



# The VOICE

## OF ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH

April 2026



by John Bengston

Dear St. Mark Family,

Scripture reminds us in Matthew 9:37 – 38 that, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.” The ministry of the church happens when God’s people step forward to serve. And it requires willing hands and hearts. There are many ways this can be done. Teaching, welcoming, helping, caring for one another and serving the church. Scripture also reminds us that the church grows and thrives when every member uses their gifts. Each of us is part of the body of Christ, and when every part does its work, the whole body is built up in love.

Please prayerfully consider using your spiritual gifts to serve others and the church. “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” 1 Peter 4:10

As we continue through the year, I’m going to try to highlight service opportunities where you may feel a connection. If you find interest in them, or any ministry opportunity, please seek a Council Member for direction.

There are several opportunities to serve the church. Last month, I mentioned a new Benevolence Team to help seek out new opportunities for our benevolence and to assist in vetting. We still need people to serve. The time commitment is minimal and your work on this team will benefit many.

We are also looking for people to serve on search teams for open positions in the church. While we have a Call Committee looking for our next leader, we are also looking to bring other people on St. Mark’s staff to assist in St. Mark’s worship experience and building a strong Youth and Family Ministry. Your work here will be invaluable in growing our church.

*Continued on page 3*

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**Last Supper April 1st**  
Dinner/Theatre 5:30 PM

**Good Friday Services**  
1:00 PM & 7:00 PM

**Easter Services**  
6:30 AM, 9:00 AM &  
10:30 AM

**Easter Breakfast following first service.**

Holy Week

**Good Friday**  
APRIL 3rd  
1:00PM & 7:00PM

### 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 **May** edition of *The Voice* is **April 12th**. Please Email articles to:

[stmarkcommunications@gmail.com](mailto:stmarkcommunications@gmail.com).

**Loving God and All People**

April 2026



## ST. MARK COUNCIL

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**PRESIDENT**  
John Bengston

**VICE PRESIDENT**  
Robin Korom

**COUNCIL SECRETARY**  
Susie Soukup

**FINANCIAL TREASURER**  
Bill Renninger

### COUNCIL MEMBERS

Robin Korom	Todd Korth	Johnna Morton
Keith Niles	Nancy O'Connor	Kathy Shelley

## ST. MARK MINISTRY TEAMS

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### FELLOWSHIP

*Supported by Council Member  
Johnna Morton*

Donna Bergl  
Tricia Cholewinski  
Shawn Frank

### HUMAN RESOURCES

*Supported by  
Church Council*

Jerry Gass    Laurie Kerns  
Scott Soukup

### SAFETY & SECURITY

*Supported by  
Church Council*

Mike Mol    Tim Rick

### FINANCE

*Supported by Treasurer  
Bill Renninger*

Brock Millsop    Pam Preston  
Sharon Wick    Lynn Wetterberg

### YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRIES

*Supported by Council Member  
Nancy O'Connor*

Lori McKenzie    Jane Milani  
Dean Miller    Denise Schaufel

### OUTREACH

*Supported by Council Member Todd Korth*

Chris Holmes    Laurie Kerns  
Rod Lunkenheimer    Jeff McKenzie  
Fred Natschke    Kurt Ulbricht

### PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

*Supported by Council Member  
Keith Niles*

Robin Korom    Jim Schaufel

### SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

*Supported by Council Member  
Robin Korom*

Laurie Kerns    Carl Norlin

### PRAYER, WORSHIP & MUSIC

*Supported by Council Member  
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 Meeting:** Tuesday, April 14th @ 7:00PM  
**Next Committee Meetings:** Tuesday, March 28th @ 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 March Council meeting:

Discussion on seeking volunteers to assist in our ministries. Also discussed that we will soon be looking to recruit volunteers to serve on Council. While elections are not until November, Council wants to be ready.

Motion to approve benevolence to match what St. Mark did in 2025.

Motion to allocate the Easter Breakfast Freewill Offering to one of St. Mark's approved benevolence programs.

Approval of Benevolence Team members from newly created ad hoc committee tabled until April as we seek more volunteers.



