

The Grapevine

St. Mark's Episcopal Church



January 2026

A Note from Nancy – January 2026

Happy New Year Everyone! I pray that it will be a year filled with wonder, joy, blessings and peace in knowing that God is in control. It may seem like chaos has taken over but, if you look at history through the ages, every new year probably feels like that. One day continues into the next all over the world. The future may be predictable for some but not for others. For the most part, we don't know what will happen in 2026.

I have made the decision to retire on March 1st. After working over 50 years in three very different professions, what will my days be like? I can only imagine and wait to see what happens. The one thing I do know is no matter how much I plan, think about what I want to do, see what actually happens, etc., God has my back. God has your back too. God is present in everything that happens throughout the world. Depending on the situation, it doesn't always seem like that is the case, but I believe it is. Good things happen and bad things happen. Some because of the laws of nature (which God created) and some because human beings think they know better than God does.

As we head into 2026, my prayer for all of us is that we continue to love God and trust that God only wants what is best for us.

Peace, In Christ,
Mother Nancy

*Sharing Christ's love unconditionally
through transformational worship and service.*

St. Mark's Episcopal Church

335 Locust Street
Johnstown, PA 15901
814-535-6797

Email: stmarks@breezelinebiz.net

Web site
www.saintmarksjohnstown.com

Office hours:
Tuesday through Thursday
9:30 AM to 3:00 PM

Our Staff:

Priest: Rev. Nancy L. Threadgill
Verger: Cindy Leap
Organist: Dolly Lopresti
Treasurer: Pam Hysong
Secretary: Joanne McKinley
Sexton: Nikki Forsythe

The Vestry:

Senior Warden:
Lisa Bell-Loncella
Colleen Curry
Junior Warden: Richard Burkert
Secretary: Doug Zawiskie
Treasurer: Pam Hysong

2026

Lisa Bell-Loncella
Richard Burkert
Tina Grata

2027

Donovan Pendell
Doug Zawiskie
Colleen Curry

2028

Louise Mead
Valarie Schultz
Cynthia Frank

*Please remember
St. Mark's Church in your will.*

From the Discernment Committee

In early December, Canon Kim Karashin shared a letter from Bishop Ketlen with the Senior Wardens and Discernment Committee co-chairs of St. Mark's and St. Francis in the Fields. There is a copy in this issue of the *Grapevine*. In the letter, the Bishop offered encouragement as we face the retirement of Mother Nancy and also offered the Diocese's assistance with our spiritual needs as we continue our search for a permanent priest-in-charge.

Thanks in large part to LisaBell-Loncella's response to Canon Kim that listed numerous concerns regarding the long-term potential for both parishes to be without a spiritual leader, Bishop Ketlen has agreed to hold a call with the Senior Wardens and Discernment Committee co-chairs to discuss these concerns and, hopefully, provide both parishes with a stronger commitment from the Diocese for not only assistance with our spiritual needs once Mother Nancy retires, but also to take a more active role in assisting us with our priest-in-charge search.

The call is scheduled for the afternoon of January 15 and we will provide an update at the January 18 annual parish meeting. Please continue to pray for the Discernment Committees of St. Mark's and St. Francis in the Fields and for the right candidate to receive a call to minister to our parishes.

Colleen Curry (potsie1008@hotmail.com)

Richard Burkert (rburkert89@outlook.com)

St. Mark's Discernment Committee Co-chairs

The following links provide more information about our search for and call a new priest.

St. Mark's Website: <https://saintmarksjohnstown.com/our-search-for-a-new-priest-2025/>

St. Francis Website: <https://www.saintfrancisinthefields.org/our-search-for-a-new-priest>

Diocese: <https://www.episcopalpgh.org/search-for-priest-to-serve-in-johnstown-and-somerset/>

Sharing Christ's love unconditionally through transformational worship and service.

Prayers for our Search

Prayer for Guidance during our Discernment Process

Gracious and loving God, you teach us that things happen in your time. As we continue to wait for clergy candidates, encourage us, the people of St. Francis in the Fields and St. Mark's Episcopal Churches, to grow steadfastly in our ministries to love and serve our neighbors by sharing the Good News in Jesus Christ.

