

Monthly Calendar for December 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<u>1</u> 10:00AM Worship Team 7:00PM AA	<u>2</u> 10:00AM Bible Study	<u>3</u> Noon AA 7:00PM Gamblers Anon	<u>4</u> 7:00PM AA	<u>5</u> Noon Women's AA
<u>6</u> 10:00AM Holy Communion 7:00PM AA	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u> 7:00PM AA	<u>9</u> 10:00AM Bible Study	<u>10</u> Noon AA 7:00PM Gamblers Anon	<u>11</u> 7:00PM AA	<u>12</u> Noon Women's AA 3:00PM Dec. 12 Festival of Lights/Bermese Mtn Dogs Group
<u>13</u> 10:00AM Holy Communion 7:00PM AA	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u> 7:00PM AA	<u>16</u> 10:00AM Bible Study 6:30PM Bishop Committee	<u>17</u> Noon AA 7:00PM Gamblers Anon	<u>18</u> 7:00PM AA	<u>19</u> Noon Women's AA
<u>20</u> 10:00AM Healing Service 11:30AM Decorate Church for Christmas 7:00PM AA	<u>21</u>	<u>22</u> 2:00PM Birthday Party @ Monte Health & Rehab 7:00PM AA	<u>23</u>	<u>24</u> Noon AA 7:00PM Gamblers Anon 9:00PM Christmas Eve Service	<u>25</u> 7:00PM AA	<u>26</u> Noon Women's AA
<u>27</u> 10:00AM Holy Communion 7:00PM AA	<u>28</u>	<u>29</u> 7:00PM AA	<u>30</u> 10:00AM Bible Study	<u>31</u> Noon AA 7:00PM Gamblers Anon		

Birthdays:

Frank Venske 12/3
 Corby Varness 12/5
 Rev. Dorothy McMeekin 12/9
 Elaine Olsen 12/14

Anniversaries:

Mary Linth 12/10

Decorating for Christmas and Christmas Service Planning at St. Mark's

We will decorate the church for service in two parts. The outside lights and the Christmas tree and stairway decorating will be done before the Montesano Festival of Lights on December 12th. Decorating of the worship space will be done after the worship service on Sunday, December 20th. Our Christmas Eve service will be on December 24th at 9:00PM, with a festive communion service with Christmas hymns, and refreshments and fellowship afterwards.

Weekly Bible Study, Wednesdays, 10:00AM at St. Mark's

Our weekly Bible study is around the weekly Lectionary series used in the Sunday worship services. Please join us for this study each week from 10:00-11:30AM at the church.

St. Mark's Worship Space Remodeling

We have completed most of the changes to our worship space. These changes included moving the communion rails forward along with removing the old rails and the pulpit, moving the altar down nearer to the people in the pews, moving the organ to the back left of the sanctuary and moving smaller items around to support the communion service. The Rev. Janet Campbell did a wonderful job of explaining all of the changes in the context of what worship is about and why we worship the way we do. You can look at pictures of the modified worship space and Janet's sermon on our website: www.stmarksmonte.com, and click on the Worship Space Planning Link on the lower right of the Home Page.

Annual Stewardship Commitment to St. Mark's

We have just gathered the 2010 commitment cards and blessed them at our service on November 29th. If you have not yet responded, please consider carefully your commitment to St. Mark's for 2010 and either bring in your commitment card, or mail it in to the church. Thank you for your continued support to the ministry of this church.

Discernment for Next St. Mark's Ministry Circle and Personal Futures, Started in November

We have started a discernment class in November for anyone who wanted to find out more about themselves and their future ministry. This will lead to starting new ministry circle next year, for those who decide to participate in the later activities. We are using a book called Listening Hearts, Discerning Call in Ministry. We are also using some spiritual gifts tests and psychological profile tests, like Myers-Briggs for this class. The class normally meets on Tuesdays at 6:30pm in the church at St. Mark's.

St. Mark's 100th Anniversary Celebration—April 25th, 2010, at St. Mark's

April 25th, 2010 has been selected as the date to celebrate our 100th anniversary as a mission church of the Diocese of Olympia. We already have several ideas, including publishing of some type of history book or brochure, but we would like input from everyone and actually form a committee of people who will do the planning and carry out the work for this grand event. Contact anyone on the Bishop's Committee to express your interest and support for this event, so this can get started soon.

