

Newsletter October 2025

“Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.” (Isaiah 40:1)

Today I’m writing about some changes to my work schedule. As many of you know my husband Dennis died in January. The last few months have been challenging as I have been processing his death. Thus, after prayer and conversations and with the approval of the Council I will be reducing my work schedule beginning in December to three quarters time, taking off one week a month. The plan is to take the first full week of the month off, running Monday through Sunday. (It will not include the first or third Sunday of the month.) My salary will be reduced by 25%. And my vacation time will be reduced from 4 weeks to three and four Sundays to three Sundays per year. I will assist in finding pulpit supply for those Sundays when I am gone.

I thank everyone as you have supported me during these months as I am finding a new balance between my personal and professional life. I know many of you have experienced similar losses and I appreciate the words of encouragement, words of wisdom and listening ears. I believe slowing down a little and stepping back to regroup will ultimately help me to be more productive and focused on the needs of St. Mark during this continued time of transition. If you have any questions about my new schedule, please come and talk to me.

I close with these words from Isaiah, *“Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.”* And what a comfort all of you have been for me. As you have been a source of comfort for me, I know that you bring comfort to others both within the four walls of this place and outside this building. I pray you too will experience God’s comfort. Go in peace proclaiming God’s comforting Good News of eternal life.

God’s Peace. Pr. Janine



Upcoming Worship Schedule and Notes:

9:30am Worship Every Sunday

4:00pm Worship Oct. 5th, Oct. 19th, and Nov. 16th

Reformation Sunday Worship, 9:30am October 26

(A wear red Sunday)

All Saint’s Worship Service, 9:30am Sunday, November 2nd.

Remembering all those who have gone before us, especially those this past year. Decon Jodi Schuman will be presiding/preaching at the one service.

Notes From the Organ Bench by Ross Jallo, Director of Music Ministry

As we approach another Reformation Sunday, it's worth examining the one hymn everyone expects to hear that day, "the battle hymn of the Reformation", our theme song as Lutherans: "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God".

Martin Luther's text for "A Mighty Fortress" (*Ein feste Burg*) is particularly vivid language in the original German, which makes it difficult to translate. (There are over 70 different translations into English alone.) A more literal translation of the first two lines would read, "A secure castle is our God, a good embankment and set of weapons". Not quite the same as our modern poetic version! Luther's imagery draws on both Psalm 46 ("God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble") and Ephesians, chapter 6 (where St Paul talks about putting on "the armor of God"). It might seem a bit crass to say "God is our bomb-proof bunker and our machine gun", but it's not entirely inaccurate: God is our protection, in both a defensive and offensive sense. (Of course, overly-warlike imagery is always a bit problematic in a Christian context. We are called to beat swords into ploughshares, and Jesus reminds us that "blessed are the peacemakers.") The broader point is that, whatever life throws at us, God is our salvation.

As far as scholars can tell, Martin Luther wrote both the text *and* the tune of "A Mighty Fortress". Looking over the past two thousand years, one might observe that most major Christian religious leaders were not especially musical themselves. (They tended to leave this to church musicians, who rarely make history.) But Luther was an exception: not only did he spearhead a religious movement that changed the face of Christianity, he was also an accomplished musician. And he had strong feelings about music:

"A person who does not regard music as a marvelous creation of God must be a clodhopper indeed, and does not deserve to be called a human being. He should be permitted to hear nothing but the braying of asses and the grunting of hogs."

(And that was probably Martin Luther in a good mood! He was not always the most tactful sort of person.)

In its earliest printing, "A Mighty Fortress" was labelled *Ein Trost Psalm* -- a psalm of comfort. It's worth remembering that, as we sing it again this Reformation Sunday. Luther intended his hymn as a statement of how we Christians can take comfort and hope in times of trial and conflict -- not as an expression of some sort of us-versus-them mentality. "The kingdom's ours forever", the last line reads. And, as Luther wrote,

"What is the kingdom of God? Answer: Simply what we learned in the Creed, namely, that God sent his Son, Christ our Lord, into the world to redeem and deliver us from the power of the devil and to bring us to himself and rule as a king of righteousness, life, and salvation."

Financial Report:

General Fund Summary for August

August Weekly Offerings	\$15,469
August Expenses	\$24,246

Income from January-August 2025

Income Received Including Supplemental Resources:	\$192,421
Amount Expected to Maintain Budget:	\$251,451

Annual NAMI Walk: Our yearly opportunity to support the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), partnering with Grace Lutheran in Davenport, will be held on Saturday, October 4, from 9:30 am – 11:30 am, at the Bend XPO Park in East Moline. If you would like to participate, or would like to make a donation to this worthy cause, please go to <https://www.namiwalks.org/teams/77681> This will take you directly to the Grace – St. Mark NAMI site.

