

# ST. MARK'S MESSENGER

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September 2023

Valley, Nebraska

[www.StMarksValleyNE.com](http://www.StMarksValleyNE.com)

402.359.2315

**ST MARK'S**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

*from the Pastor...*



And here we go again, into our new season of school, activities, and even worship! Our short service for summer—with the shortened liturgy and not as many scripture readings will now return to a full-bodied service. Kids are settling back into the

school routines, as are parents. I read an article that said that Americans traveled ‘with a vengeance’ this summer. It was a way, it seems, of trying to erase all the restrictions we endured, all the things we felt we missed out on, through the years of the Covid pandemic. I get that. We are so very anxious to get back to life as it was, aren’t we? We’ve been tired of the changes and rules.

Of course, we know that the virus has not completely gone, but we have certainly learned of ways to cope with it now. Some of the changes we made are mostly over—such as wearing a mask, but other changes have become a permanent way of us doing worship. For instance, we have become a congregation that will always livestream our worship now, and that’s a good thing! Many have wound up benefiting from what was an early necessity-to where our services are always online. You can tune in and watch a service live, or...you can tune in at midnight some day if that’s when you have time...either way—we reach out to our homebound, vacationing, and sick people in this way. In this one way—more than any other—we were *forced* to change, and it was a good thing! It is the ‘lemonade’ that we made with the ‘lemon’ that was the pandemic.

I say all that, to say this—in *all* seasons, no matter what is happening, we must learn this lesson over and over—to rejoice and be glad—for God is in control. We hear this in Philippians—“Rejoice in the Lord, again I say, rejoice,” Philippians 4:4.

So many of you gave us reasons to rejoice this summer and I want to express to you *all* our thanks for lightening our lives and our hearts. We seemed to have had a black little cloud following us around most of the summer, from a hit and run accident to our car in a parking lot, to surgery on my neck, to my accident with Luke resulting in very painful burns and torn ligaments, to Bob's broken rib—it hasn't been a fun summer or one for taking any kind of 'vengeance vacation'! It's been difficult—but you all sent us so many cards, and gifts of food, gift cards, flowers, edible flower arrangements, special soups, desserts—just too many to list! It was overwhelming how good you all were to us! Thank you, thank you, thank you! You kept us ever in prayer and it helped! We are SO grateful to God for all of you and all that you did for us during a difficult summer. Some even showed up to cut the grass for Bob after he broke his rib! WE JUST CANNOT SAY THANK YOU ENOUGH!

Initially I tried-I got some thank you's written and sent out, but after the ankle debacle and the attendant pain—those stopped, and my list got lost. I apologize for those missing thank you's. Please know how very grateful we are for the prayer's, the love, and the encouragement—in all the ways you made that real to us. You showed Christ's love to us in myriads of ways.

And so, through all of you, the 'lemons' of accidents, surgery, painful mishaps, and broken bones, got turned into the 'lemonade' of prayer, care, food and acts of service. I thank you all and we thank God for the love God showed to us through you.

I have said before but will say again—thank you to Karen King for her wonderful work in leading the Sunday Services and preaching that she so ably did for me. She too, is a gift of God and we are blessed to have her here at St. Mark's. Thanks to Jan for holding down the fort as well!! What wonderful coworkers!!

We have so much to be grateful for in our God and through the love and fellowship of God's people that is manifest here among us. I think it's time for some lemonade! Where has God done that in your life?

In Christ's service with you,  
Pastor Barbara

*from the PMA...*

## **THE GIFT**

Many churches in our area provide handmade quilts to confirmands or high school graduates from the congregation. Often, it is a group of seamstresses that design, create and complete the quilt. Through time, talent and even tears, they prepare a gift for the young people of their church family, an expression of the congregation's love.

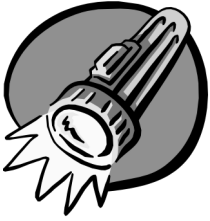
Unfortunately, it has become all too common that some young people don't attend the service where the quilts are presented. Some even fail to pick up the quilt at a later date. There is great disappointment among the seamstresses, the congregation and the church leadership. How can a gift that is designed and created with such love be ignored? Some church leaders even suggest that someone "track down" the recipient and deliver the quilt. But, that speaks to the importance to the giver and not the receiver. If receiving was a priority, then it would have happened.

Feelings are hurt. The seamstresses, leadership and congregation are sad that a gift from the church is not cherished as much as they cherish the youth. I imagine that is exactly how God feels when his gift that is designed, created and offered to us is not claimed. God continually offers his love to us in a variety of ways and yet we fail to accept it as the treasure it is. God does not "track us down" and force his gifts upon us. He created humans with the option of choice. It is up to us to choose to claim his love as the treasure it truly is.