Guided by the Holy Spirit, we open our hearts and minds to new opportunities and ideas, following where you lead — knowing that Jesus Christ walks with us each step of the way. As this discernment period evolves, empower the members of our Vestries and Discernment Committees to share their thoughts openly and honestly; to respect the opinions of others; and to encourage humility, patience, and joy.

Finally, instill in us a glorious vision of the future: one where we are united in love and ministry in fulfilling the mission of our baptismal vows; through our savior Jesus Christ.

Amen.

For a New Priest

Almighty God, the giver of all good gifts, we humbly ask you to supply your grace to all priests who are called to the ministry of your peoples. Fill them with the Holy Spirit, the truth of your doctrine, and clothe them with piety so that they may faithfully serve where they are called. Open their hearts to the possibility and consideration of a new path whereby they may serve you. We beseech you to guide to us, the pastor you would have shepherd your people at St. Mark's and St. Francis in the Fields. Open the hearts of these parish families to acceptance of your choice for us, so that together, we may increase our faith, devotion, and obedience, and be prepared to readily do the good works you have planned for us to do. We ask these things in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Amen.

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From the Senior Wardens

Happy New Year!

With Mother Nancy's retirement on March 1st, the Senior Warden will need to take on additional duties to ensure the seamless continuity of our worship, parish community and responsibilities to the Diocese. Because of this, Mother Nancy asked Colleen Curry to help Lisa Bell-Loncello with some of these duties by becoming a co-Senior Warden with Lisa. Colleen and Lisa met before the holidays to discuss and divide up Senior Warden duties. This will be a very fluid process as we determine what works best for the needs of St. Mark's. Please do not hesitate to reach out to Lisa or Colleen with any concerns or questions; we will continue to keep you informed as we move into the new year.

New Email Address

Our Parish email address has changed. Please update your contacts list with the new address:

stmarks@breezelinebiz.net

If you have not been receiving the weekly bulletin, the *Grapevine* or other email from the church, check your spam folder. ALSO, be sure to tell your email that you trust this sender.

Special Parish Meeting - Sunday, January 18th

Mark your calendar for the January Special Parish Meeting. Each year we meet as a congregation to approve the plan to balance the budget and elect Deputies and Alternates to Diocesan Convention. The proposed compensation package for the new Priest-in-Charge is part of this year's budget.

Annual Stewardship Campaign

Our Stewardship Campaign to support the operations and programs of St. Mark's Church continues throughout the year. As we close out another year of faithful ministry we continue to do important work, please join in making a commitment to sustaining our beloved St. Mark's Church as we work to discern what God will have us do!

If you have already submitted your pledge card, THANK YOU! If not, there is still time. Pledge cards can be obtained by calling the church office or on the web site. **Pledge payments can now be made online!** <https://saintmarksjohnstown.com/give-to-support-st-marks-and-its-ministries/>

Blessings,

Lisa & Colleen

For Guidance

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings with thy most gracious favor, and further us with thy continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy Name, and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* (BCP, p 832)

Sharing Christ's love unconditionally through transformational worship and service.

The Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh



Date: December 11, 2025

To: The Vestry and the People of St. Mark's, Johnstown and St. Francis, Somerset

From: The Rt. Rev. Dr. Ketlen A. Solak

Subject: Words of Encouragement

Grace and Peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Mother Nancy recently announced to you her soon departure, which will take effect at the beginning of March 2026. I imagine that this news may have engendered some feelings of trepidation about the future. While I acknowledge that finding the next person who will serve as your priest is not an easy endeavor, first and foremost I invite you to remember the faithfulness of our Lord Jesus Christ who promises never to leave or forsake us. Hence, I invite you to continue to trust him for provision.

In addition, please know that we, at the Bishop's Office, will continue to do our best to come alongside and help provide for your spiritual needs, as well as to serve as a resource for you as it relates to other matters important to your parish communities. I also take this opportunity to thank you for remaining steady during this elongated time of transition. I especially want to thank Mother Nancy for her service to you and to our Diocese.

May this season of Advent, which is a time of waiting, be a meaningful one for you and your loved ones.

Faithfully in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "+ Ketlen A. Solak".

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Ketlen A. Solak
Bishop

St. Mark's Annual Pledge Campaign

STEWARDSHIP

Time • Talent • Treasure

Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

2 Corinthians 9:7

As we near the end of 2025, we can look back at the past year with gratitude. St. Mark's Episcopal Church is closing out another year of faithful ministry.

