year to come. We both kind of know that we only have about four weeks together and then, well... then life gets in the way, and we lose energy, our commitment flags, and with a half sad smile edged with relief we wave our goodbyes and promise to meet up again next January 1<sup>st</sup>. Yeah, that's the January diet in all its glory.

Wouldn't it be sad if that is the kind of commitment and promise our Lord made with us? Good for about four weeks and then life gets in the way and we drift apart. Surely, there is no gainsaying our particular role in the “drifting apart” part. We let life: busy schedules, bad days and bad news, waning energies and easier paths get in our way. And we are the ones looking back and waving goodbye while the Lord looks on with a sad smile. Not for himself, mind you!

God's sadness is on our behalf! We're the ones missing out, not him. Missing out on his love, comfort, the promise of hope. Until one day, we once again turn back to the Lord and renew old acquaintances, share some stories and make new promises. ... New promises for us. You see, the Lord never changes nor forsakes. The Lord has always been there for us each and every day!

That's part of his “thing” you know – always being there for us, no matter what. Even and especially in those dark days when life has us down and the changes seem way too big for us to handle.

Friends, rest assured. As we enter this new year we do so with God.  
God who will not leave us. God is with you. God is always with you.

Peace and blessings everyone!

*Patrick*

Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz

# ST. MARK'S CONSISTORY MEETING

## Regular Consistory Meeting – December 11, 2025

Ben Grunwald called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Consistory members present were Lori Roelse, Tyler Bramstedt, Brenda Miota, Pastor Patrick Schultz, Judy Steinbeck, Linda Schroeder, and Ben Grunwald. Jody Binversie was absent.

Pastor led us in prayer.

Judy offered the Financial Report. She was happy to report the current state of the finances has improved due to the generosity of our congregation. Our OCWM goal is short by \$2,000 at this time. It was decided to only give what has been collected. There was some discussion on the Goeke Youth Fund. Tyler made a motion to accept the report. Linda seconded. Motion carried.

The Secretary's Report was offered up online and reviewed earlier. There were no additions or corrections at that time. Linda made a motion to accept the report. Tyler seconded. Motion carried.

Pastor started his report by updating us on his upcoming surgeries in January. A letter is to go out informing the congregation. Keith Weiland, retired pastor from Howards Grove, will be filling in for Pastor in his 6-7 week absence. Pastor also reported on the improved relations and communications with our web provider. Karen is pleased to be working with a new individual, Kevin, who is more timely and cooperative. Third, Pastor passed around a brochure that he had picked up from Pilgrim UCC wondering if we could put together something similar for our congregation. He then mentioned the 10 year old age of the sign outside and inquired on upgrades by the installation company. Finally he informed us that the Confirmation kids did not visit Immanuel UCC on their scheduled date due to the weather. It shall be rescheduled.

The only projects left to be completed are the bell tower, louvers and railing. Tabled until the spring.

Old business:

- Ben dug into the DSPS inspection situation. He asked Judy to look at the insurance policy to determine who is named there as inspector of the boiler. If it can not be determined, we will need to call the state.
- Mission Statement Display is on hold in Jody's absence. She communicated that she would be following up with the sign company the next day.
- Mission Fest in November went really well. There was discussion on possible changes for next year. Tyler mentioned that the large coffee pot no longer percolates and could be replaced. Lori suggested we stick with only pies and tortes next year. We commented that the speaker was well received and discussed the possibility of donating a meal sometime soon for Home, Inc or at the Warming Center.
- The Social Media struggle continues. There was much discussion on the difficulty and expense in linking the Facebook posts to Instagram. It was suggested that we encourage members of the congregation to post Google Reviews via Google Maps in the meantime. We welcome all members of the congregation to post a review as well. Follow this link. [https://www.google.com/maps/place/St+Marks+United+Church-Christ/@43.8771318,-87.7644706,17z/data=!4m8!3m7!1s0x88035b9bda040445:0xf5fe6131fcb9553d!8m2!3d43.877128!4d-87.761901!9m1!1b!16s%2Fq%2F1v8j0\\_sz?authuser=0&entry=ttu&q\\_ep=EgoyMDI1MTIwOS4wIKXMDSoASAFQAw%3D%3D](https://www.google.com/maps/place/St+Marks+United+Church-Christ/@43.8771318,-87.7644706,17z/data=!4m8!3m7!1s0x88035b9bda040445:0xf5fe6131fcb9553d!8m2!3d43.877128!4d-87.761901!9m1!1b!16s%2Fq%2F1v8j0_sz?authuser=0&entry=ttu&q_ep=EgoyMDI1MTIwOS4wIKXMDSoASAFQAw%3D%3D)
- Wendy Schueler and Mike Bernhardt are set to replace Linda and Ben on the consistory. Lori volunteered to install the new members in January in Pastor's absence.
- Christmas Bingo is all set for December 14, 2025. Lori updated us on how many are set to attend. She reviewed the list of tasks to be completed prior to Sunday.
  - Chili Dinner at St. James will need to be discussed at the Joint Meeting on February 9, 2026.

