

May 2025



The Messenger



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Laurie Olson,
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Pat Westphal,
Financial Secretary



Sunday School 9:00 am
(September-May, every
other Sunday)

Adult Forum
Sundays 9:00 am

Worship
Sundays 10:00 am
(Holy Communion on
1st and 3rd Sundays)

Bible Study
Thursdays 1:30 pm

St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 140 S. Green Bay Rd, Neenah, WI 54956
Phone: 920-725-2828
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Dear Children of God at Saint Mark's Lutheran Church,
Grace and peace to you from the risen Christ.

We are still rejoicing in the season of the Resurrection. As the church year reminds us, Easter is not merely a day, but a season filled with new life, hope, and promise. As Scripture says, *"This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it"* (Psalm 118:24). Indeed, we had a beautiful Easter service, and I give thanks to God for the Spirit's presence among us.

I had thought things might quiet down after Lent and Easter, but that has not been the case—and for that I am deeply grateful. Our church is alive with ministry and witness. Saint Mark's continues to be a beacon of Christ's love, shining brightly in our community and throughout the Fox Valley. You are living out the words of Jesus: *"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden."* (Matthew 5:14).

This month brings many joys in our shared life of faith:

- **Sunday School Celebration** (Sunday, May 4): Our Sunday School children will lift their voices in worship. Their song is a testament to their learning and to the seeds of faith planted by this congregation. God has blessed us with dedicated lay ministers such as Gwen Hoehne, Judy Hellman, and Jenny Case, who are faithfully committed to the ministry of Sunday School.
- **Baptism of Amylah Breeze Waskowiak** (Sunday, May 11): We will gather in thanksgiving as Amylah is baptized into the body of Christ. What a sacred moment to witness God's grace poured out through water and Word.
- **Affirmation of Baptism** (Sunday, May 18): Our confirmation class will publicly affirm their baptism. I encourage each of you to be present for this milestone. Your prayers, encouragement, and example have nurtured these young people, and it will be a joy to celebrate how Christ has been at work in their lives.

As we move through this season of new life, I want you to know how honored I am to serve as your pastor. You have shown me such generosity and grace. Truly, you have given me more than I could ever give in return.

On a personal note, I ask for your continued prayers. I am currently working with the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, to arrange further medical care for my
(Continued on page 2)



From the Pastor

Continued from page 1

brother, Odeh. His health challenges are significant, and though there is little I can do at the moment, my family and I remain hopeful that he will receive the care he needs. When we receive an appointment, Odeh will travel with his wife, Marina, and I will accompany them to offer support.

During that time, I will remain connected with you. I plan to be present for Sunday worship and to help with bulletin preparation, and I will be available by phone and email. I am also coordinating with fellow clergy to ensure pastoral care is provided if I am away.

Thank you for your understanding, your support, and your prayers. You continue to reflect the love of Christ not only in our church but in my life and family as well.

With deep gratitude and resurrection hope,

Rev. Dr. Niveen Ibrahim Sarras, Ph.D



Do you know the reason why many Lutheran churches display an empty cross instead of a crucifix in their sanctuary?

Many Lutheran churches today do not display a crucifix—a cross bearing the image of Jesus—in their sanctuaries, often due to the mistaken belief that it is solely a Roman Catholic tradition. However, during Martin Luther’s time, the crucifix was a common and meaningful part of Lutheran worship. Lutherans historically embraced it as a powerful symbol of Christ’s sacrificial death, consistent with the Apostle Paul’s message: “We proclaim Christ crucified” (1 Corinthians 1:23).

The preference for an empty cross over a crucifix in many Lutheran churches can be traced not to Lutheran theology but to the influence of the Reformed tradition, which was more suspicious of religious imagery. Unlike the Reformed, Lutherans affirmed that art and images—when used appropriately—serve to deepen devotion and focus attention on the truths of Scripture.

The decline in crucifix use in some Lutheran contexts began with the rise of Pietism in the 17th century. Pietists, separating from Luther’s teachings, distrusted symbols and turned away from many traditional Lutheran practices. Since many early Lutheran immigrants to the United States were pietists, this attitude shaped American Lutheranism, leading to a general wariness toward religious imagery.

