

THE FORWARD of ST. MARK

SHARING
THE LOVE
OF JESUS

MARCH 2021



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St. Mark Lutheran Church

Missouri Synod-English District

Pastor Brett Matz

**1019 North 7th Street
Sheboygan, Wisconsin 53081
(920) 458-4343**

Web site:

www.stmarksheboygan.com

E-mail addresses:

office@stmarksheboygan.com

pastor@stmarksheboygan.com

treasurer@stmarksheboygan.com

**The FORWARD of St. Mark Monthly Newsletter
March 2021, Volume 15 Issue 3**

PASTOR'S MESSAGE



What's Your Focus On?

Will it ever go away? And no, this time I'm not referring to the Coronavirus pandemic. As I look out my window I see this big pile of snow. It has to be a least 8 feet high and the chances are pretty good that within a couple of days (the weather forecast calls for more snow later in the week) that number will increase. And so I'm left to wonder, "Will it ever go away?" The answer to my question is, "Eventually it will." Just as I've witnessed over my entire, eventually all those big piles of snow will melt away.

So what do you do until then? I suppose you can sit and complain, that is if you don't like snow, or I suppose you can enjoy it while it lasts. And that's what I prefer to do. While I may not enjoy everything that comes with a fresh blanket of snow (shoveling, bad roads, and closures), there is still enough of a kid in me that enjoys the occasional snow ball fight with the family or spending an hour or two snowshoeing in the beautiful outdoors. What I'm trying to say is this – stop focusing on the negative things and instead focus on the positive.

This past year has been like no other, both in our personal lives and also within our church. But amongst all the negative I've also seen some wonderful and positive things. I've seen strangers come together to ensure people don't go hungry. I've seen businesses donate more than they ever have, both monetarily and with goods. I've heard from people, who have not been inside a church for years, enjoy the opportunity to worship once again and hear God's Words of love and forgiveness through our on-line services.

Will it ever go away? The snow, yes, our focus on the positive, I hope and pray it never will. That is what sets us apart. As Christians we know in this life there will be times of heartache. There will be times when everything around us seems so bleak. But look again. Even in the darkest of times there is still a light. A light of hope. A light of positivity. That light is none other than Jesus Christ. He is the One who brings all those good things in our lives. He is the One who adjusts our eyes to see all that is positive around us.

In His service,
Pastor Brett



ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH: CONNECTING-SHARING-EQUIPPING-REFLECTING

Connecting by building bridges with our neighbor
Sharing the Good News of Jesus for a changed community
Equipping each other for opportunities to serve
Reflecting God's love through acts of kindness



When you are hospitalized or in need of Pastoral care,
especially in these trying times of Covid-19 and isolation,
please contact either Pastor Matz or the church office at 920-458-4343.



Flowers will adorn our altar this Easter Sunday in memory of loved ones, in honor of others, or special gifts etc.

Please fill out and return this form, with payment to the church office by **Monday, March 29** to have your dedication listed on the Easter morning special insert.

Flowers may be sponsored without a specific dedication by making a donation specifically marked "For Easter Flowers."

I (we) wish to sponsor:

- _____ Azalea(s) at \$18.50 each
- _____ Tulip(s) at \$9 each
- _____ Daffodil(s) at \$9 each
- _____ Single stem Lily(s) at \$10 each
- _____ Double stem Lily(s) at \$19 each



Please fill in your (donors') name(s) as you would like them to appear on the sponsor list:

Please fill in how you would like the sponsorship to read:

In memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

Other: _____


Gifts
 unto the **Lord**
 from Your Estate

*Have you included
 St. Mark Congregational Fund
 in your estate planning?*

*See your financial advisor or attorney
 to find the best way for you to do it!*



Membership Statistics

As of February 12, 2021

Confirmed:	219
Unconfirmed:	14
Baptized:	233



THE SECRET OF BEING CONTENT

Greetings St. Mark !

This past year was a very challenging year emotionally and financially for many people. The Pandemic disrupted the way we live and the way many of us work. Wearing masks, using hand sanitizers, and keeping a reasonable distance from other people is the new norm.

Experiencing the isolation from others, the fear of getting sick, being restricted in the way we can worship (if we can even worship it at all), not being able to attend events and activities, and, for some, the loss of income has caused many to be angry and discontent. During this difficult and life-changing time, it has become pretty easy to become discontent, but, with God's help, we can stop allowing these circumstances to deflate us. Through faith, we know that God is in control, and He will help to get us through this challenging time. Just as the Apostle Paul learned to be content in all his adversity, we also can be content. *"I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through Him Who strengthens me"* (Philippians 4:13).

