

LIFE TOGETHER

JULY 2025

www.saintmarkstormlake.com

4th of JULY
INDEPENDENCE
DAY

"We are a community learning to love Jesus by loving and serving our neighbors."

HAPPENINGS FROM JUNE

Vacation Bible School



2025 Western Iowa Synod Assembly



FRIENDS WITH FOOD- June 19th





A pastoral note for Independence Day

Storm Lake and other surrounding communities really know how to celebrate the 4th of July. I look forward to the Storm Lake Independence Day parade each year. It reminds me of my childhood and teen years when I participated in parades led with an American Flag and an honor guard. I was always marching in a band playing music that was often drowned out by fire trucks blowing their horns. Candy being tossed to the children in the crowd. City Officials and beauty pageant contestants in convertibles, floats, and vehicles of every kind. BBQ, hot dogs, boats, fireworks, and the always uninvited guests, *mosquitos*.

This Independence Day feels a bit different to me, perhaps you feel it too. Tensions are high between nations and political parties. Stress and anxiety fatigue is at a high in the US. Many of us have family members and friends in the military who are on alert and "in the theatre" of possible armed conflict. Here in Storm Lake many of our friends, family, and neighbors live in fear every time a rumor of ICE being in town is passed along. And even if all of their paperwork is in order and they are US Citizens, they have heard the rumors about what has happened in other communities. Many in the US wonder if "*the land of the free*" includes them or not.

There are times I think life would be much simpler if I went back to being 16 again and marching in parades, not aware of what is going on in the world around me. A time when the biggest concern I had was not marching behind the horses in a parade. But I cannot. The gift of faith in Jesus Christ does not allow me to simply sit on the sideline and ignore what is happening to others, especially to my neighbors I see every day.

I am very grateful to be a Lutheran as we have a long tradition of theologians and authors who can help us to understand just what we are to be about as followers of Jesus in times like this. This week, I am especially mindful of what Bishop Elizabeth Eaton wrote a few years ago on what **freedom for a Christian is from** and **what freedom is for**. Bishop Eaton wrote ¹"*For a Christian, freedom from is liberation from all spiritual bondage. We are set free from being trapped in ourselfness, consumed by ourselves, from the belief and terror that we can and must save ourselves. That our self is the center of the universe. Life in Christ is not an inward dwelling experience. We are free to get over ourselves. Freedom from is liberation from the law's accusation and judgement. We are liberated from terror and despair which are soul crushing.*


"Freedom for means that in Christ we are set free to love and serve others.

²"*A Christian is lord of all, completely free of everything. A Christian is a servant, completely attentive to the needs of all.' We do not live only to ourselves. it is my prayer that the Lutheran movement will spill out into the streets in joyful service to the world God so loves."*

¹Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, *ELCA, Word & World, Volume 37, Number 4, Fall 2017*). / ²Martin Luther, *The Freedom of a Christian (Luther Study Edition)*, trans. Mark Tranvik (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008) 50.

I share in that same dream, that as we celebrate Independence Day, those who claim to be followers of Jesus will use our freedom, our voices, and our abilities "to love and serve others."

Peace to you on this Independence Day weekend,



Pastor Dave Kebschull

FRIENDS WITH FOOD IN JUNE



On Thursday June 19th, Friends with Food delivered to over 100 households in our community. Thank you to EVERYONE who helped out with unloading the truck, set up and tear downs, bagging food, and delivering". It was another successful day to help these households receive food for a while. If you know of someone who needs food, or you would like to help, contact Di Daniels 712-299-9863, Julie Cook 712-732-4968 or Jane Hartwell 712-732-5255. Friends with Food is a partnership of St Mark, SALUD, Western Iowa Synod- ELCA, Food Bank of Iowa, and other persons from the Storm Lake area who work together to deliver a monthly food distribution to those who are permanently or temporarily homebound and with no easy access to transportation. The next distribution is July 17th.



SIT, KNIT, CROCHET ETC.

