

# The **VOICE**

## OF ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH

December 2025 / January 2026

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

by John Bengston

Dear St. Mark Family,

We have been busy! Before I get to that, though, I want to thank our outgoing Council Secretary, Kellie Rice, who served St. Mark in this role for four years. We were blessed to have you on Council, Kellie. Thank you for your service to St. Mark. I'd also like to acknowledge our Intentional Interim Pastor Steve Abend who left mid-year and to Intentional Interim Pastor Brian Metke who joined us afterward. Their leadership this year was an inspired gift from God.

Busy, Busy, Busy...

Our number one priority this coming year is to call a new Pastor. With the help of Vanderbloemen Consulting, we are starting to see more applications come in and we anticipate, with the approach of Advent, we will see more.

In November, we had our Congregational Meeting and Special Congregational meeting where we approved and adopted a new Constitution and Bylaws effective the first of year. We also approved our 2026 Budget. With our new governing documents, there is some work to do. The Constitution Committee will now be reviewing practices and procedures to ensure conformity with our new Constitution and Bylaws. We will also realign some of our ministries with the proper Ministry Teams. With our new budget, we are now able to start the process of looking for a part-time Youth and Family Ministry Director and a Worship Tech Coordinator. We will keep you updated on our progress.

As we end this year and move into next, I'd like to extend my heartfelt wish that you all are blessed with a wonderful Christmas and New Year. I'd also ask that you continue to pray for St. Mark.

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### **Christmas Services**

Please join us to celebrate  
Christ's Birth on December 24th  
4:00 & 8:00 PM



Order your Poinsettia  
by Sunday, December  
7th! Order form can  
be found on page 15.

### **Advent Services**

*Join us on  
Wednesday,  
December  
3rd, 10th  
& 17th at  
7:00PM  
following  
supper at 5:30PM*



**CHURCH EVENTS**  
[www.smlc.info/events](http://www.smlc.info/events)

Complete Details Inside or **Find Us** Online@[www.smlc.info](http://www.smlc.info)

### **ARTICLE DEADLINE**

The deadline for the **February** edition  
of *The Voice* is **January 12th**. Please  
Email articles to:  
[stmarkcommunications@gmail.com](mailto:stmarkcommunications@gmail.com)

**Loving God and All People**

December 2025 / January 2026



## MEET THE TEAM

### ST. MARK COUNCIL

**PRESIDENT**  
John Bengston

**VICE PRESIDENT**  
Robin Korom

**COUNCIL SECRETARY**  
Kellie Rice / Susie Soukup

**FINANCIAL TREASURER**  
Bill Renninger

**BOARD OF ELDERS**  
Kathy Shelley Todd Korth Nancy O'Connor

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
Robin Korom Johnna Morton Keith Niles

### ST. MARK MINISTRY TEAMS

#### FELLOWSHIP

*Supported by*  
Johnna Morton

Donna Bergl  
Tricia Cholewinski  
Shawn Frank

#### OUTREACH

*Supported by*  
Todd Korth  
Chris Holmes  
Rod Lunkenheimer  
Jeff McKenzie  
Fred Natschke  
Kurt Ulbricht

#### FINANCE

*Supported by*  
Treasurer, Bill Renninger

Brock Millsop Pam Preston  
Sharon Wick Lynn Wetterberg

#### YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRIES

*Supported by*  
Nancy O'Connor  
Lori McKenzie Jane Milani  
Dean Miller Denise Schaufel

#### SAFETY & SECURITY

*Supported by:*  
Church Council  
Mike Mol Tim Rick

#### PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

*Supported by*  
Keith Niles

Robin Korom Jim Schaufel

#### SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

*Supported by*  
Robin Korom  
Laurie Kerns Carl Norlin

#### PRAYER, WORSHIP & MUSIC

*Supported by Elder:*  
Kathy Shelley  
Cheryl Bengston  
Charlie Burke  
Wendy Weidner

#### INTERIM PASTOR

Interim Pastor Brian Metke | [pastor@smlc.info](mailto:pastor@smlc.info)

#### OFFICE MANAGER

Julie Hennelly | [OfficeManager@smlc.info](mailto:OfficeManager@smlc.info)

#### MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN

Jim Schaufel

#### BOOKKEEPER

Barb Griffith | [Barb@smlc.info](mailto:Barb@smlc.info)

#### DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Paul Cramer | [Paul@smlc.info](mailto:Paul@smlc.info)

#### NURSERY COORDINATOR

Deb Heide

#### VOICE ARTICLES, SLIDES, WEBSITE & FACEBOOK REQUESTS

Put type of request in title | [StMarkCommunications@gmail.com](mailto:StMarkCommunications@gmail.com)

**Next Council Meetings:** Tuesday, December 9th and January 13th @ 7:00PM

**Next Committee Meetings:** Tuesday, January 27th @ 7:00PM



# St. Mark Council News

*To keep you better informed about Church Council decisions Council Minutes, Committee Minutes and monthly Financial Statements can be found on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall.*

Below are important decisions from the November Council meeting:

Council approved the addition of Denise Schaufel to the Parish Education Ministry Team.

