

# ST. MARK'S MESSENGER

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May 2026

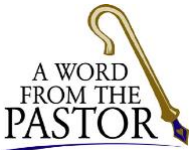
Valley, Nebraska

[www.StMarksValleyNE.com](http://www.StMarksValleyNE.com)

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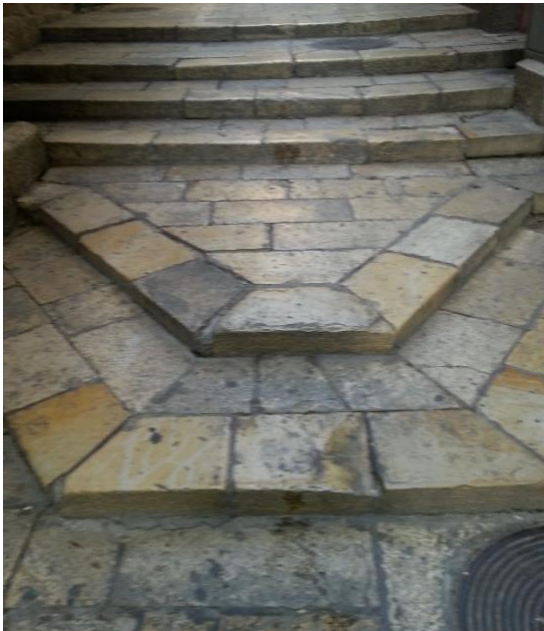
**ST MARK'S**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

*from the Pastor...*



*And when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left, your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it." Isaiah 30:21*

I am thinking a lot about our Confirmands, and the long journey that is the Christian faith, that is ahead for each of them. But they are not alone! We are **all** on that journey—only at different places. It



is unique for each of us—but the help and the wisdom from Jesus is the same.

This picture is one that I took in Jerusalem in 2015. I was always looking at the stones and wondering if Jesus had walked on them? This picture of this part of street was taken on the 'Via Dolorosa'—the *Way of Sorrow*, or *Street of Tears*. It is the route that (they think) Jesus took on the way to the cross. Who knows if these are the very same stones? Who knows how many times he walked there, or not? We just don't know. But he does tell

us that He IS the WAY, the truth and the life—that we **do** know! **He** is our salvation, his was the suffering that secured our freedom from death's

annihilation. He is our life. His determination to have us with him—and the Father’s determination was the same. How blessed we are to have such a God, who is also a Savior!

Now, in *our* time—it is our work to follow Him and Him only. It is not always an easy stroll, is it? Sometimes, it is very difficult—when difficulties beset us, it is a rough climb. When we feel that His way should be easier than this, sometimes—(especially when we use ‘the world’ as our measuring tape) we can be deluded into thinking that we should all be wealthy, and healthy, and somehow be paid back for following him. (But following Jesus was never supposed to be a transaction—but more like a *guided trust walk*—using his Scripture, and prayer, and other Christians as our guides also.) But **always**—trust the Spirit, trust Jesus’ words. Even when the words or the way is not easy—trust Him, seek Him, and listen for his voice telling you—'*this is the way—walk in it.*' Our ‘way’ is not necessarily the world’s way—don’t be worried or dismayed—he is our shepherd, guiding our way through the spiritual hazards of this world and its ways. Jesus **always** loved and forgave...if nothing else, let those two things be your ‘way’ if you feel lost. And remember, **He is there, on the road with you**, always. I want to end with a prayer from St. Teresa of Avila—one that I hope might be a blessing to you...

May there today be peace within.

May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be.

May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.

May you use those gifts that you have received and pass on the love that has been given to you.

May you be content knowing you are a child of God.

Let this presence settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise, and love. It is there for each and every one of us.

May God bless you as you travel your way, His way.

Pastor Barbara

**A PRAYER FOR ST MARK'S COUNCIL**  
**Creator God, give our leaders fresh inspiration to**  
**discover new ways to reach our communities with your**  
**message of grace. Amen.**

*from the PMA...*

## **Lonely**

Family celebrations have changed for us over the years. Where at one time there was a multitude of family and extended family, ours have shrunk to just a few loved ones. I confess to engaging in pity parties as I grieve over the lost days of old where gatherings were held often and lasted for hours and relationships were built and maintained in the process. On a recent holiday, I became frustrated and sad over the loss of these relationship building events. After a minimal venting, I thought about God. How does He cope with the shrinking relationships of all of His children? For thousands of years He has yearned for the gathering of His children. Imagine His feelings as His created beings “grow up and grow away” from Him. I was devastated by the loss of my own small family and at that point I felt very guilty for thinking of only my losses. May we do whatever we can to keep our loved ones close to us and close to God.