Because of your gifts, we have continued to do important work. We have welcomed new people and families to the congregation. We have maintained our ministries – weekly worship, the choir, pet food ministry, and others. We have shared celebrations and sorrows. We have strengthened our bond with St. Francis in the Fields congregation in Somerset, as we jointly seek to discern our shared futures and leadership.

As we work to be good stewards, St. Mark's Church will embody the mission that the Vestry adopted in 2020:

Sharing Christ's love unconditionally through transformational worship and service.

During Advent, the Vestry reaches out to each member of St. Mark's Church parish, asking you to make a commitment to support the Annual Pledge Campaign.

Please join the Vestry, clergy and the stewardship team in making a commitment to sustaining our beloved St. Mark's Church while we work to discern what God will have us do!

When you receive the 2026 Pledge letter and card, please fill it out and make your commitment to our church, our work, and our community.

A copy is available on the Church website.

(<https://saintmarksjohnstown.com/stewardship/>)

*The Rev. Nancy Threadgill, Priest-in-Charge,
St. Mark's Stewardship Team, and The Vestry*



2026 CHURCH ENVELOPES & PLEDGE PAYMENTS

Pledge Cards are available through the church office (call (814) 535-6797 or email: stmarks@breezelinelbiz.net).

The 2026 Offering envelopes may be picked up at the church during regular office hours.

The 2025 Statements will be sent through the mail next week.

There are several ways you may make your pledge payments:

- **By mail:** send to the church
- **In the offering plate** on Sunday
- **In person in the Office:** Tuesday through Friday 9:30 to 3:00
- **Online at:** <https://saintmarksjohnstown.com/give-to-support-st-marks-and-its-ministries/>

Sunday Worship Schedule

The Service begins at 10:00 AM

1rst & 3rd Sunday of the month

Holy Eucharist

2nd & 4th Sunday of the month

Morning Prayer

Pot-Luck Brunch at the Parish Meeting

We are planning a Potluck Brunch on Sunday, January 18th following the 10:00 am service in the church hall. All members of St. Mark's are invited to attend. The brunch will take place during the annual parish meeting.

Think of your favorite breakfast casserole, sausage biscuits, quiche, pastries, fruit. Yum!!

An email will be sent in later this month with more information.

Compline Wednesday Evenings through the Winter Months

Join us on Wednesday evenings at 8 PM via Zoom for Compline, the "good night prayer of the church". The first meeting will be Wednesday, January 7. An email with a copy of the service bulletin and the Zoom link will go out the beginning of each week.



*Guide us waking and guard us sleeping
That awake we may watch with Christ
And asleep we may rest in peace.*

Calendar and Hospitality Committee Tentative Plans for the Coming Months

January:

- Lay Leader Training (1/10)
- Vestry Retreat (1/17)
- Annual Finance Meeting (1/18)

February:

- Chicken & Biscuit Take-Out (2/14)
- Ash Wednesday (2/18)
- Lenten Quiet Day (2/21)

March:

- Mother Nancy's last Sunday (3/1)
- Ham Loaf Prep (3/15)
- Palm Sunday (3/29)
- Holy Week (3/29—4/4)

April:

- Holy Week (3/29—4/4))
- Easter (4/5)



SPECIAL PARISH MEETING

Sunday, January 18, 2026

**Following the 10 AM Service
Also on ZOOM**

**Congregational Approval for Balancing the Budget
Nomination and Election of Deputies (and Alternates) to
Diocesan Convention
Pot Luck Lunch**

**For help with Zoom,
please contact Mother Nancy in advance at
revnancy-stmarks@breezelinebiz.net
or
by phone 814-535-6797**

Readers and Greeters – January & February 2026

The schedule is tentative and may change. You will receive an email with the updated schedule.