## ST. MARK'S CONSISTORY MEETING, continued...

### New Business:

- Red Cross Shelter Location - Pastor responded to the emails from the Red Cross. We confirmed that we are a shelter location, but better for short-term as we have no beds or showers. Pets would not be allowed. Pastor and/or the St. Marks office will be contact points.
- Pastor's January/February schedule - Pastor's two surgeries are set for January 6 and January 22, 2026. Keith Weiland will start in Pastor's place on January 4, 2026 and continue serving for approximately 6-7 weeks. Dan Borschers is set to cover the February 1, 2026 service with Keith back on February 8, 2026. Pastor plans to be back on February 15, 2026.
- Snow removal between the parsonage, church and parking lot - Judy will call for a quote on the cost of the additional shoveling.

Christmas Eve services are set for 4:00 and 7:00 p.m with Communion. I, Brenda, will purchase the bread. Service commitments - Linda and Brenda at 4:00 - need two more; Lori, Ben, Tyler and Brenda at 7:00.

Our next meeting is set for Tuesday, December 30, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. Pastor will invite Keith Weiland to attend. Lori will extend an invitation to Wendy and Mike as well.

Pastor made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 p.m. Linda seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda L Miota

### ST. MARK'S FINANCIAL NEWS

The consistory and I would like to thank all of the people who stepped up this year to cover special events and respond to our financial needs. It is a pleasure to work with this church.

Reminder – The financial books close on December 29. Please make sure that your donations are received prior to that date if you want them posted for 2025 contributions.

May you all have a blessed Christmas and a prosperous new year!

Judy Steinbeck, St. Mark's Financial Secretary

# ST. JAMES CONSISTORY MEETING

December 2, 2025

- The meeting was called to order by David Lutze. Members present were Sheila Hemb – Treasurer, Tanya Boman, and Pastor.
- Absent: Scott Henschel, Wendy Meyer, Jamie Henschel, and Matt Lutze.
- Prayer led by Pastor.
- Motion to approve the Secretary's report was made by Tanya and seconded by Sheila. Motion carried.
- Motion to approve the Treasurer's report was made by David and seconded by Tanya. Motion carried.
- Pastor's report: Pastor shared that the Confirmation Class would be touring Immanuel UCC's food pantry in December and Lakeland in January for the UCC retreat.
- Buildings and Grounds:
  - Oostburg completed the gutters and guards on 11/19/25. The bill for \$10,743 was given to Sheila and Wendy shared a copy with Daniel Kleinhans. There is a lifetime warranty on the Gutter Cap. Wendy sent in the form on 11/19/25.
  - Special thank you to Jonathan Meyer and Ryan Binversie from Sixel & Schwinn for fixing the light in the parking lot and donating their time and materials.
  - Jeff & Wendy Meyer trimmed the shrubs around the south and west side of church. Scott to check with T & L for further trimming on the east side.
- Committee reports:
  - Vision of Hope – The below donation list was reviewed and a motion to approve was made by Pastor and seconded by Tanya.
    - \$1000 – Ruby Jump – Bachelors in Education
    - \$1200 – Randy Sohn for Beautification of Church
    - \$500 – Pat Kleinhans – We Believe Foundation
    - \$500 – Cindy Klapperich – Tiny Angels
    - Up to \$500 – Doris Sprenger – Quilting Materials
    - \$2000 – InCourage (formerly Manitowoc County Domestic Violence)
    - Up to \$300 – Adopt-A-Family Christmas gifts
    - \$2000 – Dogs2Dog Tags
    - \$2000 – United Church Men and Women
    - \$2000 – Salvation Army
    - \$2000 – Daycholah Center
    - \$2000 – Moon Beach Camp
    - \$2000 – Holy Joe's Café
    - \$2000 – Peter's Pantry Manitowoc
    - \$2000 – Safe Harbor of Sheboygan County
    - \$2000 – Sheboygan County Food Bank
    - \$750 – St James Cemetery Association
    - \$500 – Darla Otto (Professional Family Services in Kiel)
    - \$500 – Ripple Effects of Kindness for Manitowoc County
  - Stewardship Committee:
    - Meeting held Dec 1 – went over current financial status which is very similar to last year. Discussed the letters that were sent to inactive members. Received minimal responses. Need new Stewardship Committee members for next year. Possible candidates: Pat Kleinhans, Raymond Henschel, David Lorfeld, Linda Lorfeld.

