

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

June/July 2026



by John Bengston

Dear St. Mark Family,

Can you believe summer is upon us?

Our call process continues. Our Call Committee is working with Vanderbloemen and is expecting a panel of candidates to review in the next few weeks. Summer promises to be a special one for St. Mark. Please continue to pray for our Call Team and for our search for a pastor. Do not be discouraged. Psalm 66: 20 reminds us, "Blessed be God, because he has not rejected [our] prayer or removed his steadfast love from [us]."

Do you feel a calling to help lead St. Mark? There are many opportunities, and one may be for you. Our Church Council will need new members for 2027. While the election for these positions is not until November, we need you now. This year there are four council positions open, and we will also need a Council President and Treasurer. Please prayerfully consider one of these leadership positions.

St. Mark also needs people to serve on our Spiritual Development and Support Ministry Team. The Spiritual Development and Support Team encourages members to generously give of their time, treasures and talents as a spiritual discipline to help the Congregation grow in Christ.

This is a time of fulfilling needs and we are calling on our people for assistance. It is working! This year alone, we have developed a new Benevolence Team that assists in allocating our benevolence dollars to God's glory. We were also able to bring back our Human Resources Team.

Have a wonderful summer.

God's blessings,

John

## **In This Issue:**

- ⇒ President's Message
- ⇒ Meet the Team
- ⇒ Council Highlights
- ⇒ Announcements
- ⇒ Youth & Family Ministry News
- ⇒ Vacation Bible School
- ⇒ Call Committee Update
- ⇒ Safety & Security
- ⇒ America's Heritage/June
- ⇒ Baptism
- ⇒ Church Picnic Save the Date
- ⇒ Rummage Sale Information
- ⇒ H.I.S. Ministry
- ⇒ Open Arms
- ⇒ Opportunities for Prayer
- ⇒ Feed My Starving Children
- ⇒ Service Members Honored
- ⇒ Worship on the Farm
- ⇒ What's On the Shelf
- ⇒ Support Your Church
- ⇒ Soles for Jesus
- ⇒ Declaration of Independence
- ⇒ America's Heritage/July
- ⇒ Lay Readers & Media Assistants
- ⇒
- ⇒
- ⇒
- ⇒ June Calendar
- ⇒ July Calendar



## **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 **August** edition of *The Voice* is **July 12th**. Please Email articles to:

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

**Loving God and All People**  
June/July 2026



## ST. MARK COUNCIL

---

**PRESIDENT**  
John Bengston

**VICE PRESIDENT**  
Robin Korom

**COUNCIL SECRETARY**  
Susie Soukup

**FINANCIAL TREASURER**  
Bill Renninger

### COUNCIL MEMBERS

Robin Korom  
Keith Niles

Todd Korth  
Nancy O'Connor

Johnna Morton  
Kathy Shelley

## ST. MARK MINISTRY TEAMS

---

### 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

### 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, June 9th & July 14th @ 7:00PM

**Next Team Meetings:** Tuesday, June 23rd & July 28th @ 7:00PM

***Loving God and All People***

June/July 2026



# St. Mark Council News


## Recap from the May meeting:

May's Council meeting was a review of Ministry Team work and updates from the Call Team. Prayers were offered for St. Mark, its members and ministries. God is good!

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.




**Thank you for your "COOL PLANT & FLOWER SALE" orders this year! We raised over \$7,000 to support Open Arms food pantry and their Transitional Housing Program.**



### Youth & Family Ministries News

Youth and Family Ministry Team thank yous....

We would like to recognize our Sunday School Staff for their devotion and time to our Sunday School students in helping them grow in their faith.

Coordinators: Barb Griffith and Denise Schaufel

Teachers: Kelly Gregori, Bonnie Millsop, Tracy Gaul, Brock Millsop, Mary Beth Franas, Jim O'Neal, Jessica Templin, Paul Acutt and Johnna Morton

Assistant: Khloe Coughenour

Music leader: Karissa McGill

And our substitutes

We would like to also recognize our Confirmation Team: Paul Acutt, Johnna Morton, Lynn Johnson and the confirmands' Prayer Pals for their devotion and time in helping our students prepare to confirm their faith.