**Seder Supper**  
**Wed. April 1st**  
**5:30 pm**

**SEDER SUPPER**  
Wednesday, April 1st  
5:30pm  
Meal/Dinner Theatre



Tickets:  
\$15 adults  
\$12 youth (12 and under)



## CALLING ALL CAMPERS

Are your children (2nd grade - High School this coming fall) interested in attending a Christian summer camp? St. Mark Endowment Fund is covering the cost for attending Camp Timberlee this summer, in East Troy, Wisconsin. WHAT A DEAL!! Families are responsible for non-refundable registration fee and any add-ons. Please contact Lori McKenzie with questions.

## President's Message, Continued from Page 1

I know that your time is valuable, and you are busy. We are not asking for a lot of your time. St. Mark needs you.

Blessings,  
John

# 2026 Thirty Days of Prayers for Muslims

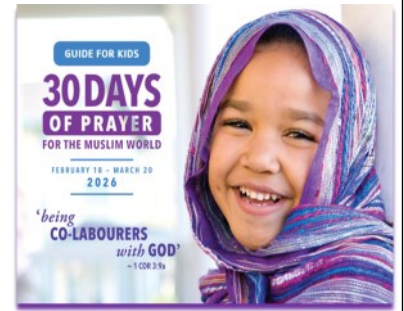
## Pray for Muslims with Faith, Hope and Love



### We Thank God for your 2026 Prayers for Muslims during Ramadan

February 18 - March 20

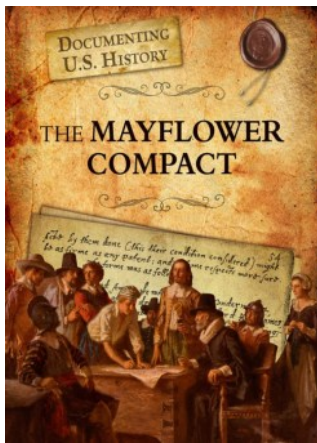
We thank you for your daily prayers for our Muslim neighbors and friends during the 2026 *30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World*. Your prayers make such an impact that Muslims around the world are coming to Jesus at a rate far surpassing any rate



recorded in Christian history.<sup>1</sup>

Please continue keeping our Muslim neighbors in mind by utilizing your prayer guide and the newly converted ones in Iran. Revival is in the air.

<sup>1</sup>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.



## What would you say? America's Christian Heritage: Fact or Fiction

This month's "What Would You Say?" series explores a question still debated today: **Did faith actually influence the founding of America?** Did the first successful settlers believe that God was guiding both their journey and the way they governed themselves?

Visualize living outdoors for two months with no place to wash, no restrooms, and only one change of clothing. Now imagine that those clothes are too light to keep you warm as winter approaches. You are exhausted. Others around you are sick. Your closest friend has just died, and you have been battling the flu for six weeks. It is now November 1620. At last, land appears on the horizon. Relief sweeps through the ship. But then comes the shocking realization...you are

in the wrong place. It was the reality facing the Pilgrims as they prepared to step ashore near Plymouth, Massachusetts.

Before reading further, pause for a moment. Write down three words that come to mind when you hear the terms *Pilgrims* or *Mayflower Compact*. What picture forms in your mind? For many people, what they learned in school offers only a small glimpse of the story.

Puritan pastor and historian Cotton Mather, author of *The Great Works of Christ in America*, believed the Pilgrim story was more than a tale of colonization. To him, it was the continuation of a spiritual movement that had begun a century earlier during the Protestant Reformation. Mather described the Pilgrims as "devout, serious Christians" who were persecuted by the Church of England. In 1602 they formed a covenant together. Their goal was simple but bold: to worship the Lord Jesus Christ freely and follow what they believed Scripture taught, without what they saw as human additions imposed by the established church.

Their efforts toward reform were not welcomed. The Church of England—supported by law—viewed the movement as rebellion. Soon members of the group were arrested and jailed. Their desire to worship according to conscience had become dangerous.

Finally, in 1608, part of the congregation fled England and relocated to Leyden, Holland. There they found what they had long sought: freedom to worship. Yet even in Holland new concerns arose. Their children were slowly absorbing the surrounding culture. English customs and identity were fading. Economic opportunities were limited. The Pilgrims began to ask a difficult question: *Was God calling them somewhere new?*

*Continued on Page 7*



## Greetings from the Call Committee!

The Call Committee has no new updates to report regarding the search for our new Pastor. The recruiters from Vanderbloemen have reported they are still in the process of sourcing and screening candidates.

