

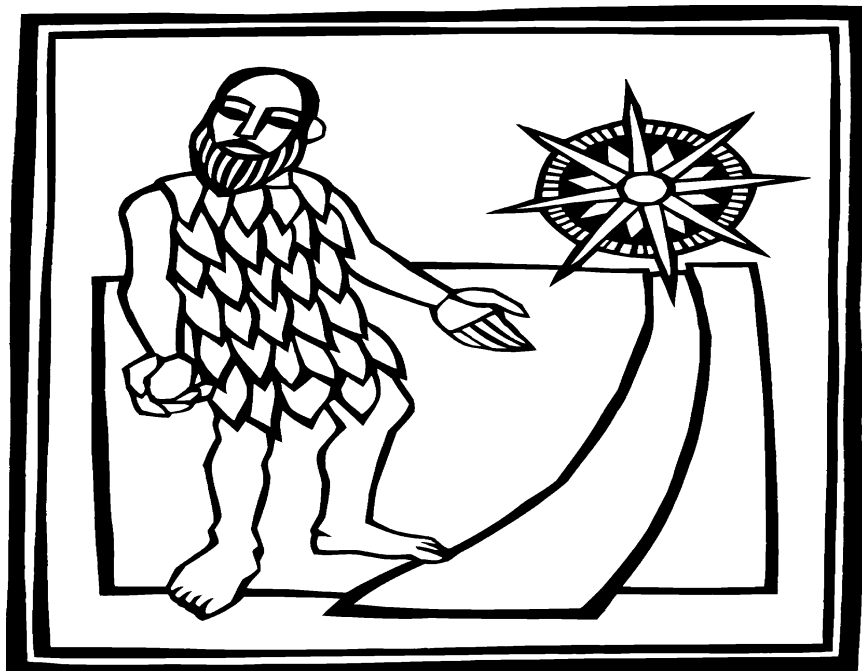
# St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church

4200 Londonderry Road, Harrisburg, PA 17109 717-652-6700

Web page: [www.stmarksharrisburg.org](http://www.stmarksharrisburg.org)

E-mail: [stmarksharrisburg@gmail.com](mailto:stmarksharrisburg@gmail.com)

MINISTERS: Every Member



Third Sunday of Advent

December 14, 2025

P THIS IS THE DAY THE LORD HAS MADE.

C LET US REJOICE & BE GLAD IN IT.

**MISSION STATEMENT:** Nourished by Word and Sacrament, the mission of the members of St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church is to spread God's Word in Jesus Christ through our thoughts, words, and actions, proclaiming God's good news for all to hear and live.

**Please silence all electronic devices.**

**WELCOME!** Please observe Silent Meditation during the Prelude. **Ver ujier para boletín en español**

**Voir l'huissier pour le bulletin français**

**PERSONAL HEARING ASSISTANCE DEVICES ARE AVAILABLE.** Please see an usher if you have trouble hearing the service.

### **CONSIDER THIS**

*A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom, and Jesus points to the unexpected and transforming signs of God's reign. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ's advent among us.*

### **GATHERING**

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRELUDE—** *Prepare the Royal Highway*      Mark Sedio

**Lighting of Advent Wreath— #257** *O Come, O Come,*  
*Emmanuel*   Vs 6



*Stand* **Gospel Acclamation**





## 8:15 Sermon Lesson — Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11

### Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11

*John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.*

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the 11th Chapter

### C Glory to you O Lord

<sup>2</sup> When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup> and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. <sup>6</sup> And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

<sup>7</sup> As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds

about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>8</sup> What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. <sup>9</sup> What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup> This is the one about whom it is written,


‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.’

<sup>11</sup> “Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

P The Gospel of the Lord

**C Praise to you O Christ**

Sit **8:15— Sermon**



Stand **Hymn #242** *Awake! Awake and Greet the New Morn*

## **The Ten Commandments**

(According to Luther’s Small Catechism)

P God promises grace and every good thing to all those who keep God’s commandments.

