



The Parishioner

Volume 28 Issue 07 A Publication of St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church July/August 2023

From the Pastor's Desk:

How do we know what it means to be Americans, citizens of the United States of America? If we live legally in this country, we share something in common, regardless of where we or our parents came from. When a person takes the time to read the Declaration of Independence, the Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, we are reading part of the history and the “spirit” of America.

There is something truly amazing about this nation. One of our defining principles is freedom: we are free to be citizens of this country. We are free to practice our faith (or not to practice a faith/religion) without coercion. Our nation does not have or support a “State Church”, like the Church of England. No politician or monarch is the head of the church.

The celebration of freedom, officially recognized on the 4th of July, is a constant reminder of the blessings of this nation. It should also be a call to diligence. We must not fall into the trap of thinking that freedom means we can do whatever we want (because we want to). American freedom allows all people to live as citizens and under our laws. As I write these words and as you read them, we know that we live in tumultuous times (to put it mildly). People are afraid – for good reasons. There are people in this country who want to destroy it in any way they can. We have laws on the books that are supposed to protect us by making it harder for people carry out these acts. But we have entirely too many politicians who refuse to see it, or who see it and don't care. When a radical terrorists loot and destroy businesses and people's livelihood and then people in positions of authority and power tell us that the real problem is Christians (and/or people who belong to a certain political party), we have a clear indication that something is deeply wrong. *(Please read the quote printed below.)*

And here is my point: as Christians, we have been set free – free from sin and death (read especially Romans 6). But we are not simply free; we are servants/slaves of Christ. We are not free to do whatever we want; we are bound to Christ and to his commandments, to live in obedience. As Christians, we continually bring ourselves to the feet of Christ to have the light of the Gospel shine upon and into our living and thinking. As Christians we want (or should want) to know the truth about ourselves. We do not shy away from confession and forgiveness, because we desire to be shaped more and more into the image of Christ.

If we need to read and understand our founding documents to appreciate the greatness of this nation – despite its flaws – and the responsibilities that are placed on us as citizens, it is even more important that we read, study, and live the Holy Scriptures, given to us by the Holy Spirit. That is only possible when we yield to the leading of the Spirit. We must live and speak the truth – tell the truth about the world, about good and evil, about love and hate, about right and wrong – without worrying that someone might be offended. If we really, truly, and sincerely believe the message of the Gospel – the message of life and death – then we have no choice;

we have to proclaim it and live it, no matter what. If Jesus is Lord, then the Gospel is not just about individual Christian's personal and private "spirituality"; it is about a new world and a new creation in Christ.

I am wondering what I have to do from now on to live out the life and ministry to which Christ commissions me. I invite you to pray for me and for one another. Perhaps there is a way St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church can even more faithfully proclaim the Good News: Jesus Christ is Lord.



Your fellow servant, *Pastor Phillips*

The following are the words of Os Guinness from his 2022 book *Zero Hour America: History's Ultimatum over Freedom and the Answer We Must Give* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2022), pp. 3-5:

Howl, America! Howl! Howl like the Hebrew prophets howled over the fate of their people before the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC! ... Howl for the way the fabled "land of the free" has turned its back on what made it free and is pursuing phantoms that lead to decline and ruin. Howl for how America has come to be what the world sees today – a world superpower still, wealthy, prosperous, and powerful but unrecognizable in terms of the ideals of its past and stumbling leaderless from one blunder to another. Howl for the way America is blindly ignoring its day of reckoning and opting for its own decline, careless about what it would take to avert it. Howl for the way a society fostering so much hate between its citizens appears to be yearning for its own destruction.

Have Americans forgotten their great *why*? The thousand and one ways their ancestors were not free elsewhere and the distinctive way that they were to live as a free people in the land of the free – with an ordered freedom born of freely chosen consent, a mutually binding pledge, and reciprocal responsibility of all for all? Not simply a democracy but a covenantal-constitutional republic that would witness to the world a better way of demonstrating human dignity, justice, freedom, and peace? Have Americans failed to realize that in choosing to be "one nation under God" they chose to be always accountable and always under the judgment of heaven for their deeds? Is America's stunning incomprehension about the present crisis the result of a blindness that is spiritual as well as intellectual?

