



The Light

St. Mark Lutheran Church

July 2024

In This Issue

From Our Pastor	2
News and Notes	
In Our Prayers	3
Thanks	3
Graduates	3
Other notes	4
Group Ministries	
Book Club	5
Council	5
Outreach	
Elders	
Trustees	
Preschool	
Sharing & Caring	5
Secret Sisters	5
Women's News	6-7
Women's League	
LWML	
Celebrations	8
Calendar of Events	9



Happy 4th of July!



Plan ahead for summer fun at this year's SCUBA VBS, July 22-26, 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m..

Register at

<https://vbspro.events/p/events/stmark2024>.

Be sure to pick up a flyer from the welcome table

to share with friends and family. VBS is open to children from age 3 through entering 5th grade.

Don't miss out on this fun event so mark your calendars to be here at St. Mark to dive into God's Word.

If you are interested in directing a Thrivent grant to our VBS, please contact **Pastor Chris**.

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VISION STATEMENT

St. Mark Lutheran Church glorifies God and makes disciples by making caring connections with the people of our community.

Freedom is Never Free

Have you ever wondered what happened to the fifty-six men who signed the Declaration of Independence? Five of them were captured by the British as traitors and tortured before they died. Twelve had their homes ransacked and burned. Two lost their sons serving in the Revolutionary Army; another had two sons captured. Nine of the fifty-six men fought and died from wounds or hardships of the Revolutionary War. They signed and pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

Carter Braxton of Virginia, a wealthy planter and trader, saw his ships swept from the seas by the British Navy. He sold his home and property to pay his debts, and he died in rags. Thomas McKeam was so hounded by the British that he was forced to move his family almost constantly. He served in the Congress without pay, and his family was kept in hiding. John Hart was driven from his wife's bedside as she was dying. Their thirteen children fled for their lives. His fields and grist mill were laid to waste. For more than a year, he lived in forests and caves, returning home to find his wife deceased and his children missing. This is just a small sampling of the sweeping sacrifices made by the Signers. Truly, freedom is never free.

Each Independence Day, we do well to note the great sacrifices of our forefathers in establishing our United States of America. In the midst of our civil celebrations, we, as baptized children of God, are reminded by the Scriptures where true freedom is found, which can never fade, nor become corrupt, nor be taken away from us: "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8: 36)

Pastor Mark



NEWS AND NOTES ABOUT THE CONGREGATION (AND BEYOND!)

From the Newsletter Editor



Thanks to all who contributed information for this issue of the newsletter. As I've said before, I couldn't do it without the notes and articles that members send to me by the third Sunday of every month. A special shout-out this month to the church office crew; many of the articles this month (and, honestly, most months so far this year) are the result of their very informative announcements in the Sunday bulletins.

-- the church elf



- Boise Bouton School in Haiti
- Building Hope in the City
- Joshua Burke, studying at Bowling Green
- Tom Chaapel (brother of Sally Ahrens)
- Dan Cicchella
- David Clark
- Jeff Croucher (son of Ron & Pat Croucher)
- Lori and Ron Cudnik
- Ardis Danicic
- Dawn Dean
- Dale and Bobi Fellingner
- Steve Fellingner
- Grace School in Haiti
- Pat Hanna
- Kathy Hardy
- Henry Hess (husband of Ursula Hess)
- Winnie Holt
- Randy Hyde
- Linda Johnston (mother of Tracy Deets)
- Betty Judkins
- Twiley Kemp (mother of Dawn Dean)
- Janet Kimmel (daughter of Phil Dular)
- Marilyn Lange (in-law of Leah Spisak)
- Pr. Ron LePere
- Lois Locher
- Larry Long (father of Sue Matzke)
- Love and Hope Children's Home in El Salvador
- Susan Matzke (mother of Pr. Mark)
- Ministry in Mission
- Diane Molnar

- Brian Orocz (brother of Melanie Orocz)
- Melanie Orocz
- Janie Palmer
- Mari Jane Pavilonis
- Beth Reksten
- Steven & Emma Repas, serving their residencies in emergency medicine
- Marilyn Smith
- Steppin Out Missions
- Trinity Lutheran, Ohio City
- Tamela and Cornell White
- Scott Whitney
- WomenSafe



Thank you: to all our friends at St Mark that lifted up prayers and sent beautiful cards and good wishes to Roy during his cancer surgery. 38 lymph nodes were removed, and all were negative. Praise God!

