

*"I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."  
-Isaiah 43:18-19*

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Updates on what is happening at St Mark
- St Mark Annual Meeting details
- Prayer list
- Birthdays
- Upcoming events
- Update on worship
- Friends with Food update
- Parish Planning Council



## ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

Ash Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, marks the beginning of the season of Lent, the forty days before Easter. One of the practices of the Church on Ash Wednesday is the imposition of ashes upon the forehead of those who wish to receive them as a visible mark of their desire to enter into the season with a heart open to being changed by God's Spirit

Worship will begin at 6:30 PM and streamed live on Facebook and YouTube, with a limited number of "in-person" worshippers in attendance. Reservations to attend this service may be made by contacting Jane Hartwell by email or phone. Masks must be worn and appropriate social-distancing will be expected of everyone in attendance.

Pastor Dave will be available to impose ashes on foreheads and hands beginning at 9:00AM on Wednesday and then immediately following the service until @7:30 PM.

## WORSHIP AT ST MARK

Worship is offered on Sunday Mornings at 9:00. Because of the pandemic, a limited number of persons may reserve a seat to attend services at this time. Reservations may be made by contacting Jane Hartwell at 712-732-5255 or by [email](#). Services are streamed via the St Mark Face-book page and St Mark YouTube channel.

Proclaim Radio Broadcasts via KAYL FM101.7 on Sunday mornings at 7:30 AM.

## A NOTE FROM PASTOR DAVE

*“Do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.” -Isaiah 43:18-19*

Early in the pandemic this passage was lifted up to me as inspiration for persons who are leading through this season of Coronavirus. One of the many lessons I have learned is that there many decisions need to be made frequently to keep things moving forward. But, when we insist on *“doing things the way we have always done them”* we can become so focused on doing what has been done before, that we may miss the “new things” that God is doing, or about to do.

This may sound a bit strange to some, but this is an exciting and fulfilling time to be the Church. We have been given the gift of trying new things out of necessity. Some will work well, and others may not, but that is okay, because when God is doing a new thing, sometimes it takes a few tries on our parts to get things figured out.

I want to lift up two new things that we will be doing. The first involves changes to **“in-person” activities** at St Mark and the second is to introduce Lent to you. For the past few weeks, the number of positive cases for coronavirus has lowered greatly from where we were even just a few weeks ago. This does not mean that it may not go up again, but at least for the time being we are able to shift to Phase 2 of *“Return to “in-person” activities”* at St Mark. The detailed description is on the next page of this newsletter. We will all need to work together in order for us to safely increase in-person activities. All persons are expected to wear masks and to maintain at least 6’ between yourself and other households when in the building. By doing so we can help reduce the chances of spreading coronavirus from one person to another. This also means that we will be having a limited number of persons in worship services. Each service will have an identified maximum capacity depending on the number of persons in a household. We ask that everyone email Jane Hartwell or call the church office to reserve a seat or seats for your household. We ask that you do so for one service at a time as we hope to accommodate as many people as possible. This will allow us to meet as safely “in-person” as we can for these next weeks until we finally get the pandemic behind us.

### LENT 2021- “Love my Neighbors”

I have been thinking about Lent for quite a few weeks. Usually I develop a theme for the season from the Small Catechism or a Book or theme from the Bible. But this past year has not been a “normal” year, and we still have a number of months to go before the end of the pandemic. Over these past months our nation and relationships with others have experienced conflicts in addition to the coronavirus crisis. One of the concerns that has become apparent to me is how we treat one another. I am hopeful that this year’s theme of “Love My Neighbors” may remind us of some ways and opportunities we have to transform the world around us by “loving our neighbors”. This theme will run through the Wednesdays and Sundays of Lent. I hope that together we can change the world around us by “loving our neighbors”. I will be utilizing a book entitled B.L.E.S.S. by Dave and Jon Ferguson, along with a VBS resource from the ELCA called “Who is my neighbor?”. In addition to Sunday morning worship, we will also offer Wednesday evening Lent Services at 6:30 PM. My hope is to have congregation conversations following each service via Zoom. Wednesday evening conversations will begin at 7:00 PM, except Ash Wednesday, Sunday morning conversations will start at 10:30 by zoom.

Be well and be of encouragement to one another.