## BUNCO Ladies

(Ladies In God's Holy Truth)

# LIGHT

**BUNCO**

Ladies, please join us for fellowship, fun, and games!

June 6 2:00pm  
Education Center



Sat, June 20th  
1:00-4:00pm  
Ages 12 and under

## PARENTS' AFTERNOON OUT



## Greetings from the Call Committee!

The new recruiter from Vanderbloemen met in person with the members of the Call Committee recently. We gave him a tour of our grounds and he was quite impressed with everything he saw. We are working closely with him and are encouraged as we continue our search.

Also, we have been working on updates to the Senior Pastor job description to make it more streamlined.

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

Isaiah 26:4

“Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord, is the Rock eternal.”

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.*



## from your Safety & Security Team!!!

It may not be “BREAKING NEWS” but here are some things we would like you to know:

- 1) We will be having a fire drill sometime in the not so distant future and it may be unannounced so ....
  - a. Please know which door you should exit out of – the Emergency Plan flier is in the pew pocket in the sanctuary. To assist you, we have posted colored signs on the appropriate doors for exiting.
    - i. If you have a child in the nursery, the nursery people will bring your child to you.
    - ii. If you have a coat in one of the coat rooms, please leave it behind.
  - b. After you have exited the building, please proceed to the north parking lot (between the columbarium and the Garden of Eatin’) - please just don't get into your car and leave. A representative from the Lake Villa Fire Department - or one of us - will dismiss you. The Fire Department Representative might have something to tell us while we are outside. You are then welcome to return to church to get your coat and/or attend coffee fellowship.
- 2) The first aid kits and the AEDs have been restocked and updated. **IF YOU NEED TO USE ONE OF THE FIRST AID KITS – GO RIGHT AHEAD** but please let one of us know and/or the office so we keep the kits stocked – thank you in advance for helping us with this!!
- 3) We have purchased a [LifeVac](#) for the kitchen, the nursery, and the Sunday School area. In case of a choking emergency, these are to be used before the EMT’s arrive. On their website, these are the [instructions](#) on how to use one. We will make an announcement at one of the services during the summer also to explain their use and purpose.
- 4) If you currently are a First Response Team member and need to be re-certified or you would like to become a team member, please keep your eyes and ears open for the next training date and/or talk to Tim Rick or Mike Mol.
- 5) As always, if you see and/or hear of anything that we should be brought to our attention, please contact Tim Rick or Mike Mol. If you would like to join our team, see Tim or Mike also. We are a team that prays that we are never needed around the church!!

**Loving God and All People**

June/July 2026

---

# VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (VBS)



Join us at Rainforest Falls: Exploring the Nature of God! VBS is the perfect spot for kids to explore who God is. Faith takes root as kids discover God is their loving creator; wonder washes away doubt in the life giving truth that God loves them deeply!

**When:** Monday, June 22nd – Friday, June 26th

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

**Who:** Preschoolers  
(3-years old and potty-independent)

through 6th graders (for the 26-27 school year)



**KIDS & VOLUNTEERS  
REGISTER BY JUNE 15th**

Use this QR Code OR go to [vbspro.events/p/smlc2026](https://vbspro.events/p/smlc2026)

---

## VBS SUPPORT NEEDED!

Putting together one of St. Mark's largest congregational and community outreach programs requires many people with various talents.

### BEFORE VBS:

**VBS Kick-off Workshop:** Help turn St. Mark's campus into the rainforest?

We'll be working on oversized flowers, vines, birds, butterflies, etc.

Date: Saturday, June 6th

Time: 1:00pm - 4:00pm

Who: Youth, Adults, Families – all ages and abilities welcome!



**Adopt a prop:** Would you like to make some of the decor or prepare some teaching materials from the comfort of your own home? **Look for these at the VBS table in the Narthex in early June!**

### DURING VBS:

**Station Leaders (2 adults needed at each station):** Using a provided curriculum, share the Bible story, lead games, make crafts/do science demos, sing songs, **or** prepare snacks. Must be over the age of 18; will require a background check through St. Mark.

