

Pulpit Supply for September: Thankful and excited to have Pr. Maddy Tayler proving pulpit supply to St. Mark for the month of September! Pastor Maddy will be leading, preaching and officiating for communion at all of our scheduled worship services during the month of September – both the 5:00pm on the 1st and 3rd Saturday evenings and 9:30am every Sunday morning. If any need for funerals should arise Pr. Maddy will provide those services as well. The assistance from the Southeastern Iowa Synod in bringing Pastor Maddy to St. Mark is appreciated. Looking forward to welcoming her to worship at St. Mark!

Witness In Faith -

So, this St. Mark logo...welcome, worship, witness, and Christ based caring at the center of it all. Visually it indicates St. Mark is focused on “God’s Work. Our Hands.” throughout the year, not just one day in September. This logo is intended to make a statement as to who the St Mark congregation and community is, but equally important in my opinion, it helps to remind us who we strive to be as we move forward – individually and corporately.



Do we ask ourselves if we witness the faith we profess – as individuals? As a Christian community? Witnessing can take the form of words and/or actions. It can be **worshipping**, praying, sharing our faith in conversation with others, **caring** by extending kindness or assistance, inviting people, sending notes, making calls, opening doors and **welcoming** people who enter our building. The list can be nearly exhaustive if one really delves into the options. How do we **witness** to and care for our food pantry clients, the Road to Recovery folks, the youth basketball participants, our own members who are hurting or struggling, and guests in worship or attending events?

Nearly every Tuesday and Wednesday morning when I walk up the sidewalk to the church doors from the East parking lot, I am challenged by what impression of St. Mark I give to those waiting in line for the food pantry to open. These individuals don't know that I am

glad they are here and hope only good things for them if my typical morning kind of grumpy, mostly still asleep, glazed over self is all that they encounter as I walk by them, seemingly blindly, to unlock the door and enter the building leaving them behind. Sadly, on too many mornings, the clients waiting out in the weather hoping the pantry has items they need, are the ones who have been more welcoming to me than I to them. *They are witnessing to me!* Realizing this brought me up short and I have been challenging myself to improve at living out the St. Mark logo entering in to work. This is only one example of my personal need to improve at **welcome, witness, worship and caring**.

What do we do well? How can we do better? As individuals and as a congregation, are we living up to who we say we are? To whom God calls us to be in caring for and witnessing to people? So, this St. Mark logo...what do you think when you see it?

From the keyboard, Sue Geise

(In October Linda Wescom will be sharing a chapter from her faith journey. Looking forward to others sharing stories or thoughts regarding *Witness in Faith* in future also.)

St. Mark Cares:

If you are experiencing a need for spiritual care, have prayer requests, a hospitalization, receiving hospice care, or experienced a death in your family, please notify Beth Claeys, Lay Minister (563-940-0899). For non-emergency matters you may also call the church office at 563-322-5318 which is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays when messages will be checked. You may also e-mail Sue Geise, sgeise@stmarkcares.org which will be monitored on days the office is open. There are also parish visitors available for home visits and/or communion as needed. Thank you to all of you who are ministering to each other with cards, calls, prayers, and visits.



Sunday, September 13th - Jazz Worship Service at 9:30am with special prelude music starting at 9:15am. St. Mark will be hosting the talented Edgar Crockett Quartet. Plan to attend. Consider inviting others. It will be a joyous and praise filled service at St. Mark!

Volunteers for Worship:

If you have any questions or are interested in filling any volunteer schedule vacancies, these are the coordinators for the various areas: Lector & Assisting Minister for 9:30am services – Nancy Beaderstadt; Altar Guild-Barb Erickson; 9:30am Ushers-Julie Ginn; 5:00pm Lector Saturday services – Beth Claeys.

Prayer Shawl Ministry-Sept 12th:

Prayer shawls are available on the quilt rack in the Narthex. If you know of someone who would like one, please take one for them.

Prayer Shawl group will meet Sat Sept 12th at 10:00 in the lounge. All are welcome! Thank you to all who are active in this ministry and also those who support it in any way.

Bunco – Friday, September 11th:

Bunco will meet Friday, September 11th 31st at 6:30 in the St. Mark lounge. For those who are unsure how to play, we will be glad to teach you. Everyone is welcome. Please bring a snack to share. If any questions, the contact person is now Diane Fellman.

Theology on Tap (a.k.a. Book Group):

Theology on Tap will meet Tuesday, September 15th at 5:30 at Granite City. The earlier time allows us to be able to order happy hour appetizer specials. Daily menu specials are available as well. We will be discussing the book “Accidental Saints” by Nadia Boltz-Weber. Please use the lounge sign-up sheet, or contact the office, so that reservations can be arranged for size of the group. Contact person: Beth Claeys.