– Donna Blankschaen

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Thank you to everyone who attended and/or donated to the Baby Shower / Guardians Game event! It turned out to be a BIG win for the Guards and Family Services!

Lori Cudnik and the Board of Fellowship



We congratulate these members of our congregation who recently finished their studies:

- Nicole Carvagno, who graduated from the University of Tennessee – Knoxville with a Bachelor of Business Administration, majoring Supply Chain Management. She will be working at Proctor & Gamble in Cincinnati
- Annie Ryan graduated from Concordia University – Wisconsin with a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Theology and minoring in Nonprofit Business. She has been called to

serve Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Delmar, NY

- Dean Springer graduated from the University of Cincinnati with a Bachelor of Science in Engineering. He will be working as an engineer at Honda in Marysville, Ohio
- Capt. Matt Webb has completed his residency in neurosurgery

We congratulate all who have recently graduated. If we have failed to list anyone, we apologize, and will list them in a future issue of *The Light*.



I Love a Parade, Don't You?

St. Mark will be marching in Chesterland's annual 4th of July Parade on Thursday, July 4. Anyone and everyone is welcome to march along with our float!



Private Communion Is Available

If you would like a time for private communion, that is available to you by appointment. Please contact **Pastor Mark or Pastor Chris** to arrange for that.



Summertime and cookouts go hand in hand, but many people do not have enough food for plain meals. Donations of non-perishable food items are always needed and appreciated. There is a food pantry box in St. Mark's mailbox room where you may place your donated non-perishable food items. We collect canned soups, stews, pastas, canned tuna, canned beans and dried beans, canned fruits and vegetables, peanut butter, jelly, macaroni and cheese, and rice. God bless your thoughtful kindness.

-- Chris Meister

Ways to Support St. Mark

Online Giving helps sustain our church. This summer, whether you're in Cleveland, OH or Cleveland, GA, Online Giving allows you to make donations via your smart device or computer, using your bank account or credit card! Set up your gift today by going to www.stmarkchester.com and click on the Online Giving link. It's quick and EASY! If you have questions or need assistance, please contact **Ellie Mercksak**, Financial Secretary.

Do you shop at GFS (Gordon's Food Service)? If so, you can support St. Mark by doing what you are already doing! When you are checking out at GFS, please let them know that you are supporting St. Mark Lutheran in Chesterland and we will get credit for your shopping trip, which will save us money on our next trip there.

And then there is our local "Avon lady," **Beth Christopherson**. 10% of the price of your purchase is donated to our preschool, to help with whatever is needed there.



Our Operation Christmas Child in-gathering will begin soon!

For those who may be visitors or new to our congregation, this is a wonderful ministry in which we collect new toys, school supplies, and hygiene items and pack them in shoeboxes to be delivered to children living overseas in poverty, in tandem with a Gospel message. Kick-off Sunday will be Sunday, September 22 and more details will follow then. Please note, however, that Walmart has already "rolled-back" prices on school supplies with crayons at \$.50 and markers and colored pencils at \$1.00 which provides a great incentive to buy now.



Mailboxes

The office and newsletter staff asks that all members periodically check your mailboxes and empty them. You never know what good news you will find there.

GROUP MINISTRIES



St. Mark Book Club's July 10 book will be Marci Bolden's *A Life Without Water*. We would love to discuss with you this modern novel that explores love, loss, and forgiveness. We will be meeting at 1:00 p.m. in the small dining room off of St. Mark's Fellowship Hall. Feel free to pack a lunch and join us at noon for extra fun. Please contact Sue Matzke for a copy of the book or with any questions. Bring a friend or two!



The Council welcomes Ellie Mercsak as our new Financial Secretary, and thanks Tamela White for her willingness to serve during the beginning of this year.