Join our group of crafters on the first Thursday of the month at 1:00PM in the library of the church. Whether you enjoy knitting, crocheting, coloring, painting or whatever, (no crat necessary) join the fun group. Conversation and laughter is always a plus with this group. They will meet July 3rd, at 1:00 PM.



ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN

The Orphan Grain Train distributes used clothing to persons in need. OGT Is located in Ida Grove and is in high need of clothes for all ages. If you are cleaning out your closets, please consider a donation. You are invited to drop items off at the church office or contact Gloria Rohlfen or call her at 712-660-0217 for pick up arrangements.

NAOMI CIRCLE

Naomi Circle will not meet in June, July and August so watch for information later as to a start date in September. You are encouraged to read the (June-July-August) Gather Magazine as they talk about relationships. Also, read the article on Reformation and Marriage which includes interesting facts about Katherine Bora, Luther's wife (they were married 800 years ago on June 13th). The Gather magazine is now being published every three months. Pick a copy up one in the Narthex information center.

PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP

St. Mark is reaching out to the community to offer a time for sharing for all the people afflicted with Parkinson's disease. The Parkinson's Support Group wants to thank all the people at St. Mark for allowing them to meet at the church. They will next meet on Tuesday, July 8th with a fish fry, in the fellowship hall 12:30pm.



Praying for one another

Prayer is one ministry that all of us can do on behalf of others and ourselves. Just letting people know that others are praying for them is one way to encourage and bless others. In addition to offering prayers for the persons on this list, please remember to offer prayers for yourself and your family members.

We are all invited to pray for God's healing and wholeness to be upon:

Tatum Shepherd, Kale Yarbrough, Donell Grow and Beverly (Friends with Food family), Kale Yarbrough, Steve Berg, Mark Johnson, Carolyn Stille (mother of Kristi Bihrer), Gladys Eddie, Ed Anderson, Donna Schulz, Steve Korner, Alex Kron, Dick Mooney, Caleb Vander Broek, Kristine Taylor, Dianne White, Tony Bodholdt, Julie Eglund, Cindy James, Cheryl Lustgraaf, Kim Anderson, Harper Ledford (great granddaughter of Don and Carol Northrup), Cheryl Crampton, David Walker, Greg Kruse, all persons seeking healing and wholeness

For persons on active duty in the US Military Service

Aiden Deitering, SLPD Officer A.J. Chase, SLPD Officer Gerardo Bravo

BOOK DISCUSSION

We will not meet for discussion during July or August. However, we did choose two books to read over the summer months and will discuss them when we meet again in September. One of the books is White Chocolate Moments by Lori Wick. "A character-rich journey leads Arcineh back to her grandfather's home where there are surprises, questions, and for the first time in her life, an answer to "who will love me forever?" This compelling story about a woman's hunger for acceptance and wholeness points the reader home to God's love." The other book is Breaking Silence by Linda Castillo. "The New York Times bestselling series hailed as "gripping" (People magazine) and "compelling" (USA Today) returns with Police Chief Kate Burkholder called to the scene of a horrific tragedy on a peaceful Amish farm." Both books are in the church library. Please watch the September newsletter for the date of our next discussion. Enjoy your summer of reading!

SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE UPDATE



We want to thank all who have been involved and supportive of this ministry. You are making a difference in the lives of children in this area! Beds continue to be delivered to children in the Storm Lake area. The smiles and excitement of children (and parents) upon the completion of the delivery are priceless! All are so appreciative. When our inventory of beds gets low, the Sioux City Chapter of Sleep in Heavenly Peace brings more beds to us! Fourteen beds have been delivered to children in the area since late May, for a total of 89 since we began this mission from Storm Lake late last year. Updates on this ministry will continue to be posted in eNews, church bulletins and the monthly newsletter. More information on the local chapter of Sleep in Heavenly Peace located in Sioux City can be found at <https://shpbeds.org/chapter/ia-sioux-city/> If you would like more information about SHP in Storm Lake, please contact the St. Mark office.