Currently Serving as Church Council Members:

Nancy Beaderstadt, President	Diane Fellman	Barb Ericksen
Beth Claeys, Vice President	Linda Ray	Tom Liebold
Robert Sherrod, Secretary	Julie Ginn	Mike Crews
Barb Jakubowski, Treasurer	Candy Nagel	

Foot Clinic:

The bi-monthly foot care clinic will be held on the morning of Monday, October 6th. It is by appointment only. Please contact Nancy Beaderstadt if you are interested in this or future foot clinic dates. There is a \$35 fee and bringing a towel is suggested.

From the Parish Nurse, Beth Claeys:

Greetings from the Parish Nurse

We had a wonderful speaker at Joy Fellowship in Sept and I wanted to share some of the highlights from her presentation for those that were unable to attend.

1 in 4 people will have a stroke in their lifetime. Stroke is the 3rd leading cause of death and the leading cause of serious long-term disability.

There are 2 types of strokes - one is caused by a clot and the other is from bleeding. Patients having stroke symptoms are given a CT scan to determine the cause.

Risk Factors for Stroke -

High blood pressure

High blood cholesterol

Heart disease

Overweight

Being inactive

Diabetes

Smoking and Tobacco use

Prior TIA or Stroke

Below is an acronym (BE FAST) that lists symptoms of stroke

Balance sudden loss of balance or coordination

Eyes sudden change in vision

Face sudden weakness of face

Arm sudden weakness of arm or leg

Speech sudden difficulty speaking

Time time the symptoms started

If you are having any of these symptoms, call 911. If the stroke is caused by a clot, a medication called Tenecteplase can be used but must be given within 3 hours of the onset of symptoms.

Additionally, I wanted to share a reflection one of the Chaplains at MercyOne Genesis shared with me:

Jesus died at 33. The human spine has 33 vertebrae. The same structure that holds us up is the same number of years He held this Earth.

We have 12 ribs on each side. 12 disciples. 12 tribes of Israel. God built His design into our bones. He wrote Heaven into our anatomy.

The vagus nerve runs from your brain to your heart and gut. It calms storms inside the body. It looks just like a cross. That's the power source running through us. Every time your body heals, every time your heart slows in prayer, every time peace shows up when it shouldn't...that's Him.

Jesus rose on the third day. Science tells us that when you fast for 3 days, your body starts regenerating. Old cells die. New ones are born. Healing begins. Your body literally resurrects itself. That's not coincidence. That's design.

And it keeps going.

Your heart has an electrical rhythm. Your brain lights up when you pray. Tears contain different chemicals depending on if you're crying from joy or grief. The blood speaks. The bones store memory. The body worships whether you realize it or not.

We are fearfully and wonderfully made. We are walking prophecy. Walking tabernacles. Dust and divinity in one.

God didn't just create you. He carved Himself into you.

You don't need to look far to find Him. You just need to look inward. He's been in the design since the beginning.

BUNCO:

Friday, October 3rd at 6:30. Please come and bring a snack to share. If you haven't played bunco before, we will teach you.

Prayer Shawl:

We will not be meeting in October but will continue to work on the shawls at home. As always, yarn donations are very much appreciated. Thank you to everyone who is making the shawls. They are much appreciated by the patients that receive them. Any questions, contact Beth Claeys.

JOY Fellowship – October 9th:

Our next gathering time will be Thursday, October 9th at 1:00pm. All are welcome. Our guest speaker will be Tom Fisher-King with a presentation about Habitat for Humanity. This is the organization St. Mark provides volunteer lunches for one Saturday per month. Any Questions, contact Beth Claeys, Volunteer Parish Nurse

Theology on Tap – October 21st:

The next “Theology on Tap” gathering will be on Tuesday, October 21st at 6:00pm. We will meet at The Foundry Food + Tap (5055 Competition Dr., Bettendorf). The book that will be discussed is “Sensible Shoes: A Story about the Spiritual Journey” by Sharon Garlough Brown. All are welcome (regardless of whether you read/complete the book or not). If you plan to attend please utilize the sign-up sheet in the St. Mark lounge (or contact Beth or the church office) in order that appropriate group reservation can be made. Also if any unexpected changes would occur those signed up may be notified. Contact persons for any questions are Beth Claeys or Pr. Janine.

Social Ministry – Quad City Crop Walk October 5th***WALK. GIVE. CHANGE THE WORLD.***

There is still time to register as a walker or donate to support the team or an individual. The 2025 CROP Hunger Walk is Sunday, October 5th. There is a wealth of information regarding walking and/or donating on the information table in the lounge (or online). Please consider being a part of the St. Mark Team fighting hunger in our community in whatever way you can.

The walk will begin in downtown Moline and proceed across the I-74 bridge. Registration begins at 1:00pm, prayers at 2:00pm, and the walk at 2:15pm. There is a growing number of people that are facing food insecurity in our community. or by contacting Gretchen Flynn at (563) 370-8949.