**Crew Leaders (2 teens/adults needed per crew):** Experience VBS with a group of preschool or elementary kids as your crew moves through the different stations/activities. Must be 7th grade or older.

If you've got any questions or want to chat about VBS, please **contact Beth Miller at [stmarkvbsfun@gmail.com](mailto:stmarkvbsfun@gmail.com) or reach out to our Parish Education Committee.**

**Loving God and All People**

June/July 2026



*A Great Awakening*, Director: Joshua Enck, April 3, 2026, Movie, PG13, 2 hr. 9 min. Tells true story of an unlikely friendship between the Reverend George Whitefield and Benjamin Franklin that resulted in one of the most defining moments in American History.

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

Almost three hundred years ago, the separate American colonies stood on the verge of an invisible phenomenon known as the “Great Awakening,” a powerful religious revival. One could hear it, feel it, and see its effects. Yet no one can fully explain how revival begins—the timing, the place, or the conditions. It happens when and where the Spirit wills it. As Scripture says:

“The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” — John 3:8

A century after John Winthrop spoke of “A City upon a Hill,” only a few spiritual embers remained in the land. Economic prosperity, worldliness, weakened church standards through the Half-Way Covenant, and the fading fear of Indian attacks had cooled the Puritans’ original zeal.

The Great Awakening spread like a wildfire through the colonies between 1730 and 1770, reaching both rural towns and major cities. It crossed denominational lines and weakened the spiritual hold of the Church of England. The movement is most associated with Jonathan Edwards and the New England Puritans. The first spark of revival came in Northampton, Massachusetts where Jonathan Edwards—a brilliant, but reserved preacher—began preaching boldly against the idea that man could accomplish God’s purposes by human effort rather than by God’s grace alone.

Edwards preached justification by faith and the necessity of being “born again.” His famous sermon, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, based on Deuteronomy 32:35, pleaded with sinners to repent while there was still time. The colonists’ response shocked even Edwards himself, later recorded in *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God*. Theologians, who knew Edwards understood the revival could not simply be explained by his personality or emotion.

Another major figure was George Whitefield (1714–1770), an itinerant preacher, from England. After his conversion at University of Oxford, Whitefield preached throughout England and eventually the American colonies. Forced outside established churches, he preached in open fields to crowds sometimes reaching 30,000 people.

Upon his second visit to the colonies, Whitefield helped ignite revival across America. Historian Paul Johnson wrote, “He simply carried a torch and used it to set alight multitudes...” In 1740, Whitefield traveled from Savannah to Boston on the first continental preaching tour. Over the next thirty years, he preached an estimated 18,000 sermons.

Whitefield’s central message was simple: “You must be born again.” His sermon *The Almost Christian* challenged listeners to examine whether their faith was real or merely outward religion. John Wesley described the response: “In some places, thousands cried out aloud... most were drowned in tears... almost all lifting up their eyes, and calling for mercy.”<sup>1</sup>(Gibbs, p. 88)

*Continued on Page 7*

May 17th at St. Mark

**Amara Margaret  
Booth**

Daughter of:

**Kayla Weidner Booth  
&  
Connor Booth**



*May the guiding presence of God be with  
Amara as she grows in the knowledge of  
Jesus Christ!*

**Save The Date  
Sunday,  
August 23<sup>rd</sup>**



“What Would You Say?” America’s Christian Heritage: Fact or Fiction, *Continued from page 6*

Nearly every denomination benefited from the revival, especially the Baptists. Even Benjamin Franklin observed its social impact: “It was wonderful to see the change soon made in the manners of our inhabitants... it seemed as if all the world were growing religious...”<sup>2</sup> The Great Awakening emphasized personal conversion, challenging ministers and churches that lacked spiritual vitality. Gilbert Tennent argued in *The Danger of an Unconverted Ministry* that a converted plowman was more fit for leadership than an unconverted minister.