Council approved the extension of Interim Pastor Brian Metke through the end of April.

Council approved the use of SVL Productions to assist in relocating video equipment, and to update some of our audio and media capabilities to ensure an enhanced online worship experience.



## Maybe one good thing that came out of Covid was that we started our Helping Hands Ministry.

Even though we haven't been as busy as we started out, we are still receiving calls for help every now and then. With that being said, I would like to ask you two things:

If you are willing to be a "helping hand", please let me know. The time commitment for this ministry is not a lot and the work is not that hard. You just need to be willing to help people from St. Mark or the community.

I have been leading this ministry from the beginning but now would like to step down from that position. I would be more than willing to help you "learn the ropes" of what this position entails and would stay on as a helping hand. Please pray about this role and if you have any questions, please feel free to ask me.

Mike Mol

## President's Message, Continued from Page 1

To borrow from my Voice Article from last month:

*Please pray for God's blessings as we move forward. Please pray for the Call Committee as we partner with Vanderbloemen Consulting. Please pray that the fruits of this partnership will bring us a new pastor.*

*Please pray that we can realize our goals of developing a robust Youth and Family ministry and improving our Worship technology. Please pray that we can accomplish our capital improvements as expeditiously as practical. Please pray that we have the means to do all these things while growing in our faith. And please pray that the Holy Spirit is with each one of us to reveal how we can personally help succeed in these goals.*

We are blessed!

John



## A Season of Anticipation, Wonder & Joy!

“When the Son of God became a man to enable men to become sons of God” C.S. Lewis

Note, however “...right from the beginning God’s love has reached, and from the beginning man has refused to understand. But love went on reaching, offering itself. Love offered the eternal...we wanted the immediate. Love offered deep joy... we wanted thrills. Love offered freedom...we wanted license. Love offered communion with God himself... we wanted to worship at the shrine of our own minds. Love offered peace... we wanted approval for our wars.” ... “And still today, after two thousand years, patiently love, Christ is reaching out to us today.”<sup>1</sup>

If you listen, each day and night “He speaks to you from the depths of eternity. The Great, I AM, calls to you from the depths of your being. *I am Christ in you, the hope of Glory.* I, your Lord and Savior, am alive within you. Learn to tune in to My living Presence by seeking Me in silence.

As you celebrate the wonder of MY birth in Bethlehem, celebrate also your rebirth into eternal life. This everlasting gift was the sole purpose of MY entering your sin-stained world. Receive my gift with awe and humility. Let thankfulness and gratitude flow from your heart in response to My glorious gift. May My Peace rule in your heart.<sup>2</sup>

Look for LCMC’s *Advent Devotional*, December 1 in the plastic wall holder next to the office to enrich your heart, mind and soul as you celebrate this awesome gift of love from our Father, God, this Christmas.

Before the mountains were born  
Or You gave birth to the earth and the world,  
Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God. Psalm 90:2

Let the peace of Christ, to which you were indeed called in one body, rule in your hearts; and be thankful. Colossians 3:15

<sup>27</sup>... to whom God willed to make known what the wealth of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles is, *the mystery* that is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Colossians 1:27

Submitted by Barb Ewert

<sup>1</sup> Hymns for the Family of God, Paragon Associates, Inc., Nashville, Tennessee, 1976. Gloria Gaither p. 200.

<sup>2</sup> Young Sarah, Jesus Calling, Enjoying Peace in His Presence, with Scripture References: (A 365-Day Devotional) Thomas Nelson, 2004, p.375.



**For those of you who do not know, St. Mark has sponsored two children through Compassion International for several years. We currently sponsor Ruma, a 15 year old girl from Bangladesh and Wesley, a 19 year old young man from Brazil.**

Along with this sponsorship, a few of us have been in contact with Ruma and Wesley through the years. We are now looking for someone to be the new “Pen Pal” for Wesley. A wonderful St. Mark’ian has stepped up an “adopted” Ruma! Could anyone “adopt” Wesley??? St. Mark will continue to be the financial sponsor, but we are looking for a person or family to be the new writing correspondent. According to Compassion’s website, your “job” of being a “Pen Pal” is:

You can write to the child you sponsor either through physical letters or online through our website or app. To begin, we encourage you to send the child you sponsor a personal or family photograph and a short letter of introduction. Our local staff will translate your letter and deliver it to the child you support. Sponsored children often keep their sponsors’ photos and letters in their homes as treasured possessions. You may write to the child you sponsor as often as you like. When you write, your sponsored child will benefit from knowing that someone across the world really cares. Your words of encouragement will help them see that they matter and give them hope for the future.