Our personal circumstances are different from Paul's and our society is different from the one in which Paul lived and worked. It seems we all, at one time or another, fall victim to discontentment. If our joy and happiness come from living comfortably and depend on things rather than on a devotion to Christ, we will be discontent. We can learn to be content in the circumstances the Lord gives us. Paul learned contentment through realizing and reminding himself that contentment comes from relying on God, trusting that His strength enables us to do "everything."

Regardless what 2021 brings, we hope and pray that we, too, will learn *"the secret of being content"* in the Lord and thank Him for all He gives us, especially His most indescribable gift, the gift of His Son, Jesus (2 Corinthians 9:15). If tribulation continues in this new year, we can take comfort in the words of Jesus, *"be of good cheer, I have overcome the world"* (John 16:33).

We are encouraged that your offerings have continued at the same level as previously. Thank you for your financial contributions to our mission and ministry, especially when giving these days may be sacrificial in nature. May God continue to bless your faithful stewardship of all that He entrusts to you.

[Adapted from Letter by Stewardship Advisors]

The Stewardship Committee



ST MARK/AUDREY BALLSCHMIDER SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Parents and students applying for registration to Lutheran High School for the school year of 2021/2022 and wish to apply for the scholarship. Please fill out the TADS application form which determines the NEED dollar level you qualify for. The forms are available at Lutheran High at a cost of \$25.00. This should be done by April.

If you have questions, please contact Tim Becker, Carol Carriveau, or Gary Leonhardt through the church office.

GIVING and WORSHIP ATTENDANCE COMPARISON
2021 through January 2021 Compared to 2020

5

	2020	2021
Average Operating Fund Offerings per week (see Note 1)	\$3,570	\$3,625
Average In-person Attendance per week at Services (see Note 2)	\$ 87	\$ 44
Weekly Budget (see Note 3)	\$4,540	\$4,355

Note 1: 2021 Giving includes offerings during Worship and payments received in Church Office through the end of January. Values do not include special fund donations to ministries such as We Care, the Food Pantry, the Vineyard Fund, the Youth Group, and building projects. These donations were approximately \$145 per week through January 2021. Other sources of funds, such as outside contributions, Memorials, refunds, rebates, and transfers from the Congregational Fund, are also not included in the amounts.

Note 2: Attendance per week includes only in-person attendance. Comparable online attendance figures are not available for live-streamed services. Live-streaming viewers during services in 2021 ranged from approximately 18-26. 'Views' of recorded services ranged from 154 to 185.

Note 3: Budget figures are included as a comparison because the budget was the estimated amount voted on by the Congregation Membership to meet the Congregation's financial requirements during the year. Actual expenditures are available in the monthly accounting report distributed by the Treasurer.

Note 4: These amounts are presented for comparison purposes only. Our individual giving amount should be based on being faithful to the Lord so that we return a generous amount of the gifts He gave us.



March 3	Mid-Week	4:00 pm
March 10	Mid-Week	4:00 pm
March 17	Mid-Week	4:00 pm
March 24	Mid-Week	4:00 pm
March 28	Palm Sunday	9:00 am
April 1	Maundy Thursday	4:00 pm
April 2	Good Friday	4:00 pm Only
April 4	Easter Sunday	9:00 am Only



March 2021

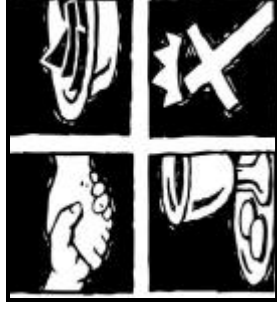
St. Mark Lutheran Church Monthly Calendar of services, meetings and events.
Please see the weekly Messenger, available at each worship service, for important changes and updates.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 9:00am-12:30pm Parish Nurse in Office 4:00pm Worship Service 5:00pm Bells Rehearsal	4 4:00pm Confirmation Class through Zoom No Church Service	5 9:30am Food Pantry Drive-Thru	6
7 9:00am Worship (w/HC) Streamed online @ Facebook.com /stmarksheboygan 10:00am Bible Study	8 6:00pm BOD Meeting	9	10 9:00am-12:30pm Parish Nurse in Office 4:00pm Worship Service 5:00pm Bells Rehearsal @ Zion	11 No Church Service	12	13
14 Daylight Savings Time Begins 9:00am Worship Service Streamed online @ Facebook.com /stmarksheboygan 10:00am Bible Study	15	16	17 9:00am-12:30pm Parish Nurse in Office 4:00pm Worship (w/HC) 5:00pm Bells Rehearsal	18 No Church Service	19 9:30am Food Pantry Drive-Thru	20 Spring Begins
21 9:00am Worship (w/HC) Streamed online @ Facebook.com /stmarksheboygan 10:00am Bible Study 10:15am Congregational Fund Meeting	22	23	24 9:00am-12:30pm Parish Nurse in Office 4:00pm Worship Service 5:00pm Bells Rehearsal	25 No Church Service	26	27
28 Palm Sunday 9:00am Worship Service Streamed online @ Facebook.com /stmarksheboygan 10:00am Bible Study Food Pantry Sunday	29	30	31 9:00am-12:30pm Parish Nurse in Office 4:00pm Worship Service 5:00pm Bells Rehearsal @ Zion			