PMA Karen

### **AdvoCare Nugget**

45% of young people say they are moderately or extremely lonely. If these figures alarm you, learn how you can make a difference. Reach out to our congregation's AdvoCare Team or check out the resource posters throughout the church.



Church Secretary, Jan Reis, is a **General Notary Public**. This service is available to the congregation at no charge.

## MAY NEWS FOR WOMEN OF ST. MARK'S

### FAITH CIRCLE NEWS

### FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE NEWS

### JOY/PEACE CIRCLE NEWS

Joy/Peace Circle will have a Baby Care Collection starting May 10-30. Girl Scout Troop #48853 will assist with a drop off collection on May 23 from 10-12. All items will be donated to COPE.

Needed items:

Size 6 diapers (ONLY)

Baby wipes

Baby lotion

Baby shampoo

Baby rash cream

No bottles, but sippy cups

## ATTENTION!!



On May 17, 2026, St. Mark's will be recognizing all graduates, both from high school and college. We would like to include your names in the May 17<sup>th</sup> bulletin and the June newsletter. In order to do so, we need the correct spelling of your name and the school from which you are graduating and your future plans. **College grads**, please list the degree you are graduating with. Please call the Church Office with your information or email it to [secretary@stmarksvalleyne.com](mailto:secretary@stmarksvalleyne.com)..



## COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

This is the synopsis of the Council meeting held on  
April 21. 2026..

- The small pantry is closed for repairs.
- The Evangelism Committee asked for the use of St. Mark's parking lot for Valley Days. There will be a walk from Waterloo to Valley. The end would be in the parking lot.
- In the fall the Evangelism Committee would like to send cards to our home-bound members. Possibly a noisy offering to cover postage.
- The Sunday that Sunday School starts up in the fall, St. Mark's could possibly have a lunch,
- Jan has been asked to create hard files and computer files for HR and then to email the personnel policy to all paid employees.
- VBS plans are being made. It will be held at St. John's Catholic Church this summer, June 22-26.
- Spring Outdoor Clean Up Day will be April 25.
- The cost of Prayer Garden Bricks will remain the same.

## **APRIL MONTHLY FINANCIAL AS OF 4/30/2026**

April Budget - \$27,191

April as of 4/30/2026 Expenses - \$21,130

April as of 4/30/2026 Giving - \$21,074

## **YEAR TO DATE FINANCIAL AS OF 4/30/2026**

January – December Budget - \$290,287

January – December as of 4/30/2026 Expenses - \$89,796

January – December as of 4/30/2026 Giving - \$89,280

## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

Victims of domestic violence often leave their homes in haste, with no more than the clothes on their backs. These personal items help aid in transitioning into a safer environment.

Suggested items that can be used:

- Toothpaste/toothbrush
- Deodorant
- Tampons
- Magazines or books
- Shampoo/conditioners.  
(hotel samples are great)
- Small stuffed animals – new or slightly used
- Children’s books
- Tote bag or grocery-type recycle bags
- Old cell phones (used for 911 only)
- Comb/brush.
- Body wash/body lotions
- diapers
- Gently used suitcases



The collections dates are from May 1 to June 30.

If summer takes you away from St. Mark's on Sundays, don't forget your offering is still mighty important. Thanks!!



**QUILTING DATES** : May 11 and May 28; June 8, June 17 and June 25; July 13, July 22 and July 30: August 10, August 19 and August 27



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## From Laughing with Lutherans

During the Easter season, the pastor asked during the children's sermon: "What just happened to Jesus that we all want to remember?" After some thought, one of the children said, Jesus died on the cross. Pressing on, the pastor asked, "And what did God do then?: The pastor's son spoke right up, "God recycled him!"

## SCRIPTURES FOR SUNDAYS IN MAY 2026

May 3

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Confirmation Day

First Reading	Acts 7:55-60
Responsive Reading	Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16
Second Reading	1 Peter 2:2-10
Gospel Reading	John 14:1-14

May 10

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Mother's Day

First Reading	Acts 17: 22-31
Responsive Reading	Psalm 66;8-20
Second Reading	1 Peter 3:13-22
Gospel Reading	John 14:16-21

May 17

Seventh Sunday of Easter

Graduation

First Reading	Acts 1:6-14
Responsive Reading	Psalm 66:1-10, 32-35
Second Reading	1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11
Gospel Reading	John 17:1-11

May 24

Day or Pentecost

First Reading	Acts 2:1+21
Responsive Reading	Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
Second Reading	1 Corinthians 12:3b-13
Gospel Reading	John 20:18-23

## Birthdays in May

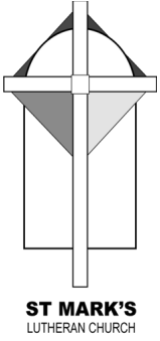


It has been requested to have personal birthdates put in the newsletter. If we are going to do this we need you to be sure that we have your birth date.