Nevertheless, traditional Lutheran theology never rejected the use of religious art. Instead, it affirmed the proper, faithful use of symbols as part of Christian freedom and as a way to glorify God. Today, many Lutherans have returned to the original Lutheran tradition, using the crucifix as a powerful visual testament to the Gospel and Christ’s redemptive work.

Rev. Sarras

Jane Franz belongs to a group called the Fox Valley Power of 100. They give donations to help others and at their quarterly meeting she spoke about our Food Pantry. They decided to donate a lot of paper products, cleaning supplies and canned goods to us. What a blessing! Thank you, Jane, for all your help. Our numbers seem to be fairly steady, but most weeks we get one or two new people needing help. In March, we had 69 families shopping to feed 154 members. We have quite a few people who load up and walk home. Even though we got a generous donation of paper products, we are always in need of paper towels, Kleenex, and Kool-Aid. Thank you so much for all your help. We appreciate it! – Karen Jordan



On the left: The Food Pantry's new logo, designed by Jane Frantz.

On the right: A very generous donation from Fox Valley Power of 100!



We will honor St. Mark's graduates from high school, college, technical school, or graduate school on Sunday, May 25. If you know of anyone associated with St. Mark's that is graduating this year, please let the church office know so we can extend an invitation to them. They will be recognized during the service and we will have a special fellowship for them after the service.

Moses Message

Thank you for everyone that participate in the Palm Sunday processional and the carrying the banner and waving the palms. It was quite a site. Thank you, children for doing such a good job singing that day.

Another year of Sunday School is coming to an end. Our last day of Sunday School is Sunday, May 4th. We are doing a cluster event in class, along with a game or two. Also, we are singing in church that day. So please plan to stay for church. It has been a joy to have everyone in Sunday School this year and I hope everyone has a great spring.

With the end of Sunday School comes the planning of Vacation Bible School. VBS will be at Gloria Dei Church on Tullar road in Neenah, on August 3 to August 7 at 5:30 - 8:00 pm. Watch for forms to sign up for VBS. Hopefully we will see some of you at VBS!!

With God's Blessings,
Gwen Hoehne, Superintendent



**St. Mark's Lutheran
Church Council Minutes
April 24, 2025**

Members: Jason Blank, Dawn Jones, Emily Gauthier, Joe Rehorst, Tom Frantz, Tammie Kersten, Pastor Niveen, JT Rose, and Laurie Olson

Members Absent: none

Call to Order: President, Dawn Jones, called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.

Devotions: Dawn Jones. Devotions for May: Pastor Niveen.

MSC to approve minutes from the last meeting 03/20/25 from Joe Rehorst/Tom Frantz.

Thank You: Newsletter thank yous for all who were involved in Seder Meal and Lenten Services, including Pastor Niveen. Thank yous to the confirmation youth for the service they led. Tammie will thank Sophia, Lily-Laurie, Leland-Jason, Braydin-Dawn.

Did you know? Pastor would like to know more about previous pastors of the church. Highlight previous pastor, history of church; Joy Case might be a good person to contact. Joe was wondering about the cross we have at church and why there is not a Jesus on our cross. The Lutheran's said they didn't know what Jesus looked like, so they didn't put him on the cross. Pastor said previously Lutherans did not want Jesus on the cross because he is no longer on it. Pastor said she would write something about this for Did You Know.

Financial Reports: Reviewed current account balances through end of March 2025. March's giving to current monthly expenses was \$15,950.65 and expenses were \$18,453.97. The difference was -\$2,503.32. It was reported that the second quarter insurance bill were paid. Additionally, the utility expenses were high, due to the extremely cold temperatures in February. With the temperatures warming and daylight increasing we will begin to see the WEnergies invoices drop extensively.

Year-to-date: Spending=\$42,067.79 and Giving=\$44,833.60 with a net of +\$2,765.81.

Total Associated Bank checking has a balance of \$243,705.22 which includes \$131,669.36 allocated to designated accounts and \$112,035.86 for current operating. Additionally, \$170,189.34 in the Thrivent money market and \$1,032.40 in Thrivent TIPS account and \$57,298.52 in the ELCA Mission Investment Fund.

MSC to approve financial report from Jason Blank/JT Rose.

Pastor's Report ~ Pastor Niveen Sarras

Grace and peace to you in the name of our risen Lord.

As we moved from the solemnity of Lent into the joy of Easter, I give thanks to God for the many ways the Holy Spirit has been moving through the life of our congregation this past month.