If you or your family are interested in writing to Wesley, please contact Mike Mol. If you just have questions about Compassion International OR would like to sponsor a child of your own, please see their website at [Compassion International](http://Compassion International).



Greetings from the Call Committee!

We had our first snowfall of the season! Hopefully everyone got around safely.

Vanderbloemen reported that applications have slowly started coming in for the Lead/Senior Pastor position. They have set up a pre-interview to talk with a potential candidate. Candidates that they pre-interview and meet the criteria we provided and from the surveys will then be sent to the Call Committee to conduct our own interview process. They are also continuing to source through their extensive database.

Vanderbloemen has a timeline established and will be setting up a meeting with the Call Committee in the very near future to provide an update as to where we currently are and what the next weeks/months will bring.

We are excited that this process is underway and we will continue to keep you updated with the progress we hear.

As always, thank you for your continued prayers, support, and patience during this process.

Galatians 5:22-23 reminds us that patience is a fruit of the Spirit:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control. Against such things there is no law.

The Call Committee

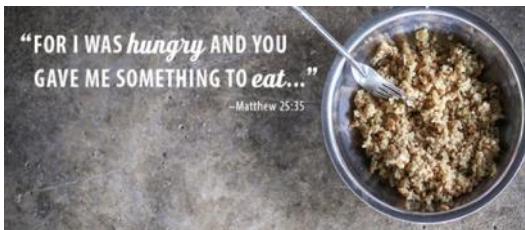


### Call Committee Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

*We come before you with humble hearts, seeking wisdom for St Mark's future pastor. Grant the Call Committee, discernment, endurance, and insight on your plan. Help us as one body of Christ to work together, and according to Your will. Guide the heart of the chosen person to know, without a doubt, St Mark is their new Church home. We thank you for your goodness, love, mercy, and perfect timing.*

*In Jesus name, we pray. Amen*



## Two (or 3) FMSC Updates!!

First – if you get this soon enough, our next packing event is Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, at 8:45 am. Our next packing day after that will be Monday, January 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. And then, the next one

after that is Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, at 8:45 am.

Second – another way to help is to look on your calendars and see if you could help pack at Hope Filled Holidays at Pathway Church in Arlington Heights on December 11 – 14. This is what FMSC calls a Mobile Pack. In those four days they “only” want to pack over 850,000 meals!!! Open registration has started so please consider joining a lot of people feeding starving kids. St. Mark will be a sponsor of this event. (FYI - the church is about 40 minutes south of St. Mark.)

As always, if you have any questions, please ask Mike Mol.



If you haven't seen in the Fellowship Hall, since St. Mark started helping out as a church group, we have helped pack 175,032 meals - that comes out to feeding 480 kids a meal a day for a year!!

Also – through your wonderful generosity and love of sharing the Good News, St. Mark has given away – for free – over 1500 Bibles at FMSC!!!!



## Your Safety & Security Team is looking for help from those of you who attend the Saturday night service OR the 8 am Sunday service.

The S & S Team needs some more people for St. Mark's "First Response" Team from these two services. This team has been put together to help in an emergency before the professionals get on site. To be a member of this "First Response" Team, you need to be certified in CPR/AED/First Aid (the committee pays for most of the training). So, if you would like to join, please let Mike Mol or Tim Rick know, and we'll sign you up for the class to be held as soon as possible. Thank you in advance for making a St. Mark a safer place to be!!

**IN OTHER NEWS** --- We have installed a safety fire blanket in the sanctuary to be used in case of emergencies. This blanket can be put on top of a fire or wrapped around a person who is on fire to help extinguish the flames. The blanket is on the south wall, opposite the organ, near the staircase.



### Winter Open Arms Food Pantry

Please donate these items

in December

Baby Food, Soup, Coffee

in January

Baby Food, Peanut Butter, Dish Soap

All non-perishable food is accepted  
always!

\*\*\*Currently, 346 households visit Open Arms Mission each month, sometimes twice a month.

