Life

A Publication of St Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church

November 2026
Monthly Newsletter

All Saints Sunday - November 1st

Worship will be at 9:30am in the sanctuary. Those members of St. Mark who have died since All Saint Sunday last year will be remembered and honored with a candle lit and bell rung as their name is read during the worship service. We hope their family members will join us in worship. Those past St. Mark members being honored include:

Sandra Engholm ◆ David Green ◆ Sally Mechum ◆ Bill Mosher
Beverly Rohm ◆ Ron Smeltzer ◆ Claudette Wiedener ◆ Herb Willer

God, we thank you for giving these loved ones to us to know and to love as companions in our pilgrimage on earth. In your boundless compassion, console us who mourn. Give us your aid, so that we may see in death the gate to eternal life. May we continue our course on earth in confidence until, by your call, we are reunited with those who have gone before us.

Everyone is welcome to bring photos or mementos of anyone important to you that you will be remembering and/or wish to honor and place them in the windowsills around the sanctuary during worship. (Please remember to take them home with you again following the service.) There will also be an opportunity for those attending to light a candle to remember those who have gone before us. Beth Claeys, Lay Minister will be leading us in worship. Lisa Crews, flute, will be providing special music and Marcia Renaud will be our guest accompanist.

November Worship Schedule:

- All Saints Sunday, 9:30am, November 1st – Beth Claeys, Lay Minister
- 5:00pm Saturday, November 7th Worship with Communion- Pr. Randy Willers
- 9:30am Sunday, November 8th Worship with Communion- Pr. Randy Willers
- 9:30am Sunday, November 15th Worship -Beth Claeys, Lay Minister
- 5:00pm Saturday, November 21st Worship - Beth Claeys, Lay Minister.
- 9:30am, November 22nd Worship with Communion – Pr. Randy Willers
  Christ the King Sunday and Thanksgiving
- 1st Sunday of Advent, 9:30am, November 29th – Beth Claeys, Lay Minister.

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

As you may remember, our liturgical year begins not on January 1st, but rather on the First Sunday of Advent (which is the first of four Sundays leading up to Christmas -- it falls on November 29th this year). But thematically speaking, the end of one liturgical year segues right into the beginning of the next: these last few Sundays of the church year are all about preparing for the coming of Christ. On November 8th we will read the parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids: some are prepared for the arrival of the bridegroom, and some are not. On November 15th we hear the parable of the master who entrusts his servants with money while he is away: when he returns, he expects them to have invested his treasures wisely. And on Christ the King Sunday (November 22nd), the final Sunday of the liturgical year, we learn how God will return and judge us based on how we treated the hungry, the sick, the strangers, and the poor among us.

Put simply, the message of these three Gospel readings is "be prepared" (a lesson that will be further emphasized in Advent). In all three we are told to take this seriously: there are consequences for wasting our time and gifts when we should have been using them wisely, preparing for the day when we meet Christ face to face. Unfortunately, that sense of seriousness can sometimes make the Christian life feel like nothing more than a normal life with a few extra things on our list of chores: wash the dishes, do the laundry, go to church, feed the hungry. But it's worth remembering that we should do our Christian duty with a sense of *joy*. We're not just waiting: we're waiting for the wedding feast, the great celebration when God returns to make all things new. "Soul, adorn yourself with gladness", we'll sing on November 8th. (The original German is more vivid: *Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele* could be colloquially translated "Put on your jewelry, beloved soul".) "Hasten, as a bride, to meet him; eagerly and gladly greet him." I attended my sister's wedding this past spring, and I can attest that a bride will indeed run down the aisle, if she's excited enough. We should summon that same sort of joyful exuberance as we work to prepare for Christ.

Thanksgiving: This year, it was decided by council not to have a separate evening Thanksgiving service. We will be incorporating Thanksgiving into our morning service on Sunday, November 22nd.

November 22nd – Christmas Decorating:

All are invited to assist in the beginning of decorating of the sanctuary for the Christmas season following the Sunday worship service on November 22nd which is the final Sunday of the church year (and when we will also recognize Thanksgiving). The parament will be changed from white for Christ the King to blue for Advent. The following week on Sunday, November 29th Advent begins when the first candle of the advent wreath will be lit.

Sponsorship of Christmas Poinsettias/Floral Decorations for the sanctuary will be available again this year. You may sponsor a plant in honor, memory, or thanksgiving of an individual or couple for $15.00. The sponsorship information and payment must be received in the church office by December 14th.

