

December 2021 / January 2022

# The GOOD NEWS Newsletter

## Emanuel Lutheran Church

241 S. Prospect Street  
Marion, OH 43302  
740-383-2184

emanuel1@emanuellutheran.net

www.emanuellutheran.net

Find us on Facebook!

### Church Staff:

Pastor Mark Schuring

Deacon Kevin Kehn

Administrative Assistant:

Ashley Koehler

Financial Secretary:

Ed Stofcheck

Children's Ministry Coordinator:

Cindy Rinker

Building Supervisor: Carl Jones

Building Maintenance:

Frank Fanello

Child Care Director:

Abby Chase

Door Attendants:

Jim Stroupe, Brian and

Christy Penrod, Pat Thomas

Music Minister: Allan Lust

Assistant Organist: Sandra Becker

Part-Time Organist: Paul Burnside

Praise Team & Children's

Choir Director: Teri Turner

Adult & Bell Choir Director:

Carolyn Fox

Sound Technician: Doug Ross

For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given...  
and his name shall be called



*Wonderful Counselor,  
Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father,  
Prince of Peace.*

Isaiah 9:6

### Worship Schedule & Announcements

December 19--One Worship at 10:30, Pastor Mark's Farewell

December 24--Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 8:15 and 10:45

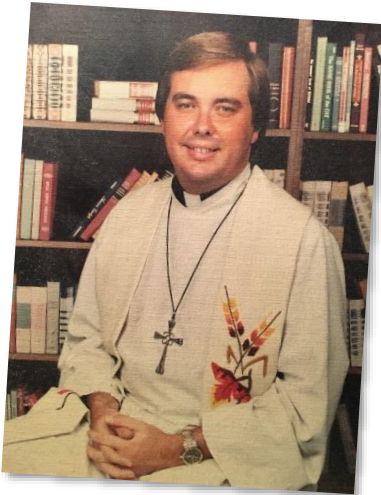
December 23 & 30--**No** Thursday Evening Worship

December 26--One Worship at 10:30, Lessons and Carols

In January we begin our journey of transition with Pastor Mark's retirement that will lead to calling a new pastor. In January, Deacon Kevin and Parish Deacon Ann will help lead the traditional worship services on Sunday. Kevin will preach on January 2 and 23 and Ann will preach January 30. Pastor Adam Taylor who is on leave while he attends Law School will supply for us on January 9 and Pastor Sarah Schaaf, the Director for Community Engagement from the synod office, will supply for us on January 16. Some of you may be familiar with Pastor Sarah because she was formerly the pastor at Saint Paul's Luther Church in Waldo. Thursday evening services will continue as usual at 7:00 pm.

*However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace.*

Acts 20:24 NIV



At the age of sixty-six, after thirty-nine years as an ordained minister, I have decided it is time to retire. As you may know, when a pastor retires, he or she no longer is affiliated with the congregation he or she has served. That means, beginning January 1, 2022 I will not be available for pastoral acts such as baptisms, confirmations, weddings, or funerals. I will also not be available to provide pastoral care in situations of need. I leave you in the faithful hands of Deacon Kehn along with additional support of the Synod. It is vital that a good transition from one pastor to another is made. That is why the retired pastor is expected to refrain from a pastoral presence in his or her former congregation. This will be particularly challenging for us, as we have been together for so long in such a loving relationship. It is, however, for the best so that Emanuel continues to grow and flourish in God's work in the world, and that Dianne and me are able to go forth into the next chapter of our lives. We would still love to share with you in the future, but that needs to be simply as friends.



I want to thank all of you for the many ways you allowed me to be your pastor. As the years go by, I will look back fondly on our time together; I trust the same will be true for you.

I've watched children grow up. I've baptized, performed marriages, officiated at too many funerals. I've visited hospitals and shut-ins. I have counseled the distressed. Together, we realized a few dreams, lived through a few trials, and persevered.



While I am leaving you, there is one who remains constant: Jesus Christ. Jesus has been here from the beginning, and will be with you for the rest of time. If through the power of the Holy Spirit you allow Jesus to guide you, Emanuel will always have a mission. It may not look like the church we have today. There may be difficult decisions which need to be made. But a passion for our Lord and Savior will see you through all your future trials. This passion guided the earlier congregations of Emanuel, a passion which allowed them to navigate their own trials. They managed and flourished; so can you.