Therefore, we are to love and trust God and gladly act according to God’s commands.

**C You shall have no other Gods**

**You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the  
Lord your God**

**Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy**

**Honor your father and your mother**

**You shall not murder**

**You shall not commit adultery**

**You shall not steal**

**You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor**

**You shall not covet your neighbor's house**

**You shall not covet your neighbor's spouse... or anything  
that belongs to your neighbor**

P Having been reminded of God's perfect law, we now  
confess our sins, seek and receive forgiveness by God's  
grace.

### **Confession and Forgiveness**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at  
baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,  
whose home is heaven and earth,  
whose salvation is sure.

**C Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God  
and of one another.

*Sit or kneel as able*

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P Long-expected God,

**C we confess that we look to ourselves**

**for the peace and security only you can provide.**

**We reach for swords and spears,**

**reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.**

**We become impatient while waiting  
and weary of keeping awake.**

**Free us from self-reliance,  
and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.  
Increase our trust in God's timing,  
and awaken us to your advent among us,  
that we may abound in the hope you have promised.  
Amen.**

P God judges us not as we deserve,  
but according to God's own righteousness.  
+ You are freed and forgiven,  
saved by grace,  
and ready to welcome the Savior.  
**Amen.**

**Glory—**Pages 185 & 186 *Congregation Sings Refrains;  
Cantor sings Verses*

Stand **Salutation**

P The Lord be with you  
C **And also with you**

**Prayer of the Day—**Let us pray...

A Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God,  
and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed  
by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ,  
our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the  
Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen**

Advent Hope

*Derek K. Hayes*

Mission Bells

**First Lesson: Isaiah 35:1-10**

*The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.*

## A reading from Isaiah

<sup>1</sup> The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
like the crocus <sup>2</sup> it shall blossom abundantly  
and rejoice with joy and shouting.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,  
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.

They shall see the glory of the Lord,  
the majesty of our God.

<sup>3</sup> Strengthen the weak hands  
and make firm the feeble knees.

<sup>4</sup> Say to those who are of a fearful heart,  
"Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.

He will come with vengeance,  
with terrible recompense.

He will come and save you."

<sup>5</sup> Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;

<sup>6</sup> then the lame shall leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness  
and streams in the desert;

<sup>7</sup> the burning sand shall become a pool  
and the thirsty ground springs of water;  
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;  
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

<sup>8</sup> A highway shall be there,  
and it shall be called the Holy Way;  
the unclean shall not travel on it,  
but it shall be for God's people;  
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.

<sup>9</sup> No lion shall be there,  
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;  
they shall not be found there,  
but the redeemed shall walk there.

<sup>10</sup> And the ransomed of the Lord shall return  
and come to Zion with singing;  
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
they shall obtain joy and gladness,  
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

A The Word of the Lord

**C Thanks be to God**

**Psalm Hymn** in place of Psalm

Hymn #251 *My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness* Vs 1-2

**Second Lesson: James 5:7-10**

*In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate patience rather than discontent.*

A reading from James

<sup>7</sup> Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. <sup>8</sup> You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. <sup>9</sup> Brothers and sisters, do