We are looking forward to having candidates presented to us so that we can begin the interview process. We will keep you updated as we have more information to share.

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

Jeremiah 33:3

“Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.”

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*



St. Mark’s next scheduled packing sessions are as follows:

Monday April 06, 2026, at  
7 PM - 8:45 PM

[April's Sign-Up Link](#)

Monday May 04, 2026, at  
7 PM - 8:45 PM

[May's Sign-Up Link](#)

Saturday June 06, 2026, at  
8:45 AM - 10:45 AM

[June's Sign-Up Link](#)



I know we usually pack on Saturday mornings in the even numbered months and Monday nights in the odd numbered months but for our “normal” March and April dates, the Libertyville site is closed. So ..... we switched our “normal” schedule around – I hope this doesn’t mess you up too much!

There are, as always, 3 different jobs during each packing session:

- A sit down job putting label stickers on all the bags.
- A stand up job packing the bags.
- A “get your exercise” job working in the warehouse.

If these dates don’t work in your schedule, please feel free to [use this link](#) to sign up at times that are better for you and/or your family. Information can also be found at [smlc.info/events](http://smlc.info/events).

If you have any issues signing up for any of these dates and/or have questions about FMSC, please free to contact Mike Mol. **ALSO – IF TRANSPORTATION TO THE SITE IS AN ISSUE, PLEASE LET ME KNOW!!**

***“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, ...”***

Matthew 25:35 (NIV)

# ENDOWMENT FUND CONTINUES TO GROW

We are excited to share with St. Mark how well our Endowment Fund has grown over the last couple of years. Your continued contributions and the Thrivent investment skills have allowed our Fund to increase to a market value of over \$90,000. **Thank You** St. Mark for those donations!



An endowment is a lasting gift. The principal is invested, and only the earnings are used — providing steady support for ministries, outreach, and the care of our facilities year after year. Even a modest gift becomes part of a permanent foundation that strengthens our church for generations to come. Right now, the Endowment Fund is helping to pay for our youth attending Camp Timberlee this summer.

Endowment gifts allow us to dream boldly, respond to unexpected needs, and ensure that our mission remains strong and vibrant. They are expressions of gratitude for the blessings we've received and acts of hope for those who will follow us.

There are a couple of ways you can contribute to St. Mark's Endowment Fund. The easiest way to contribute is to open the Giving page on our website and ask that your donation be directed to the Endowment Fund. [www.smlc.info/giving/](http://www.smlc.info/giving/)

## QCD – Qualified Charitable Distributions

Retirement can be a beautiful time to give back. One possible tool to do this is a Qualified Charitable Distribution, or QCD.

If you're 70 and a half or older, you can use QCDs to make donations directly from your individual retirement account – your IRA – to charities you care about, gaining potential tax benefits in the process.

With a QCD, assets from your IRA are directly transferred to a qualifying charity. This donation avoids taxation and counts towards your required minimum distribution.

However, QCDs don't qualify as a charitable deduction on your federal tax returns, and state income tax treatment may differ from federal law. So, it's important to fully understand this tool before putting it into action. Check with your tax professional for advice and talk with your financial advisor to process this type of distribution.

# HE IS RISEN

## EASTER SERVICES on APRIL 5th

6:30am

9:00am

10:30am

Sunday, April 5th

EASTER BREAKFAST

7:30 am EASTER SUNDAY  
FELLOWSHIP HALL

*Loving God and All People*  
April 2026

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## “What Would You Say?” America’s Christian Heritage: Fact or Fiction, *Continued from page 4*

By 1620, a group within the congregation decided to risk everything and immigrate to America. An English trading company offered them the opportunity to settle land in the New World. When the Mayflower finally sailed, 102 passengers were aboard, along with about 30–40 sailors. Roughly half of the passengers were Pilgrims. The others were called “Strangers,” individuals recruited for their valuable skills such as carpentry, blacksmithing, and stone masonry. These trades would be essential for building a colony, and their labor would help repay the cost of the journey.