LIFE SERVE BLOOD DRIVE

On Tuesday of this week, Life Serve Blood Drive was at St. Mark. The official results from this blood drive from June are: 43 registered, 47 products collected. 41 potential lives saved. Life Serve extends their gratitude to everyone for donating and helping to save lives. If you would like to give blood at the next drive Tuesday, July 1st, you can register online or text LIFESERVE to 999-777 to make an appointment to Give Blood. If you would like to know any other info about donating blood and Life Serve Blood Center, just click on this link, or contact Jane Hartwell in the Church Office.





CARING PAWS RESCUE:

Bring your cans that are eligible for a deposit in garbage bags to the collection bin by the garage at St. Mark. Caring Paws is an organization in Storm Lake that is devoted to establishing an animal shelter for

Storm Lake. The deposit money from the cans will go to Caring Paws Rescue. The meetings in July will be the 9th and 28th, 6PM-8PM at St Mark in the Fellowship Hall. If you have question about Caring Paws Rescue contact Sue Lyngaas 304-646-6120.



CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

June 17, 2025 6:30 PM

Those in attendance: Joan Christen, Deb Mortensen, Cindy Smith, Megan Sullivan, Jodi Bihrer and Pastor Dave. Steve Berg was unable to attend.

Prior to the scheduled council meeting, members met with representatives from Marcus Lumber to discuss carpet options for the narthex, fellowship hall, library, hallways and entrances. Valerie Bryant, Design Specialist and Kevin Raasch answered questions about design, quality, wearability, installation, cost, removal of current carpet and potential timelines.

1. Approval of Agenda –Deb reviewed the agenda. Cindy made a motion to approve and Joan seconded. Motion approved.
2. Prayer Concerns & Devotions - Pastor Dave shared a piece from Henry Nouwen's commentary on Psalm 139 reflecting on our "inner life" including daily contemplation of gospel and prayer and the importance of it.
3. Reports –
 - a. Secretary Report – The May council minutes were reviewed. Megan made a motion to approve and Joan seconded. Motion approved.
 - b. Treasurer's Report – Joan reviewed the financials. Expenses for the year currently exceed receipts by about \$25,000. The \$8,000 cost of removing the steeple will come out of July's expenses. Pastor Dave reported an updated endowment balance of \$367,044.
 - c. President's Report – Deb attended the Synod Assembly; she shared it was a very interesting process for the election of the new bishop, Scott Dalen. Thanks to the council for their flexibility in schedule changes to meet with MLC staff tonight.
 - d. Outreach Ministries – Cindy reported beds continue to be delivered for Sleep in Heavenly Peace. Generous donations continue for UDSM.
 - e. Children and Youth Ministries– Megan shared VBS went very well. A big thank you to Deb, Joan and all volunteers. We may look at having VBS for three days next year instead of two.
 - f. Property – Jodi shared the roofers will be here soon to finish the repair of the roof from the removal of the steeple. He is working on scheduling painting the lines in the Dave reported

the current endowment balance is

4. Unfinished Business

- a. **Improvement projects-** thanks to the generous gifts of a number of persons and family members, @\$80,000 of memorial funds are being considered for use to replace and repair a number of projects. (Information about any proposed project and costs will be shared with the congregation before a congregational meeting will be held to make a decisions.)
 - i. Carpeting- Further discussion of information provided by MLC representatives. After meeting with Marcus Lumber reps, a request for more specific costs which will include carpet for the narthex, fellowship hall, library, hallways, and entrances. Council members looked at a number of carpet styles and colors, with additional carpet samples to come in the near future. Council members want to proceed carefully, making decisions that will best meet our needs as a congregation. All agreed we want to move forward with the project in a timely manner when we are ready.
 - ii. Technology – new Wi-Fi was installed by Zone Entertainment to replace the system that had failed. Pastor Dave will work with the SLPD and representative from the Zone to determine what is needed for St. Mark.
 - iii. Steeple – a Licensed Engineer has been contacted. They will submit a number of possible design ideas to consider.
- b. Decision Making Process – the Council agreed upon the following process before moving forward with any project. The Council is mindful that financial gifts to St Mark during the Summer are at their lowest, and that we need to keep this matter in mind as we consider project timelines.
 - i. Congregation Council completes our work
 - ii. Congregation Council makes recommendation to the congregation for a special meeting. A special meeting is called for one topic such as the recommendations for raising and spending funds to complete projects.
 - iii. Congregation is informed about projects and has opportunities to ask questions.
 - iv. Congregation meets to approve.
 - v. Upon approval, projects are started and completed as funds are available.
- c. SMLC Website and Church Administration Software (transition)