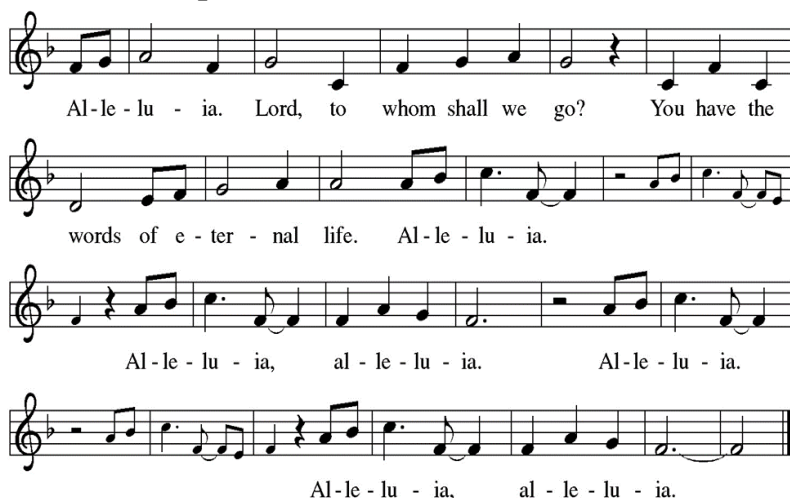


not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! <sup>10</sup> As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

A The Word of the Lord

**C Thanks be to God**

### 11:00—Stand **Gospel Acclamation**



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the  
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.  
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

### 11:00 **Sermon Lesson Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11**

*John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.*

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the 11th  
Chapter

**C Glory to you O Lord**

<sup>2</sup> When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup> and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. <sup>6</sup> And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

<sup>7</sup> As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>8</sup> What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. <sup>9</sup> What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup> This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.’

<sup>11</sup> “Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

P The Gospel of the Lord

**C Praise to You O Christ**

Sit **CHILDREN’S SERMON/YOUTH MESSAGE**

**11:00 SERMON**

**Hymn #715** *Christ Be Our Light*

## **APOSTLES' CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## **THE PRAYERS**

**P God of grace,**

**C Hear our prayer.**

**P Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom  
we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ,  
Emmanuel.**

**C Amen**

## **MEAL**

## **PEACE**

*The Peace is the link between the proclamation of the Word and the sharing of the Eucharistic meal. Our unity and mutual*

*forgiveness come from Christ whose Word has just been proclaimed and whose meal we now prepare to share.*

*We pray for the peace of the Lord for each other.*

P May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C And also with you**

*Sit* **OFFERTORY** *Mary Did You Know?* Mark Lowry &  
Buddy Green Arr. Tim Doran

*Stand* **OFFERTORY HYMN #253** *He Came Down* Vs 3



- 1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;
- 2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
- 3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;
- 4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;



he came down that we may have love;  
he came down that we may have light; hal-le-lu-jah for-ev-er - more.  
he came down that we may have peace;  
he came down that we may have joy;

Text: Cameroon traditional

Music: HE CAME DOWN, Cameroon traditional

**OFFERTORY PRAYER—** Let us Pray

A Nourishing God,  
you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert.  
Through this meal, satisfy our parched places,  
that we may rejoice and be for the world  
signs of your kingdom come.

**C Amen.**

## Spoken **THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And also with you.

**P** Lift up your hearts.

**C** We lift them to the Lord.

**P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C** It is right to give our thanks and praise..

## **PREFACE**

**P** It is indeed right, our duty and our joy.....we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## **HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -  
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -  
est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -  
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

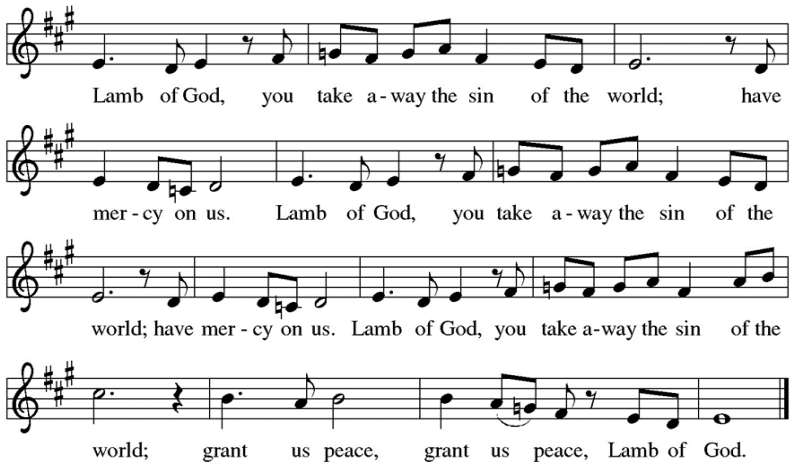
## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

## Invitation to Communion

P Here is life. God is with us.  
Come, receive what God has promised.