# St Mark Lutheran Church

## Return to “in-person” activities

As we journey through the pandemic together, we are all learning how to adapt our lives as we learn how to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. The leadership of St Mark is committed to continuing the ministry of St Mark, while at the same time adapting how we may safely do ministry. The Parish Planning Council of St Mark has made the decision to advance to Phase 2 of our plan because cases of Coronavirus in Buena Vista County have continued to decline and we have received confirmation by public officials and medical professionals that it is safe to move to more “in-person” activities. The leadership of St Mark will continue to monitor the spread of the pandemic and will adjust our practices as needs require. (January 2021)

### **SAFETY PRACTICES THAT HAVE BEEN PUT IN PLACE**

- We will begin in-person worship services with limited seating. The worship service order will be modified to reflect safe health practices.
- We will begin live-streaming worship services on Facebook and YouTube as we are able to.
- Worship services will be available on Facebook, YouTube, and the St Mark website
- Worship service “scripts” will be distributed to those who have limited access to the internet and who request it.
- Baptisms may take place in worship, or with only family and sponsors present.
- Funerals/Memorial services may take place in the Sanctuary with limited “in-person” participants. Services may be “live-streamed” via Facebook if requested. Meals and other food may not be served at St Mark.
- Holy Communion will be served at the end of services. Ushers will guide persons in order to maintain a 6’ distance between individuals and family groups.
- Holy Communion will also be available by appointment with Pastor.
- Offering plates will not be passed during worship. Offering boxes will be available, in addition to electronic giving, drop off, and mailing of financial gifts.
- Individual communion kits will be available in the church office for use at home.
- No meals will be served at St Mark. Food may be brought in for self-consumption only.
- Small groups of 10 and under may meet at St Mark as long as they reserve appropriate sized spaces to meet in. Participants are expected to wear masks and observe appropriate social-distancing.
- Office hours will be maintained when possible.
- All areas in the church will be cleaned and sanitized between uses.
- Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned daily.
- An email update will be published each Friday.
- Pastor is able to make limited home visits at this time.
- Hand sanitizing stations and masks are available throughout the building.

### **WHAT IS EXPECTED OF EACH PERSON**

- All persons are expected to wear a mask when in the church building.
- All persons are expected to maintain a social distance of at least 6’ at all times with persons outside of your household.
- All persons who use the spaces to meet in are asked to help with cleaning the area following each use.
- All persons are asked to offer prayers for the well-being of others.
- All persons are asked to inform Pastor and other St Mark staff members if you find any area of the church that may not be properly cleaned.
- All printed materials are to be recycled or taken home.
- All members of St Mark are encouraged to financially support the ministry of St Mark.

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF 2021 ANNUAL MEETING OF ST MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH

The 2021 Annual Meeting of St Mark Lutheran Church will take place on Sunday, February 21, 2021 at 10:00 AM in the St Mark sanctuary. All confirmed members of St Mark are eligible to attend. In the case of a weather event or other unexpected, emergency, the date and time of the meeting will be rescheduled.

Due to the Coronavirus Covid-19 Pandemic and out of concern for the health and well-being of the members of St Mark, 2 back-up plans for the meeting have been put in place if conditions require. Our first plan will be to have the meeting “in-person” in the sanctuary with appropriate “social-distanced” seating in place for those in attendance. If there is an increase in the activity of coronavirus in this geographical area, back-up options include:

- **Option #2 Hy-brid- “In-person and Zoom:** a limited number of participants will be onsite at St Mark, with the balance of participation via Zoom. Elections will take place by paper ballot on site with a pre-determined drop-off period. All ballots will be tabulated for all elections and adoption of matters of business requiring a vote.
- **Option #3 Zoom Only:** Same as Option #2 except only a few leaders will be onsite at St Mark to lead the meeting and to receive and tabulate all ballots.

The 2021 Annual Meeting Agenda is:

1. Opening Prayer
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Approval of the Minutes
4. Reports:
  - a. Treasurer’s Report
  - b. President’s Report
  - c. Pastor’s Report
  - d. Board Reports
  - e. 2020 Audit Report
5. Elections
  - a. Council
  - b. Delegates for Western Iowa Synod Assembly
  
  - a. Presentation of 2021 Annual Budget
  - b. Adoption of 2021 Annual Budget
6. Old Business- none
7. New Business- none
8. Adjournment
9. Prayer

## FROM PRESIDENT DAN SIEVERS

Below is a summary of the recommendations that were submitted to the PPC by the Governance committee. These recommended changes were developed by the Governance committee as a result of the St. Mark Congregation giving the PPC the authorization to explore and try changes to our governance structure during a special congregational meeting that was held on July 28, 2019. These recommendations were approved by the PPC at our November 11, 2020 regular meeting. As a result of PPC's approval of these changes, elections will be held during our annual congregational meeting set for February 21, 2021 to fill the 5 elected Council positions. Then following a trial period of approximately 1 year to refine these changes, revisions to the Constitution will then be submitted to the congregation to be adopted according to the formal process.