Such ideas were revolutionary in the eighteenth century. They helped shape a mindset that later influenced the Founding Fathers. If an unjust king lacked moral legitimacy, then authority itself could be questioned. John Adams, a principle Founding Father and 2nd President, later reflected: “The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people. As British leaders acted more like tyrants, colonial respect for English institutions and the king rapidly declined.

The “Be Born Again,” message of the Great Awakening created new men and women in Christ and was the glue which tied the colonies into a formative movement, lighting the spark of liberty. Adams, called this moral and spiritual shift “the real American Revolution.”<sup>3</sup>

The key text for the Great Awakening was Revelation 21:5: “Behold, I make all things new.”

So, what would you say? American Christian Heritage: Fact or Fiction

---

Gibbs, David C.Jr. and Newcombe, One Nation Under God, The Things Every Christian Should Know About the Founding of America, Christian Law Association, Seminole, Florida, 2005, p.8

<sup>2</sup> ibid., p.90.

<sup>3</sup> ibid., p.93.

The Annual Rummage Sale is just around the corner. Hopefully you have all gathered boxes and bags of great treasures to donate and help keep our sale the best around. Everyone has been asking the #1 question so here is the answer.....we start collecting donations on Monday June 29th. Donations will be collected Monday-Friday during normal church hours. Please put them in the back room past the nursery. There will be signs where to put different donations. Please follow signs. If you have multiple different items in a box Do Not take out of box. Just put in the everything else section. It greatly helps us if you box or bags like items together. All clothes in a bag, toys together, housewares together,



books, linens, crafts, holiday all boxed with like items. Please do not tie bags as we like to reuse them. These are all ways you can help us from home.

Ways you can help at the sale are.....Come in and help set up. We have tasks for all ages. You can help hang and fold clothes, unpack boxes and set on tables, organize books, put small items together in baggies, put price tags on multiple same items, sort bags for checkout, breakdown boxes for recycling, move items between buildings and many other helpful tasks that make our sale successful. Many of these tasks are sit down jobs for those of you who can't stand long.

During the sale we need many, many, many hands to help our visitors carry their purchases, find things they are searching for, straighten up areas as they are shopped and just be a friendly face. After the sale we need everyone to help pack up leftovers and put on the donation truck. There will be a sign up sheet in July for those who want to help. If you are interested in cashiering please see me personally. We also serve lunch to our workers and food donations are always welcomed. Set up is usually during the day, but we are going to have one evening a week where those who work can help. If you don't drive but would like to help please let us know. We will get you a ride. If young people would like to help they are most welcomed. Youth under 13 need to come with an adult for safety reasons. Many high school and college age students come for service hours. Strong arms are also needed for pick ups. Except for youth who need service hours we do not allow non members to help with set up. See me for reasons why.

Here is the timetable for the sale.

June 29th...Collection starts

July 6th.....Ed Center set up begins. Days and times will be on the sign up poster.

July 19th....After 9:30 service many hands are needed to move all donations in main building to their selling area.

July 20th.....Main building set up begins. We will still also be working at the Ed Center.

July 30th & July 31st & August 1st.....Sale days! All hands on deck.

August 1st....Clean up after sale. Many hands make quick work.

Hope to see you at the sale. It is a great way to meet other members you may otherwise never see. We are a fun welcoming group that always welcomes new faces. It's a rummage sale, so you really can't make mistakes. Come join us for fun, fellowship and yes, work. See you all in July. Questions or to schedule a pick up call Laurie Kerns.

#### **Items we do not take are....**

TVs, large appliances, microwaves, organs, pianos, large exercise equipment, Christmas trees, chandeliers, chemicals, house paint, building supplies, China cabinets, large desks, large glass top tables, mattresses or box springs, mirrors without frames, oversized couches, sleeper sofas, magazines, encyclopedias, text books, cassette tapes, computers, used make up or beauty supplies. If you would throw it away so would we.

***Loving God and All People***

June/July 2026



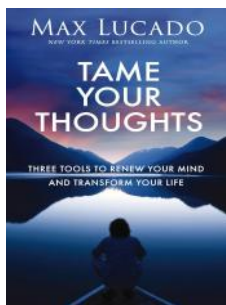
Every Month  
2nd Saturday

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).