...Most Americans show little evidence that they understand freedom and the commitments that freedom requires of them. America now stands uncertainly, stunned and bemused through its ignorance of its enemies without and within. America's conscience is battered. America's public life is torn between the guilt of a sullied past, the pull of a power-hungry establishment oligarchy, and the countering pull of a radical left-wing revolution that has never worked anywhere or at any time, and that has always ended in failure and oppression. America after two and a half centuries has grown into a wealthy, elitist, technocratic, bureaucratic, and corporatist world power that alternately suppresses and squanders freedom with a prodigal carelessness that defies all reason – and despite all this still seems largely unaware of the deadliest peril it faces.

Dr. Guinness is a British-American who moved to the United States in 1984. He is the author/editor of more than thirty books. I encourage you to search for his books online. You can also find more information about him at www.osguinness.com. ++++++

3T
Wednesday, July 5, &
Wednesday, August 2 @ 9:00 am

Time of talk, task & tea
 lite lunch @ 11:30am, bring a dish to share

Our plastic bag collection for making mats has really been busy and we can use more hands to help prepare the bags for mat making.

We are expanding the collection of recyclable plastics

**Our collection bins are located at the bottom of the steps coming in from the parking lot. We need 500 pounds of plastic in a 6-month time window to turn that plastic into a bench that will be placed on the church grounds.*

**Find the list of acceptable plastic items that qualify on the table near the elevator and start recycling today!*

****Update – We have weighed and dropped off our third batch of plastics and have met our 500 pounds requirement for a free bench! Great work, keep it coming the team will continue to process your plastic!**

*please
join us*

Prayer Shawl Group
meets

Wednesday, July 12 &

Wednesday, August 9 @ 1:00 pm.

If you are unable to join the group at the church, but would still like to add your talents, please reach out to Elaine Walker.

Afternoon @ the Movies

Thursday, July 6, July 20,

August 3, August 17

@ 1:30

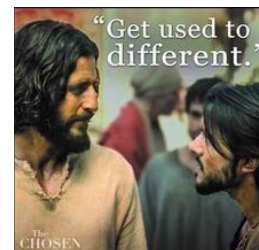


>NOW SHOWING<

The Chosen

Season 3

Join us to experience this amazing movie series.



You do not have to have seen previous episodes to enjoy the upcoming showing.

Old Testament Bible Study

Every Thursday @ 6:00 pm in Fellowship Hall
 (No study July 20)



Eve Bible Study

Tuesday, July 25 @ 3:00 - Eve Bible Study will meet in the Good News Classroom. The study that day is "Haggai, A Call to Godly Priorities" from the study book, "The Minor Prophets".

Tuesday, August 22 @ 3:00 - The study that day is "Zachariah, A Call to Wait for the Messiah" from the study book, "The Minor Prophets".

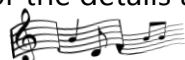
Congregational Council – Next meeting, Tuesday, August 8, 2023 @ 6:00pm

Please have your reports into the office by Thursday, August 3.

Envelopes will be available for pick-up in your mailboxes, Saturday, August 5.

Please keep our Church Council in your prayers as they make decisions for our church family.

We would love to have you share your musical gifts with your church family during the summer months, or encourage someone talented in your life to share their gifts! See Rebecca Veith, Director of Music, for the details and any questions. ❤️



St. Mark's Financial Overview

May

\$30,671.82 Receipts

\$37,135.53 Expenses

\$ (6,463.71) Deficit

I (Jessie Phillips), received a call from Mary Bates, NALC Disaster Response Coordinator, they are in need of assistance with **gift cards to Lowe's and Home Depot**. With so many disasters this year, their cards for repair supplies are getting low. Donations can be given to Jessie Phillips or dropped off at the church office.