December 24th Christmas Eve Worship Schedule:

- 5:00pm Worship Service with Communion – Pastor Daniel Witkowski, preaching and presiding. Thank you, Pr. Dan (son of this St. Mark congregation), for your gift of being with us to proclaim the Word and Sacrament as we celebrate the birth of our Lord.
- 9:00pm Candlelight Service of Word and Music coordinated by Beth Claeys, Lay Minister and Ross Jallo, Minister of Music. There will not be communion.

Extending Our Sympathy:

- Max Bunge and his family with the death of his brother Craig. Please keep Max and his family in prayer.

Prayer Shawl Ministry:

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. If you are interested in creating prayer shawls by knitting or crocheting – either individually or with others, please contact Beth Claeys.

Bunco:

Bunco will meet Friday, November 13th at 6:30 in the St. Mark lounge. Everyone is welcome and we will teach you how to play if you do not know. Free will offering appreciated. Please bring a snack to share. If any questions, the contact person is Diane Fellman.

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

Theology on Tap will meet Tuesday, November 17th at 5:30 at Granite City. We will be discussing the novel "Whistler" by Ann Patchett. 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 for Humanity:

November's date for providing lunch for construction volunteers is Saturday November 21st. Watch for the signup sheet in the lounge. Some of the job site work is weather dependent so there can be changes which are typically communicated by text message to those signed-up. All who participate in this flexible ministry are greatly appreciated! Follow the amazing work by Contact person: Maureen Currier

Hygiene for the Holidays:

The Social Committee, with support from Thrivent, is sponsoring the 2nd Annual Hygiene for the Holidays initiative collaboration with the Food Pantry. Donations of hygiene items, including shampoo, conditioner, body wash, soap, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, and feminine hygiene products will be accepted during November, and distributed to families in need through the Food Pantry in December. Donations may be brought to church on Sundays in November, or to the church office during open office hours. Thank you for considering this need in your giving! Contact Kathy Sparbel with any questions.

JOY Fellowship:

Thursday, November 12th at 1:00pm, J.O.Y. Fellowship will gather in the lounge. The program speaker will be Mikael Gibson, Executive Director of Dress for Success. Everyone is welcome! Contact person: Beth Claeys

Greetings From Beth Claeys, Lay Minister:

November: A Season of Gratitude and Hope

As November arrives, we begin to notice the changing season. The leaves have fallen, the days are shorter, and the air reminds us that winter is approaching. Yet November also brings a wonderful opportunity to pause, reflect, and give thanks for the many blessings God has placed in our lives.

Sometimes, we think gratitude comes naturally when everything is going well. But we can find reasons to be thankful even in difficult seasons. We can give thanks for a friend who listens, a family member who cares, a church family that supports us, or a quiet moment when we feel God's presence. Not every day is easy, but every day offers an opportunity to recognize God's faithfulness.

The apostle Paul reminds us in 1 Thessalonians 5:18, "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.: Paul does not tell us to be thankful for every hardship we face but he encourages us to remain thankful even in the midst of life's challenges, trusting that God is with us through it all.

November also invites us to remember the people who have shaped our lives. As we celebrate All Saints Day, we give thanks for loved ones, friends, teachers, and faithful members of our church who have shared God's love with us. Their words, kindness, prayers, and examples continue to influence who we are. Although we miss those who are no longer with us, we can find comfort in the promise that we belong to God and His love reaches beyond this life.

As Thanksgiving approaches, may we look beyond our busy schedules and familiar routines to see the blessings that surround us. Maybe we can offer a word of encouragement, make a phone call to someone who may be lonely, or simply tell someone how much they mean to us. Gratitude becomes more meaningful when we share it with others.

My prayer for us this November is that we will have eyes to see God's blessings, hearts that remember His faithfulness, and hands willing to share His love. May we enter this season with grateful hearts, remembering that even when circumstances change, God's love remains constant.

Social Ministry – Food Pantry Report:

During September, the total number of households served was 259. Those households were comprised of a total of 812 individuals that were served. This is an increase of 72 households and 211 individuals served from August to September.