Our Lenten services on Wednesdays were profoundly spiritual and deeply meditative. We focused on the hand of God working in our lives and in the life of the church. I am especially grateful to Pastor Amy and the people of St. Paul Lutheran Church for joining us during this season. I also extend heartfelt thanks to Jean Memken and Pastor Dara Clifford for their powerful preaching, which enriched our shared Lenten journey.

(Continued on page 5)



(Continued from page 4)

One of the most uplifting aspects of Lent this year was the leadership shown by our confirmation class students, who assisted in worship each Sunday. I am incredibly proud of them. On Sunday, March 30, they led the entire worship service without me, and Sophia preached the Gospel with maturity and grace. This is a clear testament to the Holy Spirit at work, raising up young leaders among us.

Holy Week was a time of deep reflection and reverence. On Holy Thursday, we hosted a Seder meal with over 40 participants. It was a meaningful opportunity to learn about the Passover meal Jesus shared with His disciples and how it shapes our understanding of the Lord's Supper today.

On Good Friday, I participated in the Neenah ELCA churches' joint service at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church at noon, and in the evening, our confirmation class and other church leaders led a moving Tenebrae service (A Holy Week service symbolizing Jesus' death through fading candlelight).

Easter Sunday was a glorious celebration of Christ's resurrection. Our worship was filled with joy. After our Easter service, I had the honor of baptizing two children, Liam and Violet—a moment of joy for our church family.

I am deeply grateful to Judy Hellman for her faithful music leadership during Lent, Holy Week, and Easter. I also thank the lay leaders who prepared the Seder meal, Lenten soup suppers, and decorated the church. Their dedication enriched our Lenten journey, Easter celebration, and time of fellowship.

This month, St. Mark's hosted the Appleton Conference Text Study, providing a space for pastors to gather, reflect, and pray together. I continue to participate in our Thursday Bible Study, and Community Table.

Looking ahead, I will preside over two memorial services:

- **Saturday, April 26** for **Jane Ellen Hartley**
 - **Saturday, May 3** for **Walt Ziemke**
- May the Lord grant peace to their souls and comfort to their families.

In addition, I look forward to celebrating:

- The **baptism of Amylah** on **Sunday, May 11**
- The **Affirmation of Baptism** for our confirmation students on **Sunday, May 18**

In all these ministries, I see the Holy Spirit bringing youth and adults together to lead worship, learn, and serve. This unity strengthens our congregation and helps us grow in faith. I am deeply encouraged by the ways our young people are stepping into leadership and ministry, and by how our whole congregation is supporting them.

Thanks be to God for all that we have shared and all that is yet to come.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed. Hallelujah!

Rev. Dr. Niveen Ibrahim Sarras

Pastor, St. Mark's Lutheran Church

MSC to approve pastor's report Emily Christofilis/Tammie Kersten.

Ministry Team Reports:

Christian Education Ministry Team—No meeting scheduled last month ~ Submitted by Gwen Hoehne

Gwen Hoehne reported the last day of Sunday School is May 4, and the kids will be singing in church that day.

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

Property Ministry Team—March 3, 2025 ~ Submitted by Bruce Grundman

Members present: Bruce Grundman, Joe Rehorst, Ginny Schieck, and Phyllis Ziemke

1. Roof leaking around chimney – we will repair when the weather gets warm.
2. Two furnaces replaced and the other repaired, so we have four newer furnaces and one old one.
3. Spruce up day at St. Mark's May 17th. Ginny will put up a sign up sheet. Rain date is May 31st.
4. Rain gutters at the corners will be sealed.
5. The light on the old sign has been repaired.
6. Bruce will call MCC about estimate.
7. Switching from Fluorescent lights to LED lights. Joe Rehorst is checking on cost.
8. Toilet in women's bathroom repaired by Ginny.
9. Next meeting will be May 12th.

Racial Equity Ministry Team—April 22, 2025 ~ Submitted by Laurie Olson

Members Present: Pat Westphal, Dawn Jones, Mary Jane Hartley, and Laurie Olson

Members Absent: Pastors Barb & Niveen

Pat mentioned she is speaking with a Wesleyan University student, regarding an article on Palestine.

Pat did a presentation on Palestine at the Racial Justice Conference on April 5.