Sunday	*	Readers	Greeters & Ushers
January 4	HE	Richard Burkert & Tina Grata	Jane & Gerry Strittmatter
January 11	MP	Donovan Pendell & Pam Hysong	Tina Grata & Joann Lacko
January 18	HE	Lisa Bell-Loncella & Colleen Curry	Melisa Babalonis & Aiden
January 25	MP	Susan Kelly & Doug Zawiskie	Melisa Babalonis & Aiden
February 1	HE	Richard Burkert & Dona Corosi	Sam & Heidi Buchan
February 8	MP	Doug Zawiskie & Pam Hysong	Jane & Gerry Strittmatter
February 15	HE	Joann Lacko & Lisa Bell-Loncella	Amy & Penn Whitlow
February 22	MP	Dona Corosi & Colleen Curry	Tina Grata & Joann Lacko
March 1 **	HE		

*HE is Holy Eucharist; MP is Morning Prayer. On the Sundays when we do Morning Prayer, one reader will lead the Psalm, read the first (OT) lessons and lead the first canticle. The second reader will read the second (NT) lesson and lead the second canticle.

If you are unable to read or usher on the day you are scheduled, please find a substitute or let Mother Nancy know so a sub can be found in a timely manner. Thank you.

You can find the readings in the bulletin that Joanne sends out at the end of the week. Alternatively, you can find



For those who are not aware, our diocese produces a monthly e-letter titled *Grace Happens*. If you are not already a subscriber go to <https://www.episcopalpgh.org/resources/grace-happens/> and you will be redirected to the sign up page.



2025 Weekly Altar Flowers & Monthly Altar Candles

Donation price is \$30 a Sunday for flowers and \$8 a month for candles.
Please contact Parish Office with your requests.

We have openings for the entire year.

January 1/11 (1), 1/18 (1), 1/21(1)

February 15 (1)



During Lent, February 18th through April 5th, there are no flowers on the Altar. However, if you wish, you can request a seven-day sanctuary candle which will burn in the Lady Chapel in honor of your loved one.

Fuel & Snow Removal

During the next few months, the extra collection for the First Sunday of the Month will help defray the cost of our heating and snow removal.

BUILDING CAMPAIGN



The Extra Collection for the Second Sunday of the month will help defray the cost of our numerous work projects throughout the Church.

Vestry Retreat & Meeting

Saturday, January 17th, 2026

9 AM to 2 PM
In person & also on ZOOM

Special Parish Meeting

Sunday, January 18 2026

Following the 10 AM service

In person & also on ZOOM

Missions

All families of the church are encouraged to donate \$1.00 on the third Sunday of each month (Jan.18th) for our Missions Offering.

Please mark your donation separately for MISSIONS.

Pastoral Care

All families of the church are encouraged to donate one dollar on the fourth Sunday of each month (Jan. 25th) for our Pastoral Care.

Please mark your donation separately for Pastoral Care.



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ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL

Another Year has come to an end here at the Pet Food Pantry. We began our Pet Food Pantry Campaign in early November and we are so thankful for those of you who gave to help keep our Pantry open. Because of your generosity, we will be able to keep our pantry open for another 4 or 5 months.

We are so grateful to all who continue to support our Pet Food Pantry. While there are too many to list here, each of you has received a personal letter from our Pantry Coordinators thanking you for your generosity.

During December, we assisted **127** Families, which included 10 new families and several walk-in emergencies.

We helped feed 194 dogs, 22 puppies, 580 cats, and 127 kittens.

We gave out over 1600 lbs of dog Food and Cat Food.

Through your generosity, we were also able to give out dog treats and cat treats.

We are grateful for all of our volunteers who continue to help us.

The Pantry will be open on **Thursday, January 8th from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM.**

Thank you for your support.

Cynthia Greig and Joanne McKinley

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
JANUARY				1 HAPPY NEW YEAR	2	3
4 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist Rt II Church & Zoom	5	6 Feast of the Epiphany	7 Compline 8 PM Zoom	8 PET FOOD PANTRY 10:00 AM TO 1:00 PM	9	10 Lay Leader Training 10:00 AM to 12:00 N
11 10:00 AM Morning Prayer II Church & Zoom	12	13	14 Compline 8 PM Zoom	15	16	17 Vestry Retreat 9 AM - 2 PM
18 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist Rt II Church & Zoom Annual Meeting	19 MARTIN LUTHER KING HOLIDAY	20	21 Compline 8 PM Zoom	22	23	24
25 10:00 AM Morning Prayer I Church & Zoom	26	27	28 Compline 8 PM Zoom	29	30	31
				1-17 Vestry Retreat (Conference Room, lunch will be served) 1-18 Annual Budget Meeting (also on Zoom)		