Donations and rescue food in September were provided by:

- St. Mark members and friends
- Asbury Farms
- Wal-Mart, Kwik Star, HyVee (Rescued Food)
- Midwest Food Bank
- Zion Lutheran
- Popcorn Charlie's
- Living Hope Church

River Bend Food Bank: 4,122 pounds of food were obtained at the low cost of $1,245.89

Thank you to the volunteers and for all of the support of the St. Mark Food Pantry.

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. If you are interested in a parish visitor and/or home communion, please contact Maureen Currier, Beth Claeys, or the church office. Thank you to all of you who are ministering to each other with cards, calls, prayers, and visits.

St. Mark Financial Report:

General Fund Summary for September

Weekly Offerings	$14,843
Expenses	$26,755

Income through September 2026

Income Received Including Supplemental Resources	$226,080
Amount Needed to Maintain Budget	$301,290

Total Expenses Through September 2026 $251,158

2027 Pledge Forms: Are now available. Please consider completing a pledge for as you consider your giving for 2027. Currently work has begun on the 2027 budget for St. Mark. Pledge information is a vital part of the budget planning. There is a form included elsewhere in this issue of LIFE or you may pick one up in the lounge or office. If you want one mailed to you please call Sue the office.

Looking Ahead – December LIFE:

All information for the December issue of the LIFE newsletter is to be submitted to the office by end of Monday, November 23. Please direct any questions to Sue Geise, Admin. Assistant in the church office. (email: sgeise@stmarkcares.org)

"Witness in Faith" submissions to be included in one of the upcoming issues of LIFE newsletter may be given to Nancy Beaderstadt or Sue Geise 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 – December 7th:

The next foot clinic is the morning of Monday, December 7th - by appointment only. If you are interested, please contact Nancy Beaderstadt. The cost is $35. Suggest bringing a towel.

Keys & Doors: Any one with exterior/interior keys to the church that you do not use routinely, please return them for security reasons. And if keys are used, please take extra time to be sure all interior and exterior doors are locked before leaving and all lights are turned off. Church is being left unlocked too often. Thank you. (Door lock does not always catch when it closes, please check it.) Any questions, please contact the office.

Front Doors to the Sanctuary:

At this time, please do not use the main sanctuary doors due to a structural issue. Please use the lounge or alley entrances for access to the sanctuary for worship services. Thank you, Property Committee

Thank You Received:

Davenport, Oct 15, 2026

Dear brothers and sisters of the St. Mark Lutheran Church,

I thank you with all my heart for your hospitality and support for the Camino de Emaus church and for me personally.

I will continue walking through the Quad Cities brining the good news of the gospel to the community.

May God bless you generously. Your brother and friend in Jesus Christ. Pastor Pilar 😊

Message from the Stewardship Committee:

'Thy Will be done".....familiar words to us all. We speak them often; some of us daily. But what do those words mean to us in our lives? What is God's Will for us? Is it attending church regularly? Showing others what a "good Christian" looks like? God tells us that we are His hands and feet and He has provided us with the time, talents, and treasures to do His work. But His Will is for us to use ALL He has given us in every way needed. If God's church struggles to pay its bills, if no one signs up for Bible Study, if a visitor doesn't feel welcomed, that's on all of us. Each of us has been given God's grace in so many ways. The next time you speak "Thy Will be done", truly listen to what God calls you to do.
In Christ's Service – Your Stewardship Committee P.S. If you did not have an opportunity in October to receive a copy of the red booklet titled "Why Support Your Church?" there are additional copies available in the lounge. Please feel free to pick one up.

Council Corner – The following was discussed at the October 15, 2026 meeting:

Our current finances are still a concern. In September, our tithing was at $14,000, approximately $5.000 short of the budgeted expectancy. Overall expenditures were $26,000+.

Sue will be out of the office from Tuesday, November 3rd until Saturday, November 14th. Office hours will be covered by several volunteers during Sue's absence.

Letter to families of members who have passed over the last year will be sent out, inviting them to the November 1st All Saints service. The congregation is invited to bring photos or mementos of any loved ones as well. Also, the renewal of membership for Bethanee Zuber was approved by the council.

JOY Fellowship will be held November 12th at 1:00pm in the lounge. Guest speaker Michael Gibson, the Executive Director of Dress for Success, will discuss the program and provide information on how the community can become involved.