The biblical record is full of stories about people who faced harder trials than we. A few times the people of Israel were exiled from their land; every time they returned. When Elijah was on the run from King Ahab and Queen Jezebel he prayed, "I've been very passionate for the LORD God of heavenly forces because the Israelites have abandoned your covenant. They have torn down



your altars, and they have murdered your prophets with the sword. I'm the only one left, and now they want to take my life too."

The LORD heard Elijah's prayer and encouraged him with these words: "I have preserved those who remain in Israel, totaling seven thousand—all those whose knees haven't bowed down to Baal and whose mouths haven't kissed him." When Elijah had done the math it looked to him like it was all over. God's math was different from Elijah's. God made a way where there was no way, and God will do it again for people who have faith.

I contemplated offering a personal word of thanks to individuals and groups within our family and realized the utter futility in even beginning that task. Suffice to say, I have made it a cornerstone of my ministry to give thanks to those who serve on a regular basis so that will have to suffice for now.

I hope you have a wonderful future. I hope that under new pastoral leadership you find a way to connect with the neighborhood and invite more people to join you Sunday morning. Finally, I share with you the Mizpah blessing: "The Lord watch between me and thee while we are absent one from the other." **Go out thankful!**

God Bless,



THANK YOU, PASTOR MARK!  
The staff of Emanuel will miss you!

Enjoy your retirement.

Pictured above a quilt of staff handprints made by  
Ann Thomas and presented to Pastor Mark.



## A Time to Heal, Offering Hope to a Wounded World in the Name of Jesus

I continue with my summary of this book by JR Briggs with Chapter Six which is entitled, *How Can We Be Prepared to Be Bringers of Healing?* He presents us with a list of *ifs* that can guide our journey as we help others heal;

- If we want to be healers, we must understand our own limitations.
- If we want to be healers, we must lean into difficult conversations about American culture.
- If we want to be healers, we must understand the trauma others are facing.

**Research shows us that oftentimes a child needed only one loving person in their life to be able to overcome their trauma and experience healing.**

- If we want to be healers, we must help people heal from chronic loneliness, isolation and disconnection.
- If we want to be healers, we must walk with people in their anxiety and loss.
- If we want to be healers, we must prioritize healing in our church ministries.

He then adds that Jesus' ministry is expressed in three primary ways: preaching, teaching, and healing.

Since we are all in need of being healed Briggs refers to us as *wounded healers*, this is true as we touch our own wounds and name our own pain and then we are often invited by others to lovingly and gently touch their pain. This is a being compassionate--co-suffering. When we love well, we suffer alongside of others. *Wounded healers* help others realize that growth and maturity cannot occur without first healthily entering into grief.

Our role as *wounded healers* is to enter into the difficult and messy work of moving toward forgiveness and helping others do the same, for in forgiveness we find true healing. It is the gospel story. We are to forgive those who have hurt us, forgive ourselves for our own failings, forgive life for not being fully fair, and forgive God for seemingly being so indifferent to our wounds.

Briggs then brings into discussion *lament* as he defines lament as Godly complaint. Lament is bringing words before God which acknowledge we don't like the space we are in and we long for deliverance and justice. A lament is a passionate complaint attached to hope and trust that God is good, powerful, and in control of the world. This is what we hear from Jesus as he hung on the cross and cried out, *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?* We find psalms of lament in The Psalms, the prayer book of the Church, and they serve as training wheels attached to raw and honest prayers teaching us how to talk honestly and courageously with God. A framework for lament is complaint, followed by a petition, ending in a resolution. Lament, awareness, and gratitude directed toward God and others can then become a redemptive framework for our healing. *Wounded healers* are wise enough to know their primary task is not to try to fix others, but to offer hope, presence, and guidance in their healing...God fixes people.

Did you know that Jesus asked over 300 questions in the Gospels. It wasn't that he needed more information. To Jesus, questions were a form of compassion and care...questions are one of the most important forms of connection in all of the human experience. To go along with this, simply showing up, and giving our full attention, care, and concern to others can be a much-needed salve. *Wounded*



*healers* realize they play a part, but ultimately know that true healing is rooted in the love and power of God. It is in grasping the goodness and the depth of love God has for people that the healing process begins.