**Blood Drive
Butler Community
St. Mark's Evangelical
Lutheran Church**

Fellowship Hall
201 West Jefferson Street
Butler

**Tuesday, August 15
12:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.**

Maximize your blood donation. Help more patients.
If you are an eligible type O, B - or A - donor, consider making a Power Red donation.
Red blood cells are the most commonly transfused blood component.

Please call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter: Butler to schedule an appointment.

Streamline your donation experience and save up to 15 minutes by visiting RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass to complete your pre-donation reading and health history questions on the day of your appointment.

Mark your calendars!

Date: Sunday September 10, 2023

Place: Alameda Park, Masonic Shelter

Schedule: Picnic will start at 1pm. Service of the Word will be at 1:30pm. We will eat immediately after the service.

Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, and drinks will be provided. Please bring at least one covered dish to share with everyone. Please RSVP to the Church Office by September 1, 2023 with the number that will be attending from your family.



Congratulations St. Mark's graduates.

Please raise up in prayer the many students that have graduated and are transitioning to new phases of life this year. We would love to add your favorite students to the list of names so that we can surround them with prayer, it is never too late to be praying for them! Contact the church office to have them added.

- Rhyan Deal – graduated Honors with Distinction from Butler High School and will be attending West Virginia University to major in Pharmacy.
- Bernie Thomas Elliott – graduated Butler High School; and will be attending Keystone Diesel Institute to get his CDL license.
- Tyler Wiles
- Katelyn Reott
- Brynn Morton
- Reid McDonald
- Caitlyn Cypher



NEWSLETTER FOR Katie's Kitchen July 2023.....

Happy Summer! For those of you who long for heat & humidity..... It's HERE!

Summer brings so many different experiences- vacations, family reunions, & days without a plan! But everyone of them is a gift from God! Appreciate the minutes & hours that we are given & use them for His service.



Notes from the Kitchen.....

- ❖ Congratulations are in order for 3 young ladies who graduated from Butler High this year & have been an important part of KK. Maxine Burger (granddaughter of Loretta Bachman), Cailyn Tosidori, & Maren McIntyre have been volunteering after school each Thursday this year. Their smiling faces & great attitude have been a welcome addition to KK. We will miss them and wish them all of God's blessings as they begin a new chapter in their lives. Maxine will be attending Pitt, Cailyn will be studying at Arizona State University, while Maren is off to Grove City College.
- ❖ I have mentioned before that Max, Cailyn, & Maren are in charge of the children's books that we give away each week. We hope to continue sharing books with our folks who have kids. As you are cleaning out things this summer & you find children's books that you no longer need, please consider donating them to KK. You can bring them to Trinity or to St Mark's. We will be happy to share them. Summer reading for kids is important too!
- ❖ Our volunteers continue to be a vital part of KK. This dedicated bunch prepare the food, wash produce, count bags & drink cartons, & package desserts! Without these generous souls many would go hungry. We share joys & sorrows, and lots of laughs to get the job done! What a great family! ♥
- ❖ Food donations continue to help us stretch our food budget. Although the weather hasn't always cooperated, we have been fortunate to receive lettuce from Barry & Janet Flecken, Jim & Christine Creighton, Butler Catholic School, and other produce from my buddy - Bob Hillberry, & Butler School district. Of course, don't forget Butler Farm Market, & Panera! If you have more garden produce than you can use, please think of KK.
- ❖ The Butler Lions shared packaged dry meals of Mac & Cheese, and Tomato Basil Pasta that they have recently put together. All of these donations help us to make sure that we have plenty of resources for interesting, nutritious meals for our neighbors who are hungry
- ❖ As I am writing this, our Community Meal churches are discussing the huge jump in number of people we are serving. Apparently there are NO summer feeding programs as there have been in the last few years, and kids are not in school getting lunches at school. Therefore, the number of families & meals we are serving has GREATLY increased yet again.

Please continue to pray for all of the Community Meals to find the resources & strength to minister to the needy in Butler.

