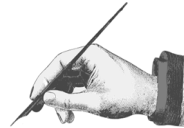


May 2023

President's Notes

By Joni Wasmund



I hope you were able to attend our Town Hall meeting on Sunday, April 23rd to hear all that's happening, from the Elders' update on an Intentional Interim pastor to the Community Garden being developed on our grounds, a single summer service on Sundays to bring us together in worship and so many other wonderful things to come in our near future. If you weren't able to attend, you'll find a recap of the meeting content elsewhere in this issue of the Voice. God has never left us and never will. He is our constant and may we never ever forget that.

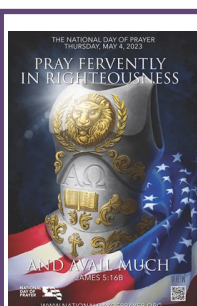
On many of our minds these days are kids who are being bullied and tragically taking their own lives as a result of not being able to handle the emotional stress. As adults, we may not be able to comprehend the devastating toll bullying has on young people because our brains function at a different level than kids' brains do. The rational part of a teen's brain isn't fully developed until age 25 or so. Research has found that adult and teen brains work differently as any parent has experienced when trying to discuss their differing opinions of how the world works. Adults think with the prefrontal cortex, the brain's rational part. This is the part of the brain that responds to situations with good judgment and an awareness of long-term consequences. Teens process information with the amygdala. This is the emotional part. In teens' brains, the connections between the emotional part of the brain and the decision-making center are still developing and not always at the same rate. That's why when teens have overwhelming emotional input, they can't explain later what they were thinking. They weren't thinking as much as they were feeling.

We keep reading about youth suicides and teen uprisings, serious crimes committed by all ages, some as young as 10. Kids getting hold of guns and taking out their heightened anxieties and frustrations on their friends and teachers because they're so lost that they don't know where else to go.

Continued on page 6

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- ⇒ What's on the Shelf
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- ⇒ Rummage Sale
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- ⇒ Noah's Nursery News
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- ⇒ Easter Thank You



National Day of Prayer

May 4th
 See page 12

Complete Details Inside or
 Find Us Online@
www.smlc.info

ARTICLE DEADLINE

The deadline for the June/July edition of *The Voice* is **May 15th**. Please Email articles to: deb@smlc.info & stmarkcommunications@gmail.com.

Look Inside For Information on:

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Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, May 9th @ 7:00PM
Next Committee Meetings: Tuesday, May 23rd @ 7:00PM

Serve The Lord With All Your Heart

May 2023



MISSOURI MUSINGS

BY BOB YARBROUGH

Trustworthy Savior

Did you follow the Gwyneth Paltrow skiing trial? Who ran into whom? Skiers know there are things to watch out for. You don't want to run into other skiers, be they a movie star or an optometrist. You don't want to ski in an avalanche zone.

Stay away from obvious danger and you can trust your skis, your skills, and the snowpack to get you down the mountain, right?

Actually, be careful about trusting the snow . . . if you ski under certain conditions. Especially in the Rocky Mountains of the US and Canada, tree wells swallow up many people each year, the death toll reaching a dozen annually at times.

Tree wells form when low-hanging branches prevent snow from collecting in the area immediately surrounding an evergreen tree. From a distance it looks like the tree is standing in deep snow. But in fact, around the tree there is a pocket of air, sometimes over ten feet deep.

If you ski too near the tree, you fall headfirst into deep powder snow. Unless the skier is able to wiggle out (difficult since you're upside down, and the more you move, the deeper you sink), or someone saw them and calls for help, people die of SIS (snow immersion suffocation).

There are some things in life that we think we can trust (like the snow on a beautiful mountain hillside) that may turn deadly. This is true in life generally.

Some people trust a political religion. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36). In fact, Jesus says it twice in that verse. It must be very important. We must be careful with equating our political convictions with Jesus and his will in the world.

Some people trust their earnings and possessions. There's that parable of the man who strikes it rich. Build bigger barns! He plans for a future of leisure and pleasure (Luke 12:13–21). "But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?'" (12:20). Too bad the man didn't think of that before he invested so much in himself and so little in being prepared to meet God.

Jesus told of "some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt" (Luke 18:9). The Bible warns us "not to think of [ourselves] more highly than [we] ought to think" (Romans 12:3). Rather, we are to "in humility count others more significant than" ourselves, looking not so much to our own interests as to the interests of others (Philippians 2:3–4).

Here in rural Missouri, people often trust the weather forecast. I don't blame them: it's all we have to go on when weather turns ugly. But it's amazing how often there are panic headlines for days about an approaching storm . . . and then we get a smattering of rain and nothing more.

So what can you trust? Is anyone or anything trustworthy?

In the book of Revelation, God, seated on his throne, says to John, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true" (Revelation 21:5). You can trust God and his word as he goes about his work of saving us and bringing ultimate order to this world.

Similar words appear in the last chapter of Revelation: "These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place" (22:6).

Then in the very next verse Jesus says: "And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." We may think of "this book" as both Revelation and the whole Bible.

There are plenty of objects, ideas, causes, and people which we are unwise to trust. But there is Jesus Christ, and he is trustworthy. He stands behind what Scripture says. He is the One to whom Scripture points! He (and only he) opens the way to God through faith as we hear, trust, learn, and share the Bible's good news.

Serve The Lord With All Your Heart

May 2023



St. Mark Council News

To keep you better informed about Church Council decisions we briefly present the major items from our meetings. Should you desire in-depth information, please go to <https://smlc.info/minutes/> for additional Council and Committee minutes.

Council Highlights April 2023

Interviews are being held with several Intentional Interim candidates who posted to our open call and look promising. LCMC allows St Mark to interview and choose an interim as opposed to synods that select and provide interims for a church.

Motion carried to bring a proposed Constitutional amendment to the next Annual Congregational meeting in November to add verbiage to Section 8, The Pastor (s), Part B, Duties: "make disciples who make disciples" and "develop others by discipling".

Council agreement to revise the word "committee" to "ministry team" was confirmed from last month's meeting.

A motion carried to approve Scholarship Committee members Kurt Ulbricht, Kathy Shelley, and Brenda Klein.

Mike Calacci, Cross View Church Lead Pastor, joined the Council to encourage and support us with ideas and insight to help St. Mark during this transition period. Mike has assisted numerous congregations with the gifts God has given him to identify solutions, bring new ideas and help congregations move forward in Christ.

Motion carried to ask Mike to guide St. Mark through this transition phase.