Open  
Arms

June

Canned Tuna, Cereal & Jelly

July

Hamburger Helper, Shampoo  
& Bar Soap

Any non-perishable  
food donation is  
always welcome!



## 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). **Plastic Wall Holders.**
- **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** - Utilize the **2026 National Day of Prayer Brochure** and/or **Bookmark** for our Education, Business, Military, Government, Arts, Entertainment and Media. Available in the Narthex.
- **ZOOM Weekly Prayer Meeting** - Come, pray and be blessed. Currently Thursday until further notice from 6:30 to 7:15 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

June/July 2026

## FMSC Update

Through St. Mark's benevolence funds, we donated enough funds to make St. Mark a "Bronze Sponsor" at last month's annual gala! That benevolence helped provide 22,403 meals, which in turn, feeds 61 kids a daily meal for a year!!



At the gala, FMSC's CEO showed this picture of some refugees in Sudan – notice the t-shirt the young man over his left shoulder is wearing!!

Overall, the FMSC Illinois Gala raised \$1.1 million - that's enough to feed well over 10,300 kids a meal a day for a full year. How cool!! That's the GREAT news but the bad news is that there are more than 10,300 kids who need food. FMSC goal this year is to feed over a million kids so please consider helping financially or by volunteering.

Speaking of volunteering, here are the 3 dates already planned for St. Mark to go to Libertyville and help pack food for the less fortunate.

[Sign up link for Saturday, June 6th, at 8:45 am](#)

[Sign up link for Monday, July 6th, at 7 pm](#)

[Sign up link for Saturday, August 1st, at 8:45 am](#)

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. I know we are all crazy busy during the summer, but ***hunger doesn't take a vacation with these kids!***

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)

**Loving God and All People**

June/July 2026



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.

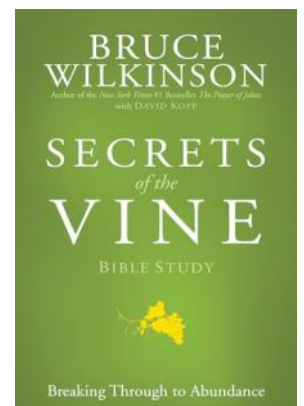
**Join us on the first Sunday of the month (June - November) at 10:30 AM for an inspiring worship service at the farm!**

Experience a morning of faith, fellowship, and uplifting worship at Stade's Farm & Market. Free coffee, water, and our signature apple cider donuts will be available to all attendees.



### **Secrets of the Vine**

Have you ever wondered how you can best serve God? In *Secrets of the Vine*, Dr. Bruce Wilkinson explores John 15 to show you how to make maximum impact for God. Wilkinson demonstrates how Jesus is the Vine of life, discusses four levels of “fruit bearing” (doing the good work of God), and reveals three life-changing truths that will lead you to new joy and effectiveness in His kingdom. *Secrets of the Vine* will open your eyes to the Lord’s hand in your life and will uncover surprising insights that will point you toward a new path of consequence for God’s glory. You can find this book under call number 226.5 WIL.



# In CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776

## *The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen United States of America*

*When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of man-kind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.*

*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,—That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.*

*Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.—Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.*

### *List of Grievances.*

*WE, THEREFORE, the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.*



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

July, 2026 marks the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Would you define the Declaration as the \*birth certificate\* of the nation, reflecting the spirit of the United States of America? Or as an insurrectionist statement? As in the past, the perennial question resurfaces: Was the founding of the United States primarily a product of Christianity or Enlightenment Deism?<sup>1</sup>

Michael Novak, in *\*On Two Wings: Humble Faith and Common Sense\**, writes: "The leaders of the American Revolution were not, like the leaders of the French Revolution, secularists. They did not set out to erase religion. Quite the opposite." "...if the Founding Fathers were influenced by the Enlightenment...it was the Enlightenment of John Locke, a man ever at pains not to tread heavily on Christian sensibilities."<sup>2</sup> And Baron Charles Montesquieu, a Christian and legal philosopher, who wrote God is the source of all law,<sup>3</sup>

The first act of the Continental Congress in September 1774 was to pray Psalm 35 to God for wisdom in responding to the British bombardment of Boston. The Second Continental Congress, in June, 1776, issued a proclamation calling for a national day of prayer, humiliation, and fasting.