Wishing you a relaxing & bountiful summer! ~ Justine



Classic Bean Salad (Better than Grandma's)



Ingredients

- *15-ounce can kidney beans, *15-ounce can white beans or pinto beans
- *15-ounce can green beans, *15-ounce can wax beans (or another 15-ounce can green beans)
- *1/2 medium white onion, *1/4 medium red onion (optional)
- *2 tablespoons chopped curly parsley (or Italian parsley)
- *1/2 cup white vinegar, *1/4 cup olive oil, *2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- *1/4 teaspoon each dried dill and garlic powder, *1 teaspoon kosher salt
- *Fresh ground black pepper

Instructions - Drain and rinse the beans. Thinly slice the onions into slivers; Finely chop the parsley. In a large bowl, whisk together the white vinegar, olive oil, sugar, dill, garlic, powder, and kosher salt. Add the beans, onions and parsley and stir until coated. You can eat immediately, but for best results refrigerate for 1 hour to allow the salad to marinate. Store leftovers refrigerated for up to 5 days.



As one of the Core Values of the North American Lutheran Church is Mission Driven, it is important for us to be reminded that this is not our mission, our vision, our strategy, but it is “pre-eminently the work of the triune God—*missio Dei!*”

This year’s NALC Lutheran Week completes a six-year focus on the Holy Trinity, concluding now with “God the Father Creates...in His Image,” as the theme for the Braaten-Benne Theological Lectures. However, it seems appropriate to conclude this cycle with the theme, *Missio Dei*, as we celebrate the fact that everything we do as a mission-driven Lutheran body comes from God and His mission—that we are to go into all the world, empowered by the Holy Spirit, preaching the good news of salvation in and through Jesus Christ—to the whole creation!

Our prayer is that this year’s Mission Convocation will indeed be a mission-oriented and mission-driven gathering! While there will be necessary times dedicated to reports, actions and elections—including the election of a bishop—highlights will be the several “On Fire for Mission” sessions, focusing on domestic mission, international mission and mission related to congregational life. These will begin with brief Bible study and devotional periods, followed by presentations on the theme, with extended time for table talk, reflection, breakouts, and strategies for “taking it home!”

We are also excited to hold a **Faith Formation Festival** (“Everything You Want to Know About Youth & Family Ministry”) and the **Gathering of the Women of the NALC** (“Using Our Gifts to Serve”) earlier in the week.

The hope and prayer of all involved is that this will light a spark or fan the flame for mission, that we return home inspired and excited about *missio Dei*—the work and mission of God in our local congregations, in North America and throughout the whole creation!

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Check out the St. Mark’s Church Library!

We have a wonderful variety of great reads in our library. Check out “The Engineer’s Wife” by Tracey Enerson Wood, on display on the round table. A story with ties to a local community, Saxonburg.

“She built the Brooklyn Bridge, so why don't you know her name? Based on the true story of an American icon, The Engineer's Wife delivers an emotional portrait of a woman transformed by a project of unfathomable scale, which takes her into the bowels of the East River, suffragette riots, the halls of Manhattan's elite, and the heady, freewheeling temptations of P.T. Barnum. The biography of a husband and wife determined to build something that lasts? even at the risk of losing each other.”

Saxonburg Borough is a relatively small borough, but it celebrates its history extremely well. It was founded by Friedrich and John Roebling, brothers who emigrated from Germany to seek freedom from oppression in Germany. They founded Saxonburg as a farming community, and once they were settled in, John returned to his core passion of engineering. In Saxonburg, John A. Roebling created the innovation of wire rope, a technology that made the creation of easier to build and stronger bridges. Roebling would go on to create a series of critical bridges, for which Pittsburgh was the testing ground for the technology, and the pinnacle of his projects was the Brooklyn Bridge, the first bridge to successfully cross the East River and connect the then twin cities of New York City and Brooklyn. For more information go to: <https://www.interestingpennsylvania.com/2023/03/saxonburg-john-roebling-historic-butler.html>

“There is a temperate zone in the mind, between luxurious indolence and exacting work; and it is to this region, just between laziness and labor, that summer reading belongs.”