A Town Hall style meeting was scheduled for Sunday, April 23, 2023, at 11:30 am., following the 10:30 worship service to provide an informational update on planning for the future of St. Mark.

A motion carried to submit a monetary gift to Jim Schaufel in thanks for his years of service.



Please congratulate our Confirmands for the completion of this step in their faith journey.



- Alyn Mary Appelt, daughter of Ryan and Lisa Appelt**
- Madeline Genevieve Butler, daughter of Christopher and Rebecca Butler**
- William Henry Honaker, son of Andrew and Becky Honaker**
- Leah Grace Koslosky, daughter of Peter and Sarah Koslosky**
- Samuel Ivor Krook, son of Patrick and Laurie Krook**
- Reina Marie Maciareillo, daughter of Alfred and Sarah Maciareillo**
- Zeke Love Quane, son of Rob and Lori Quane**
- Matthew William Sanderson, son of Tom and Jackie Sanderson**
- Sydney Kate Schneider, daughter of David and Christine Schneider**



Questions: smlc.confirmationcom.lindenhurst@gmail.com

We Thank God for our 2023 Prayers for Muslims near and far

March 18- to April 17, 2023

We thank you for your daily prayers for our Muslim neighbors and friends during the 2023 - 30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World. Your prayers make such an impact that Muslims around the world are coming to Jesus at a rate far surpassing any rate recorded in Christian history.¹

Between 2010 and 2030 the Muslim population in the Americas is projected to grow from 0.3% to 0.5%. We have here in Lake Villa an Islamic Center on Monaville Rd which was established several years ago.

Please continue keeping our Muslim neighbors in mind by utilizing your prayer guide. If you are interested in learning how to witness to Muslim friends, please contact me for the information.

Barb Ewert 1-847-514-5487.

¹ Garrison, David, A Wind in the House of Islam: How God is Drawing Muslims Around the World to Faith in Jesus Christ, Wigtake Resources, LLC, 2014.

Serve The Lord With All Your Heart

May 2023

UPDATE FROM THE ELDERS

Unexpected changes... Working through our next steps

Congregations are always in some sort of change. However, there are moments when change is more intense. With Pastor Breum's sudden departure we find ourselves in a very challenging time. We are thankful that persons with whom we are familiar (Rev. Stephen Greggo, Dr. Robert Yarbrough, and Seminarian student Taylor Houser) have stepped forward and are leading us in worship during this time. As the weeks have passed, we have come to realize that our members are in different places. Some

are grieving the loss of our pastor, others felt he may have stayed too long, others are disappointed but excited for the new opportunities. We need some extra TLC to move us forward and bring healing to our congregation. We reached out to LCMC for guidance, and they suggested that given our situation with an unexpected leaving of a long-term pastor we consider seeking an "Intentional Interim Pastor."

We were already looking for a Co-Pastor, why not just look for a new Senior Pastor? The job description for the Co-Pastor role was put together to compliment Pastor Breum's spiritual gifts. We envisioned the two working together to fill our congregation's needs. Now that Pastor Breum has left, we need to take some time to re-evaluate who we are and what we see for our future and re-define the characteristics we want our Senior Pastor to have. This will take some time.

What is an Interim Pastor? An interim pastor is one who comes to a church for a given period of time to perform the usual duties of a pastor such as sermons, confirmation classes, bible studies, marriages, funerals, visits to ill, etc. This person essentially fills the gap until a new permanent pastor comes on board.

How is an Intentional Interim Pastor different? An Intentional Interim Pastor fulfills the pastoral roles but has additional training to help a congregation through a sudden and unexpected loss. The term of an Intentional Interim Pastor's contract can vary between 9-24 months. The Intentional Interim Pastor can assist us with: coming to terms with our history, discovering a new identity, fostering/enabling leadership changes, renewing our commitment to our community and missions, and preparing for a new Senior Pastor. We agree that seeking an Intentional Interim with the additional training and expertise is the best approach to our current needs.

Where are we in the process of selecting an Intentional Interim? The last time St. Mark had an interim pastor, the person was appointed by the ELCA. LCMC handles this process differently. We are able to hand pick the person to serve as our interim. We were provided with a list of LCMC Interim and Intentional Interim Pastors. We have posted the job on the LCMC website and emailed candidates as well. We have been pleased with the number of responses. The Elders have been busy sifting through the resumes that have been submitted, searching the internet for information on them, and listening to sermons, etc. To date, we have three interviews scheduled. Best case scenario is to have someone start in the summer months.

Remember that God is the head of our church, and we are the Church! No human can take the place of our Lord. The Lord is the only one worthy of our praise. Let us be open to change, not in our core values, but in how we learn and grow in Christ. Let's be excited about the possibilities and what is to come! A little pruning may hurt but re-growth can be amazing!

How can we support another? Transitions may be difficult, but we are not alone. Joshua 1:9 reads "Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go!" Pray together. Work together. Be peaceful with each other. Find patience and persevere. If the Lord is at the center, then nothing can stand in the way.

The Elders- Cheryl Bengston, Rod Lunkenheimer, Nancy O'Connor



Volunteer Opportunity

The church office is looking for a volunteer to come to church once a week and enter attendance in our church software. Once training is done, it only takes about an hour a week. Please contact Deb at deb@smlc.info or call the office (847-356-8140) if you are interested in this volunteer opportunity.

Serve The Lord With All Your Heart

May 2023

President's Message *Continued from page 1*

Can we each make a difference in one child's life? Yes, we can. We wonder why our youth numbers are down but what can we do? Can we start in our own neighborhoods or in our children's classrooms? Can we have kids in the neighborhood come and know they have a safe place at St. Mark? Can we model kindness and patience with each other so our youth have good role models and know how to reach out to a bullied classmate without fear of losing "friends" (who aren't really friends at all)? Can we stop mistreating those who disagree with us just because we don't share the common ground that allies come together on? I'm no expert because I don't have kids but there is a significant difference in personalities among my 17 nieces and nephews based on the role models they had growing up. School is almost out and although I can't go on the mission trip, I'm going to make an effort to reach out to kids in our congregation and try to help them know they have security in their church family. Will you please do the same?

God bless you and your family as we search for Him with our whole hearts and look for all He is doing in and through His people of St. Mark.

Joni Wasmund
Congregational President

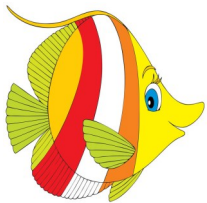


**Open Arms
Food Pantry**
Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Did you know? That OAM continues to support more than 200 families every week! **Thank you** for all your continued support in filling the "yellow barrels"! It's truly heart warming to see our Congregation continuing to reach out to help our neighbors in these unique times.