Next book study will be *The Lemon Tree* by Sandy Tolan and held in the Fall.

Discussed the **Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center trip**. The trip is planned for June 30 – July 4. A \$500 deposit has been sent to the center, to reserve our dates. Dawn said nine have committed to the trip. She will make an announcement at church Sunday to extend an invitation to anyone wishing to fill the one opening. The Synod grant was well received, and we should hear soon on our funding request. Dawn will set up a meeting with all attending to establish a date/time for a fundraiser. Dawn is looking for a frybread source. Barb is willing to make and donate prayer bracelets to sell, to assist with fundraising.

The **Racial Justice Conference** was held on Saturday, April 5. It was decided to tie a summary of the conference with a Pine Ridge Presentation, after the group returns.

Pat has done a book review for *Little Hawk & the Lone Wolf: A Memoir*, by Raymond Kaquatosh which will appear in the May newsletter.

No May meeting. We will attend the first Pine Ridge group meeting instead (date to be determined).

Adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Social Ministry Team—April 14, 2025 ~ Submitted by Gwen Hoehne

PRESENT: Phyllis Ziemke, Jane Arps, Pat Thompson, Karen Jordan, Gwen Hoehne, Jenny Case (guest)

CHAIRPERSON: Karen Jordan

Phyllis opened with devotions.

- 1) Jenny Case showed us the 2025 Graduation cards she made. Karen took a few to give to our graduates. Thanked Jenny for the beautiful cards.
- 2) There was a good response for the Food Pantry which was well received since the Food Pantry was getting very low on funds. Thank You to everyone for their contributions.

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

- 3) We have used some of our budget to purchase gift cards.
- 4) The Helping Hands fund is very low. Only have \$157.00 left in the account.
- 5) Graduates will be honored on May 25. There are 5 graduates. Phyllis will get a cake.
- 6) Karen sent out Easter cards to 5 families along with gift cards.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

NEXT MEETING IS MONDAY, MAY 12, 2025 at 6:30 P.M.

Worship and Music Ministry Team—April 21, 2025 ~ Submitted by Judy Hellman

The Worship and Music Ministry Team met on Monday, April 21st. Members present were Jenny Case, Ardys Seelow, Mary Ellen Tracey, Pat Westphal, and Judy Hellman.

Devotions were given by Pat Westphal. Pastor Niveen will do devotions in May.

We discussed the services during Holy Week. The Seder meal was nicely done. Past Westphal informed us that the United Church of Christ and St. Paul Lutheran Church are interested in joining us next year.

On April 27th, we will have Holy Humor Sunday and a hymn sing.

We have placed several Bibles by the offering box. If people use them, we will put more Bibles out. We will also have a prayer box once the shelf is made.

On Mother's Day, we will give carnations to all adult women. A card provided by Jenny Case will also be given out. Joy and Jenny Case and Mary Ellen Tracey will hand these out.

On Father's Day, we will give all adult men a card, wooden cross, and candy bar.

A booklet of peppy hymns will be made to use in future services. This should encourage the congregation to play rhythm instruments and clap their hands. Judy Hellman, Pat Westphal, and Joy and Jenny Case will create this booklet.

Mid-week vespers were discussed for possibly in July and August. We would invite St. Paul Lutheran Church to participate with us.

Our ministry team will be serving fellowship on July 27th. We will be serving ice cream sundaes.

Our next meeting will be Monday, May 19th, at 10:30 am.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Youth Ministry Team—March 9, 2025 ~ Submitted by Laurie Olson

Members Present: JT Rose, Jenny Case, Pastor Niveen, Laurie Olson, and Ginny Schieck

Members Absent: Joe Rose, Nancy Rose, Sherri Denney, and Jeff Tharp

We opened with a prayer.

Business for Consideration

Review St. Patrick's Day Fellowship Hosting: Food, songs and games went well. Jeff did a great job dressing as a leprechaun. The team agreed that we should do it again next year.

Please be
Praying for...

Ellen LaMarche
Sarah L.
Richie Sczerzen
Doug Bedor
Odeh Sarras
Mary & Ron
Zielewski
Serenity and Leighton
Chuck Baumgartner
Marguerite Brechlin

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 9)

Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center in South Dakota: Trip dates have changed to June 30-July 4. A *Doing a New Thing* Grant application was submitted through the synod. Still will be applying for an Endowment Grant, after we know the results of our *Doing a New Thing* Grant application. Once we receive confirmation on the ten attending, fundraising events will be planned by the group. Laurie reminded the team that this mission trip is co-sponsored with the Racial Equity Ministry Team. Dawn Jones is the lead.