— Henry Ward Beecher



St. Mark's
Kids stuff

Church Service is every Sunday at 9AM.

Youth Page
July/August 2023

Hope to see YOU there!



Church Picnic

St. Mark's is heading back to the Masonic Shelter at Alameda for the annual Church Picnic.

The fun will be taking place on Sunday, September 10th.

Bring a dish, relax at the park, and engage in great conversation!

Friends!
Food! **Fun!**

Confirmation classes are starting up in September. Anyone (7th grade and up) that is interested in taking classes, please contact the Church office.



Rallying Back to Sunday School starts **September 10th** at 10:15AM in Schramm Hall.

Come make some new friends and see some that you've missed over the summer. There are lots of activities planned for the year ahead!

Sunday at 9AM As part of the Worship Service, all kids are welcomed at:

Children's Church



Make a difference and volunteer. Ways you can help with the kids:
Donate supplies, Cut stuff out at home
Assist a Teacher, Teach a Class
And definitely PRAY for all the families!



First Communion classes are starting up. The kids will take their First Communion on **Sunday, October 1st** at the 9AM Service.

Miss Darcie will be teaching four classes to prepare the kids for their First Communion. All kids 3rd grade and up that are ready to take their First Communion need to register by contacting Miss Darcie.



St. Mark's Lutheran Church NALC
201 West Jefferson Street
Butler PA 16001

Darcie Pomykata, Youth Ministry Leader
(724) 996-9245 cell/text
Email: Darcie.Pomykata@stmarksbutler.org



St. Mark's Children's Hour—50th Year!!!

Wednesdays, 9:30 to 11:30AM

September 2023 through May 2024

St. Mark's (201 W. Jefferson St, Butler PA) offers "Children's Hour" for all kids ages 2 up to Kindergarteners.

There is a lot of activity on Wednesday mornings. The kids will sing, make crafts, play games, listen to stories, have snacks, and make friends!

Cost: Suggested donation of **\$35** for the whole school year.

Parent Orientation Meeting on Wed., Sept. 6th from 6 to 7:30PM

First day of Class is Wed, September 13th from 9:30 to 11:30

Register today

Call the Church for a registration form (724) 287-6741 or print one on line at www.stmarksbutler.org (click the Children's Hour tab)

Always looking for great volunteers/leaders/Teachers, if you are interested please reach out to Darcie Pomykata.

Children's Hour is a volunteer program for kids: Children's Hour is going on its **50th** year!



Trivia answers from page 9: (1.) Off the Florida Keys, (2.) The Beatles, (3.) Revere Beach in Massachusetts, (4.) Pacific Ocean, (5.) 1938, (6.) Cantaloupes, (7.) 9 ft.

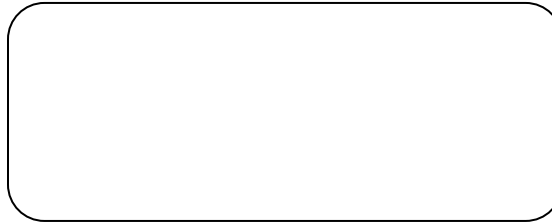
St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church
201 West Jefferson Street
Butler, Pennsylvania 16001
Phone: 724-287-6741
Fax: 724-287-6747
Website: www.stmarksbutler.org

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
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BUTLER, PA

Parish Office Hours:
9:00 AM -- 1:00 PM
Tuesday – Friday
WORSHIP SERVICES

Saturday: 5:00 PM
Sunday: 9:00 AM
Sunday School: 10:15 AM

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



Learn more about The North American

Lutheran Church



www.thenalc.org

Christ Centered


Mission Driven

Traditionally Grounded

Congregationally Focused

St. Mark's Staff

Rev. David Phillips, Senior Pastor
Wendy Holt, Parish Administrator
Darcie Pomykata, Youth Director
John Lingenfelter, Custodian
Larry Rettig, Custodian
Rebecca Veith, Director of Music
Sherry Young, Treasurer
Toni Tasse, Financial Secretary