### BAPTIZED INTO THE FAMILY OF GOD

November 23rd at St. Mark

**James Quinn, Jr.**

Son of Jennifer and  
Anthony James Quinn

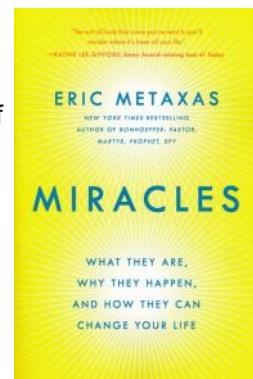
May the guiding presence of  
God be with this individual as he  
grows in the knowledge of  
Jesus Christ.



### ***Miracles: What They Are, Why They Happen and How They Can Change Your Life***

Have you ever wondered about God's miracles? Do they still take place today? What are they? Why do they occur? *Miracles: What They Are, Why They Happen, and How They Can Change Your Life*

by Eric Metaxas addresses these questions and more. Not since C. S. Lewis in 1947 has an author of Eric Metaxas's stature undertaken a major exploration of the phenomenon of miracles. In this groundbreaking work, Metaxas examines the compatibility between faith and science and provides well-documented anecdotal evidence of actual miracles. With compelling—sometimes electrifying—evidence that there is something real to be reckoned with, Metaxas offers a timely, civil, and thoughtful answer to recent books by Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, and Sam Harris. A *New York Times* bestseller, *Miracles* will be welcomed by both believers and skeptics—who will find their minds opening to the possibilities. You can find this book under call number 231.7 MET.



# Congregational Life Team



## Operation Christmas Child

Thank you to everyone that participated in one way or another with our Operation Christmas Child project. These boxes provide more than just trinkets and other items for Children around the world. In addition to hearing the Gospel before they receive their shoebox gift, children also receive *The Greatest Gift*, a storybook that shares the message of salvation. With the Apostle John as narrator, the booklet shares 11 Scripture stories and invites children to follow Christ. Children take this home to share with family and friends. It is used in more than 100 languages.

**EVANGELISM. DISCIPLESHIP. MULTIPLICATION.**

*It's All About Jesus!*

## Advent Soup Suppers

We invite you to us for fellowship, food & fun at our three weekly Advent Soup Suppers on 12/3, 12/10 and 12/17. We're going to try something new this year. In conjunction with the Evangelism Outreach Team, our Advent suppers will be open to the community. The first supper of the season on 12/3 will be a pasta and chicken night that will be sponsored by the Evangelism Team. We are looking for other ministry teams to sponsor the Advent suppers on 12/10 and 12/17. Please reach out to us if your ministry team is willing to help out. This is a great way for our community at large to meet our members and learn more about all that St. Mark has to offer.



## Crafters' Retreat

The returning Crafters' Retreat was a success and so much fun! We have scheduled three more retreats and hope that more crafters will join us going forward. Mark your 2026 calendars for January 23 & 24, February 27 & 28 and April 24 & 25. The online signup will be posted soon. The attendees each made a donation of \$10/day for the crafting event. We raised \$290 that was donated to BiG Great Lakes, a day program for adults with disabilities. Midwest Veterans Closet will receive a donation from the January event. We look forward to more fun and productive crafting events!

*Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from your St. Mark Congregational Life Team!*

**FREE EVENTS**  
Register Now  
See: Details below

## **Parents' Afternoon Out**

Saturday 1pm—4pm  
**December 6th**



## **Parents' Morning Out**

Friday 9am—12pm

**December 26th, January 23rd, February 27th**



## **News**

We are rolling into the holidays with exciting events geared toward making life easier on our church parents and children as well as for those in our community! Beginning with our **Parents' Afternoon Out** (PAO) event on **December 6th, 1pm - 4pm**. This FREE PAO event is for children 12 years and under, 13 years and up may volunteer, those 18 or older require a background check. Lunch will be served with McDonald's chicken nuggets, fries, snacks, popcorn and beverages. Activities, crafts and games will be highlighted, followed by a movie to wind down before going home!

We will also continue with our 4th Friday of the month **Parents' Morning Out** (PMO) events **9am - 12pm** throughout winter with these dates: **December 26th, January 23rd, February 27th, March 27th**,

These FREE PMO events are for children 5 years and under, with snacks, crafts, games, story time, and activities provided.

A big shout out of thanks to our many dedicated volunteers who keep these events running smoothly with love, care, nurturing and a commitment to overall safety. Thank you.

Of course, the nursery is open for 0- 4 year olds every Sunday during both services as well as the Sunday School hour.