## SUMMARY OF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Committee Members: Dan Sievers, Lori Porsch, Rick Lampe, Julie Sievers

Committee recommendations:

- A 7-member Council consisting of 5 elected members plus the Pastor and Treasurer.
- Each term will be for 3 years, except for the Pastor.
- The initial election will be for 1 member for a 1-year term, 2 members for 2-year terms, and 2 members for 3-year terms.
- Following the initial election, 1 new member will be elected (or re-elected) to serve a 3-year term. The following year 2 new members will be elected (or re-elected) to serve a 3-year term and the following year 2 members will be elected (or re-elected) to serve a 3-year term. The election will continue with this rotation for 3-year terms.
- Each elected council member may serve two consecutive terms.
- The Treasurer will not be an elected position. They will be appointed by the council and may serve two consecutive 3-year terms.
- The President, Vice President and Secretary will be elected from the Council and will be one-year positions.
- A person can be elected President in the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> years of their first term. A person can be elected President in any year of their second term. A person can serve as President once during a 3-year term.
- The President will not be a liaison to any committee except the Executive Committee.
- The Vice President is not required to serve as President the following year.

The standing committees will be:

- Property
- Mission/Outreach replacing our current Social Ministry and Evangelism boards
- Life replacing our current Worship and Fellowship boards
- Family and Children
- Executive

These committees are not required to meet monthly. They will meet as needed.

Other committees required by the constitution are the nominating and the audit committees.

The structure relies on participation and volunteers. Members will be encouraged to volunteer/serve/work on projects that interest them and where they are passionate about the work. Committees are encouraged to engage volunteers for short term projects.

If you have any questions regarding these changes please contact any member of the Governance committee.

Yours in Christ,  
Dan Sievers

## **PARISH PLANNING COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS**

### **ST MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**January 13, 2021 (mtg per zoom)**



**Present:** Pastor Dave, Dan Sievers, Rick Lampe, Linda Glienke, Kent Smith, Mike Porsch, Cindy Smith, Joan Christen

**President Dan Sievers** called the meeting to order and the agenda was approved. The secretary and treasurer's reports for December were accepted.

**Board reports** – No reports

**Ongoing business** –

- Congregation Governance – The committee is talking to people about serving on the Council.
- The Storm Lake Schools using our classrooms is going well and they are grateful for our partnership.
- Pastor Dave discussed technical adaptations moving forward with “in-person” worship.
- Roof Leaks – The current leaks have been repaired. The roof needs to be replaced. More information will be coming.
- Annual Meeting will be February 21<sup>st</sup>. Discussion was held regarding options for meeting. In person vs. Virtual via Zoom vs. Hybrid. The preference would be to try as much in person as possible with masks required.
- 2021 Annual Budget – Discussion was held and the budget was approved.
- Synod Assembly will be done on Zoom April 9-aoth. Pastor Dave, Dan and Julie Sievers will be our delegates.
- 2020 Fall Stewardship results- 53 pledges received for 2021 for a total of \$180,494. (2020 we had 58 pledges for \$178,778.00)

**New Business** – No new business at this time

## Pastors Report –

- The children’s Christmas program included 20 children with very positive comments.
- When we can safely return to “in-person” worship the new normal will most likely be live and streaming each service. We will need persons willing to learn how to run cameras during the services.
- Lent 2021 – We will offer services on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm.
- The grape juice & wafer kits are working well. People are stopping by after worship and during the week to receive the communion kits or receive it from Pastor.
- Proclaim costs are \$38.00 per week and has a growing listenership.
- Sunday School started January 10<sup>th</sup> and Confirmation class began January 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Plan on adding some adult Zoom Sunday morning opportunities.
- Plans are being made for 1<sup>st</sup> Communion class and other events for young children this spring.
- Pastor attends SALUD, Community Food Coalition, BV County Suicide Prevention Coalition, local ministerium and other community meetings via Zoom.
- Friends with Food is going well.
- Life Serve has significantly increased the number of donors in 2020.
- The congregation’s response to Upper Des Moines Food Bank and CASA continues to be strong.
- Storm Lake High School classes are going very well.
- Online giving transaction continue to grow.
- Attended Western Iowa Synod Pastors weekly meetings via ZOOM.
- Pastor will participate in the ELCA World Hunger event (via Zoom) January 20-23.
- Pastor continues to contact the homebound with phone calls & sending worship service scripts of the service.
- He is unable to make hospital visits, and limited home visits at this time..