Read the Declaration of Independence, mark phrases that are meaningful to you stating \*why\* the Declaration was adopted. To whom is this appeal directed? Common sense, reason, God, divine Providence, Creator, Supreme Judge?

### Laws

The phrase "the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God" is key to understanding the spirit of the Declaration. In the 18th century, "law of nature" was understood to mean God's universal law written into creation and known through reason and science. The phrase "Nature's God" referred to God's will as specifically revealed to man in Scripture.<sup>3</sup> Like gravity, these laws were considered fixed and unchanging for both individuals and nations. Thomas Jefferson combined the "law of nature" and the "law of revelation" into the Declaration's phrase: "The Laws of Nature and of Nature's God."

### Self-Evident Truths

In the Preamble of the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson wrote of "self-evident truths." A truth which is understood directly and needs no proof, discussion, or debate. Examples: Man is created in the image of God. Round is not square. Men are not angels.

- "All Men Are Created Equal" This phrase refers to equality in the sight of God. All share the same sinful nature. All stand equally in need of salvation. This does **\*\*not\*\*** mean all people are equal in: appearance, ability, status, personality and circumstances. (Gibbs, p. 141)
- Men are "endowed by their Creator with certain "Unalienable Rights" Because we are created in God's image, we have both the duty and right to resist efforts to dishonor that image. These rights: cannot be sold; cannot be surrendered; cannot be taken away. Therefore:
  - God — not government — is the source of rights.
  - Government exists to protect these God-given natural rights.

*Continued on Page 15*

## America's Heritage: Fact or Fiction *Continued from Page 14*

- Governments that deny these rights, or claim authority to grant them, are illegitimate and may be overthrown.<sup>4</sup>
  - “Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness” Citizens possess these rights whether or not governments recognize them. Therefore, citizens have a duty to insist that government protect them.
  - Life and liberty are gifts from God. Government is to protect the life, not deny it.
- William Blackstone, a British jurist, (1723–1780) defined liberty is a power of acting as one thinks fit, without restraint or control, unless by the law of nature.” John Locke added “Though this be a state of liberty, yet it is not a state of license.” In other words, liberty is governed by moral responsibility. Doing the right thing.
  - The Pursuit of Happiness. Blackstone argued there is a direct connection between happiness and God’s law: “(God) has graciously reduced the rule of obedience to this one paternal precept, ‘that man should pursue his own happiness.’ This is the foundation of what we call ethics, or natural law.”
  - Jefferson’s closing prayer appeals: “To the Supreme Judge of the World for the rectitude of our intentions.” Gibbs notes that only God could validate the moral correctness of their movement for independence from Great Britain.

Historian Paul Johnson observed that the Declaration of Independence was, for those who signed it, both a religious and secular act. Many believed the winning the Revolutionary War confirmed approval of God. Just as earlier colonists had written their covenants and compacts in the name of God and spread the Gospel to all the nations, many believed the founding of the United States reflected both prayer, faith and liberty working together.

Do you believe the Declaration reflects primarily Christianity, Enlightenment ideas, or both?

---

<sup>1</sup> Enlightenment Deism. The belief that God created the world and its laws, but that humans should use reason and observation, rather than miracles or church authority, to understand truth and morality.

<sup>2</sup> Gibbs. David C.Jr. and Newcombe, [One Nation Under God, The Things Every Christian Should Know About the Founding of America](#), Christian Law Association, Seminole, Florida, p.134.

<sup>3</sup> [Ibid.](#) p. 139.

<sup>4</sup> [Ibid.](#) p.141.

<sup>5</sup> [Ibid.](#) p.142.

<sup>6</sup> [Ibid.](#) p.143.