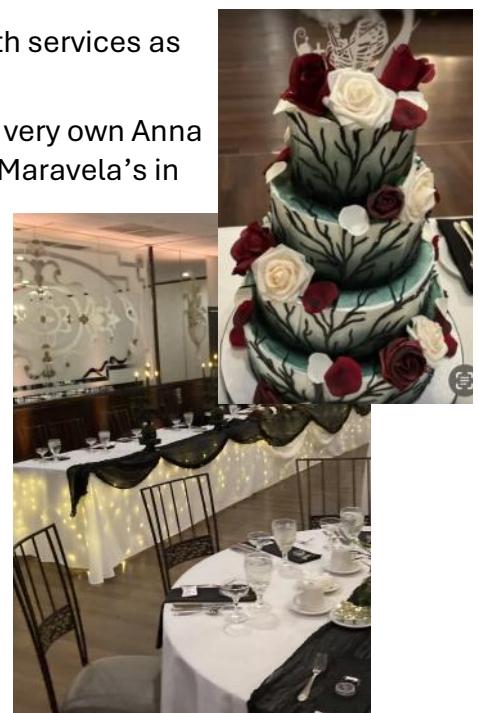
As an important note, on Friday, October 31st, this past Halloween, our very own Anna Hill married the love of her life Eric, at a beautiful wedding ceremony at Maravela's in Ingleside, IL. Congratulations Anna and Eric and may Gods blessings shower you both with many years of marital bliss!

Anna has volunteered in the nursery since September of 2014, and we are so grateful for the gifts that she has shared with our children and families all of these years! Thank you Anna!

Alright, we had a busy Fall and now as winter approaches in full swing, we will continue this momentum geared toward love, companionship and stewardship with our St. Mark and community families.

May Christmas and the New Year bring you joy, comfort and God's everlasting peace. Amen

Blessings,  
Deb Heide and the Nursery team



# Children's Christmas Program and Celebration

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2025  
During 10:30AM Service

On December 14<sup>th</sup> during our 10:30AM service our Sunday School Students will be bringing the true meaning of Christmas to our church with a nativity program. Please join us and invite family and friends as we celebrate the joyous occasion of our Savior's birth.

Immediately following service will be Cocoa and Christmas Cookie Fellowship.

**Reminder:** *There is no Sunday School Dec 21st or 28th!  
Classes resume on January 4th, 2026!*

**Advent services are December 3rd, 10th, & 17th.**

*Suppers begin at 5:30 pm and Services are at 7:00 pm.*

***During Advent, Confirmation will meet in the library  
and attend the service immediately afterward.***



*Parents of play participants Reminder:  
**Practices / Rehearsals are 9:00AM Sundays  
before class Nov 23rd & 30th and Dec 14th.***

*There is still time to participate or volunteer,  
to help make everything run smoothly.  
Please contact the Sunday School  
Coordinators, Denise or Barb.*



## 6<sup>TH</sup>-8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE SUNDAY SCHOOL & CONFIRMATION NEWS

IT HAS BEEN A BUSY AND ENGAGING TIME FOR THE STUDENTS AS THEY ARE LEARNING THE 10 COMMANDMENTS; GOD'S LIFE DIRECTIONS, THE LESSON IS TAUGHT DURING THE SUNDAY SCHOOL HOUR, WITH CONFIRMATION STUDENTS MEETING ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS WITH A CONTINUATION OF THE LESSON THROUGH **VERY** COMPETITIVE GAMES OF JEOPARDY, FAMILY FEUD, TIC-TAC-TOE, HOCKEY AND SCAVENGER HUNTS!

OTHER ACTIVITIES THE STUDENTS HAVE DONE:

NOVEMBER 2<sup>ND</sup> WAS PARTY TIME WITH THEIR PRAYER PALS; FELLOWSHIP, FOOD, CRAFT AND FUN!

NOVEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup> STUDENTS CONSTRUCTED 100 BOXES FOR OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD AND ASSISTED THE YOUNGER SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN PACKING THE BOXES.

BLESS THE STUDENTS SO THAT THEY WILL HAVE THE DESIRE TO LEARN.



**Loving God and All People**  
December 2025 / January 2026



READER

# Lay Readers & Media Assistants December/January



MEDIA

If you are unable to read or be the Media Assistant on a specific Sunday, please switch with someone on the list **and notify the office**. Readings for both Saturdays and Sundays will be out the week before you read.