Briggs then stresses the importance of trust and that trust is built when people pay attention, take notice, and exhibit care and compassion. Part of this is that we must be hopeful and expectant as well as realistic and prepared. God has created us for connection. We don't just want others' presence; we *need* it. The experience of disconnection is what we consider to be trauma, so thus, the reversal of trauma, which is the process of healing, can only occur through connection. We know that physical healing occurs when the cells, neurons, bones, muscles, ligaments, and tissues begin to connect to one another again, functioning in their original state. Emotional and relational healing occurs when reconnection is established through forgiveness, reconciliation, trust, safety, redemption and love. Spiritual healing occurs when we reconnect back to our original design--to the heart of our loving Father--a place of true freedom, hope, and peace. Healing is always about connection.

Briggs then shares from Ernest Hemingway's short story, "The Capital of the World," a story that centers around the life of a young man named Paco. Set in Madrid, Paco spends his days as a waiter, but longs to become a matador one day. In a heated exchange, he wrongs his father, and, in his shame, he runs away. His father, in an attempt to reconcile with his estranged son, searches tirelessly for him all over Spain to no avail. In a desperate attempt to find him, he places a prominent ad in the Madrid newspaper:

PACO,  
MEET ME AT THE HOTEL MONTANA  
NOON TUESDAY.  
ALL IS FORGIVEN  
--PAPA

When the father arrives at the hotel at noon on Tuesday, he is astonished at what he finds: 800 Pacos, all looking for their father. The world is desperately longing for someone to welcome them home.

In the story of Numbers 21 it is interesting that God doesn't just heal the people, nor does God erect the bronze snake on a wooden pole. Instead, he asks Moses to craft the snake and erect it and then healing occurs. He invited Moses to join him in the healing process. Without God, there would be no healing, but without Moses, there would have been nothing to look to for that healing.

Finally, as we continue to live through this pandemic and search for healing, Briggs suggests that we need to consider not only a *new normal* but also a *new reality* and a *new abnormal*.

Until next time, may the peace of God be with you all.

Deacon Kevin



**Thank you** to all of the people who have supported the Comfort Quilters this past year. We were able to send 425 quilts, 15 blankets and 7 fleece blankets to Lutheran World Relief. A special thanks to Bruce Showalter for renting the u-haul to transport the quilts to Waldo. We also want to thank the manager of Jo Ann's for making a special trip to get the batting we needed. Due to a change in their system we were not able to special order the batting like we have been doing in the past. Remember that we continue to need sheets, blankets, pillow cases, and table cloths. We are also almost out of cotton fabric for the tops. We cannot use fabric with military or religious symbols. Contact Ann Thomas at 740-360-3546 if you have questions about quilting materials.

*Left to Right:* Bill Lambert, Bobb Davies, Lou Ann Showalter, Bruce Showalter, Daryl Kraner, Ann Thomas, Ed Stofcheck, Chris Kehn, & Matt Primmer (not pictured, photographer)

Please accept my sincere gratitude and appreciation for the kindness, love and respect afforded to me by the congregation and staff of Emanuel Lutheran Church. After moving away from Marion and "navigating" through the pandemic, I have finally found a new church home at St. Stephen Lutheran in Stow.

Emanuel is a special congregation, filled up with good people doing God's work. I will always treasure the memories and experiences of my time there.

May the Grace of God be with you always,  
Kevin Strohl

**Hauling Hope**, the furniture ministry of Love In the Name of Christ (Love INC), will be starting up again beginning in January. If you have furniture that you would like to donate please contact Love INC at 740-382-3340 and they will arrange for pick-up. Emanuel will take its turn manning this ministry every three months beginning in February. Deacon Kevin will coordinate workers to move furniture usually on Saturday mornings. If you are interested in helping move furniture please let Kevin know so your name will be added to the list. He will usually contact workers on Thursday evening for work on Saturday morning. Thank you for your support of this ministry.







## Sunday School's Service Theme for the year is "Loving Your Neighbor"

The first project was a huge success . We collected personal hygiene items to give to less fortunate children and families in Marion County. Amy Vanderhoff received 26 "Blessing Bags " to distribute to her clients. Thank you, Emanuel!

For Christmas we asked for donations of fleece. We now have plenty to make warm neck scarves for the Emanuel mitten tree and gifts for Amy's clients.

We will do a Valentine "Blessing Bags " project in February. These will definitely contain treats of some kind and maybe something inspirational. Please let me know if you have any ideas or suggestions for this project.