In addition to participating in the annual Fourth of July Parade (see article on previous page), the Board of Outreach is considering having a booth at the West Geauga Chamber of Commerce Unity Day on August 25.



Because of many on-going problems, including that the recycling bin covers are broken, the company has been sold, and the preschool is no longer receiving any money for the papers that are being recycled, the trustees have asked the new company to remove the bins from our property. Please refrain from bringing any more paper and/or cardboard to the bins.



The Board of Elders welcomes Joe Werner as its newest member.



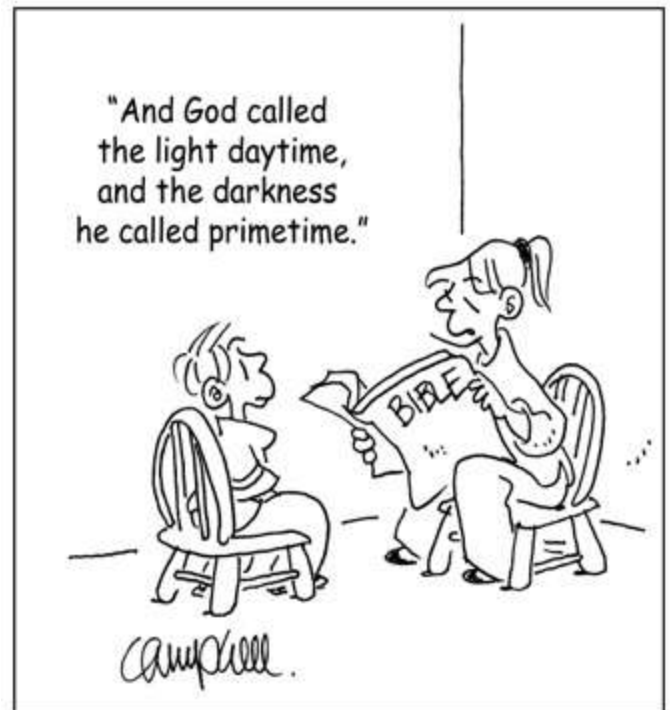
The next open house will be July 12 and July 13. To date there are 3 students committed for the next school year, with 2 more possible.

Sharing and Caring

Do you have a need to borrow a piece of medical equipment? St. Mark's Caring and Sharing group has a small inventory of medical equipment that can be checked out. If you have any questions, or would like to borrow something, please contact **Chris Meister, Ellie Mercsak, or Donna Toth.**



Does your Secret Sister have a birthday this month? If so, be sure to pray for her and send her birthday greetings. If it is not your Secret Sister's birthday, pray for her and let her know you care with an encouraging note or card. We also celebrate the birthday of our country this month. Pray for the United States of America that as a nation we would return to God, and ask your Secret Sister to pray for our country, too.



Women's News

Women's League

This 'n' That Sale

Beginning in July we will begin accepting gently used household items, tools, toys, and more for our annual congregational "This & That Sale". Sorry, no clothes or electronics, please. The first work session to sort and price items will be held on Thursday, July 11 from 9:00 a.m.-noon. If you can help during any of these hours, please just show up. The preview day for the sale is September 5, with sale days being September 6 and 7. For more information or to ask questions, please contact **Brianna McCrudden** or **Lori Cudnik**.

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Jewelry is needed for the This & That Sale. Bring in your unwanted jewelry and boxes to be sold at our sale in September. Please put them in the small dining room off Fellowship Hall in the box labeled "Ellen." Direct your questions to **Ellen Gilbert**.

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Gift of the Magi Holiday Boutique

Did you know that St. Mark has hosted an annual Christmas boutique for over twenty years, with the only exception being our COVID hiatus? The boutique has provided a wonderful opportunity for the ladies of our congregation to fellowship together making crafts, served as a way to connect our church with the Chesterland community, and has consistently been our biggest fundraiser for missions. A rough estimate is that between the Friday night preview party and the Saturday sale, more than 200+ people typically come through our sale and many tell us that they mark their calendars for this event!