# ST. JAMES CONSISTORY MEETING--continued

- Stewardship Committee—continued...
  - Discussed the request to post “shut-ins”, assisted living, nursing homes, etc. names and locations in the newsletter. The concern about privacy was discussed and we would need the family approval before moving forward. There was also a concern about the person receiving garbage mailings, robocalls, etc.
- Christian Board – Christmas Program on December 21. Wendy will pick up bags and treats.
- Social committee – no report
- Old Business:
  - The Mission Statement display is being worked on and hope to have it up by Christmas.
  - Special thank you to the following who have volunteered for consistory next term – Kristin Zolltheis and Cindy Klapperich. Still in need of one more. Need to announce in church.
  - Special thank you to Heidi Belitz for providing the candles for Memorial Sunday.
  - Scott to check with the volunteers to see if they will continue in 2026.
    - Sohn’s – janitor, organist, choir – yes
    - David Lorfeld – opening door
    - Linda Lorfeld – communion
    - Barb Reimer – mail
    - Bill Heckmann – snow
  - Mary Ann Vogel will continue to chair the Brat Fry & Service Committee.
  - Special thank you to Deb LaDuke for organizing the Adopt-A- Family trees in the back of church.
- New Business:
  - Scott will put the wreaths on the Oemichan grave.
  - Chili Dinner – Kari Langenhahn will mentor the next chairperson. St. James & St. Marks will run the chili dinner together. Kari would like for someone else to do the grocery shopping. The money will go to the OCWM funds.
  - Annual meeting will be held on January 18.
  - Scott will be in charge of bread for communion on December 25.
  - Cards and gifts for volunteers will be handed out on December 21.
  - Trees will be taken down on January 6.
- Congregation concerns: none
- Next meeting date: January 6, 2026 at 6:30 pm
- Motion to adjourn made by Tanya and seconded by David. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Wendy Meyer, Secretary



No choir for the month of January. It will be winter recess.

Cindy and Randy Sohn





## St James Sunday School Program





# WELCOME...

to St. James newest member,

Scott Kafka!

We are so glad you joined our church family



Many thanks to everyone who participated in the Adopt-A-Family gift program. Presented to us were two families to support – a single mom with three daughters, and a mom and dad with three boys. The lists were not large or extravagant but humble and easy to fill.

Once again, the members of St. James and the Vision of Hope Committee have succeeded in surprising families with a bright Christmas morning. You have changed their world.

When we look at the Golden Rule in Matthew 7:12 as an ethical foundation, we can pray these acts will be paid forward also in the future.

May God bless you with your own wonderful memories created on Christmas morning!

With gratitude,  
Deb La Duke

## IMPORTANT DATES IN JANUARY:

Annual Meetings will be held at each church this month, St. Mark's on Jan. 11<sup>th</sup> and St. James on Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>, both after a shortened worship service.

Annual Reports are due to Karen, [stmstjoffice@gmail.com](mailto:stmstjoffice@gmail.com) St. Mark's Reports are due on Fri., Jan. 2<sup>nd</sup> and St. James Reports are due on Fri., Jan. 9<sup>th</sup>.



## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT – SHELDON FAMILY



This month's Member Spotlight shines on the Sheldon family: Abbey, Brett, and Blair. Abbey, daughter of Sandy and Larry Perronne, has been a lifelong member of St. Mark's. Brett grew up at First Congregational UCC in Sheboygan.