## LIFE SERVE-BLOOD DRIVE

In January, Life Serve collected 113 units of blood saving up to 339 local lives. The next blood drive will be Tuesday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> from 12:30pm – 6pm at St. Mark’s Church. Thanks to everyone who has donated blood and saved lives. Be sure to text **‘LIFESERVE’ to 999-777** to make your next appointment. If you or someone you know has recovered from COVID-19 and are interested in donating lifesaving plasma, please contact LifeServe Blood Center representative, Allison Wegner, at 712-635-4930.



## PRAYERS-

You are invited to pray for the following persons:

Felipe Moreno, Lorraine Mortenson, Heather Woodley, Orin Rinkel, Betty McCrory, Evelyn Messenbrink, Katie Bradley, Terry Taylor, Alyssa Waddel Dave Drey, Doris Paulson, Theodore Hyde, Steve Berg, Alex Kron







# FRIENDS WITH FOOD

## SALUD

### MULTICULTURAL HEALTH COALITION

Working collaboratively with the community  
towards physical, mental and social well-being.

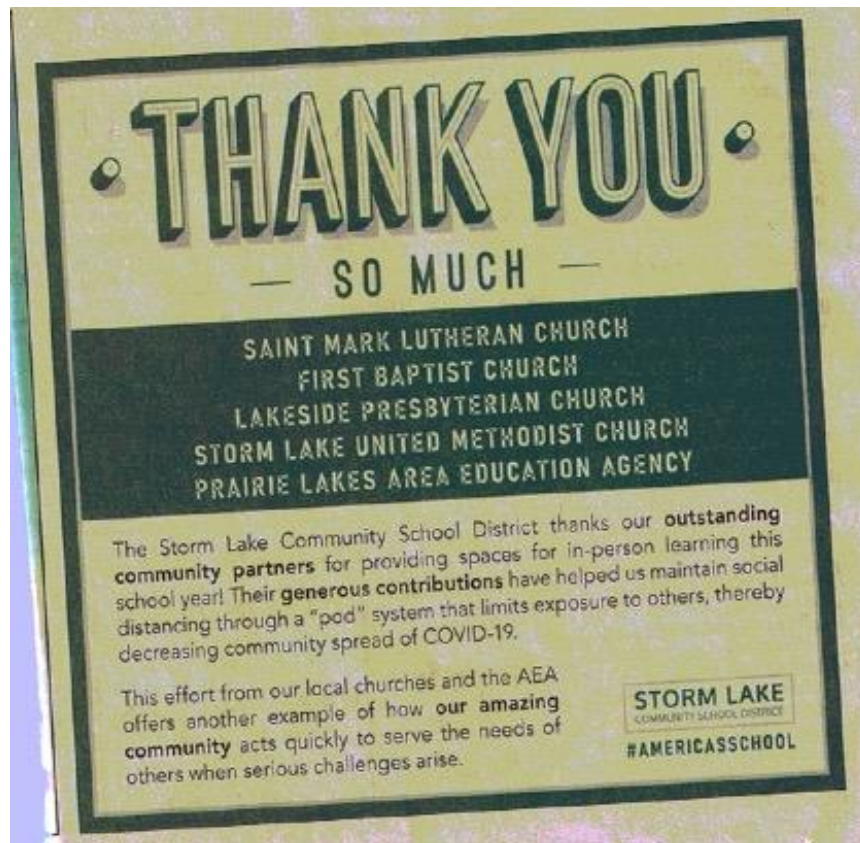
[salud.of.stormlake@gmail.com](mailto:salud.of.stormlake@gmail.com)

[www.salud-stormlake.com](http://www.salud-stormlake.com)

[www.facebook.com/SALUDofStormLake](https://www.facebook.com/SALUDofStormLake)



Friends with Food packaged and delivered food to 61 families with a total of 138 persons (54 seniors, 34 adults, 50 children) on Thursday, January 21<sup>st</sup>. If you know of anyone who is homebound and needs food, please contact Jane Hartwell in the church office 732-5255, Di Daniels, 712-299-9863 or Julie Cook, at the Synod Office 732-4968 before our next distribution which will be Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup>.