Pastor Dave, Julian and Jane are working on this very large project. July 7th is the day that Pastor Dave will work with a IT specialist from AMPLIFY Church Ministries to transfer and check all data. We want to go live as quickly as possible, being mindful that Pastor Dave, Jane, and Julian have other projects they need to keep moving forward with. The agreement to work with Amplify includes training hours, once the data has been transferred.
- d. Friends with Food is Thursday, June 19. Over 4,000 pounds of food is expected from the Food Bank of Iowa to be sorted and distributed to well over 100 households in the area.

5. Pastor's Report –

Pastor shared Pastor David and Bishop Lorna appreciated their welcome and brunch at St. Mark on May 18; he thanked all involved with VBS; he is working on fall schedules; he

participated in SLPD's "Taco with a Cop" event; follow up is needed to get background checks for all volunteers working with children for insurance purposes; he will be gone June 23-29 – Rev. Dr. Melanie Hauser will be filling in; he will be out August 7-8; and at the end of the year he and Leslie will be in Phoenix for their daughter Whitney's wedding.

6. The council will meet on 7/9/25 at 6:30 p.m. Cindy made a motion to adjourn. Megan seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

-Minutes submitted by Cindy Smith

CONGREGATION TREASURER'S REPORT FOR MAY

Receipts for May- \$20,054 down \$2,294 from April

Expenses for May- \$29,340 down \$3,218 from April

Expenses exceeded receipts - \$9,285

Expenses exceeded receipts for the year \$25,595

Operating Balances 4/30/25

Unrestricted Funds

Checking account - \$80,911.72

Savings account - \$170,598.58

Total \$251,510.30

Restricted Funds (memorials) -\$110,837.47

Month End Balance \$140,672.83

Respectfully Submitted – Joan Christen SMLC Treasurer – June 5, 2025

UPPER DES MOINES FOOD CART: Any food and other items are always need at Upper Des Moines. The grocery cart continues to stay in the Narthex for those of you who want to donate. The grocery items do not change much. This food list doesn't change. These items are always a necessity at Upper Des Moines. ***Cereal, oatmeal, canned fruit & vegetables, beans and rice, spaghetti sauce and pasta. Meat is very much needed (lunch meat, hot dogs, ground beef, ground pork, chicken). Freezers are available at Upper Des Moines, please drop refrigerated and frozen food items at Upper Des Moines. Other items needed are: laundry soap, dish soap, shampoo, body soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, toilet paper, paper towels.*** Thank you! Your donations are greatly appreciated.



Upper Des Moines
Opportunity

SERVICE NAVIGATORS IN BV COUNTY

"Building connections with community and resources"

The Service Navigators of BV are grateful for the working space and the support that St. Mark has given them. We are establishing office hours at St Mark on M, W, F afternoons, but a lot of our work happens out in the community. As Community Health Workers (CHWs) we connect people to the services they are looking for. We also keep our BV county Resource Repository updated and accessible. Our team is growing as at least 5 more people from Storm Lake will be taking the CHW (Community Health Worker) training this fall. The Service Navigators of BV County are: Ana Sanchez, Emilia Marroquin, Selynna Butler, Andrea Taylor, and Di Daniels. You can contact them by- Email- servicenavigatorsfbv@gmail.com Phone- 712-730-3045 and on Facebook. [Facebook.com/Servicenavigators.bv](https://www.facebook.com/Servicenavigators.bv)