Before they left Holland, their Senior pastor, Reverend John Robinson, offered final words of counsel. Though he would remain behind, he urged the Pilgrims to carry the principles of the Protestant Reformation with them. Robinson reminded them that their new community would require both faith and responsibility. In a letter sent with them, he encouraged the settlers to continue practicing the pattern of self-government they had used in their church for years. In other words, the community would choose its leaders. He wrote:

“Lastly, whereas you are to become a body politic, using civil government among yourselves... let such authority be chosen by you into office of government. Let your wisdom and godliness appear... that those chosen may diligently promote the common good.”

Those words would soon prove remarkably important. After weeks of storms and hardship crossing the Atlantic, the Mayflower reached land—but not the land they expected. Instead of Virginia, they found themselves more than 250 miles north, along the harsh coast of New England. This created a serious problem. Because they were outside the territory covered by their charter, there was technically **no legal government** over them. No authority. No structure. No rules. Tensions rose quickly. Some of the “Strangers” argued that once they left the ship, each person should do as he pleased. But such freedom might destroy the fragile colony before it even began. Every person on board would be necessary for survival. So in the cramped cabin of the Mayflower, before anyone set foot on land, the settlers made a decision that would shape American history. It began with these words:

“In the name of God... having undertaken for the Glory of God, and the Advancement of the Christian Faith, and the Honour of our King and Country... we solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil Body Politick...”

This was a covenant **between ordinary individuals**, each promising before God to work together for the common good of the colony. God was the witness. The people themselves formed the government. In a small wooden ship rocking in the cold Atlantic, a struggling band of settlers drafted the *Mayflower Compact*. Pledging to form a model of self-government, rule by consent and cooperation for survival “for the glory of God, and the advancement of the Christian faith that would echo through American history.”

Why does this matter today? The Pilgrims believed their journey and their government were guided by God. Their covenant on the Mayflower was one of the earliest examples in North America of ordinary people forming a government by mutual agreement. Historians still discuss how much influence faith had on the development of American ideals. Yet the story of the Pilgrims reminds us that for many early settlers, faith and public life were closely connected.

So the question remains: What would you say? Psalm 33:12 reminds us: Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.

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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**

April 2026



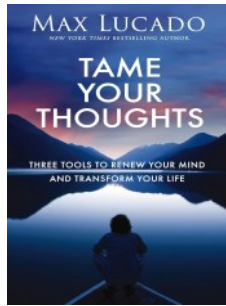
Every Month  
2nd Saturday

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

God loves up 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).



# First Communion Class



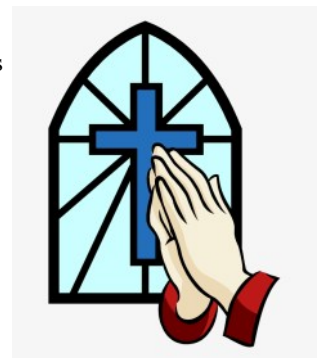
April 22, Wed. 5:30 pm  
Bring a "Sack Lunch"  
Adult Accompanies Child  
3rd grade and older  
Sign up in Lobby

"First Communion Sunday" 10:30 April 26

## 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. *2026 St. Mark Church Prayer Guide*
- **Pray the Call Committee Prayer for a new pastor.**
- **Church council/teams** - *2026 St. Mark Church Prayer Guide*. **Plastic Wall Holders.**
- **Prayers for building up young saints** - *2026 Sunday School Prayer Booklet* (Timely resource for parents/grandparents, other family members and significant others).
- **Offering Prayers at Communion Prayer Tables** during services.
- **Prayers offered after each service at the Communion Rails.**
- **St. Mark Prayer Chain** , a wonderful group of fellow Christians, praying for all prayer requests and praising God for His listening to our petitions, and answered praises of God's glory. Email requests and praises to [smlcprayers@gmail.com](mailto:smlcprayers@gmail.com). Please share with the Prayer Chain: how God has responded to your prayer request. Check with Connie Saunders, or call the office, if you want to join.
- **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 )**- young adults, health concerns, homebound, and loss - pray for highlighted individuals in your insert/handout during the week.
- **Pray at the Communion Rail** - after service on the south side.
- **Pray for one another as the opportunity arises.**
- **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.
- **Intercessory Prayers for the Nation** - our communities, our elected national, state and local officials to put the well being of America above all. And a one minute prayer every evening for protection of America against Spiritual Warfare - the world, the flesh and the Devil.
- **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: St. Mark Office Manager, 1-847-356-8140.