Social Ministry - Habitat News:

September 12th is our scheduled day to provide a simple lunch for construction volunteers for Habitat for Humanity. The sign-up sheet is in the lounge. Contact person: Maureen Currier

Social Ministry Committee-God's Work. Our Hands:

Thank you to those that have brought in items for The Third Place QC. We will continue to take collections through September 20. They are especially in need of men's clothing. With cold weather coming, they need men's coats, gloves and boots. If you would like to help sort and transport donations on Wednesday, September 23 from 1-3 please let Gretchen Flynn know.

The ELCA annual service day/project selected by the Social Ministry Committee is collecting needed items for *The Third Place QC* in Rock Island. It is a day shelter for people experiencing homelessness. They serve on average 100+ people every day. Approximately 80% of those are men.

From Bishop Curry on God's Work. Our Hands:

"Through our acts of service, we bear witness to the love and concern God's people have for one another. Our congregations do this every day, accompanying their neighbors and addressing community needs. We are connected through this shared work. These ministries belong to all of us in the ELCA."

~ The Rev. Yehiel Curry, Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Church in America

Social Ministry – Food Pantry Report:

During July, the total number of households served was 238. Those households were comprised of a total of 824 individuals that were served.

Donations and rescue food in July were provided by:

- Asbury Farms
- Starbucks, Wal-Mart, Kwik Star (Rescued Food)
- Midwest Food Bank
- Popcorn Charlies
- Zion Lutheran
- HyVee bread & baked goods

Thank you for support of the St. Mark Food Pantry. God's Work. Our Hands. All year long.

Greetings From Beth Claeys, Lay Minister:

As the leaves begin to change and the air becomes cooler, fall reminds us that every season has a purpose. Nature gives us a beautiful picture of change - leaves fall, the landscape is renewed, and we are reminded that God is always at work.

Fall can also be a wonderful season for us to pause and reflect on our faith. In the busyness of everyday life, it is easy to become focused on what is next. But God invites us to slow down, give thanks, and notice His blessings.

Romans 5 reminds us that because of Jesus Christ, we have peace with God, access to his grace, and hope. Even when life brings difficult seasons, we can trust that God is using them to build perseverance, character, and hope within us.

As we enter this new season, may we remember that God is faithful in every season of life. Whether we are experiencing a season of joy, uncertainty, change, or challenge, His grace is sufficient and His love never changes.

JOY Fellowship Thursday, Sept 10th at 1:00pm: Our speaker will be Tara Erpelding, Director of Oncology Services for MercyOne Genesis. Tara will talk about the rising cancer rates in Iowa and give updates on new treatments and diagnostic procedures. Everyone is welcome!

St. Mark Financial Report:

General Fund Summary for July:

Weekly Offerings \$14,269

Expenses \$26,671

Income through July 2026:

Income Received Including Supplemental Resources \$188,349

Amount Needed to Maintain Budget \$234,337

Total Expenses Through July 2026 \$198,639

From the Organ Bench, by Ross Jallo, Minister of Music:

Despite all our labor-saving devices, it seems we are busier than ever before. The number of hours in the week remains the same, and yet it always seems we have less time to do the things we want to do. I have some thoughts on why this might be -- but I'll spare you my economic message.

In any case, our busy lives can sometimes make church feel like one more thing to do in an already hectic schedule. When we have so little time off, church can feel like a burden. But I encourage you to think about it differently: attending church is not an obligation to be met, where we are forced to stand and sit, listen, sing, and recite for 50-60 minutes. It is an opportunity to escape the hustle and bustle of the rest of our lives. The rhythms of the church service -- so unlike the rhythms of work, school, running errands, doing housework -- are actually an opportunity to relax. In observing the Sabbath -- a day set aside to rest from labor and to offer thanks to God -- we not only observe the third commandment: we also recharge our batteries. The text of hymn #521 in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* sums it up pretty well:

O day of rest and gladness,
O day of joy and light,
O balm for care and sadness,
most beautiful, most bright!

This is all to say: if you see church as work, you're approaching it wrong. It's a whole hour - - maybe the only hour of your busy week -- in which you can set aside the cares that weigh you down. It's not part of a hectic schedule; it's an escape from that schedule. For me, changing my approach to church has made it a much more fulfilling experience. Rather than approaching church as one more thing on your To Do List, approach it as something that gives you strength to do all the other things.