Saturday, December 6 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, December 7 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Carl Norlin
Sunday, December 7 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	Gary Olson
Saturday, December 13 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, December 14 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Bonnie Millsop
Sunday, December 14 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	Kevin Graul
Saturday, December 20 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Kathy Kurth
Sunday, December 21 <sup>st</sup>	8:00 AM	Cliff Ewert
Sunday, December 21 <sup>st</sup>	10:30 AM	Deb Zuchowski
Wednesday, December 24 <sup>th</sup>	4:00 PM	OPEN
Wednesday, December 24 <sup>th</sup>	8:00PM	Lynn Wetterberg
Saturday, December 27 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Lynn Johnson
Sunday, December 28 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Betty Oesterle
Sunday, December 28 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	Gary Olson
Saturday, January 3 <sup>rd</sup>	5:30 PM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, January 4 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Carl Norlin
Sunday, January 4 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	Deb Zuchowski
Saturday, January 10 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, January 11th	8:00 AM	Jim Schranz
Sunday, January 11th	10:30 AM	Kevin Graul
Saturday, January 17 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Kathy Kurth
Sunday, January 18 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Cliff Ewert
Sunday, January 18 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	Gary Olson
Saturday, January 24 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Lynn Johnson
Sunday, January 25 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Lynn Wetterberg
Sunday, January 25 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	Deb Zuchowski
Saturday, January 31 <sup>st</sup>	5:30 PM	OPEN

Saturday, December 6 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Taylor Houser
Sunday, December 7 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, December 7 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	Jerry Gass
Saturday, December 13 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Taylor Houser
Sunday, December 14 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, December 14 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	OPEN
Saturday, December 20 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Taylor Houser
Sunday, December 21 <sup>st</sup>	8:00 AM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, December 21 <sup>st</sup>	10:30 AM	Jerry Gass
Wednesday, December 24 <sup>th</sup>	4:00 PM	OPEN
Wednesday, December 24 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 PM	OPEN
Saturday, December 27 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Taylor Houser
Sunday, December 28 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Mel Ellingson
Sunday, December 28 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	OPEN
Saturday, January 3 <sup>rd</sup>	5:30 PM	Taylor Houser
Sunday, January 4 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, January 4 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	Jerry Gass
Saturday, January 10 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Taylor Houser
Sunday, January 11th	8:00 AM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, January 11th	10:30 AM	OPEN
Saturday, January 17 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Taylor Houser
Sunday, January 18 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, January 18 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	Jerry Gass
Saturday, January 24 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Taylor Houser
Sunday, January 25 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Mel Ellingson
Sunday, January 25 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	OPEN
Saturday, January 31 <sup>st</sup>	5:30 PM	OPEN



If you or a family member are currently serving in any branch of our Armed Forces or any First Response Unit, would you please let me know. I would like St. Mark to honor them and pray for them by making a photo gallery that we all can see at St. Mark. Once you tell me who they are and how they serve, I will let you know how big of a picture I would like. Thank you and please thank them for their service.

Mike Mol

**Loving God and All People**

December 2025 / January 2026

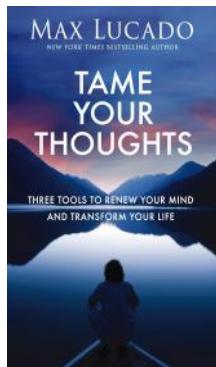


Every Month  
2nd Saturday

7:00am Breakfast / 8:00am Training /  
9:30am Adjourn

God loves us too much to let us be stuck with "stinking thinking." Learn 3 key thought-management tools to help deal with thought problems like worry, guilt, anxiety and other types of mental quicksand.

\*Books and breakfast are provided. Free will offering. We always have room for one more man. (15+) Send your contact information to [Ministry2EveryMan@gmail.com](mailto:Ministry2EveryMan@gmail.com).



Angel Tree supports families in need. Please consider taking an angel tree tag off the Christmas tree in the narthex, and supply a gift of clothing or toys (not more than 25-30 in value). Return the gifts wrapped with the tag attached to the tree, no later than Dec. 14th.



## Hanging of the Greens!

Hi All!! By the time this publication is delivered, the church will be decorated for Christmas. Thank you to those who helped! Many hands always make lighter work!

The TAKING DOWN of the greens will take place on Saturday, January 10th at 1:00PM. Please consider helping with that task. It usually goes very quickly... again, the more the merrier and bless you for your help!

Any suggestions or new ideas, PLEASE let me know.

Have a blessed holiday... and remember the Reason for the Season! Gae



On behalf of the family of Rhoda McMurtry, we would like to extend our sincere thank you for all the hugs, condolences and cards. You don't completely know someone until they have passed,

but for those who shared personal stories or fond memories of Rhoda, we are truly grateful that she meant so much to our church family. All of you have made the grieving process manageable with a few less tears.