Loving God and All People

April 2026



# Lay Readers & Media Assistants For April



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.

Sunday, April 5 <sup>th</sup>	6:30 AM	Bonnie Millsop
Sunday, April 5 <sup>th</sup>	9:00 AM	Lynn Wetterberg
Sunday, April 5 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	Betty Oesterle
Saturday, April 11 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, April 12 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Carl Norlin
Sunday, April 12 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	Betty Oesterle
Saturday, April 18 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Lynn Johnson
Sunday, April 19 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Bonnie Millsop
Sunday, April 19 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	Kevin Graul
Saturday, April 25 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Kathy Kurth
Sunday, April 26 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Cliff Ewert
Sunday, April 26 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	Zuchowski's

Sunday, April 5 <sup>th</sup>	6:30 AM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, April 5 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, April 5 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	Jerry Gass
Saturday, April 11 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Taylor Houser
Sunday, April 12 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, April 12 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	Jerry Gass
Saturday, April 18 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Taylor Houser
Sunday, April 19 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, April 19 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	Jerry Gass
Saturday, April 25 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Taylor Houser
Sunday, April 26 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, April 26 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 AM	Jerry Gass



## ... does anyone have any musical instruments they would like to get rid of???

The following is from one of FMSC's many wonderful partners. This one is in Haiti, and it is called [Love a Child](#). Please read to see what they are asking for and thank you in advance!

### Musical Instruments Needed for "Church Service" at our "Haitian Restaurant."

As many of you may know, some of our "older Love A Child kids" in Haiti have started a restaurant in Fond Parisien, Haiti. The restaurant has great food and provides jobs for locals, "in an area where there are no jobs!" The older boys, who run the "Fresh Food Restaurant," want to have a "Church Service" on Sunday, for those "who don't go to church!"

Haitian Christians are very "particular" about what is worn to church! Ladies are expected to wear nice skirts, dresses, heels, and the guys are expected to wear white shirts (if possible), coats, and ties! Many poor Christians do not have "clothes to go to church," and many who are not Christians don't feel comfortable in white shirts and ties. Ladies must wear dresses and heels. This is why many do not go to church. People will "stare at them" for not wearing dresses, coats, dress pants, and ties! What happens if they do not have the money to buy these clothes, or to buy them "on the streets?" They won't go to church and be embarrassed! They will never receive Jesus as their Savior!

Our older Love A Child kids, who run the restaurant, are asking for a "keyboard, drums, horns, P. A. System, and other musical instruments in good shape!" They said, "Mom and Dad," if you get the musical instruments, "we can play them," or "we will learn quickly," as Haitians have the "gift" to learn fast! If you have a musical instrument, you are not using, or you want to give money to buy a keyboard, small sound system, etc., please send checks to:

Love A Child, Inc.  
12411 Commerce Lakes Drive  
Fort Myers, Florida 33913-8664

Or please call our office at 239-210-6107 to find out how to give "Musical Instruments!" We "know" that people will come to Jesus, especially those who do not have "church clothes!"

God bless you,

Missionaries Bobby and Sherry Burnette



# Food April Pantry Needs

ANY NON-PERISHABLE  
FOOD ITEM IS  
ALWAYS  
ACCEPTED

Coffee, Baby Wipes,  
Feminine Products



HELP & HEALING

For the hurt of separation & divorce

Join us this week at

## DIVERCE Care

A new session begins:  
Monday, March 30th

6:30pm - 8:30pm

St. Mark Lutheran Church  
Meeting in Library

This session runs through June.



## ALTAR GUILD OPENINGS

If you have 15 minutes to volunteer once a month, with an attention to detail, we would welcome your services!! I have 2 part-time openings...we have a couple of Sunbirds, so I would like help Nov-April. It involves Communion set up once a month on either the 1st or 2nd Sunday for the 10:30 Service. This can be done after the 8am service, or before the 10:30 service. All that is needed is to refresh the wine trays and the altar elements. Literally should take 15 minutes, Max!