Thank You: Our heartfelt thanks to the church for graciously allowing us to use Luther Hall for Sandra's memorial luncheon. We are so grateful for the volunteers who gave their time to care for our family and guests. Thank you.

~Al Engholm and family

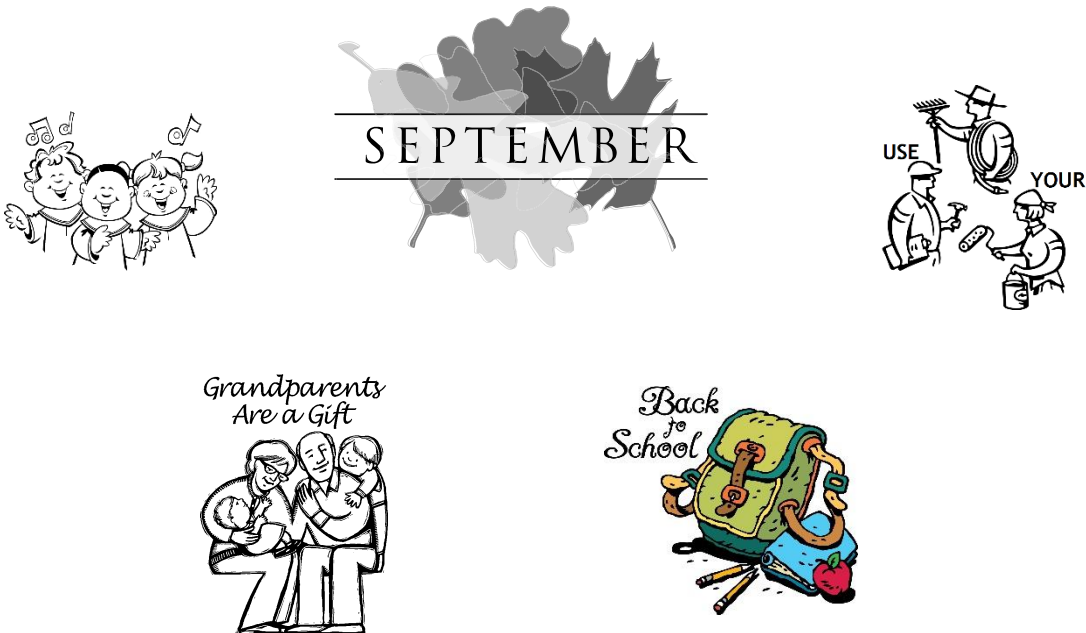
Looking Ahead - October LIFE:

All information for the October issue of the LIFE newsletter is preferred to be submitted to the office by end of day Monday, September 21st, but I will accept items up until September 23rd to be included. (Calendar dates fall a bit different this month.) Please direct any questions to Sue Geise, Admin. Assistant.

“Witness in Faith” submissions to be included in one of the upcoming fall issues of LIFE newsletter may be given to Sue Geise in the office in any format you choose: email, handwritten, dictated over the phone or in person. Sue will gladly type it up for you. It may be brief or detailed. Anonymous or signed. Sharing our stories with each other is a way to witness our Christian faith as well help build community. We hope you will accept this invitation extended last month to share one of your stories or some of your thoughts.

Foot Clinic – October 5th:

The next foot clinic is the morning of Monday, October 5th - by appointment only. If you are interested, please contact Nancy Beaderstadt. The cost is \$35. Suggest bringing a towel.



Preschool and Kids Crossing Update:

August 12, 2026

Dear Church Family,

For decades, our church has been filled with the joyful sound of young children laughing, singing, and learning about God's love. Our Preschool Ministry has served as a cornerstone of our outreach, a vibrant place where young minds were nurtured, early friendships were formed, and generations of families were welcomed into our church community with open arms.

It is with heavy yet faithful hearts that we write to share a deeply significant update regarding this beloved ministry. Following extensive prayer, careful reflection, and exhaustive financial and operational reviews, the St. Mark Preschool Board has made the very painful decision to bring our preschool ministry to a close at the beginning of this upcoming program period.

"To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven." — Ecclesiastes 3:1
While seasons change, the impact of the love, faith, and foundation built here over many years will endure for a lifetime.

Understanding the Context of Our Decision

We know you may wonder how we arrived at this difficult crossroads. Over the past several years, our preschool has experienced a steady and persistent decline in enrollment. Despite the remarkable dedication and creative efforts of our director, teachers, and staff, lower student numbers have steadily depleted our financial reserves, placing a growing strain on our broader resources.