**ELCA Good Gifts** Christmas trees will once again be set up during Advent in the Narthex and the first floor elevator lobby. These trees are decorated with ornaments that represent a collection of opportunities to provide for a poor family. You can find an ornament to buy a pig, or a goat, or some chickens, or school supplies to name a few. It's also easy to do, pull an ornament and follow the directions on the tag! Thank you for sharing God's love and providing life changing materials to those less fortunate.

## Social Ministry News....

A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who completed projects for this year's **God's Work Our Hands**. By sharing our time and talents we can individually and collectively spread the love of God. Our most popular project this year was the Veteran Blessing Bag, something very much appreciated by the Marion Veteran Clinic and the veterans they serve.

The **Laundry Initiative** for 2021 will wrap up on Saturday, December 11 at both Colonial Laundromats (587 N Main and 355 S Main) in

Marion from 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. We need 3 volunteers for each hour. Signup sheets for all shifts at both locations can be found in the Gathering Space. Please consider volunteering; required skills are a friendly smile, the ability to pour detergent/fabric softener and swipe the money card. Training will be provided.

Questions on this project can be directed to any member of the Social Ministry Board: Carolyn Bailey, Cindy Schifer or Barb Russo. Thanks again to the congregation for sharing and caring about the Marion community.

## Looking Back with Alicia Mayes

I want to give some facts about Pastor Mark's life as he prepares to retire and leave this congregation. He started his journey in ministry when he was ordained in his home church, Epiphany Lutheran in Dayton, Ohio, on July 4, 1982. He has served 6 churches in his 39 years of ministry, St. Mark's Lutheran in Orlando, Florida, St. Mark's in Butler, Pennsylvania, Emanuel in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, Grace in Rochester, Pennsylvania, Trinity in Marion County, and here at Emanuel in 2005.

Pastor Mark served as Associate Pastor here from May 8, 2005 until 2009 under Pastor J. Weston Jones. Pastor Jones retired in the fall of 2009 and Pastor Mark was called to be our senior pastor and was installed December 13, 2009. He has served at Emanuel for 16 years, 4 as associate and 12 as senior pastor. Deacon Kevin was installed here June 5, 2010 and has worked side by side with Pastor Mark for 11 ½ years.

Pastor Mark had hip surgery January 4, 2011. A.I.M. Molly King came to Emanuel November 1, 2010 and helped Deacon Kevin through the time that Pastor Mark was recuperating from surgery. While at Emanuel, Molly started the once a month, Sunday Gentle Worship Service.

Ann Thomas and Tanyce Addison are graduates of the first Diakonia lay education program and became Parish Deacons under Pastor Mark. Since becoming a Parish Deacon, Tanyce Addison has become a Vicar and is working toward becoming an ordained minister. Under the direction of Pastor Mark, Parish Deacon Ann's duties include preparing sermons, being a worship assistant, serving home communions to our shut-ins, and facilitating the "Hour of Prayer" group.



I have looked back through church records and found that Pastor Mark has confirmed 100 youth, married 64 couples, baptized 158 children and adults, and conducted 172 funerals in his 16 years with us here at Emanuel.

While Pastor Mark was serving Emanuel Lutheran in Pittsburg he met and married his wife, Dianne. She has been very active here at Emanuel as a Sunday school teacher for many years, on the Board of Education as director and as a board member, Hand Bell Choir, and a faithful support to her husband's ministry.

They are parents of a daughter, Bethany and son-in-law, Douglas Nichols and a son, David. They are proud grandparents of Landen and Lucca.

On a personal note, I have been chair of the Altar Guild for almost 19 years now and have spent 16 of those years working with Pastor Mark and getting to know Dianne. It has been a joy and privilege for me and I will miss them both.

Until next time,  
Alicia Mayes





**Deacon Kevin is a SAM.** Deacon Kevin has been approved by the Northwestern Ohio Synod Council to serve as a Synodically Authorized Minister (SAM) for Emanuel. Kevin is approved to administer Holy Baptism and Holy Communion while the congregation is in the call process due to Pastor Mark's retirement.

**NEWS from your TRANSITION TEAM** – Your transition team wants to share some of the results from the surveys you completed.

#### LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

– (top 5 results in order)

- Preaching/Worship
- Pastoral Care & Visitation
- Youth & Family Ministry
- Builds a Sense of Community
- Interpret Theology

#### GIFTS FOR MINISTRY

– (top 5 gifts in order)

- Help people develop their spiritual gifts
- Be an effective communicator
- Be an effective teacher
- Be active in visitation of members and nonmembers
- Build a sense of community

#### MINISTRY SITE CHARACTERISTICS

– (a lot like us)

- Obviously Lutheran in identity and practice
- Focus on Biblical study and doctrine
- Tend to be formal and programmatic
- Prefer ideas that are tried and true
- Perceive conflict as something destructive

More results will follow in the next newsletter. The Transition Team will give the results from these surveys to the Call Committee to use as they search for our new pastor. Thank you for helping us with this important ministry. If you have questions, feel free to reach out to the Transition Team: Betty Anderson – 740-244-1661, Randy Gilbert – 740-262-0334, Donna Thomas – 740-262-0930, or Jean Yake – 740-360-2473

**Term Call?** Parish Planning Council met with Bishop Beaudoin and Deacon Sherry Krieger, Director of Leadership Development for Congregational Care for the NWOS, on November 11 to discuss plans for calling a new pastor. PPC was introduced to a new possibility in this regard. In the past congregations that have experienced the retirement of the senior pastor have turned to supply pastors to cover Sunday worship or an interim pastor who would do the same in addition to preparing the congregation for a new pastor. A new idea that may fit into the plans for Emanuel is that of a term call. A term call pastor would be called by **congregational vote** to serve a 2–3-year term (usually 3 years) and would focus on what is next for the congregation in terms of mission and vision. This 2–3-year call could be extended or even become a stated (permanent) call. The Transition Team and Executive Board interviewed a potential term call candidate on November 29<sup>th</sup>. They believe this candidate could be a good fit for Emanuel. PPC will conduct a second interview and then possibly as soon as our annual meeting in January we may be putting the candidate's name up for **congregational approval**. PPC is very excited about this opportunity and will continue to keep you informed.

**The Congregational Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> after the 10:30 service.**

## Sunday School Updates

The seasons of Thanksgiving and Christmas make me think of the wonderful blessings God has brought to me. One of these blessings are some very special people at Emanuel who helped me get ready for Sunday School this fall. Alicia Mayes, Sue Rakow, Linda Hoch, Abby Chase, Tanya Rankin, Jodi Haas, Carl Jones and Frank Fanello. These brave people cleaned out closets, sorted cupboards and cabinets full of surprises and hauled stuff to the dumpster. We now have clean usable classrooms. Our resource room has been cleaned and organized by the Daycare staff. We now share supplies and coexist with happy hearts. Thank you for your hard work.

It wasn't easy finding Sunday School teachers. God came through and sent me a small but very special group of volunteers.

Judy Ishida told me, "I haven't taught in over 30 years, but God is telling me to try." Miss Judy teaches from the Bible and fascinates us with her trivia tidbits. What an unexpected blessing she's been to me.

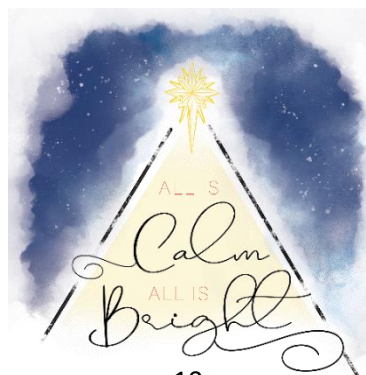
Linda Hoch has taught Sunday School at Emanuel for many years. I think she thought she was done!!! How many prayer journals has Linda put in the hands of children? How many Bibles? Thank you, Linda, for always loving our children.

Rob and Jen Valentine are overseeing grades 9 through 12 and also host Confirmation kids on Sundays that Deacon Kevin preaches. How wonderful that this young family is committed to these kids and have hopes of growing into an active youth group.

Our classes are small, we knew they would be due to Covid. Every one of these teachers have said "I don't care if I have one or ten, I will be here." Kathy Stroup and Sandy Becker are sharing their gifts of music with our children on Sunday mornings. Neither one of these women hesitated when I asked for help with music. When I approached Teri Turner about a Christmas program she said, "Let's talk, let's choose a date, let's choose a script, let's do this!"

I thank God for each and every one of you. Your faith in our Lord and your love of children set shining examples of service to all of us.