We plan to continue this tradition and have scheduled this year's boutique for November 8 and 9. However, due to the economic situation, among other reasons, as of right now we only have about a dozen vendors confirmed for participation. We will need many more to commit in order to maintain the quality of event for which we are known. Our event is unique in that it is a juried craft fair, which means that all items must be homemade and vendors must be reviewed and approved. If you know of a vendor that makes high quality items, please provide their contact information to

mail@StMarkChester.org c/o Jenny Klopff. Jenny will reach out to them with more information and an invitation to apply. We pride ourselves in treating our vendors exceptionally well. Since we will need to make a final decision by mid-July on whether we have enough vendors to hold the boutique, please act now!

There are also other ways that you can help. This year we are considering adding a new feature to the boutique which is "Make It and Take It" stations. In order to do this, we need 2-4 volunteers to choose a craft, purchase supplies, and arrange for volunteers to man their station and assist shoppers as they purchase and make the take-home crafts. We could also use a volunteer who will head up set-up and take-down and recruit and oversee volunteers for this task. We also need people to commit to bake and package items for the sale. And, finally, it would be great to have volunteers to solicit gift basket items from local vendors. Please contact **Sue Brill** if you want to learn more about any of these responsibilities.

Our congregation has benefited from our Gift of the Magi Boutique in countless ways over the years. Most visibly, it has allowed us to provide consistent and generous grants to many local and international missions. However, the boutique also funds our monthly community lunches and funeral lunches. And, it has funded numerous church projects. Whenever there is an unexpected expense that is not in the church budget, the first place that the financial request generally goes is to Women's League and boutique proceeds are the main reason that we have been able to say "YES" to so many of these requests.

Let's rally together to keep the boutique going and make this our best one yet!



Stamps for Missions Is Back!

Yes, Lutheran Women in Mission – LWML is once again collecting used postage stamps. We now have a dealer in the Toledo area who will take the stamps we receive and turn them into a Mite donation. As before, there are a few rules:

- Commemoratives (people, places things) ONLY – that means NO flags, NO

Christmas, NO cute animals, NO pretty flowers.

- Stamps MUST have 1/8" of paper around the outside – this protects the perforations on the edges of the stamps.
- Foreign stamps and stamp collections are the only exceptions to the commemorative-only rule.

So be on the lookout for a box on the Women's League table for your Stamps for Missions.

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LWML Future Events

Our **Fall Retreat** will be held on September 28 at the Environmental Learning Center/Jordan Creek

Park. This year's theme is R.E.S.T., based on Exodus 33:14. Coffee/fellowship begins at 9:00 a.m. followed by the retreat opening at 9:30 a.m. For more information, check the Women's League bulletin board and table, or contact **Ruth Mowery**.

Looking ahead, the next LWML Convention will be held in Omaha, Nebraska on June 26-29, 2025. And the 2026 Ohio District Convention will be hosted by the Lorain-Medina, Cleveland South-West, and Northeast Zones – that's us!

There are so many opportunities to meet with our sisters in Christ for fellowship and to "serve the Lord with gladness." Prayerfully consider participating in any, or all, of these events



Celebrations



- 2 Beth Christopherson
Diane Molnar
Carolee Sandacz
- 4 Andreas Csepi
- 5 Alice Clarkin
Matthew Meister
- 6 Donna Nass
- 7 Paula Holt
Jamie Nicoletti
- 9 Brandon Springer
Emily Vesbach
- 11 Allison Palivec
- 12 Roberta Fellingner
Sean Larrick
Elizabeth Wassel
- 13 Timothy Bunsey
Eric Leslie
CJ Paterniti
Robyn Paterniti
- 14 Todd Lohraff
Matthew Webb
- 15 Carolyn Downs
- 17 Diana Adam
Georgia Rust
- 18 Jenna Ebersbacher
Alex Heritage
Suzanne Schmidt
Edward Tornberg
- 19 Sawyer Paterniti
Caroline Rychel
Gay Welsh
- 20 Raymond Gilbert
Shaun Paterniti
- 21 Dylan Reksten
- 22 Sally Ahrens
- 23 Dennis Vig
- 24 Dawn Simonetti
- 25 Dianne Archer
Ron Cudnik
Ursula Hess
- 26 Bart Pendley
- 28 Joseph Pavilonis
- 29 Courtney Churchia
Holden Hedrick
- 30 Jay Haller
Jennifer Wilson
- 31 Carol Johnson
Brandon Wilson, Jr.