Social Ministry- Habitat for Humanity News:

The next Saturday St. Mark is scheduled to provide lunches to Habitat work crews is Saturday October 25th. Look for menu and signup sheet in the lounge. Thank you for your participation in this social ministry project.

The “Build a Dream” fundraiser at Bally’s Casino on October 17th is fast approaching and seats are limited and filling up fast. It’s a fun evening with great food, music, both live and silent auctions, and fun games all supporting a great cause. If this interests you go to the Habitat Quad Cities website to purchase your tickets!

Social Ministry-St. Mark Food Pantry Report – August 2025:

There were 248 households/families comprised of 724 individuals served by the St. Mark Food Pantry during the month of August. This is another increase from the previous month. The need in our community for this ministry continues to be significant. A total of 6,037 pounds of food was donated and purchased at a discount as follows:

479 pounds donated by St Mark members & friends

995 pounds of rescue food donated by Starbucks/Walmart/KwikStar

420 pounds of breads & pastries by HyVee

90 pounds by Popcorn Charlies

401 pounds by Tapestry Farms

12 pounds by Faith United Methodist

100 pounds by Church of the Nazarene

595 pounds from Midwest Food Bank

2,945 pounds purchased from River Bend Food Bank

Thank you to all who continue to donate food items, monetary gifts, and volunteer their time. All contributions to this ministry are greatly appreciated.

Social Ministry- Thank you -GODS WORK OUR HANDS

Thank you! Thank you! What an amazing outpouring of caring as evidenced by the large amount of donated winter items as a part of the ELCA's "God's work. Our hands."! The donations were delivered to The Humility Homes & Services organization on September 8th to be distributed to those in need within our community when the weather turns cold and blustery. Again, thank you to all who participated in this project.

Preschool Notes:

We've had a fantastic first month of preschool! The children have been busy making new friends, exploring their environment, and settling into classroom routines with curiosity and joy. It's been a pleasure watching them grow and learn each day.

We're still welcoming new children into our preschool community! If you or someone you know is looking for a nurturing, fun, and engaging environment, we'd love to connect.

Be sure to follow our **Facebook page** for updates, photos, and a peek into our daily adventures!

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHTS:

- Merriam-Webster definition of “stew-ard-ship”: noun.
 - 1.) The office duties, and obligations of a steward.
 - 2.) the conducting, supervising, or managing of something

especially: the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one’s care

- Four pillars of stewardship: hospitality, prayer, formation, and service.
- Stewardship applies to various areas, including:

Environmental Stewardship: Protecting and preserving ecosystems and natural resources.

Financial Stewardship: Managing money and resources wisely.

Community Stewardship: Working responsibly to build healthy and sustainable communities.

Personal Stewardship: Using one’s own time, talents, and gifts in a way that is beneficial.

- Proactive Approach: Stewardship implies a proactive engagement with the resource of community one is caring for, rather than a passive approach.

How do you define or describe stewardship in your life? Within St. Mark? Consider giving it some thought.

Iglesia Camino de Emaus (Spanish speaking congregation) meets Sunday afternoons at 4:00pm where they share space in the St. Mark building. Pastor Pilar may be reached by e-mail at pastor@caminodeemaus.org for further information.

St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church

2363 West Third Street, Davenport, IA 52802

Phone: 563-322-5318

E-mail: stmark@stmarkcares.org or sgeise@stmarkcares.org

Office Hours: Tuesday & Wednesday 9:30am to 2:30pm and Thursday 9:30am to 1:30pm.
(Monday by appointment only. Closed Fridays.)

Food Pantry Hours: Tuesday & Wednesday 10:00am to 2:00pm
(Serving Iowa residents only)

(St. Mark is a member of the Southeastern Iowa Synod - ELCA)

TRUNK or TREAT:

Sign-up in the church lounge to host a trunk to distribute treats or to assist with the hot dog lunch. There is also a basket for candy donations. Invite any ghouls and goblins you know to attend. Any questions should be directed to Amber Sherrod.



Bring your ghouls and goblins on Saturday October 18th from 1-3pm for St. Mark's Annual Trunk or Treat event! This will be held in our East parking lot next to the gym. We will have a many decorated trunks as well as a hot dog lunch. If it rains, join us in the gym! This event is free and all are welcome!

Thank You For Your Commitment!

It is time to start planning for 2026. Please consider your commitment to the future of St. Mark.

You may use this pledge form to express your financial support for 2026. Printed forms are available in the lounge and church office if needed. Also, consider your support by giving your time and talents. Your completed form can be returned to the church office.

Giving Pledge to St. Mark for 2026



Name(s) (print please: _____)

Telephone _____ (cell or landline ?)

Email _____

Address _____

My/Our estimate of giving to St. Mark for 2025 is:

\$ _____ ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ As follows: _____

My/Our planned giving of Time/Talents is:

Envelopes will be sent to you throughout the year unless the office is otherwise notified.
We are unable to make an estimate of giving for 2026...for the following reason (optional)