This trend has been further accelerated by positive expanding changes within our local community. In recent years, our local school district has significantly increased its public preschool slots and tuition-free early childhood programs. While we rejoice that quality early education is now more accessible to families in our neighborhood, this shift has directly reduced the pool of families seeking private, tuition-based church preschool programs.

Though we explored every possible option; restructuring schedules, adjusting rates, and re-evaluating operational models, we have reached a point where continuing the program is no longer financially sustainable or fiscally responsible for our program or the church's contribution to the program.

While this closure brings a deep sense of grief, we are committed to navigating this closure with the utmost care, transparency, and honor for everyone involved. Our priority is to steward this transition in a way that reflects the love of Christ. We are committed to Honor Our Dedicated Staff: Our teachers and staff have poured their hearts into this ministry, Supporting Current Families we are providing ample notice and personalized assistance to ensure all our current families can transition smoothly, and lastly Celebrating Our Legacy.

Looking Ahead with Faith and Gratitude

A closure of a ministry is a sorrowful milestone, but it does not diminish the immense good that has been accomplished. Every prayer prayed over a child, every story read, every song sung, and every seed of faith planted remains alive in the hearts of the hundreds of children and families who walked through our doors.

We ask that you join us in holding our preschool staff, directors, students, and families in your prayers during this delicate time. Let us walk alongside one another with compassion, patience, and gratitude for all that God has done through this ministry.

If you have questions, memories you would like to share, or simply wish to send a kind word, our board members, and director remain fully available to you in the coming weeks.

In Christ's abiding peace and grace, The St. Mark Preschool Board and Director

August Social Ministry - Caring for Our Preschool Update:

In light of the pre-school closing, the paper towels and other general items that have already been donated and collected in the office will be used to restock the supplies for St. Mark used in the lounge, office, Luther Hall, etc. Thank you for all the items collected. They will be put to good use in our church. Please contact Barb Jakubowski or Sue Geise with any questions.

Council Corner: The following was discussed at the August 20, 2026 meeting.

The treasurer's report showed that our July expenditures exceeded our income by approximately \$12,000. This is a trend that will affect our 2027 budget as our Finance Committee addresses this in the coming months.

JOY Fellowship will be held September 10th in the lounge. The guest speaker will be the Director of Oncology Services at MercyOne Genesis. The session will address the rising number of cancer cases in Iowa and the current diagnostics and treatments.

Two requests, which the Endowment Committee put forth for Council review, were approved. Social Ministry requested \$1,000 from the outreach funds to purchase items for hygiene packets for The 3rd Place community outreach center. \$700 was requested from our youth funds to update and refresh the Pray Ground area in the sanctuary.

Mike continues to work with Northwest Flooring to address some tiles that have buckled and need to be re-glued. We have a 1-year guarantee on the flooring.

Linda Ray reported that, due to the closing of the meat processing plant in Joslin, there has been an increase of clients to our food pantry.

Council discussed the letter from our Preschool, addressing the closure of the program. The plan is to sell or dispose of items in the preschool after an inventory is completed. A floor plan of the area will be put together, as we look into other possible uses for the space. There will be further discussion at our upcoming meetings.

In September, we welcome Pr. Maddy Tyler as our pulpit supply for the month. Pr. Maddy will also lead worship at the Saturday evening 5pm services on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month.

Kathy and Linda C. continue to work on the St. Mark website. They and the Augustana Web Guild are working diligently to make our site more interesting, accessible, and informative.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, September 17th at 6:30 pm in the conference room. Any member of St. Mark is always welcome to attend the council meetings as a guest.

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.
(Closed Mondays and Fridays.)

Food Pantry Hours: Tuesday & Wednesday 10:00am to 12:45pm
(Serving Iowa residents only)

St. Mark is a member of the Southeastern Iowa Synod – ELCA



Southeastern Iowa Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



God's work. Our hands.



Join us for a day of service!

Our congregation will soon engage in service work right here in our community. We are one of over 8,300 congregations participating in "God's work. Our hands." day of service. Across the country, thousands of members will work to make a positive change in our communities, build and deepen relationships and share God's love. Join us as we do God's work with our hands! Contact us for more information:

St Mark Ev. Lutheran Church, Davenport, IA is
supporting "The Third Place" a day shelter for those experiencing housing
insecurity in the QC with a collection of needed hygiene and men's warm clothing,
especially coats, gloves, and boots. Donations will be accepted at the church
thru Sept. 20th. (Delivery will be done Wed. 9/23 - inquire if available to help.)
Will celebrate at worship on Sept. 13th. Contact person: Gretchen Flynn