Karen

### **A PRAYER FOR ST MARK'S COUNCIL**

God who provides, speak to those you are calling to leadership.  
Guide them in the way you wish St. Mark's to go. Amen.



# COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

**This is a synopsis of the Council meeting held on  
August 8, 2023**

- St. Mark's will be doing the Pancake Feed for Valley Days on August 12<sup>th</sup>. It will run from 8:00 to 11:30 a.m. Men In Mission will be doing the pancakes and Dean, The Big Flipper will be flipping the pancakes.
- The Fall Clean Up Date for inside and outside will be Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup> beginning at 9:00 a.m. A worksheet of suggested jobs for inside work will be available so jobs can be marked off when accomplished.
- The Annual Meeting date is Sunday, October 15 following worship.
- The Nominating Committee will be seeking candidates for the Church Council. The Nominating Committee is Kim Shunk, Cal Peacock, Cheryl Marshall, Joyce Snide and Sharon Wilson.  
The terms of Lori Dyas, Sharon Renshaw and Sharon Wilson end December 31, 2023.
- Consecration (Stewardship) Sunday is October 8. Watch for further details.
- Committees need to be working on their budget for 2024 immediately, The budgets need to be turned in to the Budget Committee by Tuesday, September 5.
- Mike Wiekhorst, an arborist, will be trimming the tree near the parking lot and is checking on a couple other trees on the property.
- New members will join St. Mark's on Sunday, September 3.
- Rally Day is September 10
- God's Work, Our Hands – Ministry Celebration and Hand Anointing in church September 10.

## **JULY MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT**

July Budget = \$24,045  
July Expenses = \$18,115  
July Giving = \$23,720

## **YEAR TO DATE FINANCIAL REPORT**

January – July Budget = \$168,316  
January – July Expenses = \$165,530  
January – July Giving = \$150,047

End of year 2022 Balance in Savings = \$64,404  
End of July 2023 Balance in Savings = \$44,616  
End of July 2023 Balance in Checking = \$8,330  
End of July 2023 Worship Enhancement Total = \$17,794



AseraCare Hospice needs volunteers in your area to provide support to our terminally ill patients and their families. Volunteers can visit, read to the patient, participate in a favorite activity, or simply sit alongside them in their journey.

Volunteers are a vital part of our hospice care mission. They are provided with extensive training and continued support throughout their tenure.

To sign up or find out more about this or other opportunities please contact:

Jen Vogt, Regional Volunteer Coordinator  
402-943-6871

Jennifer.vogt Amedisys.com

Apply online at <https://bttr.im/sjmww>

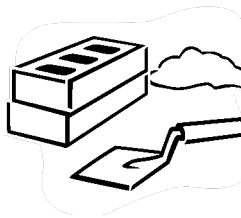
## **PRAYER GARDEN BRICKS**

**New bricks will be installed in the  
Prayer Garden  
in October.**

**Deadline to order a brick is  
September 30.**

**Order forms are available at the front  
desk.**

**Please turn order form(s) in to Jan.**



## *Thank You*

I am sending out a HUGE THANK YOU to the many of my St. Mark's family and others who offered their prayers, calls, cards, visits, concerns and positive thoughts at the time of my surgery and since recovering. Special thanks, also, to Pastor Barbara for her prayers and concerns and healing blessings. Thanks to all of you and these efforts, my surgery and recovery have been very successful. St. Mark's is a really spirit-filled place and you are all blessings. Thank you!

Carmen Dau

I want to send a big thank you to everyone for your prayers, cards, food and visits during my illness. So much appreciated. I feel so blessed to have such a caring and loving church family. May God bless all of you.

Ann Crabtree

We would like to thank everyone who visited and sent cards to our mother, Joyce Lewis. A special thanks to Pastor for being with us from the beginning to the end. Thank you everyone who worked and prepared food for the luncheon. You are all blessings.

Ronnie, Vicki, Linda and family

Dear St Mark's Family,

Dannielle, Kathryn & I would like to thank all of you for your prayers first for Danny's recovery while he was in the hospital. You lifted Danny up with your love and he felt it and was encouraged by it. Our prayers were for him to get well enough to come back home with me. Danny & his medical team tried so hard to make that happen. Eventually he was able to go home but those prayers were answered by sending him home to Jesus. Our hearts are broken but now we are lifted by your love & are encouraged by it.

Thank you to all who helped to make Danny's Celebration of Life so memorable. Pastor Oshlo for your guidance, words of healing & comfort & beautiful sermon/service; Jeannie & Bob who held us up & kept us steady & made things happen; Rob & Karen for leadership in the service, special music by 100 Voices, Sandra Stewart, Becky Pittman, Cal Peacock; Sound Board team; Barb & WELCA for 'round' desserts for luncheon & service for luncheon; Dean & Bert who had coffee & drinks ready before 8:00 a.m. & were just leaving @2:00 p.m.; Jan, who keeps the ship upright at all times; all the unseen hands in set-up & tear-down.