The items requested for May are **Baby Food/Baby Wipes**. Any nonperishable food is gladly accepted.

If you have any questions about OAM please contact Ron Placko at rdplacko@comcast.net.



Fin Facts

Did you know?

As reported by the "Fun"ance Committee at the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, April 22nd, St. Mark is on solid financial footing and can well afford the hiring of an Intentional Interim Pastor to perform pastoral duties and help move St. Mark forward.

Though the church is under budget in donations by \$4,827 through the first quarter of the year, expenses (mostly due to staff openings) are far under budget. The Congregation stepped out in faith in November when approving a budget with a \$35,850 deficit. At this time, there is a strong possibility of ending the year with a small gain.

This summer or fall the church will be going through an Internal Audit of Fiscal Year 2022. Though it will not be as extensive as an audit from an accounting firm, the Audit Team will be looking at every transaction which occurred during one month of the year as well as interviewing the Treasurer and Bookkeeper to ensure that the 2023 financial statements appropriately reflect the financial position of the church and that established accounting procedures are being followed. Recommendations and results are then forwarded to Council.

If you like to laugh, know how to balance a checkbook and like ice cream, you are qualified! Please consider observing the Funance Ministry Team. Your only responsibility will be attending meetings one evening a month!

	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Over/Under</u>
	<u>Unrestricted Offerings</u>	<u>Unrestricted Offerings</u>	
Month of March 2023	\$ 57,200	\$ 53,738	(\$ 3,462)
2023 Fiscal Year (Jan.- March)	\$ 163,400	\$ 158,573	(\$ 4,827)

Serve The Lord With All Your Heart

May 2023



TOWN HALL MEETING RECAP FROM SUNDAY, 4.23.23

Elder Board – the Intentional Interim Pastor position was posted on the LCMC website and the first candidate was received within 24 hours. Shortly after, 6 more were received for a selection of 7 candidates. Two of those stood out and were interviewed, references were obtained and one will be chosen pending receipt and review of their proposals. One will be available in May, the other in June. The anticipated contract time is 12-24 months to prepare the congregation for the next pastor and to take the opportunity to decide who God wants us to be and to become that church and then to determine what the Sr Pastor call description should look like as determined by the congregational profile. The call committee that was developed for the Co-pastor position last year will resume their search when it's time to call a Sr Pastor.

A challenge was given to the congregation to resist taking a summer vacation from church and instead make church a priority to connect and renew.

Congregational Life - coming up: Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day recognition, OCC in July, church picnic, Trunk or Treat, Holiday baskets and many other great events. Participation in preparing for any of these events doesn't require joining the committee although new committee members are always welcome for any who would like to join.

HIS Ministry - helps where needed, contact Jerry Doran to be added to the newsletter distribution.

ChurchDoctor work continues with committees working on recommendations. About 100 spiritual profiles have been completed and those who have not yet completed theirs were strongly encouraged to do so to better understand the gifts they've been blessed with.

Discipleship is how we learn in 4 easy steps: e.g., if someone watches an usher, then helps an usher, then switches places with the usher so the usher helps them, they can become the usher in the 4th step.

Evangelism - Community Garden coming, contact Fred Natschke to join the group. Chamber of Commerce, contact Kurt Ulbricht with any upcoming church events that he can share with the Chamber and have included in the Chamber newsletter to promote public awareness. Cake 4 Cops is planned for May 7 and a number of other events are in the planning stages to make St Mark known in the community through outreach activities.

Feed My Starving Children - St Mark has served 7x since we began monthly events last October and during those packing events we prepared a year of food for 522 kids. We saved 522 kids' lives by each of us who went giving just 2 hours 7 times! Next packing event is Sat, May 6 @ 9:00 am (all events are at the Libertyville site). Contact Mike Mol for more info.

Finance – our annual audit is scheduled for next month and St Mark is in good financial position for hiring and filling open positions.

Parish Ed - VBS, June 19-23: outer space theme “shine the light of Jesus everywhere”. Kids bring your friends!

Confirmation, Sun April 30 2:00 pm, all invited and encouraged to come to support our newest members.

Sunday school - 2 coordinators are in place, may need teachers or subs (subs don't need to prepare, just attend a class to cover when a co-teacher is absent).

Continued 

Serve The Lord With All Your Heart

May 2023

Prayer group – prayer is a foundation of the church and many source documents are available on the table at the north end of the narthex. Weekly prayer meetings will be held via zoom on Wednesdays in May. The St Mark prayer chain increases our prayer opportunities and everyone who has an email address should be on the prayer chain as prayers themselves are our powerful request path directly to God. To join the prayer chain, send your email address to Connie Saunders or Joni Wasmund or to smlcprayers@gmail.com. Send prayer requests to smlcprayers@gmail.com.

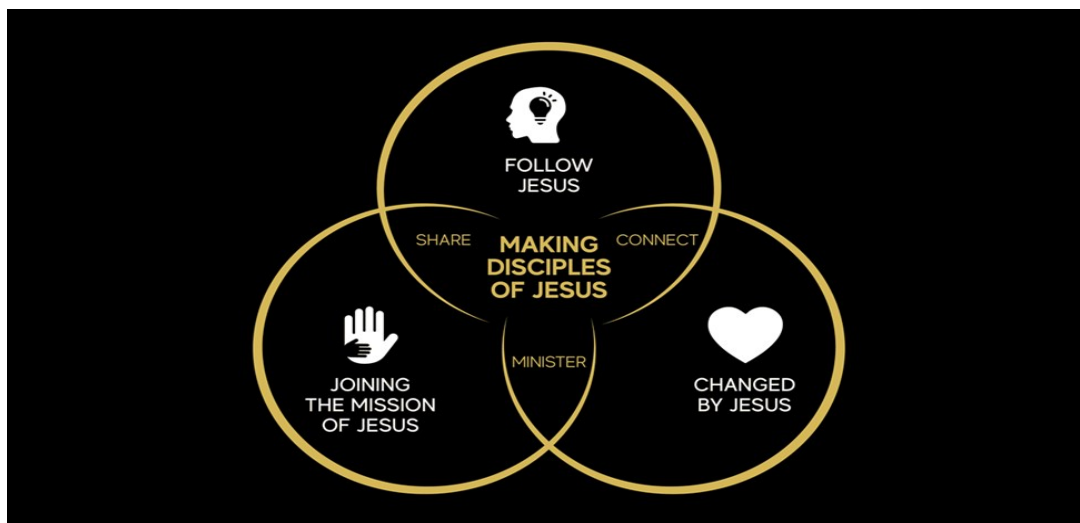
Safety & Security- pop quiz! 8 exterior security cameras have been installed with #9 coming soon.