Blessings,  
Cindy Rinker



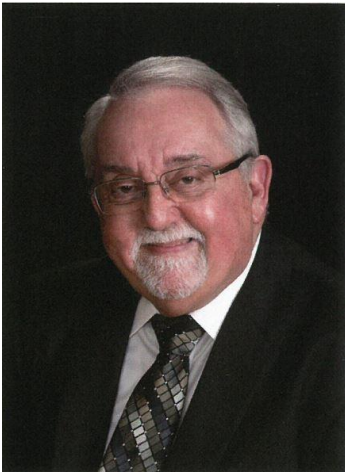




**A Special Thank you** to Cindy Rinker and Teri Turner for coordinating this year's Sunday School Christmas Program and to all those who helped make it a success! The children had a wonderful time telling the tale of Jesus' birth. After the program, families joined together in the parlor to decorate cupcakes and sing 'Happy Birthday' to Jesus.



**Epiphany, January 6**, concludes the Christmas season with a celebration of God's glory revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. **We will be celebrating the Feast of Epiphany with a special service on Thursday, January 6 at 7:00 pm.** On Epiphany we are reminded that the glory of God is proclaimed for all nations and people *and* like the light of the star that guided the magi to Jesus, the light of Christ reveals who we are: children of God who are claimed and washed in the waters of baptism. We are then sent out to be beacons of the light of Christ, sharing the good news of God's love to all people. **Please plan to attend this enlightening service with us on Thursday, January 6 at 7:00pm**



Thank you, Allan - Enjoy your retirement!

After 62 years, 45 at Emanuel, serving as church organist, Allan Lust will retire at the end of January. We wish him all the best!

If you would like to send a card, please contact the office for Allan's address.

In February we welcome someone who is already in our midst, as Paul Burnside will become our full-time organist upon Allan's retirement. Sandy Becker will continue to serve as assistant organist.



Emanuel's LGBT & Allies group met on November 14<sup>th</sup> for fellowship and to say a fond farewell to Pastor Mark. The December meeting of the group has been cancelled over concern of Covid spread around the holidays. The group will return on January 9th and February 13th@ 6pm for food and fellowship. All are welcome!

### Scholarship Opportunity

High school seniors and current college students are encouraged to apply for the **Robert and Margaret Mather Scholarship Fund, Agnes Baldauf Scholarship Fund, and The Hollensen/Dennis Fund** if you plan to attend or are already attending an accredited ELCA college or you are pursuing a career in Christian ministry or social services. This scholarship is open to any young and confirmed Emanuel Lutheran Church member.

Applications may be picked up at the church office. **The application and other support information are due no later than Monday March 1, 2022** to the chairperson, Rae Andrews at 379 Brightwood Dr., Marion, OH 43302. Rae Andrews 740-387-5432



**Winona Fogle** celebrates her 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday on December 26<sup>th</sup>  
**Thirza Shaw** celebrates her 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday on January 9<sup>th</sup>





**2022** is **The Year of Vision** in the Northwestern Ohio Synod. The Memory verse is Revelation 21:5a, *And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See I am making all things new."* Bishop Beaudoin will have a bible study available as the focus for this new year will be vision. More details to come.

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**Confirmation Class** will meet January 9, 16 and 30 during the Sunday School hour.

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**Inclement Weather Policy** - As we begin the winter season a reminder that when we have a **Level Two** Snow Emergency all church activities are cancelled.



## **Biblical resolutions**

**H**old firmly to your faith (Hebrews 4:14)

**A**ssemble with the saints (Hebrews 10:25)

**P**ray and thank God earnestly (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18)

**P**etition God for great blessings (Malachi 3:10)

**Y**ield not to temptation (1 Thessalonians 5:22)

**N**otice opportunities to serve others (Galatians 6:10)

**E**xamine yourself daily (2 Corinthians 13:5)

**W**ork diligently for the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58)

**Y**earn for righteousness (Matthew 5:6)

**E**xercise godliness (1 Timothy 4:7)

**A**im for sinless perfection (Hebrews 6:1)

**R**edeem the time, living wisely (Ephesians 5:15-16)



# WORSHIP *with us*



## *December Schedule*

December 19--One Worship at 10:30, Pastor Mark's Farewell

December 24--Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 8:15 and 10:45

December 23 & 30--**No** Thursday Evening Worship

December 26--One Worship at 10:30, Lessons and Carols

January 6 – Epiphany Service at 7:00 p.m.

Sundays in January will continue our 8:00, 9:15, 10:30 schedule.



Prepared Especially For:

\*Return Service Requested.

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