

MARK TIMES

NEWS and NOTES for July 21, 2024

School Supply Collection!

Believe it or not, it will soon be Back-to-School time! We will again be collecting **school supplies** in support of Franklin Elementary. **Collections run through August 4.** A box and can are in the narthex/Canterbury Room. Things are a little different for the school this year, and they have adjusted their needs. Items most needed: **boxes of 24 crayons; large colored washable markers; colored pencils; colored highlighters; plastic folders with prongs; earbuds; adult scissors; dry-erase markers; glue sticks; Kleenex; One-gallon Ziplock bags; One-inch and 2-inch binders.** They do NOT want backpacks, paper, pencils, and pens. Cash, of course, is always helpful!

Honoring Pastor Ron

At its June monthly meeting, the Church Council voted unanimously to **name the Rev. Ron Neustadt**, former long-time pastor of St. Mark, as ***pastor emeritus***. The declaration will become official at our regular worship service at 9:00AM on **Sunday, August 11**, in which we will also pay tribute to Pastor Ron's **50th ordination anniversary**. Bishop Greg Busboom of the Central/Southern Illinois Synod will be present to preach and bring greetings from the synod. A cake and punch reception will follow in the Parish Hall. Please plan to join us for this special celebration!

*The conferring of the title of *pastor emeritus* represents recognition of exceptional ministry setting and a sign of a congregation's high regard for a retired pastor. It is honorary and confers no pastoral responsibilities, expectations, or compensation. The *pastor emeritus* may be listed among the congregation's staff, which will be the case with St. Mark and Pastor Ron.

Summer Office Hours

With the slower summer months, the Church Council has approved Randi's suggestion to reduce her hours by one day each week, with a commensurate reduction in pay. Her work hours will be Monday-Thursday from 10:00AM-2:00PM. *Henry will be in the office on Fridays should anyone need to access the office proper.

Guys' Nite is Back!

The rumors are true - Guys' Nite is back! This event for the men of St. George's and St. Mark (and friends!) will be held in the **circle driveway** area on **Friday, August 16 at 5:00PM** (food served at 6PM). Fly solo or bring a friend and enjoy an evening of beverages, brats, games and more! The event is free but a donation of \$20 per person is suggested to help offset the cost. Sign-up sheets are in the Narthex and Parish Hall. If you have any questions, contact Bob Vaughn (618-593-7263) or Greg Guenther (618-910-4594).



Land Acknowledgement

By now, many of you have likely noticed the “Land Acknowledgement” that has been printed somewhere in our Sunday bulletins (usually near the end) for the past few months. This is an **ELCA-wide endeavor in which all congregations are encouraged to participate**. From the ELCA’s Land Acknowledgement Guide:



“On Indigenous Peoples’ Day in 2021, the ELCA published ‘*A Declaration of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to American Indian and Alaska Native People*,’ in which the church confesses its sins toward Indigenous peoples and lists the commitments it will begin working toward as it responds to its original ‘*Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery*’ from 2016.

One commitment found in each document is to formally acknowledge the original inhabitants of North America. The declaration states, ‘*We commit to begin the practice of land acknowledgments at all expressions of the church.*’

This is arguably one of the easier commitments, though it should never be thought of as simple or meaningless. Land acknowledgments are indeed meaningful and play a crucial part in combating the erasure of Indigenous peoples.”

SHARE GOD’S WARMTH through a Hot Meal

For many years now, St. Paul’s United Church of Christ (just a few blocks from St. Mark) has been offering a FREE Tuesday evening meal from about 4:30PM to about 5:15 for Belleville’s homeless and those of low-income. In considering how we might help the folks who fall into those populations, our Evangelism & Social Ministry team has decided to put our efforts towards assisting other local organizations serving our community instead of trying to “duplicate efforts/recreate the wheel”.

With that in mind, **we invite 5-6 people to be part of a group that will help once a month or every other month at St. Paul’s Tuesday evening meal**. A couple of volunteers would assist from about 3:00pm until about 6:00pm for meal prep, serving and clean up. Others will assist with serving and clean up from about 4:00 to 6:00pm. This is a fantastic way to help others who often find themselves desperately in need! Please contact Sherri Foppe at 618 791-6148 or cookinsherri2@gmail.com for more information or to join!

Belleville Summer Sack Lunch Program

We at St. Mark are excited to continue helping to provide free lunches for low-income children this summer!

We are collecting individual size bags of Cheez-its, potato chips, nacho chips, individually wrapped store-bought cookies (*no nuts or peanut butter please!*), and fruit juice pouches (i.e. Capri Sun), for the lunches. No peanut butter please! Bring donations to church on Sundays or contact Sherri to drop off or arrange pick up.

Monetary donations are also welcome and can be made to Sherri Foppe or Ann Martens, or electronically to <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-YT91/campaign/C-14EWR>

Minimum of 4 volunteers are needed to help pack **150-200 lunches at Westview Baptist** on the following **Wednesday evenings from 5:00-5:45PM: July 24 & 31; Aug 7**

One volunteer driver and one co-pilot are needed to help **deliver the lunches** from 10:35AM to approximately 12:45PM on the following Thursdays: **July 25; Aug 1 & 8**

Volunteer sign-up sheets are in the Parish Hall. For more information, please contact Sherri Foppe (618-791-6148 or cookinsherri2@gmail.com) or Ann Martens 618-235-7762 or ga72mart@charter.net

St. Mark Offerings for 7/14: Operating Fund: **\$6,725.11** (online giving received by 7/12); Food Pantry: \$50; Coffee Fund: \$114.40; Youth Gathering: \$125.74