## EVENTS IN FEBRUARY

The most up to date resource for activities at St Mark is to go to <http://stmarkstormlake.com/home/calendar>

### WORSHIP

Sundays 9:00 AM- via

[St Mark's Facebook](#)

[St Mark YouTube Channel](#)

Sundays 7:30AM- Proclaim radio FM 101.7

### OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Sundays –
  - 9:40 am- 10:15 Drive thru Communion
  - 10:00 am – Sunday School via zoom
- Tuesdays – 12:00 pm Spanish AA
- Wednesdays – 6:00 pm Confirmation
- Thursdays- 12:00 pm AA
- Schedule changes *will be announced via weekly eNEWS and Facebook posts.*

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

2/01 - Marsha Boyd  
2/01 - Stacey Eddie  
2/01 - Julie Winterton  
2/03 - Lori Porsch  
2/05 – Tim Lullman  
2/07 – Dave Keschull  
2/09 - Robert Thompson  
2/12 - Clair Thompson  
2/14 - Mason Adams  
2/17 - Megan Peterson  
2/18 - Paul Loos  
2/19 - Micah Naslund  
2/20 – Brayden Marshall  
2/23 - Norma Williams  
2/24 - Pam McClannahan  
2/25 - Julie Cook  
2/26 - Janis Stavnes  
2/27 - John Bartz  
2/27 - Clara Samuelson  
2/28 – Mason Denholm  
  
Happy Birthday!

## STORM LAKE HIGH SCHOOL UPDATE

Iowa Jobs for America's Graduates

### What is iJAG?



iJAG (Iowa Jobs for America's Graduates) is a career exploration and preparation course offered to 9th-12th graders at the Storm Lake High School. Mrs. Kayla Hernandez teaches 11th/12th grade.

We work on various life skills, which include but are not limited to: resume writing, interviewing skills, life skills, organization, leadership, volunteering/community service, and fundraising.

## HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY FROM LSI!

*"We love because he first loved us." 1 John 4:19*

Lutheran Services in Iowa's (LSI) mission is about love: responding to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. We give thanks for all the ministry partners, both individuals and congregations, who help share this love for Iowa children, adults, and families!



We see this love in newly adopted children and their families, in teens who are overcoming years of trauma and building bright futures, in Iowans with disabilities who are growing their independence and confidence, in new parents who are raising strong and healthy families, and in so many other moments of joy. You can help carry out our mission of hope and healing by giving a gift and showing love to the Iowa families we serve. For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI's Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at [Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org](mailto:Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org) or 563-676-2065.

Thank you for the love you share and create through LSI. Happy Valentine's Day!

*Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at [LSIowa.org](http://LSIowa.org) and [facebook.com/LSI.iowa](https://facebook.com/LSI.iowa).*

### Building a Bond

Julie had made a promise years ago: If anything happened to her friend, Julie would take care of her son, Jacob.

When Jacob's mom passed away and he had no place to go, Julie stepped up. Her six children had grown up and moved out of her home, and she had the resources and space needed to care for Jacob. She became a mentor through LSI's Host Homes program. The service enables Iowans with disabilities to move into a private family home and live with a specially-selected mentor instead of living in a shared space with roommates and several staff members.

Jacob moved into Julie's home last December and now, the two are thriving. Jacob is learning to take care of himself and build the life skills he needs to feel more confident and independent. He is learning to cook and enjoys looking up new recipes to try, especially meatloaf.

"It's a great opportunity. You're changing their lives," Julie says. "You get to know each other more personally. We have a lot of discussions and heart-to-hearts."

Jacob is finishing his senior year of high school. He enjoys learning new things and visiting new places, and he dreams of the day when he and Julie can go on more trips. Once it is safe to do so, Jacob is determined to visit more zoos and take a trip to Canada. "It's good," Jacob says of his Host Homes match with Julie. "She makes me laugh."

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## ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH

1614 West 5th Street  
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### CONTACT INFORMATION

#### St. Mark Lutheran Church

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