Stephen Ministries - when life events get so difficult that there's no right person to talk with, pull out a SM card from the pew rack and contact the church office for a Stephen Minister. Six newly trained ministers will be commissioned for our congregation in May.

Stewardship- there are so many easy things everyone can help with at St Mark - everyone can do something. When everyone does something, no one has to do everything. Rummage sale will happen again this year, more info to come!

Worship & Music - in addition to the 5:30 Sat worship this summer (June-Aug) we will have 1 Sunday service @ 9:00 am with the goal of bringing our 2 Sunday services together for fellowship (yes, coffee and doughnuts all summer) and to get to know each other better. Two services each month will be traditional and 2 will be contemporary so everyone has a chance to experience both and gain the worship experience each has to offer. Organist search continues; the job description will be amended to try to reach a broader audience.

Youth - please pray for our youth and for the upcoming Mission Trip to Logan County, West Va.



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A DISCIPLE OF JESUS?

Follow me (FOLLOW JESUS) and I will make you (CHANGED BY JESUS) fishers of men (JOINING THE MISSION OF JESUS). Matthew 4:19

Following Jesus means taking the time to do so and it becomes easier when His path for us becomes clearer by studying His Word. Can we really get to know a Person if we try to fit Him in between our all-consuming life plans that distract us even when we're trying to spend time with Him? How well does a child learn when they don't take time to study what they're learning? What if they only attend an hour or 2 of class once each week? They might graduate with a C average and sometimes that's the life of Christ in us, a C average, that we might accept when we don't put Him before worldly life. This world has all sorts of distractions because that's how the enemy keeps us too busy for Jesus. If the devil can't make you bad, he'll make you busy.

Then, Jesus says, *I will make you...He changes our hearts when we don't conform to this world but allow ourselves to be transformed by the renewing of our minds.* Romans 12:2

You will seek me and find Me when you seek me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:13

Blessings,
Joni Wasmund

Serve The Lord With All Your Heart

May 2023

The trip is getting closer!!!

As you read this, we've had our first meeting and the group is fired up and looking forward even more to our upcoming adventure. Please keep your eyes and ears open for our upcoming fundraisers. We'll definitely be doing the "Take an Envelope" fundraiser again but here are some other ideas we have been kicking around:

- ~ Do odd jobs around the house for our parishioners
- ~ Car and/or dog wash along with a lemonade stand
- ~ Raffle off a chance to throw a pie in the face of ????
- ~ Guess how many ??? in the jar to win it
- ~ Pancakes-for-dinner night
- ~ Flamingo a yard (or buy insurance to NOT get flamingo'ed)
- ~ Bake Sale
- ~ Spaghetti night
- ~ Face Painting
- ~ Trivia Night

Please keep this trip in your prayers. A few of the things you can pray for are:

- Ease in the planning
- Healthy participants
- Safe travels
- to have the Logan'ites open to our visit

I have received information from YouthWorks about the area and thought I'd share with you:

Logan County is surrounded by the Appalachian Mountains (pronounced: app-uh-LATCH-an), natural beauty and resources, especially coal and timber. Logan County is also known for its storytelling, clogging, flat foot dancing (a form of dance where the rhythm of music is beaten out with the feet), bluegrass music and being the hometown to musician Landau Eugene Murphy Jr. (Season six winner of "America's Got Talent"!!)

Logan County is in the heart of the Appalachian Mountains (which extend from Maine to Georgia). West Virginian culture offers a taste of southern hospitality, a northeastern work ethic and simplified mountain living. Most of West Virginia's ancestral roots go back to the Scottish, Irish and English immigrants of the 1600s and 1700s.

YouthWorks also shared a donation list. I will put a box outside my "office" if you would like to help. Donations of travel size hygiene products will be brought to a local organization involved in providing support to families and children in Logan County. Travel size shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, toothbrush and toothpaste, washcloths, and soap, would all directly benefit community members, and especially those experiencing homelessness.

If you have any questions, thoughts, concerns, ideas, please feel to share with me, Mike Mol, at MEMOL2Elks@gmail.com

*God is good, all the time.
And all the time, God is good!!*

Ongoing Opportunities for Prayer

St Mark & America Need Your Prayers



- *First Friday Sing and Pray* is on Friday, May 5 in the Sanctuary for worship and praise through music, and prayer. Contact person is Pam Burke, pamelaburke02@gmail.com.
- *National Day of Prayer*, Thursday, May 4. This year's theme, *Pray fervently in righteousness and avail much*. James 5:16b "... the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. Look for more details in this *Voice*. Click on the link below to view this year's theme via video.
https://vimeo.com/767003155/65c28aabb2?embedded=true&source=video_title&owner=91233561
- *St. Mark Prayer Chain*, a wonderful group of fellow Christians, praying for all prayer requests and praising God for His listening to our petitions, thanksgivings and praises for His responses. Email requests and praises to smlcprayers@gmail.com. Please share with the Prayer Chain; how God has responded to your prayer request.
- *ZOOM Weekly Prayer Meeting* - Come, pray and be blessed. We meet Wednesdays at 6:30 pm for about an hour praying over the previous week of Prayer Chain requests, St. Mark Church and each other. Contact Person: Pam Burke pamelaburke02@gmail.com and Barb Ewert for Zoom link [bewert@colsonfellows.org](https://www.zoom.us/j/91233561).
- The Worship and Music Committee have posted the 2023 *Three Days of Prayer Brochure* on the St. Mark website under Prayer. We prayerfully request you include these various petitions as part of your devotions for our church families, Intermediate and Senior pastor search, staff, church council and committees and for the Church Doctor training and program during this coming church year.

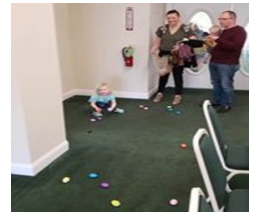
Serve The Lord With All Your Heart

May 2023

The Easter Bunny was here!!

The bunny sure hopes all the kids that showed up had a great time and that the parents weren't too upset with all the chocolate the kids got!!