## LAMB OF GOD



## Communion Distribution

*We invite all Christians who believe that Jesus gives his body and blood for the forgiveness of sins to receive the sacrament with us, the communion assistant will distribute the wine from a pouring chalice into a cup you may pick up at the front of the aisle. If you are unable to take either the bread or wine, be assured that the sacrament is complete. Those not receiving communion are invited to come to the rail to receive a blessing. Parents of young children; please direct the pastor as to whether your child usually receives communion or not.*

## Communion Hymns

#248 *People Look East*

ACS#905 *We are Waiting for Jesus*

1 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.  
2 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.  
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

Sun of jus - tice, shine up - on us; we are trust - ing in your prom - ise.  
Lov - ing Shep - herd, walk be - side us; stir our hearts, and gent - ly guide us.

We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.  
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'We are Waiting for Jesus'. It consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp). The first staff has two parts: a soprano part (1) and an alto part (2). The second staff has two parts: a soprano part and an alto part. The third staff is a single line of music. The fourth staff has two parts: a soprano part and an alto part. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Text: John Helgen, b. 1957

Music: JESUS BRINGS PEACE, John Helgen

Text and music © 2013 Augsburg Fortress

Duplication in any form prohibited without securing permission from copyright administrator or reporting usage under valid license.

Stand **COMMUNION BLESSING**

**POST COMMUNION PRAYER**—Let us pray.

A God our host,  
at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.  
Send us forth, eager to share the feast,  
welcome the stranger,  
and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

**C Amen**

**Blessing**

P May God who comes among us,  
Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit,  
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,  
and good news to share today and always.

**C Amen.**

## Hymn #264—*Prepare the Royal Highway*

### DISMISSAL

**P** Go in peace. Keep awake.

**C** We will. Thanks be to God.

### POSTLUDE ~ *All is Well* Michael W. Smith & Wayne

*Kirkpatrick Arr. Tim Doran*

From Sundays and Seasons.com. ht 2006 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #23172. Hymns and other music reprinted/podcast/streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-741863. New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

**Altar Flowers** are in loving memory of my husband, Harold Sultzaberger's birthday. Given by Mary Sultzaberger.

**Altar Flowers** are in celebration of Vaughn Heym's 80th birthday. Given by his wife Barbara.

**Communion Bread/Wine Sponsor** December 14th. In honor of our dad & pappy, Vaughn Heym on his 80th birthday. Given by Kathy Joe, Vaughn, Joshua, Will, Vaughn III, Amelia & Emma

### **Birthday Celebration for Phyllis Mengel**

When: January 2, 2026

Where: Ecumenical Retirement Community

624 Wilhelm Road, Harrisburg, PA 17111

Time: 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Please RSVP John Mengel – (717)497-4620



## **THOSE WHO SERVE TODAY**

**CO-MINISTERS OF MUSIC** - Jenny Sustak & Faith Smeck

**YOUTH/FAMILY MINISTER** - Kellen Michalowski

**ALTAR CARE** - Sue Bennick; Sandy Dinger

**USHERS** - Doug Womer, Ed Shadle, Rick Frazier,

Chris Bair, Joe Boslet, Dave Featherman

**COMMUNION ASST** - Randy Whitaker; Emmor Boslet

**WORSHIP ASSISTANT**— Randy Whitaker

**CANTOR**— Praise Singers

**LECTOR** - Randy Whitaker; Susan Shultz

**FLOWER DELIVERY** - Barb Heym

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT** - Dave Stanton

**NURSERY SCHL DIR.** - Jessica Broome 717-827--8104

**SEXTON** - Don Young

## **A SEASON OF GIVING—EMMOR BOSLET**

As we approach the holidays, our thoughts turn to giving — cookies to the postman, money to the paperboy, and gifts to friends and family.