Discussed Summer Ideas: High Cliff State Park picnic, Bay Beach, Wacky Water Olympics at a park, scavenger hunt, Go Karting at Badger Family Fun Center, Mini Golf at On the Fringe, service projects, working at the Food Pantry, Recycled & Upcycled Craft night, having youth create and paint a wall mural on west Fellowship Hall wall, and a Sidewalk Chalk night. Discussed ideas, dates and availability of team members.

4. It was decided to have a **High Cliff State Park picnic** on Sunday, June 8 in the afternoon. Include BIG yard games and possibly a scavenger hunt. The first weekend in June is free state park admission weekend.
5. Wednesday, June 25, during the evening, will be a **Sidewalk Chalk night**. Draw bible verses and pictures on church sidewalks. (Could just be the sidewalk adjacent to the road, due to the parking reconstruction project.) Serve pizza. Rain date: Thursday, June 26.
6. **Mural on wall in Fellowship Hall:** Pastor Niveen will talk with a couple of the confirmands, who are talented artists and see if they are interested in working on a design. From there we will take it to the council for approval and then work on setting up a work date, organizing other youth participants and purchasing supplies.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next meeting: Sunday, May 11^h at 11:15 am.

Connections Ministry Team—March 24, 2025 ~ Submitted by Tom Frantz

February Wrap Up:

Funds from craft sale will cover donuts and coffee expenses for Fat Tuesday drive up event.

Lent:

Midweek Lenten Services continue.

The Seder will be held 4/17 at 6:30 pm.

The Neenah ELCA churches will be holding a Good Friday service at noon at Gloria Dei featuring a Good Friday cantata. Singers are needed. Contact Jean in the office to get a copy of the cantata and a CD to practice to. Evening service will be at St. Mark's beginning at 6:30 pm.

New Business:

Bingo resumes 3/31. Will check prize inventory. Will need help with treats and set up.

Connections Ministry Team will assist with the Lenten Soup Summer April 2. Expect 30-50 people for dinner. We'll serve ham sandwiches, soups, and desserts.

We will begin to send cards to individuals that we may not have seen in church for a while as a way of showing our concern.

Discussion about best ways to offer rides to those who can't drive and want to attend worship in person but can't.

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

Connections Ministry Team will again oversee the church hours advertising. Cost will be \$175 and will come from the budget.

Sunday, May 11, we will assist with serving food and coffee following a service with a baptism. This is Mother's day and also Name Tag Sunday.

Looking ahead:

Bingo will resume on March 31st from 1:00-3:00 pm.

Craft show is October 25th. Set up will be October 23rd and 24th.

ECSW Women of the ELCA Biennial Convention will be held November 8 and St. Mark's is hosting. Featured speaker is Jacqueline Bussie who will speak on the theme "Love Without Limits" Assistance will be needed for set-up, the luncheon, greeters & ushers, and other assorted tasks. We'll work on those details at an upcoming meeting. We will also need delegates from St. Marks to serve as our voting representative during the business part of the meeting. Let Jean know of your interest in attending or in serving as a voting delegate.

Finance and Stewardship Ministry Team—April 15, 2025 ~ Submitted by Laurie Olson

Members Present: Treasurer Laurie Olson, Financial Secretary Pat Westphal, Mary Jane Hartley, and Fern Fuhmann

Members Absent: Pastor Niveen, Jason Blank, and Pennie Linna

Opened with a Prayer.

Reviewed current account balances through end of March 2025. March's giving to current monthly expenses was \$15,950.65 and expenses were \$18,453.97. The difference was -\$2,503.32. It was reported that the second quarter insurance bill were paid. Additionally, the utility expenses were high, due to the extremely cold temperatures in February. With the temperatures warming and daylight increasing we will begin to see the WEnergies invoices drop extensively.

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Laurie reported that she spoke to Jean Memken, Pat Thompson and Bruce Grundman, regarding not asking for Geranium money this year due to the fund having a \$620 balance. All thought that was a good idea. Jean mentioned that there are some who like to give to this fund – we will accept donations from those who normally wish to contribute.