If you still have left over empty eggs, please return them to my "office" when you get a chance - thanks! Mike Mol



St. Mark Church, America, the World and You need YOUR Prayers

As Pastor Breum noted we are in the end times and the storm clouds are over us. SO, brothers and sisters, WAKE UP! THE LORD IS CALLING YOU! Open your eyes, your ears and your mind to the spiritual warfare that is increasingly revealing itself - the invisible is now manifesting itself to the visible (materialistic) world. Prayers for revival spanning many decades and around the world are being answered by the Holy Spirit not just personally (Ava Klein's testimony), but publicly too at Asbury College this past February. The majority of the media, public (secular) schools, some doctors, lawyers, "progressive churches," and local/national and international politicians are advocating for agendas/ideologies that are evil and an abomination before the Lord. Not just in America, but the world. Thinking critically: ideas have consequences; bad ideas (WOKE) have victims.

God (1) created each of us male or female, (2) forgave our sins as confessing Christians, (3) adopted us as His child with an eternal inheritance, and (4) created each of us for a purpose with fitting gifts. Christ now is waiting for us to trust and obey Him as His workers in discipleship in the restoration of His creation.

So practically speaking where do you start? **First**, there are two dates we should always have on our calendar. Today and the day I go home to be with the Lord. **Second**, this is the day the Lord has made, and I am to rejoice and be glad in it. Here is a morning affirmation which helps you to trust the Father, abide in the Son and Walk with the Spirit.¹ (To abide, To continue permanently or in the same state; to be firm and immovable. [Psalms 119:90.](#))

Third, safety - putting on the Armor of God each morning for spiritual protection (Ephesians 6:10-18) allowing you to go forth each day to be a Christian soldier fighting the good fight so to glorify God.² *In the morning or any time of day to help you in the spiritual battle. Note the 3 R's of renew, reckon and resist - one for each of the three fronts of warfare.* Always keeping in mind as we struggle each day with these spiritual forces, God has already won the battle on the cross - victory over death and the evil one!!! Continued in "National Day of Prayer" announcement.

EXERCISE: One habit we can cultivate is, upon first waking in the morning, to dedicate the day to trusting the Father, abiding in the Son, and walking by the Spirit. The card shown in figure 7 is designed to help you embrace this routine.¹⁶ Try this exercise every morning for a week and see if it enhances your discernment and openness to the Spirit's work during your day.

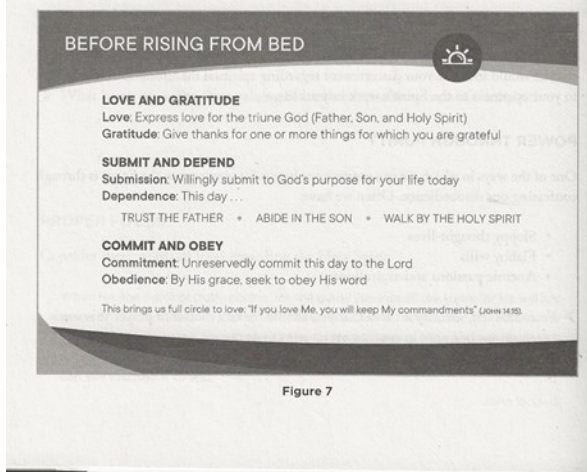
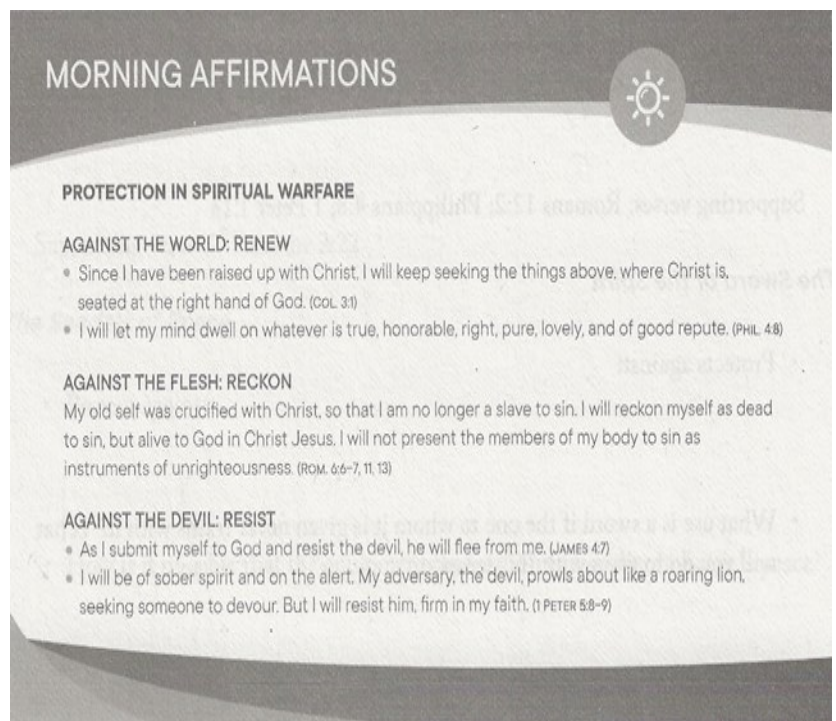


Figure 7

¹ Boa, Ken, Conformed to His Image, Study Guide.

p. 190.

² IBID. p. 210.





Greetings From The Congregational Life Committee

Student Volunteers Needed for Mother's Day & Father's Day Services

We are looking for Confirmation students to help hand out some goodies for all three services for Mother's Day and Father's Day. If your student needs some service hours, this is an easy way for them to help us out and earn an hour or two. We have an online sign up for Confirmation students that would like to help out:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F084BA4A92CA5FE3-confirmation>

Operation Christmas Child - Christmas in July

Operation Christmas Child delivers great joy and the Good News of Jesus Christ to children in need around the world through gift-filled shoeboxes. Each box packed full of quality toys, school supplies, and personal care items becomes a tangible expression of God's immense love for the child. For many, it is their first gift ever! Delivered by our local church partners, shoebox gifts provide an opportunity to present the Gospel to boys and girls in a clear, child-friendly way.

Rather than wait until the busy Christmas season, we are going to start collecting items for OCC in July. Please start gathering items that will fit in a shoebox to be ready for our July collection. You can visit [Official Shoebox Gift Suggestions \(samaritanspurse.org\)](http://OfficialShoeboxGiftSuggestions(samaritanspurse.org)) to learn more about what types of items are most needed. Here are some ideas to help get you started. Please remove as much packaging as possible when donating.