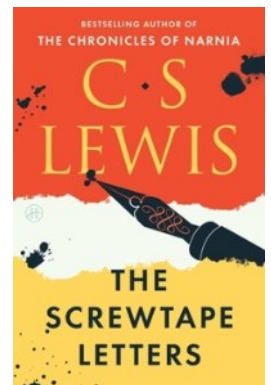
If you like to do hand laundry, we could use an alternate with taking care of the Altar Linens. They occasionally need laundering and more often ironed! This is an AS NEEDED job...but checking the linens would be necessary. Talk to me for details!

Contact Gae Michal with any question...or better yet, to volunteer! Training provided!!



### *The Screwtape Letters*

This month's book is a masterpiece of satire on hell's latest novelties and heaven's unanswerable answer. C.S. Lewis's *The Screwtape Letters* has entertained and enlightened readers the world over with its sly and ironic portrayal of human life and foibles from the unique vantage point of Screwtape, a highly placed assistant to "Our Father Below." At once wildly comic, deadly serious, and strikingly original, C.S. Lewis gives us the correspondence of the worldly-wise devil to his nephew Wormwood, a novice demon in charge of securing the damnation of an ordinary young man. *The Screwtape Letters* is the most engaging account of temptation—and triumph over it—ever written. You can find this book under call number 284.4LEW.





## Fin Facts

# Financial Position & Year End Giving

The "Funance" Committee is happy to report that 2025 was a very good year! In spite of a significant decrease in holiday giving, year to date donations were only \$15,010 lower than what was predicted in the budget. This is only 2.4% below what was predicted for 2025 and \$57,485 above unrestricted donations received in 2024. The good news..... Overall expenses were reduced significantly in 2025 due to staff openings throughout the year and reduced spending.

This resulted in a net **profit** (unaudited) of \$4,176 after expensing and saving \$55,000 in the Capital Improvement Fund to be used to replace the roof on the Main Building in the spring of 2026.

Cash balances, CDs and Saving Accounts increased to \$442,143 while the Endowment Funds increased to \$90,230. The Contingency Fund, for use in the event of cash flow issues, remained \$60,000 and Restricted Funds rose to a total of \$512,228.

In the first two months of 2026, offerings were \$455 above budget and expenses were \$29,823 below budget resulting in a net gain of \$6,528 thru February.

	<u>Budgeted</u> <u>Unrestricted Offerings</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>Unrestricted Offerings</u>	<u>Over/Under</u>
Month of December 2025	\$ 86,000	\$ 62,941	(\$ 23,059)
2023 Fiscal Year (Jan.– Dec.)	\$ 628,700	\$ 613,690	(\$ 15,010)
Month of January 2026	\$ 50,945	\$ 44,528	(\$ 6,417)
Month of February 2026	\$ 40,855	\$ 46,122	\$ 5,267

April 24th  
9am - Noon/ Ages 5 and under

PARENTS  
FREE!

Morning  
OUT

St. Mark Lutheran Church  
Register online at [smlc.info](http://smlc.info)

**Loving God and All People**

April 2026

# 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**  
4/14/2026, 5/12/2026



# 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**  
4/16/2026, 5/21/2026

**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).

## Swing by for Vacation Bible School!



### Rainforest Falls: Exploring the Nature of God

**When:** June 22<sup>nd</sup> through June 26<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 9:00am - Noon

**Who:** Preschoolers (3 years and older) through 6<sup>th</sup> graders

[Kids do not need to be SMLC members; everyone is invited.]



Registration will open **May 1<sup>st</sup>** for children and for VBS volunteers.

Look for VBS opportunities in **May and June!**

Contact: **Beth Miller** at [stmarkvbsfun@gmail.com](mailto:stmarkvbsfun@gmail.com)

Loving God and All People

April 2026

# Updated 2026 St. Mark Church Prayer Guides

Now  
available  
in the  
Narthex



St. Mark Lutheran Church  
2026 Children's Interactive  
PRAYER BOOKLET  
Training Up A Child

Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it.  
Proverbs 22:6



2026 St. Mark Church Prayer Guide

Intercession  
For Myself  
God, Family, Church,  
America the Beautiful,  
One Nation Under God  
1776-2026