Peace be with you,

Brock & Bonnie Millsop

## On Going Opportunities for Prayer at St. Mark Church

Prayer Literature located in plastic wall holders outside office.\*

- **Pray for yourself** - confession, praise, thanksgiving, petitions, protection, your personal relationship with God.
- **Pray the Call Committee Prayer for a new pastor.**
- **Pray for one another as the opportunity arises.**
- **Healing Prayer opportunity during service on 11/30/2025.**
- **LCMC Advent Devotional 12/1-12/30\***
- **Prayers offered after each service at the Communion Rails.**
- **Church council/committees 2025/2026 Days of Prayer Handout.\***
- **St. Mark Prayer Chain**, email prayer requests, thanksgiving and praises to [smlcprayers@gmail.com](mailto:smlcprayers@gmail.com). Please contact Connie Saunders at [csauntea@aol.com](mailto:csauntea@aol.com) to receive the church prayer email requests.
- **Love Notes** - Updated weekly from St. Mark Prayer Chain and sent out on Wednesdays of each week - round table in front of sanctuary double doors.
- **Circle of prayer (pink sheets inserts/ handout)** - college students, prayer chain, homebound - pray for highlighted individuals in your insert/handout during the week.
- **Prayers for Revival** - Pray according to Proverbs 9:10 that America's moral slide, both inside and outside the church, will fill God's people with holy fear and a burning desire to seek Him.
- **Prayers for St. Mark Church to be the Gospel light in our communities.**
- **Pray for our communities, Illinois, our elected National, State and Local officials, America and the world.**
- **ZOOM Weekly Prayer Meeting** - Come, pray and be blessed. Currently Thursday until further notice from 6:30 to 7:30 pm. we will be meeting on Zoom praying over the previous week of Prayer Chain requests, St. Mark Church and each other. Contact Person: Pam Burke 847-356-8140.



# 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](http://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**  
12/9/2025, 1/13/2026



### Stephen Ministry

*Bear one another's burdens*

effective results in most circumstances.

If you, or someone you know, becomes overwhelmed by challenging problems, please contact Pastor Brian, Deb Zuchowski, or the church office at 847-356-8140 to see if a Stephen Minister might help.



## 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**.

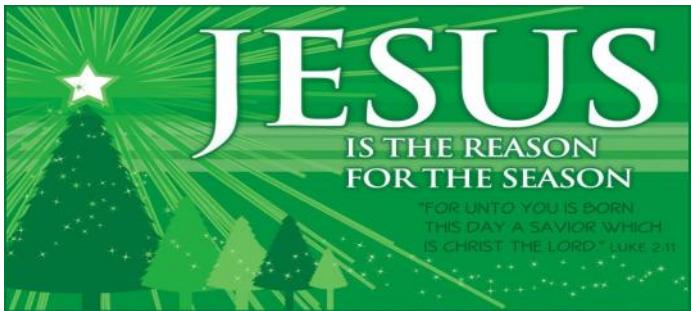
**DATE: Every Third Thursday**  
12/18/2025, 1/15/2026

**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](http://www.hamrafundraising.com).



# December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> 10:00AM AL-Anon 6:00PM Hanging of the Greens 6:30PM Divorce Care 7:30PM AA	<b>2</b> 8:30AM Men's Group 10:00AM Bible Study Ed. Center 5:00PM St. Mark Ringers 6:00PM Choir Practice	<b>3</b> 9:30AM Bible Study 5:30PM Advent Soup Supper 6:00PM Confirmation Class 7:00PM Advent Service	<b>4</b> 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 9:00AM Quilter's Grp 6:00PM Stephen Min. 6:30PM Arise Practice	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 8:45AM FMSC 5:30PM Worship 1:00 Parent's Afternoon Out
<b>7</b> 8:00AM Traditional Worship 9:20AM Sunday School 10:30AM Contemporary Worship  Pointsettia Orders Due	<b>8</b> 10:00AM AL-Anon 6:30PM Divorce Care 7:30PM AA	<b>9</b> 8:30AM Men's Group 10:00AM Bible Study Ed. Center 5:00PM St. Mark Ringers 6:00PM Choir Practice 7:00PM Council Mtg  <i>Antioch Pizza Tuesday</i>	<b>10</b> 9:30AM Bible Study 5:30PM Advent Soup Supper 6:00PM Confirmation Class 7:00PM Advent Service  <b>Last day for Angel Tree Donations</b>	<b>11</b> 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 6:00PM Stephen Min. 6:30PM Arise Practice	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 7:00AM HIS Ministry 5:30PM Worship
<b>14</b> 8:00AM Traditional Worship 9:00AM Play Rehearsal 10:30AM Contemporary Worship & Children's Christmas Program/Celebration	<b>15</b> 10:00AM AL-Anon 6:30PM Divorce Care 7:30PM AA	<b>16</b> 8:30AM Men's Group 10:00AM Bible Study Ed. Center 5:00PM St. Mark Ringers 6:00PM Choir Practice	<b>17</b> 9:30AM Bible Study 5:30PM Advent Soup Supper 6:00PM Confirmation Class 7:00PM Advent Service	<b>18</b> 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 9:00AM Quilter's Grp 6:30PM Arise Practice  <i>Wendy's Thursday</i>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 5:30PM Worship
<b>21</b> 8:00AM Traditional Worship 10:30AM Contemporary Worship	<b>22</b> 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:30PM AA	<b>23</b> 8:30AM Men's Group 10:00AM Bible Study Ed. Center	<b>24</b> 4:00PM Blended Worship Service 8:00PM Traditional Worship Service		<b>26</b> 9:00AM Parent's Morning Out	<b>27</b> 5:30PM Worship
<b>28</b> 8:00AM Traditional Worship 10:30AM Contemporary Worship	<b>29</b> 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:30PM AA	<b>30</b> 8:30AM Men's Group 10:00AM Bible Study Ed. Center	<b>31</b>			