SUBJECT TO CHANGE



VOLUNTEERS SERVING IN THE MONTH OF MARCH



Note: If you are unable to attend on your assigned day, please switch with someone else and notify the church office of the change, so bulletins can be corrected.

MARCH 2021 VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

Day	Date	Time	Sound	Projection	Facebook Page	Ushers	Altar Guild	Deacon
March 3	Wed	4:00pm	—	Kathy Matz	Kathy Matz	—	—	Jim Leonhardt
March 7	Sun	9:00am	Jeff Evans	Dave Hilpertshauser	Rob Sass	—	Kelly Irwin	Todd Goebel
March 10	Wed	4:00pm	—	Kathy Matz	Kathy Matz	—	—	Needed
March 14	Sun	9:00am	Rob Sass	Drew Thimmig	Dave Hilpertshauser	—	—	Jim Leonhardt
March 17	Wed	4:00pm	—	Kathy Matz	Kathy Matz	—	—	Needed
March 21	Sun	9:00am	Tim Matz	Rob Sass	Dave Hilpertshauser	—	Ginny Altendahl	Mark Lawrenz
March 24	Wed	4:00pm	—	Kathy Matz	Kathy Matz	—	—	Needed
March 28	Sun	9:00am	Dave Hilpertshauser	Drew Thimmig	Rob Sass	—	—	Mary Rautmann

SUBJECT TO CHANGE



Hi From Your Parish Nurse!

Last month I started discussing chronic kidney disease (CKD) by looking at what the kidneys do in your body, risk factors for CKD, and symptoms of CKD. This month I would like to review ways you can protect your kidneys, diagnostic tests for CKD and treatment for CKD.

First let's talk about what you can do to keep your kidneys healthy. **1) Control your blood pressure.** This is the most vital factor in controlling all types of CKD. You may not have high blood pressure (BP) in the very early stages of CKD, but it will ultimately rise. Two of the most usual classes of medications prescribed to treat high BP related to CKD are angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors and angiotensin II receptor blockers (ARBs). High BP can damage blood vessels in the kidneys so they don't work as well, then your kidneys may not work as well either. **2) Control blood sugar.** Checking your blood sugar is an important way to manage your diabetes. Keep your blood sugar close to your goal as too much glucose or sugar in your blood damages your kidneys' filters. This can also decrease your risk of cardiovascular disease and other complications of diabetes like nerve damage and blindness. **3) Further protect your cardiovascular health.** Protecting your heart and blood vessels enhances your kidneys' function and vice versa. CKD is a key risk factor for cardiovascular disease. In older adults with CKD, the risk of dying of heart disease is more significant than the risk of ultimately needing dialysis. Also, controlling your low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol will assist in protecting your kidneys and cardiovascular health. Supporting a healthy weight will assist in keeping your BP and blood sugar down. If you smoke, stopping is a game-changer for cardiovascular health and can aid in slowing the progression of CKD. **4) Use medications wisely.** Certain medications can harm your kidneys and add to worsening CKD. Long-term use of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin IB, others) and naproxen sodium (Aleve) can lead to kidney damage. You should ask your health care provider before taking any drug, nonprescription health product or supplement to see if it is safe for your kidneys. Dye injected into your veins (radiographic contrast material) for imaging studies like CT scans can possibly injure your kidneys. If you need one of these tests remind your health care providers if you have CKD. Either another test could be used or steps can be taken to decrease the risk to your kidneys.

There are several tests that can be done to check kidney function. First, a blood test called the **glomerular filtration rate (GFR)** checks to see how well your kidneys are filtering your blood. The normal GFR is 90 or above. It can vary by age, decreasing as you age. It is calculated from the creatinine level in your blood using age and gender. It is also adjusted for African American descent. A GFR below 60 is a sign that the kidneys are not working correctly. A GFR below 15 suggests kidney failure and a need for dialysis or kidney transplant. **Creatinine** is a waste product from the normal breakdown of muscles in your body. Your kidneys remove creatinine from your blood. Health care providers can use the creatinine level in your body to estimate your GFR. Creatinine levels may vary depending on age, race and body type. A creatinine level greater than 1.2 for women and 1.4 for men may be an early sign of the kidneys not working correctly. As CKD advances the creatinine in the blood rises. **Blood Urea Nitrogen (BUN)** comes from the breakdown of protein in the foods you eat. A normal BUN level is 7-20. As kidney function decreases the BUN increases. Other things can increase the BUN level such as dehydration.