Reasons to Be Episcopalian
(from the book of 101 Reasons, compiled by Louie Crew)

11 Episcopalians can respectfully disagree about a great many things—and still break bread together. *Barbara Tensen Ross, Diocese of Oregon*

12 I'm an Episcopalian because of the incredibly profound understanding of authority in the Anglican Communion. The three-legged stool—with its stout legs of Scripture, tradition, and reason, supported by (but also firmly joined by) the seat of our experience and prayer—is perhaps Anglicanism's most glorious contribution to theology. *Paul M. Johns, Diocese of Olympia*

13 We believe that love without justice is cheap sentimentality. *Carter Heyward, Diocese of Massachusetts*

14 My four-year old has attended the Episcopal Church since birth. He sings the Alleluia from the fraction anthem as easily as the theme from "Blue's Clues." *The Rev Rachel Endicott, Diocese of Olympia*

15 When asked if he was saved, Archbishop of Canterbury William Temple replied, "I have been saved, I am being saved, I hope to be saved." That understanding of faith, hope, and humility reinforces me as an Episcopalian/Anglican *Dean George L. W. Werner, Diocese of Pittsburgh*

Summary of St. Mark's Finances—11/17/2009

Total Operating Expenses--\$19,816.24 (Previous month--\$17,709.60)

- Highlights—Overall expenses are basically tracking per the budget plan. Several areas will likely come in under budget for the year, while a few are overrun but are reasonable expenses that were needed. The only large area left to fund is Outreach, with about \$1200 still available to distribute. All current bills are paid to date.
- Outreach Given to Date--\$3,528 Diocesan Assessment Required/Paid--\$3,326

Total Operating Revenues--\$21,556.76 (Previous month--\$19,625.22)

- Highlights—All revenues are tracking roughly per the budget plan.

Net Operating Year to Date—+\$1,740.52 (Previous month—+\$1,915.62)

From now until year end we will basically be even with revenues vs. expenses in total.

Non-Operating Revenues--\$970.92 Non-Operating Expenses--\$592.00

Revenues--includes a gift to Memorial Fund, collection for Bishop's discretionary fund, additions to the Clergy discretionary fund, and collection for the Pets Blessing Day. Expenses--includes outreach gifts from the Clergy discretionary fund, outreach for Bishop's discretionary fund, and outreach for PAWS and Pawfect Connections.

Funds Summary—Total is \$11,857.72 (Previous month--\$12,086.36)

- Checking Account—\$3,078.47 (Previous month--\$3,253.57)
- Savings Account--\$517.52 (Previous month--\$517.52)
- Memorial Fund--\$976.38 (Previous month--\$975.57) (\$200--Windows fund)
- Diocesan Investment Fund--\$6,137.88 (Previous month--\$6,192.23)
- Clergy Discretionary Fund--\$1,147.47 (Previous month--\$1,147.47)

We are in the Season of Advent

Advent (from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "coming") is a season of the Christian church, the period of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus; in other words, the period immediately before Christmas. It is the beginning of the Western liturgical year and commences on Advent Sunday. The Eastern churches begin the liturgical year on 1 September. The Eastern Christian equivalent of Advent is called the Nativity Fast but it differs both in length and observances.

The progression of the season may be marked with an Advent calendar, a practice introduced by German Lutherans. At least in the Roman Catholic and Lutheran calendars, Advent starts on the fourth Sunday before December 25; in other words, the Sunday between November 27 and December 3 inclusive.

Latin *adventus* is the translation of the Greek word *parousia*, commonly used in reference to the Second Coming. Christians believe that the season of Advent serves a dual reminder of the original waiting that was done by the Hebrews for the birth of their Messiah as well as the waiting that Christians today endure for the second coming of Christ.

The theme of readings and teachings during Advent is often to prepare for the Second Coming while commemorating the First Coming of Christ at Christmas. With the view of directing the thoughts of Christians to the first coming of Jesus Christ as Savior, and to his second coming as Judge, special lessons are prescribed for each of the four Sundays in Advent.

The usual liturgical color in Western Christianity for Advent is purple or violet. The color is often used for hangings around the church, on the vestments of the clergy, and often also the sanctuary. On the 3rd Sunday of Advent, Gaudete Sunday, rose may be used instead, referencing the rose used on Laetare Sunday, the 4th Sunday of Lent. In some Anglican and Lutheran churches, blue is the liturgical colour for Advent, a custom traced to the usage of the Church of Sweden (Lutheran) and the medieval Sarum Rite. This color is often referred to as "Sarum blue". Red is used in the Eastern churches.

Many churches make use of Advent wreaths during this season, with one candle representing each of the four Sundays of Advent. The rose candle is lit on the 3rd Sunday of Advent. During Christmas Day, four lit white candles are used.

From the 4th century, the season was kept as a period of fasting as strict as that of Lent (commencing in some localities on 11 November; this being the feast day of St. Martin of Tours, the fast became known as "St. Martin's Lent", "St. Martin's Fast" or "the forty days of St. Martin"). The feast day was in many countries a time of frolic and heavy eating, since the 40-day fast began the next day. In the Anglican and Lutheran churches this fasting rule was later relaxed, with the Roman Catholic Church doing likewise later, but still keeping Advent as a season of penitence. In addition to fasting, dancing and similar festivities were forbidden.



Gifts for Life

During this Advent and Christmas Season, please consider giving to the Episcopal Relief & Development Fund in support of their many programs, or as specific gifts as shown below. Online, go to: www.er-d.org/GiftsForLife/ to find out more information about this possibility for Christmas time giving.