Laurie informed the team that the 2023 & 2024 audits were completed Saturday, March 22. All the financials were found to be in order.

There is a need for additional counters. Jean has included an announcement in the bulletins and in the newsletter and we will continue to ask that this be included, since no one has come forward. The team reviewed the names of possible individuals to approach and ask for their service. Pat will then meet with each of the teams during counting and review procedures and ask for feedback.

Stewardship: Stewards of God's Land Seed Library will be set up the week after Easter. The team will discuss doing a recycling project with kids and adults in May or June at their next meeting.

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next regular meeting is May 13, 2025, at 6:30 pm.

Audit Ministry Team Report—March 22, 2025 ~ Submitted by Laurie Olson and Pat Westphal

The Audit Team met on March 22, 2025, and reviewed the records and the financial reports of St. Mark's Lutheran Church for the 2023 and 2024 church years. The review consisted of cash receipts, cash distributions, general financial controls, banking statement reconciliations, credit card use procedures, payroll, etc. The reviews did not find any significant errors, omissions, or control deficiencies and the financial reports are accurately stated.

The following findings and notes for future audits:

1. File VANCO (online giving system) monthly summaries on top for ease in matching.
2. On recording form, add a column for "reference number" (account number or invoice number)
3. Follow up with Fire & Safety Equipment company on a \$10 overpayment from 1/17/2023.
4. File monthly reconciled bank statements in the locked file cabinet.

Ministry Teams: Christian Education has not met yet. The youth are planning a few things for this summer to keep them connected and involved. JT recommended Fritze Park after a church service followed by food. We discussed sidewalk chalk art with pizza. They are also doing a mural on the west wall of the church. We also discussed the survey Jean had completed from last fall. Tammie discussed attaching a bulletin to the livestream for people who watch church at home. It would be good accessibility for those who aren't in person at church. Could this be available electronically and for those in person when it runs out in church. QR Code for the bulletin? Also discussed work for the church website, Pastor said she would work on it in May.

Ministry Team Reports: MSC to approve ministry team report Tammie Kersten/Jason Blank.

Unfinished business: Discussed Quick Reference Safety Guide and where to post a few guides in the church. Could be in the "Do you know?" in September. We highlighted what happens after an emergency, legality, and incident reports/documentation. Discussed training people CPR/AED. **MSC to approve safety guide Jason Blank/Joe Rehorst.**

Communication Audit: No report

Parking Lot Update: Joe Rehorst had a company come in and mark the church's internal underground utilities and Laurie Olson has obtained the City of Neenah permit.

Synod Council Academy: Discussed highlights from those who attended.

Tammie said she liked a statement by an attendee: "We will focus on what is possible for the future, rather than how we have done things in the past." Other items mentioned:

More connection for our agenda as a church council-talked about having each member give a high & low about what's going on in the lives. Dawn will have this added to the agenda. Reviewed the checklist provided at the academy on job of the council? What could we apply to our church and what do we already do well?

New Business: Pastor Niveen brought up the ideal of doing the newsletter items in the bulletin once a week, instead of doing it once a month to help break down some work for Jean. Pastor proposes sending the last two Sundays to homebound church members, instead of doing a monthly newsletter. The weekly newsletter would have the information instead of putting it in the bulletin. Would trial basis work? Would this provide more time

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

for Jean? Would the end user be bogged down by receiving emails weekly? The council decided to allow Jean to decide what is easiest for her and what would streamline her workload.

Goals & Objectives: Dawn asked council members to review the church's Ministry Results Areas (goals listed on page 8 of the April packet) and come prepared to discuss at the May meeting on how to proceed.

Our next meeting will be 05/15/25 at 6:30pm MSC by Laurie Olson/Tammie Kersten.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer.



We will be trying something a little different next month with our church newsletter, *The Messenger*. Instead of a monthly publication, we will have a brief

weekly newsletter that will be inserted in the bulletin. It will include all the news of events and activities that are going on at St Mark's, as well as a weekly calendar. We hope this new format will better keep you informed on what is happening here at the church. So let us know what you think. The first issue of our new format will be June 1.