JULY BIRTHDAYS

7/02 Nancy Erickson
7/02 - Paulette Erlandson
7/04 - Donna Sennert
7/05 – Monica Monroe
7/06 - Joan Christen
7/06 – Donna Stanton
7/07 - Deb Reiersen
7/09 - Cheryl Rodger
7/11 – Kamden Mellmann
7/11 - Jim Hultgren
7/15 – Kayla Woodke
7/16 - Andy Paulsen
7/17 – Jim Winterton
7/21 - Mary Raveling
7/22 - Cheryl Lustgraaf
7/26 - Brian Underwood
7/26 - MaryJean Steenberg
7/27 - Linda Glienke
7/28 - Hayley Quirin
7/29 - Erik Olson
7/30 – Greg Larison
7/31 – Pete Erickson

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

For individual events and for the most up to date schedule look at the weekend bulletin, eNEWS sent out each Friday by email and on Facebook. Or to [Saint Mark Website](#).

Sundays

7:30 am Proclaim radio FM 101.7
9:00 am In-Person Worship & via [Facebook Live](#)
10:00 am Coffee and Fellowship time
10:15 am Bible Study with Pastor Dave

Thursdays

12:00 pm AA

Office Hours are 9:00-5:00 M-F.

Secretary Hours are Monday-Thursday 9:00-12:00 and Wednesday 1:00-4:00

ELCA YOUTH GATHERING 2027

The dates and place are set for the 2027 ELCA Youth Gathering. June 28-July 2, Minneapolis. Students and parents, put the dates down on your calendars. Information is just starting to come out on their new website at <https://www.elca.org/gathering>



LUTHERAN SERVICES IN IOWA

Dear Pastor and Members- Greetings! As we look ahead to the joys of July, we're filled with gratitude for the support of our church partners and excited for a summer full of meaningful moments and fun activities! Whether you're soaking up the sunshine, heading off on a family adventure, or simply enjoying some well-deserved rest, we pray this season brings joy, renewal and connection.

You are invited to join us on October 17th as we celebrate 160 years of faithful service and community impact through LSI! We are marking this incredible milestone with a special community celebration, and everyone is welcome. Friends, families, supporters and congregations alike! If you would like to purchase tickets or for more information please contact Deborah Whitford, LSI's Senior Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations at Deborah.Whiteford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065



A colorful poster for a 'Back to School Supply Drive'. At the top, there's a banner with blue, yellow, and red pennants. A red apple is in the center top, and a yellow pencil is on the left. The title 'BACK TO SCHOOL' is in large, blue, bold letters, with 'SUPPLY DRIVE' in smaller blue letters below it. The text 'FOUR OAKS/LSI ARE NOW COLLECTING SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR CHILDREN/TEENS IN IOWA FOSTER CARE.' is in brown. Below that, 'LIST OF SUPPLIES NEEDED:' is underlined in red. Two columns of red text list needed items: CRAYONS/MARKERS, COLORED PENCILS, HIGHLIGHTERS, BLUE, RED, & BLACK PENS, #2 PENCILS, BACKPACKS, FOLDERS/BINDERS, KLEENEX'S/ CLOROX WIPES, ERASERS, T9 CALCULATORS, NOTEBOOKS WIDE & COLLEGE RULED. A QR code is on the right. At the bottom left, there's an illustration of a stack of books with a red apple on top and a blue pencil holder with pencils. The bottom right has the LSI logo (Lutheran Services in Iowa) and the Four Oaks logo (support success).

BACK TO SCHOOL
SUPPLY DRIVE

**FOUR OAKS/LSI ARE NOW COLLECTING
SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR CHILDREN/TEENS IN
IOWA FOSTER CARE.**

LIST OF SUPPLIES NEEDED:

CRAYONS/MARKERS	FOLDERS/BINDERS
COLORED PENCILS	KLEENEX'S/ CLOROX
HIGHLIGHTERS	WIPES
BLUE, RED, & BLACK	ERASERS
PENS	T9 CALCULATORS
#2 PENCILS	NOTEBOOKS WIDE &
BACKPACKS	COLLEGE RULED

**AMAZON
REGISTRATION
LINK: [HERE!](#)**



LSI **FOUR OAKS**
LUTHERAN SERVICES IN IOWA
people focused • results driven

Donations and other gifts can be placed in the BIG BIN
Located by the grocery cart in the main hallway at St Mark.

ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH

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