Beth reported that our Saturday service attendance is growing and that the service will be moved back into the sanctuary in November. Also, Pr. Randy Willers will preach and provide communion at the November 7th service. Beth and Pam Carstens continue to provide worship at Addington Place in Muscatine. They will also be providing a monthly worship service at Senior Star in November. Please keep Beth and Pam in your prayers as they provide this valuable outreach to our community,

Barb reported that St. Mark earned a bonus of $4,500 from our investment to Birdies for Charity. This amount reflects the 8.85% interest we received on our initial investment to the program. This money will go into the General Fund.

Council approved a monthly stipend to Rob Sherrod for his work each week as our congregational videographer and his work with our sound systems. Rob dedicates his time each week to ensure that our services are available for viewing through YouTube. Rob has also provided services for several funerals and weddings.

Our sanctuary doors continue to be problematic. Mike is working with two contractors to find a resolution. Access through those doors will be limited until a fix is found.

Kathy reported that our updated website will be ready to "go live" by the beginning of November. The Augustana Web Guild is putting the finishing touches on the site.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, November 19th at 6:30 pm in the conference room. Any member of St. Mark is always welcome to attend the council meetings as a guest.

From the Office – Adjusted Office Hours: Sue will be off:

Please be aware that during the first two weeks of November, the office will be open during the same hours as the Food Pantry on Tuesdays and Wednesdays with volunteers in the office. The mail and phone messages will be checked at various times during the week as well. If you have a time sensitive office matter, please contact Barb Jakubowski or if you have questions about worship services, materials, or announcements please contact Beth Claeys. Any inquiries regarding the rental of the lounge or Luther Hall should be directed to Nancy Beaderstadt. E-mails regarding worship materials and on-line links will be sent out in advance. Sue will return from her time off to the more typical office schedule and check the e-mail on Tuesday, November 17th.

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.

Fall Blessings from Luther Properties and your Luther Properties Board members!

A Harvest Gathering event has been planned for our Luther Properties residents, hosted by Grace Lutheran and the board. The events will take place Thursday, November 12th, Friday, November 13th, and Tuesday November 17th at Luther Crest, Luther Towers, and Luther Manor respectively. Attendees will enjoy refreshments, treats, door prizes, and special music. The gatherings begin at 1:00 pm and will last about an hour.

And our Luther Properties partner churches are invited to attend as well! Many of our churches have, or have had, members who have resided at one of the Luther Properties. We encourage church members to attend events such as this to show church support and, more importantly, to see first-hand the wonderful facilities where those in need can find safe and affordable housing in a caring environment.

Pertinent Information:

Luther Crest - 5454 N. Gaines St, Davenport (Tuesday, Nov. 17 @ 1:00pm)

Luther Towers - 1810 East 38th St. Davenport (Friday, Nov. 13 @ 1:00pm)

Luther Manor - 3118 Davil's Glen Road, Bettendorf (Thursday, Nov. 12 @ 1:00pm)

Corporate Board Members:

Nancy Beaderstadt - St. Mark Davenport

Jay Eldredge - Zion Davenport

Virginia Helble - Zion Princeton

Kevin Krebs, Kim Wilkins - Faith Eldridge

Vicki Liebbe - Grace Davenport

Henry Marquard - Trinity Pleasant Valley

Shari & Craig Schledewitz - St. Matthew

Anthony Souhrada - Redeemer Bettendorf

Ron Whan - St. Paul Davenport

Attached is a Harvest Gathering flyer with details of this upcoming event. Please print and post a copy or two, or perhaps add this information to your weekly bulletin inviting members to participate if they are able. Questions can also be directed to your church's Corporate Board representative. Support from our member churches is important as we share the blessings that we have been given with others.

Thank you for your consideration -

Nancy Beaderstadt, Secretary, Luther Properties Corporate Board

(Note: Flyer referenced is not attached here in Life due to space limitations, but it is posted on the community bulletin board near lounge entrance.)

Thank You For Your Commitment!

It is time to start planning for 2027. Please consider your commitment to the future of St. Mark.

You may use this pledge form to express your financial support for 2027. Additional printed forms are available in the lounge and church office if needed. Also, consider your support by giving of your time and talents. Your completed form can be returned to the church office or the secured office mail box.

Giving Pledge to St. Mark for 2027

Name(s) print please: _____

Telephone: _____ (cell or landline?)

Email: _____

Mailing Address: _____

My/Our estimate of giving to St. Mark for 2027 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. Online tithing is available by setting up a vanco account and then searching for St. Mark Lutheran Church Davenport.

We are unable to make and estimate of giving for 2027....for the following reason (optional):

_____