They are a busy, young family! Abbey is an RN at Aurora in Two Rivers. After lots of dedication and studying, she recently completed her certification to be a Lactation Consultant. New parents and their newborns will definitely benefit from her expertise! Brett is Director of E-Sports at Lakeland University. Both are into running; Abbey and Brett completed a half-marathon in October! Blair loves coloring, gymnastics, and swimming.

Abbey's special memories of St. Mark's include the childhood Christmas pageants. She and Brett treasure Pastor Patrick performing their wedding at Abloom Farm in Saukville. Blair's baptism is another precious, endearing memory.

Something they love about our church is that it is both comforting and comfortable. A hope for the future is that there will be more children to share the Sunday School experience with Blair when she is old enough.

Abbey, Brett, and Blair, you bring light and life to our church family!



**Thank you all who have supported  
the North food closet. Everything  
that you donated has been used by  
our students.**

**Thank you  
Janell Davis**

**Bethlehem Chili Supper**

**11608 Lax Chapel Rd – Kiel**



**Wednesday Feb 4, 2026**  
**3:00 pm- 6:00 pm**

**Drive Thru/Pick Up Only**

❖ **Meal deal - \$10.00**  
Ready-to-Heat Chili,  
Fresh Bread, Cheese, Crackers, & Homemade Tortes

❖ **Gallon of Chili - \$20.00**



*My sincere appreciation to all those  
who shared prayers for me during the  
last couple of months. The Birthday,  
Thanksgiving, Get Well Wishes, along  
with cards, visits, food, and phone calls  
were all outstanding caring from my  
fantastic friends.*

*Thanks to all who helped with my  
journey of recovery.*

*Marlene Kammann*

# ST. JAMES USHERS

## JANUARY

\* Jamie & Heather Henschel  
Rieck & Sandy Beiersdorf  
Brian and Sheila Hemb  
Tom Kleinhans  
Amy Christianson  
Alyssa Grotegut  
Ashley Grotegut  
Christopher Grotegut  
Charlie & Ruth Ann Kolb  
Ashley Lutzke  
Ethan Lutzke  
Linda Lutzke

## FEBRUARY

*You will be notified.*



## ST. JAMES VISION OF HOPE

"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 & GREETERS

## JANUARY

Bruce & Karen Mansker  
Jim & Patty Taylor

## FEBRUARY

Jon & Julie Herrmann  
Mike & Roxi Bernhardt

## READERS

Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> - Sandy Perronne  
Jan. 11<sup>th</sup> - Scott Siekman  
Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> - Lori Roelse  
Jan. 25<sup>th</sup> - Jacob Grunwald

**\*\*Let Pastor or Karen know if you're interested in reading.**



If you or a family member are in need of pastoral care or are hospitalized, please contact Pastor Patrick by calling the church office, 920-693-8361, or Pastor Patrick's cell phone, 608-352-9544. You may also email Pastor: schultzpw@gmail.com

## CHURCH ATTENDANCE

### St. James

### St. Mark's

30	Thanksgiving Eve	*
23	November 30 <sup>th</sup>	27
41	December 7 <sup>th</sup>	55
39	December 14 <sup>th</sup>	54
Blue Christmas Service at SJ-weather cancellation		
**	December 21 <sup>st</sup>	44

**\*\*will be reported next month**



# St. James January Celebrations!

## BIRTHDAYS

We wish Scott Kafke a very happy December 29<sup>th</sup> birthday!

### January

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

## ANNIVERSARIES

None



Please report any corrections or additions on the birthday and anniversary lists to Karen in the church office:

[stmstjoffice@gmail.com](mailto:stmstjoffice@gmail.com)

OR call 920-693-8361

so that the information will be correct on future publications.



Please let Karen, the church secretary, know if you have a change in your mailing address, email or phone number.

You may either note the change on the Welcome Card, email the church office:

[stmstjoffice@gmail.com](mailto:stmstjoffice@gmail.com) or call the church office 920.693.8361.

# 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 Warren Vandoske
- 18 Hailey Hermann
- 23 Jason Bramstedt
- Ray Brickner
- 29 Nancy Sixel

## ANNIVERSARIES

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

From St. James Stewardship Team:

Out of the mouths of babes  
come the remarks  
parents wish  
they had never made  
in the first place.