We were over-whelmed by the number of family & friends who came to help us celebrate Danny's life. He loved his St Mark's family. His faith journey included his music which was inspired & encouraged by you. Danny was grateful for that.

For your prayers or hugs or cards or phone calls or texts or donations of food or donations for memorial gift or sharing a donut or coming to the service, we are forever grateful. As a St Mark's saint just wrote me, "Danny made me want to be a better person! He always left a wave of happiness when he left a group." Thank you for helping us celebrate the man who made us smile & laugh & sing & feel good about ourselves & others!

With love & gratitude,  
Connie Stewart  
Dannielle Stewart & family  
Kathryn Wiles & family

## Birthdays in September



It has been requested to have personal birthdates put in the newsletter. If we are going to do this we need you to be sure that we have your birth date. Please let the church office know your date if you have not already done so.

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE FOLLOWING"

- |                       |                           |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 – Jerry Bills       | 16 – Louise Allen         |
| 2 – Jacie Calek       | 16 – Allison Goff         |
| 2 – Rob King          | 16 – Ashley Foutch        |
| 2 – Clayton Karloff   | 16 – William Mayer        |
| 2 – Georgia Goff      | 17 – Rylie Bakken         |
| 3 – Nate Wittgren     | 18 – Sara Gotch           |
| 4 – Daniel McGaughey  | 18 – Sandra Gunnerson     |
| 4 – Matthew Petersen  | 18 – Kurt Saathoff        |
| 5 – Tom Melton        | 18 – Eric Lopeman         |
| 7 – Cody Feist        | 18 – Colton Leal          |
| 8 – Ryan Gochanour    | 18 – Tyler Rogert         |
| 9 – Bonnie TenEyck    | 20 – Donna Foutch         |
| 10 – Ed Barnes        | 20 – Robert King          |
| 10 – Brennen Lopeman  | 21 – Bryce Larsen         |
| 10 – Chloe Saathoff   | 23 – Melanie Ueckert      |
| 11 – Chris Bonacci    | 24 – Reagan Gurzick       |
| 11 – Sue Steckelberg  | 24 – Wyatt Hamsa          |
| 11 – Dean Slader      | 26 – Pastor Barbara Oshlo |
| 11 – Sharon Wilson    | 26 – Joyce Snide          |
| 12 – Eli Hurt         | 27 – Karen Authier        |
| 12 – Danielle Stewart | 28 – Bob Stubblefield     |
| 13 – Colton Trost     | 29 – Rod Marshall         |
| 14 – Harlan Dreesen   | 29 – Shane Bakken         |
| 14 – Haylie Bakken    | 30 – David Hackworth      |
| 15 – Bob Stiefel      |                           |



## SCRIPTURES FOR SUNDAYS IN SEPTEMBER 2023

September 3

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Old Testament Reading	Jeremiah 15:15-21
Responsive Reading	Psalms 26:1-8
Epistle Reading	Romans 12:9-21
Gospel Reading	Matthew 16:21-28

September 10

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Old Testament Reading	Ezekiel 33:7-11
Responsive Reading	Psalms 119:33-40
Epistle Reading	Romans 13:8-14
Gospel Reading	Matthew 18:15-20

September 17

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Old Testament Reading	Genesis 50:15-21
Responsive Reading	Psalms 103:[1-7] 8-13
Epistle Reading	Romans 14:1-12
Gospel Reading	Matthew 18:21-35

September 24

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Old Testament Reading	Jonah 3:10—4:11
Responsive Reading	Psalms 145:1-8
Epistle Reading	Philippians 1:21-30
Gospel Reading	Matthew 20:1-16



**The Ties That Bind Quilting** Group will meet on **Monday, September 11 and Thursday, September 28** in Fellowship Hall. If you can tie a knot or use a scissors, you can be God's Hands, doing His work. We look forward to seeing you.

## SEPTEMBER NEWS FOR WOMEN OF ST. MARK'S

### FAITH CIRCLE NEWS

**FAITH CIRCLE** will meet on **Tuesday, Sept. 5** at the home of Karen Authier for the first meeting of the new season. We will meet at 12 noon for lunch and then begin our new study with Desiree Katsampes as our leader. A short business meeting will follow.

### FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE NEWS

We met on Aug. 7<sup>th</sup> with 6 members in attendance. Karen King lead our Study from "Gather" and Barb Kahlandt served as Hostess.

The ingathering of items for LWR Personal Care Kits Starts Aug. 20 and ends on Sept. 30.