Please let the church office know your date if you have not already done so.

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE FOLLOWING:

- |                        |                          |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 – Carolyn Chaffin    | 21 – Rick Bohnhoff       |
| 5 – Jacqueline Stanzel | 22 – Matthew Allen       |
| 7 – Greyson Peters     | 22 – Mya Kerwin          |
| 8 – Kristi Saathoff    | 23 – Michael McKie       |
| 8 – Baylor Kahlandt    | 23 – Micky Nielsen       |
| 9 – Matthew McGaughey  | 24 – Abigayle Burkholder |
| 10 – Wyatt Gotch       | 24 – Nicholas Stanzel    |
| 11 – Jack Floody       | 25 – Dylan MacDonald     |
| 11 – Misty Wilson      | 26 – Cheryl Benke        |
| 11 – Nora Wittgren     | 28 – Bev Griffin         |
| 11 – Jacob Hackworth   | 29 – Monica Burkholder   |
| 13 – Ryan Hackworth    | 29 – John Niemoth        |
| 13 – Helen Kirchmann   | 30 – Brooks Hinrichs     |
| 17 – Julissa Bakken    | 30 – Elly Kennec         |
| 18 – Colton Feist      | 30 – Grant Mayer         |
| 18 – Hayden Lewis      | 30 – Bill Richards       |
| 19 – Lonnie Peterson   | 30 – Peggy Saathoff      |
| 21 – Jennifer Arp      | 31 – Cheryl Marshall     |



# ST. MARK'S MESSENGER

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## SUMMER SCHEDULE

The St. Mark's Messenger (newsletter) summer schedule is as follows:

May

\*June/July

August

The deadline for articles to be in the church office is May 20 for the \*June/July newsletter; and July 20 for the August newsletter.

\*Please note that we are going to combine the months of June and July and only send out 1 newsletter for those two months.



As the end of April is here, it is time to begin planning our summers. Along with the planning, it is time for Summer Sundays, our version of a shorter service which features a couple less readings and shorter liturgy. Summer Sundays will begin on Sunday **May 31, 2026** and run through Sunday, **September 6, 2026**.



The following youth were confirmed on Sunday, May 3, 2026: Tristan Alexander Jurgensen, Hadley Ryan Peters, and Nora Marais Nickel Wittgren. Forrest Lane Goff was confirmed the following Sunday, May 10, 2026. Please keep these youth and their families in your prayers.



**Baptized** on Sunday, May 10, 2026, was Hadley Mae Johnson. Hadley is the daughter of Dalton and Courtney Johnson. Her grandparents are Jeff and Louise Allen. Hadley's baptismal sponsors are Jeffrey and Matthew Allen and Braden and Morgan Johnson.

### *Thank You*

Thank you for the many, many prayers said for my granddaughter, Eryn, during her battle with cancer. I know it was the prayers that helped all of us deal with and give Eryn support. A very special thank you to Pastor Barbara for the wonderful Celebration of Life for Eryn. It gave us all a sense of peace.

Your sister in Christ, Jan Reis

# May 2026

May 2026							June 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30					28	29	30				

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Apr 26	27	28	29	30	May 1	2 8:00am Men In Mission
3 8:30am Joy/Peace Circle 8:30am Sunday School 9:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship	4 1:00pm Friendship Circle 1:00pm Worship at Valley Lake 10:30am Fellowship	5 1:00pm Faith Circle	6 7:00pm Choir	7 4:00pm Bible Study	8	9
10 6:30am Sunday School 9:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship	11 1:00pm Quilters	12 6:30pm Music and Worship	13 7:00pm Choir	14 4:00pm Bible Study	15	16
17 8:30am Sunday School 9:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship	18	19 6:30pm Church Council	20 7:00pm Choir	21 4:00pm Bible Study	22	23
24 8:30am Sunday School 9:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship	25	26	27 7:00pm Choir	28 Synod Assembly 1:00pm Quilters 4:00pm Bible Study	29 Synod Assembly	30 Synod Assembly
31 Synod Assembly 8:30am Sunday School 9:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship	Jun 1	2	3	4	5	6

Jim Rees