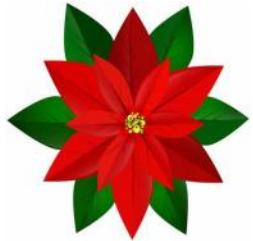


# January 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Happy New Year's Office Closed	2	3 5:30PM Worship
4 8:00AM Traditional Worship 9:20AM Sunday School 10:30AM Contemporary Worship	5 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:30PM AA 7PM FMSC Packing	6 8:30AM Men's Group 10:00AM Bible Study Ed. Center 5:00PM St. Mark Ringers 6:00PM Choir Practice	7 9:30AM Bible Study 6:30PM Confirmation Class	8 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 6:00PM Stephen Min. 6:30PM Arise Practice	9	10 7:00AM HIS Ministry 1:00PM Take Down the Greens 5:30PM Worship
11 8:00AM Traditional Worship 9:20AM Sunday School 10:30AM Contemporary Worship	12 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:30PM AA	13 8:30AM Men's Group 10:00AM Bible Study Ed. Center 5:00PM St. Mark Ringers 6:00PM Choir Practice 7:00PM Council Mtg <i>Antioch Pizza Tuesday</i>	14 9:30AM Bible Study 6:30PM Confirmation Class	15 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 9:00AM Quilter's Grp 6:30PM Arise Practice  <i>Wendy's Thursday</i>	16	17 5:30PM Worship
18 8:00AM Traditional Worship 9:20AM Sunday School 10:30AM Contemporary Worship	19 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:30PM AA	20 8:30AM Men's Group 10:00AM Bible Study Ed. Center 5:00PM St. Mark Ringers 6:00PM Choir Practice	21 9:30AM Bible Study 6:30PM Confirmation Class	22 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 6:30PM Arise Practice	23 9:00AM Parent's Morning Out 5-10PM Crafter's Retreat	24 8-5PM Crafter's Retreat 5:30PM Worship
25 8:00AM Traditional Worship 9:20AM Sunday School 10:30AM Contemporary Worship	26 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:30PM AA	27 8:30AM Men's Group 10:00AM Bible Study Ed. Center 5:00PM St. Mark Ringers 6:00PM Choir Practice 8:00PM All Teams Meet	28 9:30AM Bible Study 6:30PM Confirmation Class	29 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 6:30PM Arise Practice	30	31 5:30PM Worship

# Order Your Poinsettia

## Plant Today



I/We would like to order \_\_\_\_\_ (quantity)  
RED POINSETTIA plant(s) at \$13.00 each for the  
2025 Christmas Eve Worship Services

**PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print Clearly)

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print Clearly)

**Plant(s) are given:**

- To the Glory of God
- In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print)
- In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print)
- In Celebration of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print)
- I will pick up the plant(s) after the 8 pm Christmas Eve Service.  
*(Plants must be picked up by Friday, 12/26/25)*
- I would like the plant(s) taken to someone who is ill or shut-in.

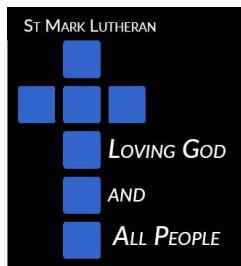
**PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY ORDER**

I have enclosed my payment of \$\_\_\_\_\_.  
(Please make checks payable to St Mark Lutheran Church  
and put Poinsettia in the memo field.)

Deadline for ordering plants is Sunday, **December 7th**

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

*Address Service Requested  
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](http://www.smlc.info)  
✉️ [smlc@smlc.info](mailto:smlc@smlc.info)

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

TO RECEIVE  
★ THE VOICE ONLINE  
★ EMAIL [Julie@smlc.info](mailto:Julie@smlc.info)

**February 2026**  
**VOICE DEADLINE:**  
**January 12, 2026**

**Loving God and All People**  
December 2025 / January 2026