Energy Medicine Workshop Coming to St. Mark's

Saturday, June 21, 9:30-11:15 am

- Learn what energy medicine is and how it can improve your mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual health
- Explore Healing Touch as one of 250 energy modalities
- Learn major and minor chakras
- Experience a Healing Touch demo and live testimony
- Q&A

All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Facilitated by Jane Frantz, HTP-A
Healing Touch Practitioner Apprentice
Energy Therapist

Coffee/tea, cinnamon rolls and fresh fruit will be served -please sign up in the church office so we have an accurate count.

"Another solid night of sleep and more productive coughing than before the session. The muscles in my neck where I usually carry my tension is soooo much better." A Client

St. Mark's Lutheran Church Youth Ministry Team



Summer Youth Activities

Stay Connected Over the Summer
920-725-2828 * stmarksneenah.org

**Come Enjoy! Save the Dates & Watch for
Details in the coming weeks.**

- Family Picnic in the park – Sunday, June 8 from 12:00-2:30 pm at Fritse Park, Food and Fun
- Sidewalk Chalk Night – June 25: Draw bible verses/ pictures on our church sidewalks. Pizza!
- Vacation Bible School (VBS) August 3-7 from 5:30-8:00 pm at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Neenah



LOTS of Thank You notes this month! Take a look!

Many thanks to everyone who made our Lenten, Holy Week and Easter services so memorable. We thank all those who prepared our Midweek Lenten meals, our Maundy Thursday Seder, and our Easter Sunday Fellowship. We thank our singers and musicians who made our Holy Week and Easter services even more beautiful. We thank our readers, assisting ministers, altar guild members, and all who had a special part in our worship services. We thank those who so beautifully decorated our church during the Lenten season, Holy Week and on Easter. And finally, we thank our church staff, especially Pastor Niveen, for providing us with such lovely worship opportunities. God's blessings to all!

– St. Mark's Church Council



On behalf of the Community Christmas Dinner Committee, I wish to extend a belated Thank You for your church's continuing support of the dinner. We couldn't do it without your workers, your monetary donations, and your donations toward the food and gift bags.

We served 400 guests in 2024, both done-in and home deliveries. In addition to their meal, each dine-in guest received a gift bag containing paper products, personal hygiene items and a Jimmy John's gift card. Children could also choose a toy, and adults were offered a blanket and socks.

Thank you again!

– Ellen Tews



Thanks so much to **Gwen Hoehne** for all your hard work in leading our Sunday School. You are truly a blessing to our "littles" and our entire church family.

We look forward to next September.

God's Peace – Ginny Schieck



Dear Members of St. Mark's Lutheran Church,

Thank you for the lovely gifts and card I received on Administrative Professional's Day, and for the many nice comments and good wishes you sent my way via Facebook. I love working at St. Mark's because of the love and support I get from all of you. Thank you for allowing me to partner in the Gospel with you here at St. Mark's. To get to see God's Spirit at work in you is really the greatest job of all!

Thanking God for You – Jean Memken

A BOOK REVIEW

from the Racial Equity Team

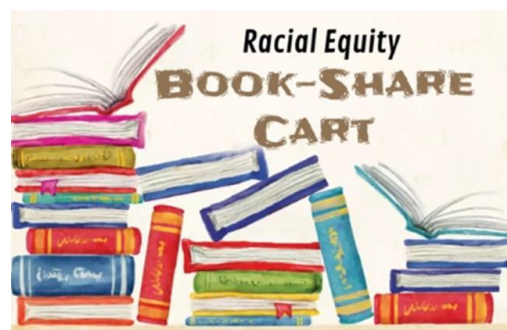
Thank you, Sherri Denney, for the donation to our library. Little Hawk and the Lone Wolf, A Memoir by Raymond C. Kaquatosh (Little Hawk).

Raymond was born in 1924 on the Menominee Reservation near Keshena, WI. He was the son of a medicine woman and began life as a boy steeped in tribal and family traditions in the natural world of Northern Wisconsin. After the death of his father at the time of the depression, he was sent to live at the Indian boarding school in Keshena. Without a means of transportation and due to the financial constraints, the 8-yr. old boy was unable to return home until later. He was a lonely boy when he met and befriended a lone wolf.

Through each chapter of his life, through school and work, time with the Marines, and finally postwar Wausau with his future wife, the wolf waited, and the friendship held. This is a rare book written in first-person by a Menominee Indian. It is by turns funny, sad, irreverent, and deeply moving.