<sup>7</sup> [Ibid.](#) p.144.



# St. Mark Garden of Eatin'

Sign up on  
the calendar



We'd love your help!

## Volunteer in the Garden:

**\*\*\*Watering , Harvesting, Filling the Veggie Cart**

The Garden Club is looking for volunteers to help our harvest thrive! Whether you have a green thumb or just want to enjoy the outdoors, we would love to have you involved.

### How You Can Help:

- Watering: Sign up on the calendar for a week-long stint (Sunday-Saturday).
- Flexibility: If you can't commit to the full week, just sign up for the days you are available— someone else will cover the rest!

**Harvesting & The Veggie Cart:** The Garden Club is for everyone! We aim to have the veggie cart filled every Sunday. However, during busy vacation weeks, we may not always have the cart loaded. If it's empty, please feel free to pick your own vegetables— no permission needed! We only ask that you be considerate of others so everyone **can share in the bounty.**

**Donations & Impact:** Everything is free, though we gratefully accept donations. Thanks to your past generosity, we recently provided our daycare with bumper cars, bouncy houses, and other essential items!

- Note: Please designate any offerings to the "Garden of Eatin'".

God's Blessings,

The Garden Club



## Operation Dropbox:

Thank you for all of your donations! As of today, May 29th we have taken the lead in Lake County donating more than 571 lbs of food with more still being calculated. Once processed all donations will go to Veteran's Path to Hope.

Thank you to all of our donors for your generosity.

The Medical Reserve Corps Emergency Response Team.

**Loving God and All People**

June/July 2026



**Soles  
For  
Jesus**

**You all have been doing a great job of supplying shoes for this awesome cause – thank you!!**

**This is just a peek into what it means when you put your shoes/boots in the collection box in the coat room!!**



Please keep bringing in those donations and thank you for tying the shoes together - if possible - or putting lace-less shoes and/or sandals into individual plastic bags. If you would just like to know more about this organization, here is their website: [Soles for Jesus](http://Soles for Jesus). If you have questions, see Mike Mol.

## **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**  
6/9/2026, 7/14/2026



**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**  
6/18/2026, 7/16/2026

**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).

**Loving God and All People**

June/July 2026



# Joyful Hearts

Singles Group

We will be attending all the concerts in the park this summer. Please join us at the park by finding our blue flag!



Contact Nancy O'Connor or Patty Lindholm for questions

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| FRI., JUNE 26 | The Electric Dudes – Rock/Dance               |
| SAT, JUNE 27  | Pandora's Vox – Rock/Pop/Classics             |
| FRI., JULY 3  | Lipstick – 80s Pop/Rock                       |
| SAT., JULY 4  | Knockout Band – Rock and Roll                 |
| FRI., JULY 10 | Mike Taylor – Classic Rock                    |
| SAT., JULY 11 | The Gypsy Felons – Classic Rock               |
| FRI., JULY 17 | Collideoscope – Rock                          |
| SAT., JULY 18 | Perfect Strangers – Acoustic Rock             |
| FRI., JULY 24 | Elaine's Basement – Classic Rock 60s/70s      |
| SAT., JULY 25 | Sweet Ride Long Island – Rock/Country/Blues   |
| FRI., JULY 31 | Vintage Vibes Band – 50s/90s Upbeat Party Mix |

## 2026 SUMMER CONCERT SERIES



A floral arranger is needed for the 1st weekend of the month. What a perfect way to serve the church!

Contact Gae Michal with questions

# Congratulations Marilyn and John!



Saturday | 5:30PM *Traditional*

Sunday | 9:30AM

1st & 3rd *Traditional*

2nd & 4th *Contemporary*



## Lay Readers & Media Assistants For June & July



Saturday, June 6 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Kathy Kurth
Sunday, June 7 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 AM	Kevin Graul
Saturday, June 13 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, June 14 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 AM	Gary Olson
Saturday, June 20 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Lynn Johnson
Sunday, June 21 <sup>st</sup>	9:30 AM	Carl Norlin
Saturday, June 27 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Kathy Kurth
Sunday, June 28 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 AM	Gary Olson
Saturday, July 4 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, July 5 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 AM	Taylor Houser
Saturday, July 11 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Johnna Morton
Sunday, July 12 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 AM	Kevin Graul
Saturday, July 18 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Lynn Johnson
Sunday, July 19 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 AM	Carl Norlin
Saturday, July 25 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Kathy Kurth
Sunday, July 26 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 AM	Deb Zuchowski