“Wow” Items:

- Doll or Stuffed Animal
- Soccer ball (Make sure to include a manual air pump)
- Small musical instrument (such as a harmonica or woodwind recorder)
- Backpack / String Bag

Clothing & Accessories

- Shirts and pants
- Underwear
- Shoes and socks
- Flip-flops
- Hat/scarf/mittens
- Wrist watch
- Sunglasses

Crafts & Activities

- Puzzles
- Binoculars
- Compass
- Chalkboard and chalk
- Tool set with work gloves
- Fishing kit
- Brightly colored rope or twine
- Gardening kit with gloves and trowel (no seeds)
- Magnets
- Kaleidoscope
- Skipping rope/Jump rope
- Playing cards
- Marbles

Personal Care Items

- Comb & Hairbrush
- Toothbrush
- Washcloth
- Feminine products
- Adhesive bandages (Colorful ones can help a child be more willing to wear a bandage. Do not include liquid antibiotic ointment.)
- Reusable plastic containers: cup, water bottle, plate, bowl, (Consider filling an empty container with non-liquid items such as combs, markers, sunglasses, or washcloths to maximize the space.)
- Blanket
- Non-liquid lip balm
- Flashlight (solar-powered or hand-crank; if battery operated, be sure to include extra batteries)

Reach out to the CLC for more information: [Shawn Frank](#) ♦ [Tricia Cholewinski](#) ♦ [Donna Bergl](#)

Serve The Lord With All Your Heart

May 2023

National Day of Prayer, Thursday, May 4 and Beyond

James 5:16b "...the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

2023 National Prayer For America

We come with fervent hearts to praise You Lord. You are The Word, the Way, Truth and Life. The Alpha and Omega, Lion of Judah, Almighty God who was, and is, and is to come. You clothed Yourself in flesh and dwelt among us, to remove our sin and clothe us in Your righteousness that we might dwell with You forever and ever.

With broken, humbled hearts we repent of our sins, confessing to You our faithlessness, prayerlessness, and disobedience. Forgive us for our doubt, our prideful and quarrelsome words that reveal our unclean hearts. Cleanse us and renew a right and steadfast spirit within us we pray. With grateful hearts we thank You fervently for the blessings in our life and throughout America; they are more than we are able to count. We will remember Your grace and testify to Your goodness in all generations. Help us to refrain from complaining, but instead be prompted to pray faithfully in every circumstance. Teach us to have a content heart knowing You are always enough for our every need. As the Church we commit to pray and love our neighbor and nation as You loved us, that our reputation in this world would be rooted in Your love. Holy Spirit work and overflow through us in every prayer, thought, word, and deed. May our character, conversations, and conduct reflect the righteousness in which You clothed us and command us to live.

With an obedient heart we put on the full armor of God; Your breastplate of righteousness guards our heart from which flows the springs of life. We pray fervently for our communities and country; the people who are in the Church, Family, Education, Business and Workplace, Military, Government, Arts, Entertainment and Media. Every person is Your workmanship, fearfully and wonderfully created and loved.

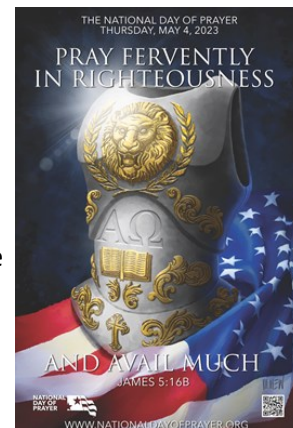
With hopeful hearts we pray that all would choose to receive Your love and follow You. We pray that America would confess, "Jesus is Lord" and reflect Your righteousness in every sphere of influence, and every aspect of our lives. We ask that heavenly hope would flood our hearts, silence hate, and that You will heal our land.

Believing You; all You are, all You said, and all You have promised, we pray fervently in righteousness and avail much. In Jesus Name we pray, Amen!

Kathy Branzell President, National Day of Prayer Task Force

Click on the link below to view this year's theme via video.

https://vimeo.com/767003155/65c28aabb2?embedded=true&source=video_title&owner=91233561



BAPTIZED INTO THE FAMILY OF GOD

March 19th at St. Mark

Jaxon Daniel Brock

Son of
Kristena
& Nathan Brock



April 30th at St. Mark

Callie Rose Quinn

Daughter of
Jenny Neumann
& Anthony Quinn

May the guiding presence of God be with these individuals as they grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Serve The Lord With All Your Heart

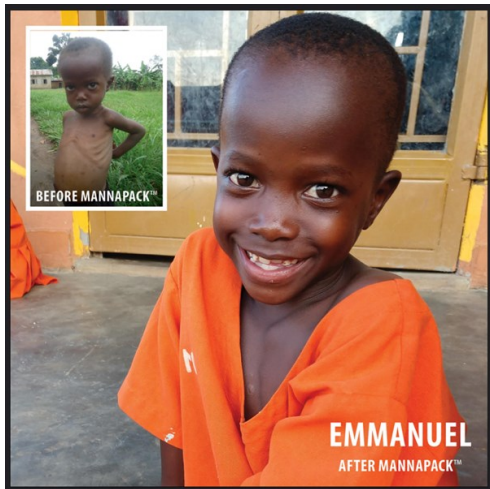
May 2023

St. Mark is starting a Garden Club!

- **WHO is Invited:** Anyone of any age. Beginner and experienced gardeners. Congregation members, family, friends, community members.
 - **Where Located:** On St. Mark property (near the back parking lot). It will consist of at least 20 raised beds (already constructed).
 - **Why:** To foster fellowship within St Mark as well as reach out to the community. Also, fresh vegetables taste better! :)
- Contact:** If interested, please contact Fred Natschke at fdnatschke@gmail.com



The garden is just getting started. Once (God willing) produce starts growing, the plan is to have a cart where produce can be available to St Mark members and the community. Any good-will offerings will be used for other ministries. In the fall, we are planning a "Harvest Fest" with food, music, and kid activities. We hope you will be involved. God Bless



COME HELP FEED KIDS LIKE EMMANUEL

Yes, May should be a Thursday night packing event, but we moved this month to Saturday because we have some special guests joining us!!

Come join your SS Teachers & Students (and their parents) at FMSC in Libertyville on Saturday, May 6th at 8:45.

As a reminder, we have three different "jobs" you can do when you are there:

- If you need a sit down job, we have a need for labelers
- If you want to get a workout, we could use you in the warehouse
- That leaves the "normal (but awesome) job" of standing and packing the food

Here is the link to use to sign up [May 6 FMSC Sign Up Link](#) and as always if you have any questions and/or problems signing up, please let me help you. Send me an email at MEMOL2Elks@gmail.com.