The book has about a sixth grade reading level and would be enjoyed by youth as well as adults. It is a quick read and reveals many of the hurdles in life faced by a Wisconsin Indian boy and man. "Little Hawk" died in 2018 at the age of 93.

Reviewed by Pat Westphal



Our Sunday Servants

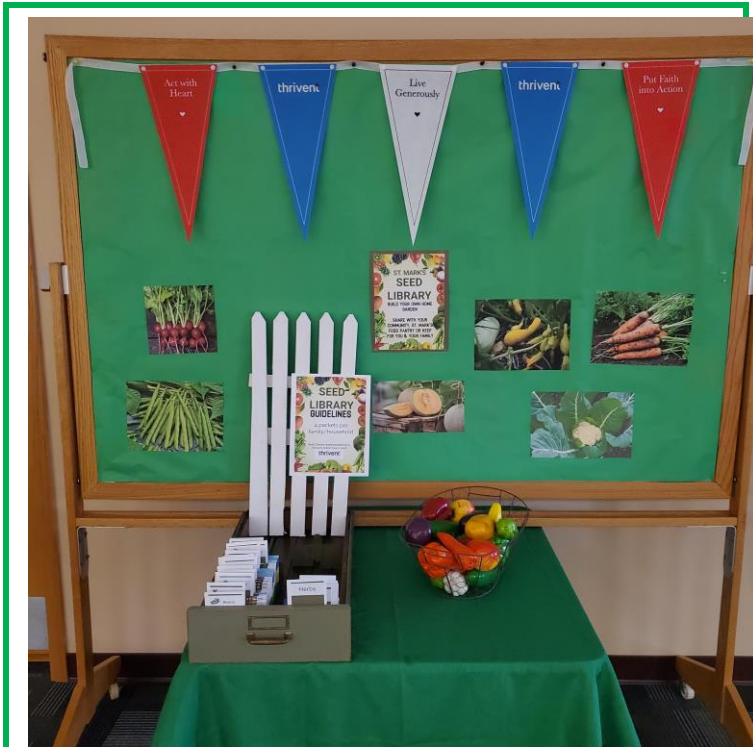
Date	Assisting Minister	Reader	Greeters	Ushers	Counters	Acolyte
May 4 Last Sun. Sch. FISH FRY	Judy Hellman	J.T. Rose	The Clifford Family	Pat Westphal Doug Sebestead	Jeff Tharp Kim Wallmuller Fern Fuhrmann	Sophie Kersten
May 11 Mother's Day Baptism	Emily Christofilis	Pat Westphal	Nancy Rose Samantha Rose	Emil Leppiaho Phyllis Ziemke	Jane Arps Ellen LaMarche Pat Westphal	Braydin Messing
May 18 Confirmation	Sherri Denney	LaVerne Arndt	Karen Jordan Nancy Bricco	John & Laurie Olson Shaun Johnson	Gwen Hoehne Doug Sebestead Renie Sebestead	
May 27 Graduation Celebration	Bruce Grundman	Jenny Case	Jeff Tharp Sherri Denney	Nancy Bricco Rosemary Cermak	Bruce Grundman Lois Kemp Linda Anderson	

Communion Assistants:

May 1 – (At the Rail) – Dom & Emily Christofilis

May 18 – Easter Sunday (Intinction) – Bruce Grundman, Mary Jane Hartley, and Judy Hellman

Altar Guild: Mary Jane Hartley



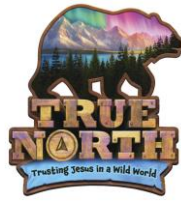
Our Seed Library is open for business in our Fellowship Hall. Feel free to take some seeds to plant in your garden and if you have extra produce at the end of the season, share it with others! The time to plant is NOW!



BINGO IS BACK!!!

That's right! We have another rousing round of BINGO on Monday, May 19th from 1:00-3:00 pm in our Fellowship Hall. Come for BINGO, refreshments, and maybe even a prize if you win! Tell your friends about it and bring them along! Get ready a fun afternoon of competition and comradery!

VBS REGISTRATION IS OPEN!!!



Pick up a form in the narthex and turn it in to the church office or register online at:

<https://forms.gle/eQ7iCB4yvPjxx53v6>

St. Mark's Lutheran Church
140 S. Green Bay Road
Neenah, WI 54956

May