Being a financial advisor, it was a busy time for us as well.

Making sure our retired clients who were 70 1/2 (now 72) or older completed their RMD's (required minimum distributions).

Today, if they are retired and 72 and older...and have retirement accounts such as IRA's, 401K's or similar, you must start making withdrawals. The money counts as ordinary income and you pay federal income tax on the withdrawn money.

The custodian of your retirement accounts is required to notify you of that minimum amount you must withdraw but you can always take out more.

But you can avoid paying federal tax on the withdrawn amount if you donate all or part directly to a church or licensed charity.

What a wonderful way to tithe with tax free money.

### Christmas Eve Festival Choir

We are looking to add voices to the Festival Choir for the 6:30 PM Christmas Eve Service. All are welcome to join in song as we herald the birth of Jesus. The choir will be singing two anthems. Members can sit with their families during the service. The ability to read music is helpful but not required to sing. The choir will be rehearsing for one hour at 7:15 PM Dec. 4, 11, and 18. If you have any questions, please speak to Faith Smeck, 717-673-0368.

**We appreciate members supplying bread for communion, please try to select bread with a soft crust. Thank you.**

Many years ago, Roy and Judee Leister started the tradition of sending a Christmas card to every family in our Saint Mark's Congregation.

In honor of Roy, and in memory of Judee, we continue that tradition by making cards available for members to send to each other. There are packs of cards in the baskets at the back of the church. Each card is addressed and stamped so you only need to sign your name, add a brief message if you'd like, then seal and mail the cards. Thank you for spreading some extra Christmas cheer among our Saint Mark's family.

## OPPORTUNITIES AT ST. MARK'S THIS WEEK

SUNDAY	12/14	<b>8:15 am Worship</b> 9:45 am St Mark's Minis Sunday School 9:45 am Intergenerational Sunday School <b>11:00 am Worship</b> 7:00 pm AA 7:00 pm Gamblers Anonymous
MONDAY	12/15	6:00 pm Lion/Lioness Meeting Fellowship Hall
TUESDAY	12/16	6:30 pm Council Meeting 6:30 pm Cub Scouts Fellowship Hall
WEDNESDAY	12/17	10:00 am Bible Study
THURSDAY	12/18	6:00 pm Mission Bells Rehearsal 7:15 pm Festival Choir Rehearsal
FRIDAY	12/19	
SATURDAY	12/20	
SUNDAY	12/21	<b>8:15 am Worship</b> 9:45 am FM Sunday School Fellowship Hall Making Gingerbread Houses <b>11:00 am Worship</b> 7:00 pm AA 7:00 pm Gamblers Anonymous

Today we will be having lunch after the late service. Then a decorating "party" to get the church ready for the Christmas season. Then if interested we will be going caroling. I know everyone is busy, but can you spare a little time for one or both activities it would be appreciated.

## **SPREADING CHRISTMAS JOY**

**Christmas is doing a little extra for someone, and our Christmas project includes the young and the young at heart.**

**For the young, please consider giving a toy or toys for a child from toddler to age 12. New, Unwrapped toys can be placed in the toy chest in the Narthex.**

**Our neighbors at Colonial Park Care Center/River's Bend, would appreciate items to enhance their daily living, such as:**

**\* Personal care items - shampoo, body wash, toothpaste, hand and body lotion for sensitive skin, lip balm, eyeglass cleaning cloths, travel-size packs of tissues**

**\*Light weight throws or lap blankets, non-slip socks, slippers with non-skid soles, U-shaped neck pillows, stress balls**

**\*Large print crossword or word search puzzles, calendars with large print, large piece puzzles, large print books, adult coloring books, non-toxic crayons or markers**

**Items can be placed in the bin in the Narthex**

**May the gifts of love, peace, and happiness be yours at Christmas.**