If you can't come pack with us, FMSC could still use your prayers or your donations. Please consider donating to an awesome cause!! FMSC would gladly except your one-time donation, but we also have a monthly giving program called "[Something Greater](#)". If you have the resources available, please look at the following information for ways you can help feed the hungry [Ways to Give to FMSC!!](#)

God is good, all the time. And all the time, God is good!!



Serve The Lord With All Your Heart

May 2023

St. Mark's Joyful Hearts - Singles Group

Joyful Hearts is a group for St Mark single people who get together for friendship and fellowship. The commonality and shared experience of being single is what brings us together. We believe that Christian friendships make our lives more fulfilling. Joyful Hearts is not a group that actively seeks dating relationships. We have been getting together once a month at one of our local restaurants. Additionally, throughout the month we have gone to the movies, farmers markets, local concerts, etc. If you are interested in joining this group please let us know (you can pick and choose what you want to participate in). This is a great way to make new friendships!

We are also exploring ways we can support the church. We are a new group and appreciate all suggestions!

Contact Patty Lindholm_Patricia@yahoo.com or Nancy NEOConnor@comcast.net



Following Christ



Do you want your life to count for Christ? Would you like to make a real impact for God's kingdom in this world? You can and you don't have to be a great leader for it to happen. Just a good follower.

In *Following Christ*, Joseph Stowell, former president of Moody Bible Institute, shows why Christ's command to "Follow me" isn't merely the starting point of Christianity. It's the very heartbeat of vibrant, effective faith. And it's not just for a few gifted leaders, but for all believers.

"Christianity is a relationship, an adventure, a passionate pursuit of Christ," says Stowell. "Followers escape the drudgery of a system of rituals and regulations, and revel in the discovery of the ever-interesting Christ." Stowell shows you what happens when an ordinary man or woman pursues not the trappings of

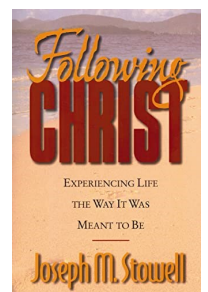
Christianity, but Christ himself. You'll discover:

- What a "non-negotiated" follower looks like
- Why God does his best work through followers
- Why self-directed living is a recipe for emptiness
- What makes Christ so worth following

- What makes Christ so worth following
- How Christ transforms our character
- What it means to pick up your cross
- Why a close walk with Jesus is the key to effective living

This inspiring book cuts through the side-issues of Christianity to reveal its true, compelling object: Jesus Christ. As his fully devoted follower, you'll discover a dynamic and refreshing way of living, one that will sustain you through life's valleys and provide breathtaking spiritual vistas from its peaks.

It's Christianity the way God intended it, marked by simplicity. Vigorous faith. Purpose and direction. Soul-winning impact on those around you. And above all, a joyous, growing closeness with Christ. You can find this book under call number 248.4 STO.



Just C.H.A.T with God

"Devote yourselves to prayer" Colossians 4:2
When was the last time you had a little C.H.A.T. with God?

Friday May 5
First Friday Sing and Pray

C stands for Confession - Confession is when we tell God how we have sinned-the ways we have turned away from following Him. By confessing to God, we show Him that we trust Him. Knowing his love endures forever draws us closer to Him no matter what we confess.

H stands for Honor - God loves our worship. When we honor Him with our prayers-especially after confessing-it is pleasing to Him. We declare what we know to be true about Him.

A stands for Ask - God says you can ask for anything in His name-and asking is usually the first thing we think of when it comes to prayer. Asking is when we lay our requests before our God. We will be lifting up prayer needs for world situations, our country, current events, our church, the lost, family, friends, and of course personal prayer requests. Please consider bringing those in your life who need prayer.

T stands for Thankfulness - Saying thank you to God comes quite naturally. An ending prayer with statements of thanks and gratitude is an easy way to pray! anything you see in nature, your family, or small delights in your day!

Please join us for an informal gathering from 7:00 to 8:00pm. Pray whatever is on your heart silently, in agreement, or out loud. No pressure. No expectations. Stop in for 30 minutes or stay until the end whatever works in your schedule.

So let's have a little **CHAT** with God!

Serve The Lord With All Your Heart

May 2023



Rummage Sale 2023 Save the Date!

The 2023 Rummage Sale will be held August 3rd, 4th and 5th. We will have complete details in the June Voice. Collection will begin in early July. So start cleaning out all your unneeded treasures and boxing them up. Help us out by putting like items together. Clothes in one bag, books in another box, housewares in another, toys all together. The June Voice will have a list of what we do not accept or you can check last year's Voice on our website. We welcome ALL help in setting up and running the sale. Questions, call Laurie Kerns at 847-612-1510.

Please continue to pray for St. Mark's graduating high school seniors. May God's love and protection continue with them in their future endeavors wherever they may take them!!

*Amya Appelt
Caleb Barnes
Abby Bergl
Niva Doty
Nicholas Gregori
Emily Hawkins*



*Josh Hawkins
Keith Hill
Logan Johnson
Alexander McGill
Colin Shea*

THE CONFIRMATION MINISTRY NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT!

Beginning Fall 2023, the church needs 2-3 people to provide the organizational/administrative support necessary to help our 7th/8th graders complete their confirmation. This includes setting up the activities and preparing materials at the beginning of the confirmation year, communication during the year, and facilitating end of year activities.

This is a great way to support our youth! Confirmation typically runs beginning of September thru end of April.

We have a detailed description to help.

PLEASE contact Jane Milani lymom76@att.net or Lori McKenzie lorimckenzie119@gmail.com



Vacation Bible School

**SAVE THE DATES FOR
VACATION BIBLE
SCHOOL (VBS)**



**Stars, Planets, Comets...
Oh My God, you are
AWESOME!**

3-2-1...Blast off for some star-studded Bible adventures!
We'll learn how Jesus' light shines even
in the darkest parts of the universe!
Join us for some light years of faith-building fun!

REGISTRATION OPENS MAY 1st

When: Monday, June 19th –
Friday, June 23rd

Time: 9:00am - Noon

Who: Preschoolers (3-years old and potty-trained) through 6th graders (for the 23-24 school year)
Be on the lookout for more details and registration information on SMLC website!



If you have any questions about VBS or would like to volunteer to be part of our VBS crew, please **contact Beth Miller at smarkvbsfun@gmail.com**.



VBS Mission Control Members Needed!

REGISTRATION OPENS MAY 1st

We are searching every corner of our SMLC galaxy looking for adults (over 16 years of age) to lead His children on an out-of-this-world adventure that will leave an everlasting, faith-based impression!