**WHEN:**  
**FRIDAY, APR 24TH**  
**6:00PM - 10:00PM**

**SATURDAY, APR 25TH**  
**8:00AM - 4:00PM**

**COST:**  
**\$20 Per Person for Both Days**  
**\$10 For One Day**  
**(Includes a meal both days)**

**ALL INDOOR CRAFTS WELCOME!**

We'll provide you with your own work table,  
power, cutting mat/iron, and fellowship

*Loving God and All People*  
April 2026



## “The Garden of Eatin”

We are blessed that we are beginning our fourth season at St. Mark with our Garden Club. The first year was an unprecedented drought which proved challenging but nevertheless successful. The following year we had an amazing garden, added another 6 boxes and had a bounty of vegetables. Last year we opened up a fifty foot by twenty five foot section in which we planted zucchini and pumpkins. This year we plan to go even bigger. This year we hope to have many more faces; we would love to have you be a part of our group. Our group had collected enough funding to help our nursery with a bounce house, bumper cars and mini trikes. There honestly is only one day of tough work but last year we knocked it out in a few hours. There is no experience required and everyone is welcome whether you water the plants or lay some seeds or plant seedlings. It's a great time sharing our mutual love for gardening and meeting incredible people. On April 17, 2026 in the fellowship hall beginning at 5:30 pm we will have our first meeting including dinner. I will order Pizzas and soft drinks and discuss our plans for this upcoming year. Please come with ideas and suggestions everyone has a say! If you are interested in coming to the meeting to see what we are about please reach out to me by text at 773-317-1391 and I have a group text we share with each other. Please let us know if you can attend to get a head count for pizzas. As our saying goes “Come Grow With Us at the Garden of Eatin”



Gods Blessings,  
Fred Natschke

# Lay Readers Needed



## Media Helper

**VOLUNTEERS  
NEEDED**



Join us upstairs to  
advance the slides  
for worship service!

***Loving God and All People***

April 2026



# April 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 9:30AM Bible Study 5:30PM Seder Supper	2 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 9:00AM Quilter's Grp 6:00PM Stephen Min. 6:30PM Arise Practice	3 <i>Good Friday Service</i> 1pm 7pm	4 7:00AM Men's Group
5  6:30AM Worship 7:30AM Easter Breakfast 9:00AM Worship 10:30AM Worship  NO SUNDAY SCHOOL	6 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:00PM FMSC 7:30PM AA	7 8:30AM Men's Group 10:00AM Bible Study Ed. Center 5:00PM St. Mark Ringers	8 9:30AM Bible Study 6:00PM Confirmation Class	9 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 6:30PM Arise Practice	10	11 7:00AM HIS Ministry 5:30PM Worship
12 8:00AM Traditional Worship 9:20AM Sunday School 10:30AM Contemporary Worship	13 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:30PM AA	14 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>	15 9:30AM Bible Study 6:00PM Confirmation Class	16 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 9:00AM Quilter's Grp 6:30PM Arise Practice  <i>Wendy's Thursday</i>	17	18 7:00AM Men's Group 5:30PM Worship
19 8:00AM Traditional Worship 9:20AM Sunday School 10:30AM Contemporary Worship	20 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:30PM AA	21 8:30AM Men's Group 10:00AM Bible Study Ed. Center 5:00PM St. Mark Ringers 6:00PM Choir Practice	22 9:30AM Bible Study 5:30PM 1st Communion Class 6:00PM Confirmation Class	23 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 6:30PM Arise Practice	24 9:00AM Parent's Morning Out 6:00PM Crafter's Retreat	25 7:00AM Men's Group 5:30PM Worship 8:00AM Crafter's Retreat
26 Pastor Brian's Last  8:00AM Traditional Worship 9:20AM Sunday School 10:30AM Contemporary Worship  1st Communion Sunday	27 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:30PM AA	28 8:30AM Men's Group 10:00AM Bible Study Ed. Center 5:00PM St. Mark Ringers 6:00PM Choir Practice 8:00 Committee Meetings	29 9:30AM Bible Study 6:00PM Confirmation Class	30 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 6:30PM Arise Practice		

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](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)

**May 2026  
VOICE DEADLINE:  
April 12, 2026**

***Loving God and All People***  
April 2026