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						5:00pm Worship 1
9:00am Worship 10:15 S.S. 2		 3 OFFICE CLOSED 4	9:00am 3T 5	1:30pm Movie 5:00pm Katie's Kitchen 6:00pm Bible Study 6		5:00pm Worship 8
9:00am Worship 10:15 S.S. 9		10	1:00pm Prayer Shawl 11	12	5:00pm Katie's Kitchen 6:00pm Bible Study 13	14 5:00pm Worship 15
9:00am Worship 10:15 S.S. 16		17	18	19	1:30pm Movie 5:00pm Katie's Kitchen NO Bible Study 20	21 5:00pm Worship 22
9:00am Worship 10:15 S.S. 23		24	3:00pm Eve Bible Study 25	26	5:00pm Katie's Kitchen 6:00pm Bible Study 27	28 5:00pm Worship 29
9:00am Worship 10:15 S.S. 30		31				

JULY

2023

1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5
4 5 6 7 8 9 10	6 7 8 9 10 11 12
11 12 13 14 15 16 17	13 14 15 16 17 18 19
18 19 20 21 22 23 24	20 21 22 23 24 25 26
25 26 27 28 29 30	27 28 29 30 31

JUNE 2023

AUGUST 2023

Scripture:

Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.

— 1 Peter 2:16 [ESV]

Fun dates to celebrate:

7/1 – International Cherry Pit Spitting Day;

7/11 – Cheer Up the Lonely Day;

7/14 – National Macaroni & Cheese Day;

7/24 – National Tell an Old Joke Day;

7/27 – Take Your Houseplants for a Walk Day

Scriptures and Prayers July 2023

July 2 – Jeremiah 28:5-9, Psalm 119:153-160, Romans 7:1-13, Matthew 10:34-42

**O God our defender, storms rage about us and cause us to be afraid. Rescue Your people from despair, deliver Your sons and daughters from fear, and preserve us all from unbelief; through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

July 9 – Zechariah 9:9-12, Psalm 145:1-14, Romans 7:14-25a, Matthew 11:25-30

** O God, You prepared for those who love You joys beyond understanding. Pour into our hearts such love for You that, loving You above all things, we may obtain Your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

July 16 – Isaiah 55:10-13, Psalm 65:1-13, Romans 8:12-17, Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

** God of glory, Father of love, peace comes from You alone. Send us as peacemakers and witnesses to Your kingdom, and fill our hearts with joy in Your promises of salvation; through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

July 23 – Isaiah 44:6-8, Psalm 119:57-64, Romans 8:18-27, Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

**Almighty God, we thank You for planting in us the seed of Your Word. By Your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love; through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

July 30 – Deuteronomy 7:6-9, Psalm 125, Romans 8:28-39, Matthew 13:44-52

** Pour out upon us, O Lord, the Spirit to think and do what is right, that we, who can not even exist without You, may have the strength to live according to Your will; through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Scriptures and Prayers August 2023

August 6 – Isaiah 56:1-5, Psalm 136:1-9 (23-26), Romans 9:1-13, Matthew 14:13-21

** O God, Your ears are open always to the prayers of Your servants. Open our hearts and minds to You, that we may live in harmony with Your will and receive the gifts of Your Spirit; through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

August 13 – Job 38:4-18, Psalm 18:1-16, Romans 10:5-17, Matthew 14:22-33

** Gracious Father, Your blessed Son came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world. Give us this bread that He may live in us and we in Him, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

August 20 – Isaiah 56:1, 6-8, Psalm 67, Romans 11:1-2a, 13-15, 28-32, Matthew 15:21-28

** Almighty an everlasting God, You are always more ready to hear than we are to pray, and to give more than we either desire or deserve. Pour upon us the abundance of Your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things for which we re not worthy to ask, except through the merit of Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

August 27 – Isaiah 51:1-6, Psalm 138, Romans 11:33-12:8, Matthew 16:13-20

** Almighty and everlasting God, You have given great and precious promises to those who believe. Grant us the perfect faith which overcomes all doubts, through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*