Can you be the hands and heart of God, shining His incredible love for His children?
Can you be one of our VBS stars?



We can't do this without you!

We are in need of:

- Co-director** (working to organize VBS materials, donations, and training)
- Station Leaders** (using a provided curriculum, share the Bible story, lead games, make crafts, sing songs, **or** prepare snacks.)
- Crew Leaders** (experience VBS with a group of preschool or elementary kids)

Got questions? Please **contact Beth Miller at smarkvbsfun@gmail.com** or reach out to our Parish Education Committee.

Serve The Lord With All Your Heart

May 2023



Meet Jackie

Featuring a segment called "Getting to Know You" regarding our nursery volunteers!

In this article, I would like to introduce Jackie Sanderson!

Jackie, and her husband, Tom, have been members of St. Mark for 22 years! They also have two sons, Jacob and Matthew, who are members here as well. Jacob was confirmed here in 2021, and Matthew was confirmed with this year's confirmation class in April.

Jackie started in the nursery when her boys were very young. Jackie loves children, which shows in the natural and nurturing way that she interacts with them. She remains devoted to the nursery by assisting during the Sunday School hour for the past 9 plus years.

In her free time, Jackie enjoys going to her sons' baseball games, spending time with her folks, especially in their cabin up north, gardening, volunteering regularly at her children's schools, helping animals in need and assisting at church however she can.

Jackie's many God given gifts include her organizational skills, her easy going disposition and her insightfulness. All of these attributes combined make her an asset at St. Mark

Thank you, Jackie, for your many years of contributions here at St. Mark!

God bless,
Deb Heide



BEHIND THE WALLS 2023 Lake County Day of Champions

Saturday, June 17th

Registration is open! We need 54 men & women to take the Good News Behind the Walls in Lake County! The deadline to register is Sunday, May 21st. God is presenting the opportunity for you to comfortably share your faith. Training is provided.

Contact Jeff McKenzie, Carl Norlin, or Lynn Wetterberg for answers to any questions. Get signed up today!

[Click here to register](#)



*Easter
Breakfast*

EASTER VOLUNTEERS

Where to begin!

Roger Zuchowski, Jim Schaufel, Pete Koslosky, and Nathan Brock for somehow climbing that horrifically tall ladder to put up our stunning white cross drape. It is truly the centerpiece of Easter at St. Mark!

The lilies were arranged by our floral team: Kay & Dave Dummer, Jane & Jenny Milani, Katy Owens and Gae Michal.

The hall was set up with 18 tables and 125 chairs by Nathan Brock, Pete Koslosky, Jim Schaufel, and Roger Zuchowski. Thank you! Thank you to those who helped to decorate the hall. I really could not have done it without you Betty & Bruce Young, Joy Baumunk, Cheryl Bengston and Gae Michal. Then the large task of clearing the hall after breakfast. Thanks go out to Betty Oesterle, Hannah & Amber, Joy Baumunk and Bonnie Millsop for their help.

I do hope I have everyone, but beg your pardon if I missed someone. Special mention to all who brought fruit and baked goods, etc. Yummm!

As you can see, it takes more than a few people to make it all happen. Bless you all! And bless all 75 who came to enjoy our feast. Considering what we have been through this past month, I am impressed we had that many.

Our proceeds of \$70 will go towards the summer Mission Trip. Praise God for so many willing to offer their talents to this yearly ministry.

Serve The Lord With All Your Heart

May 2023

Support St. Mark & Local Businesses



Second Tuesday Each Month

CARRY OUT, PICK UP or DELIVERY!
Be sure to bring your coupon and mention it at time of payment!

Present this certificate at the time of payment and **15%** of your order, excluding tax and tip, will be donated to **St. Mark Lutheran Church**.
Certificate must be presented at time of payment.
Not to be used with any other coupons or discounts.

Share with your friends and family.

LINDENHURST LOCATION ONLY

12:00 - 9:00 PM

Visit www.antiochpizzashop.com for full menu.

Valid the **Second Tuesday** of each Month

Antioch Pizza ■ 224-444-8657
1856 E. Grand Ave., Lindenhurst

DATES: Second Tuesdays
5/9/23, 6/13/23, 7/11/23



Wendy's

THIRD THURSDAY EACH MONTH!

Now Serving Breakfast!

DRIVE THRU Anytime that day! Be sure to bring your coupon! (paper or electronic)

Show your support for St. Mark Lutheran Church

Stop into **Wendy's® Lindenhurst** anytime on the **Third Thursday** of each month and **30%** of qualifying sales will be donated to **St. Mark Lutheran Church**.

DATE: Every Third Thursday
5/18/23, 6/15/23, 7/20/23

TIME: All Day (Breakfast until Close)

LOCATION: 370 S US Highway 45, Lindenhurst

Present this flyer when ordering!

Paper flyer or electronic image of flyer (on a phone/tablet) is required when order is placed. Only valid on date at location specified above. Wendy's gift cards and other retail purchases are excluded from the event. Drive-thru, carry-out (place inside the dining room at the counter) and dine-in orders when and where available qualify. Owned and operated by **HAMRA** Enterprises, a Wendy's franchisee www.hamrafundraising.com.

Divine Signs is Lake County's premier yard message creation company, dedicated to spreading joy and love in an extraordinary way!

We are excited to announce that we will **contribute 10% of our proceeds to St. Mark Lutheran Church** in Lindenhurst, IL. Simply mention St. Mark Lutheran Church, it is that easy! Tell your family and friends and let's get your next congratulatory event in the schedule!

This promotion is offered for everyone. Contact us directly or visit our sites to learn more about us...



Kevin and Tracy Graul

Phone or text: (224) 223-2786

[Facebook.com/DivineSigns3.16](https://www.facebook.com/DivineSigns3.16)

[Instagram@Divinesigns3.16](https://www.instagram.com/Divinesigns3.16)

DivineSigns.godaddysites.com

Serve The Lord With All Your Heart

May 2023

ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH
1822 EAST GRAND AVENUE
LINDENHURST IL 60046

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Return Postage Guaranteed*



The **VOICE**
OF ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH



Stephen Ministry

THE VOICE

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF
ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH

 (847) 356-8140
 www.smlc.info
 smlc@smlc.info

Service Times
Saturday | 5:30PM
Traditional
Sunday | 8:00AM
Traditional
Sunday | 10:30AM
Contemporary

★ TO RECEIVE
THE VOICE ONLINE,
EMAIL DEB@SMLC.INFO

**JUNE/JULY VOICE DEADLINE:
May 15, 2023**

Serve The Lord With All Your Heart
May 2023