Saturday, June 6 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Aleea Houser
Sunday, June 7 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 AM	Jerry Gass
Saturday, June 13 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Aleea Houser
Sunday, June 14 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 AM	Johnna Morton
Saturday, June 20 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Aleea Houser
Sunday, June 21 <sup>st</sup>	9:30 AM	Johnna Morton
Saturday, June 27 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Aleea Houser
Sunday, June 28 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 AM	Mel Ellingsen
Saturday, July 4 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Aleea Houser
Sunday, June 5 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 AM	Johnna Morton
Saturday, July 11 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Taylor Houser
Sunday, July 12 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 AM	Johnna Morton
Saturday, July 18 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Taylor Houser
Sunday, July 19 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 AM	Johnna Morton
Saturday, July 25 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 PM	Taylor Houser
Sunday, July 26 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 AM	Mel Ellingsen

\*If unable to read or be the Media Assistant on a specific day, please switch with someone on the list and notify the office.

**Loving God and All People**

June/July 2026



# 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:30PM AA	2 8:30AM Men's Group 10:00AM Bible Study Ed. Center	3	4 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 6:00PM Stephen Min. 6:30PM Arise Practice	5	6 5:30PM Worship Traditional
7 9:30AM Summer Worship Traditional	8 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:30PM AA	9 8:30AM Men's Group 10:00AM Bible Study Ed. Center 7:00PM Council Mtg  <i>Antioch Pizza Tuesday</i>	10	11 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 6:30PM Arise Practice	12	13 7:00AM HIS Ministry 5:30PM Worship Traditional
14 9:30AM Summer Worship Contemporary	15 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:30PM AA	16 8:30AM Men's Group	17	18 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 6:30PM Arise Practice  <i>Wendy's Thursday</i>	19 9:00AM Parent's Morning Out	20 1:00-4:00 PM Parent's Afternoon Out 5:30PM Worship Traditional
21 9:30AM Summer Worship Traditional	22 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:30PM AA	23 8:30AM Men's Group 8:00PM All Team Mtg	24	25 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 6:30PM Arise Practice	26	27 5:30PM Worship Traditional
Vacation Bible School all week from 9:00am—Noon (Mon– Fri)						
28 9:30AM Summer Worship Contemporary	29 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:30PM AA	30 8:30AM Men's Group				



# July 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 6:00PM Stephen Min.	3 Church Closed	4 5:30PM Worship 
5 9:30AM Summer Worship Traditional	6 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:30PM AA 7:00PM FMSC	7 8:30AM Men's Group	8	9 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 6:30PM Arise Practice	10	11 7:00AM HIS Ministry 5:30PM Worship Traditional
12 9:30AM Summer Worship Contemporary	13 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:30PM AA	14 8:30AM Men's Group 7:00PM Council Mtg  <i>Antioch Pizza Tuesday</i>	15	16 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 6:30PM Arise Practice  <i>Wendy's Thursday</i>	17	18 5:30PM Worship Traditional
19 9:30AM Summer Worship Traditional	20 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:30PM AA	21 8:30AM Men's Group 8:00PM All Team Mtg	22	23 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB 6:30PM Arise Practice	24 9:00AM Parent's Morning Out	25 5:30PM Worship Traditional
26 9:30AM Summer Worship Contemporary	27 10:00AM AL-Anon 7:30PM AA	28 8:30AM Men's Group	29	30 8:00AM Men's Discuss Grp BYOB  <b>Rummage Sale 9am-7pm</b>	31  <b>Rummage Sale 9am-7pm</b>	  <b>Rummage Sale 9am-3pm</b>
						