Our next meeting will be on Aug. 29 at 6:30 due to the fact that Labor Day is Sept. 4 our usual meeting date. Karen King will lead our Study and Marilyn will serve as Hostess. Please join us if you can.

### JOY/PEACE CIRCLE NEWS



### **BELL CHOIR**

Watch for further details as to when this group will begin rehearsals.

If you are interested in joining this group or have questions, please contact Karen King at 359-5964. Praise Ringers play on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month. Please come join us.

## THANK YOU

We would like to thank the St. Mark's family for your generosity and support of the 2023 school supply outreach. Your school supply donations are able to provide the students in DC West Schools with the much needed items for this school year.

We were able to partner with COPE and they supplied the list of back to school items for our community students. The items were packed up and delivered to greet the students for their new school year.

The St. Mark's family donated over 125 lbs. of backpacks, colored pencils, markers, composition notebooks, pens, water color sets and hand sanitizer. Thank you for your prayers, contributions and support.

*Joy and Peace Circle Members*



On September 3, two families joined our St. Mark's family of faith. Jason and Hilarie Calek and their 3 daughters Gracie Glass, Cacie and Jacie Calek from Lutheran Church of the Master in Elkhorn;; and Janice Allen. From United Faith Community Church in Valley.

# Thank You



***We would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks and appreciation to our St. Mark's family, volunteers, auction donors, luncheon guests and friends from surrounding communities in making the 2023 Salad Luncheon and Silent Auction a wonderful success.***

***Your willingness to give of your time and talent, preparation of the scrumptious salads and sharing of your treasured recipes. Through all of your efforts, we have strengthened the mission and ministry of this church. Funds raised by the event will be used for our Charitable Giving.***

***Each of you is a blessing to St. Mark's.***

***The Circle Board***



Zoe Joy Dreessen was baptized at St. Mark's on September 3. Blessings to her parents Kyle and Vanessa Dreessen, grandparents Harlan and Teri Dreessen and to the whole family. May Zoe's faith be a blessing to her and to many.



## **ADULT CHOIR BEGINS**

**St. Mark's Music Ministry** will resume on **Sept. 6** with Choir rehearsal at 7:15 pm. If you like to sing and "Make a Joyful Noise", you are welcome to join the group. Choir normally sings the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month.

## **PRAYER CONCERNS**

Pastor Barbara Oshlo	John & Lorrie Denker	Shari
Gwen Rittgarn	Steve Whitley	Rick & Janae
Janet Pennington	Chris	Gregg
Kelsey & Stefan	Ruth	Jean Krahmer
Ann Crabtree	Maxine Nash	Eryn Hamke
Cindy	Lawrence Bonacci	Julie Dunn
Lois Schaefer	Paula O'Brien	Kari
Charlotte	Judy Munger	Family of Nancy Glidden
Caregivers Among Us	Care Center Residents	Care Center Staff
All Those Grieving		

## **ALL OUR HOMEBOUND MEMBERS**

Chet Ryan	Donna Fintel
Joan Kahlandt	MaryLou Finn
Dee Christiansen	Annie Hurt
Millie Richards	Donna Hovendick

For all military serving at home and around the world. We include prayers for their families as they hold things together in their absence.



## CONGREGATIONAL ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday  
October 15, 2023  
Following 9:30 a.m.  
Worship Service

On the agenda will be the approval of the 2024 Financial Plan, electing 3 Council members, approving delegates (voting members) to the 2023 Annual Nebraska Synod Assembly, and electing a Nominating Committee for 2024.



## From Laughing with Lutherans

Sam, the sound technician, neglected to activate the lectern microphone at Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Cypress, California, when the Bible school chair went to make an announcement. She drew smiles from the congregation when she called to him, "Turn me on, Cam." Sam is her husband.

When it was announced at church that the purchase of the adjacent laundromat had been completed, my husband leaned over and whispered, "Now cleanliness is next to godliness."



## PERSONAL CARE KITS for LWR

Ingathering of items:  
August 22 thru Oct. 10



The following items are included in each Personal Care Kit:

ONE light-weight bath-size towel (between 20" x 40" and 52" x 27"), dark color recommended

TWO or three bath-size bars of soap equaling 8 to 9 oz., any brand, in original wrapping

ONE adult-size toothbrush in its original packaging

ONE sturdy wide tooth comb, remove packaging

ONE metal nail clippers (attached file optional), remove packaging

Toothbrush multi-packs may be used by sealing an individual toothbrush in a business-size envelope; no plastic bags or wrap

### SOME IMPORTANT GUIDELINES TO REMEMBER

- Be sure to shop for light-or medium-weight towels, which are easier for kit recipients to hand wash and air dry.

Please give new items only.

- Please do not donate items with any religious symbols, messages. Please do not donate any items decorated with a U.S. flag, patriotic or military symbols, or references to the armed forces, including camouflage.