- 1 Karen Stone-Dailey
- 3 Mark Hedrick
Marti Jacobson
- 7 Ellen Gilbert
Chase Hickey
- 10 Alexandra Roth
- 13 Abby Allen
- 14 Ron Croucher
Eric Meister
- 15 Deborah Turk
- 16 Sarah Doll
- 17 Jodi Chambers
Emilia Ruedin
- 18 Alex Heritage
Clayton Heuer
Kristina Rosenbaum
- 19 Linda Csepi
Carolee Sandacz
- 21 Nathan Fellingner
- 22 Asher Dugan
Ambrose Wiley
- 23 Taylor Deets
Jackie Rychel
- 25 Bobi Fellingner
Dianne Rudyk
Judy Stein
- 29 Scott Larrick
Charles Nicoletti
- 30 Susan Matzke
- 31 Ursula Hess



- Chris and Kim Ryan
July 1, 2000
- Bill and Kathy Dvorak
July 1, 2001
- Geoffrey and Sara Molnar
July 9, 2021
- Paul and Janet Vesbach
July 14, 1990
- Richard Elwell & Heather Hardy
July 18, 2003
- David and Donna Toth
July 19, 1975
- Don and Patti Lombardy
July 22, 1978
- Lawrence and Gayle Tomko
July 23, 1966 (58 years)
- Bill and Karen Tritt
July 24, 1982
- Laurence and Brigitte Keil
July 25, 1981
- Cody and Carly Gessel
July 25, 2020
- Cody and Nicole Paterniti
July 30, 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30 11am - Outdoor Service 12:15pm - Church Picnic	1 9am - Office Hours 9:30am - Devotions 7pm - Elders' Meeting	2 9:30am - Prayer Group 11am - Bible Study 7pm - Handbell Rehearsal	3 9:30am - Children's 10am - Office Hours 5pm - Summer Supper &	4 9am - 4th of July Parade 9:30am - Devotions 10am - OFFICE CLOSED	5 7:30pm - @the Cross	6
7 8am - Traditional 9:15am - Education Hour 10:15am - Blended 11:20am -	8 9am - Office Hours	9 9:30am - Prayer Group 11am - Bible Study 12pm - Red Cross Blood 7pm - Handbell Rehearsal	10 12pm - Office Hours 1pm - St. Mark Book Club	11 9am - Office Hours	12 7:30pm - @the Cross	13 8:30am - Men's Breakfast
14 8am - Traditional Service 9:15am - Education Hour 10:15am - Blended 11:20am - 11:30am - Council 7pm - Evening Bible	15 9am - Office Hours	16 9:30am - Prayer Group 11am - Bible Study 5pm - Summer Supper & 7pm - Handbell Rehearsal	17 9:30am - Children's 12pm - Office Hours 5pm - Summer Supper &	18 9am - Office Hours 9:30am - Devotions	19 7:30pm - @the Cross	20 2:30pm - Trinity Lutheran
21 8am - Traditional 9:15am - Education Hour 10:15am - Contemporary 11:20am - 5pm - Newsletter Due	22 9am - VBS 9:30am - Devotions 11am - Office Hours 7pm - Education Board	23 9am - VBS 9:30am - Prayer Group 11am - Bible Study 7pm - Handbell Rehearsal	24 9am - VBS 9:30am - Children's 12pm - Office Hours	25 9am - VBS 9:30am - Devotions 11am - Office Hours	26 8pm - Youth Lock-In 9am - VBS 7:30pm - @the Cross	27
28 8am - Traditional 9:15am - Education Hour 10:15am - Contemporary 11:20am - 7pm - Evening Bible	29 9am - Office Hours 9:30am - Devotions	30 9:30am - Prayer Group 11am - Bible Study 7pm - Handbell Rehearsal	31 9:30am - Children's 11am - Free Lunch 12pm - Office Hours	1 9am - Office Hours 9:30am - Devotions	2 7:30pm - @the Cross	3