Urine can also be tested for **albumin** which is a protein found in your blood. Healthy kidneys do not let albumin pass into the urine, so the less albumin there is in your urine, the better. **Urine albumin-to-creatinine ratio (UACR)** determines and associates albumin in your urine with amount of creatinine in your urine sample. The UACR can be used to estimate how much albumin would pass into your urine over 24 hours. A urine albumin result of 30mg/g or less is normal while more than 30mg/g can be an indication of kidney disease. If you have albumin your doctor may repeat the urine test 1 or 2 more times to confirm the results before further testing. Measuring the albumin in your urine assists your provider knows which treatment is best for you if you have CKD. If a urine albumin stays the same or goes down it can mean the treatments are working.


Treatment for CKD includes the steps that I discussed previously to keep your kidneys healthy as well as working with your health team to monitor your kidney health, take medications as prescribed, work with a dietician to develop a meal plan, make physical activity part of your routine, aim for a healthy weight, get enough sleep, stop smoking and find ways to cope with stress and depression. Many people think that all kidney disease will lead to dialysis. However, most people with CKD will not need dialysis. You can lead a normal productive life with kidney disease.

From: www.kidney.org, www.niddk.nih.gov and *Mayo Clinic Health Letter*, January 2021

Carolyn Eiden, RN
Parish Nurse

I will be in my Parish Nurse office every Wednesday in March from 9 a.m.—12:30 p.m.

GriefShare is on hold until Spring, due to Covid-19.



Virtual Gala
for the benefit of the
**English District
Endowment Fund**

In the beginning, God spoke and it was so. **THY STRONG WORD.**

Today ministry and mission work is done with our hands and feet, our actions and our words. **THY STRONG WORD.**

God also inspires us to give of our treasures. **THY STRONG WORD.**

Our English District has an Endowment Fund that assists congregations and pastors with ministry and mission work. The 2021 English District Virtual Gala is a time for our district to gather online and recognize the work of our ministries and missions that received assistance from our Endowment Fund. It is also an opportunity for all members and congregations to donate to this important fund so it may continue supporting our district's work in ministry and mission.

Join the English District on June 13, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. Eastern Time for the Virtual Gala—**THY STRONG WORD.** There will be inspiring speakers, award presentations, opportunities to donate, an online auction, a celebration of our missions, and beautiful music.

[Register here](#)
OR
Visit our English District website – www.englishdistrict.org.



We're always looking for new and detailed information to publish upcoming events. The deadline is the 15th of the month. When emailing to jleff@att.net, please use the words FORWARD (month) in the subject line (Word format—not PDF, please.) You can also call my phone number (920.458.0886) and either leave a detailed message or your return number. There is a drop box at church, but since I am worshipping online at the present time, I am not faithful with checking it. If you prefer a “real voice”, please call after 2 PM. Thank you. Julie Leffin/FORWARD Editor

Birthday blessings to you!

Thomas Kroll	March 1
Joe Matz	March 1
Dan Drossel	March 2
Barb Sohn	March 4
David Weichbrodt	March 7
Boots Brandt	March 9
Kathy Matz	March 10
Jerry Cramlet	March 12
Jaxsen Horvat	March 14
Gayle Sebald	March 15
Steve Schueffner	March 19
Hank Kalkopf	March 22
Nancy Rank	March 22
Phyllis Hoepfner	March 24
Aidan Laumann	March 26
Ryan Bulkow	March 28
Dan Diener	March 29
Dave Hartman	March 31



God bless your years together!



Donald and Kim Diener	March 18	32 years
Jim and Sue Meyer	March 24	59 years
Joe and Kelly Irwin	March 28	29 years
Dennis and Bev Diener	March 30	47 years



Mary Bellinder
4.13.1935—2.4.2021



A word of gratitude . . .

St. Mark has been blessed through the generosity of many businesses who pay to advertise in The FORWARD. Please be kind and consider patronizing these monthly advertisers, as their ad donations keep the cost of The FORWARD to a monthly minimum, if any.

And when you do, feel free to mention your appreciation on behalf of St. Mark Lutheran Church.

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MARCH 2021
FORWARD
MONTHLY
NEWSLETTER

