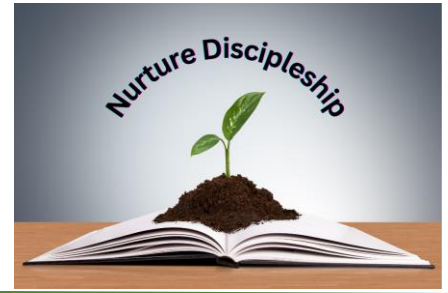




ST. MARK'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH

August 2025



Created in God's image.

DISCOVER YOUR DIVINE DESIGN

Find your passion and your
place in God's world

"Many gifts we are given from the time of our birth"

That is the opening phrase of a choir anthem at House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Country Club Hills, IL in the 80's. I loved singing in the choir!

The song may be dated, but the truth hasn't changed. It is God's great delight to gift us with joy, peace, heart and spirit.

All of God's children have been endowed with at least one gift of the Spirit to build up the whole Body of Christ – most of us have received many. Our gifts change over time as we grow in faith and understanding of God's purpose for all creation.

Just as we re-evaluate our life calling at various times throughout our life, we re-assess your spiritual giftedness – and yes, **everyone has one!**

Your challenge, should you choose to accept it is:

1. To complete the assessment (use [this link to the ELCA's Spiritual Gift Assessment Tool. You will need to use your ELCA sign-in or create a new account](#)) or use a paper copy available in the narthex;
2. Talk about the results with at least one other person who might help you see gifts that you don't see;
3. Email (or hand a note to) Pastor Karen with "I've done it" and list two gifts you feel passionate about.

If 10 people meet the challenge, Pastor Karen will plan a very special benediction!

If 20 people meet the challenge, she will incorporate a random object picked from a box into the Morning Message (a box someone from the congregation fills).

If 30 people accept the challenge she will host "office hours" at Peets Coffee Shop, in a Luther costume, with a sign that says "Free Prayer. Dad Jokes Extra."

The deadline will be the day before our Semi-Annual Meeting (August 24). Find your passion – when God gives us a gift, we find joy and passion in doing it. Find your place in God's world to use those gifts – perhaps at St. Mark's, perhaps out in the world.

Let's see what we can do together!

Pastor Karen



We nurture our discipleship when we care for
and celebrate one another.



Please pray for...

Our members:

Janet Benson, Ivonne
Bradford, V-Anne
Chernock, Elsie Edgeman,

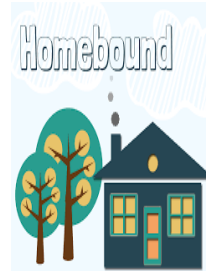
Richard Ehman, Sarajane Hakenen, Gabby
Hansen, Jim Hanser and family, Cheryl Hurd,
Pamela Lyons, Robert McGee, Karen Mullin,
Gerda Reid, Stu Reid, & Josephine
Traugher.

Our homebound

Kathy Doty, Judith Eckhart and Shirley
Quinn.

Our friends and loved ones

Kim Arnold, Bruce Atkinson, Zoe Barrett,
Makita Bond, Adrian Butler, Roxanne Costan,
Dave Eubanks, Josh Ezell & Crew (USS
Nimitz), Dave Frogget, Ed Goldberg, Rob
Hakenen, Nicholas Hanson, Shaman Houpt,
Craig Jimenez, Phil Ladiero, Scott Macroy,
Rene Maddox, Mike Michaelsen, John & I
Patty Nyquist, Helen Powell, Cheryl
Rasmussen, Jo Reed, Sharon Sanderson,
Toni Scarrott Collins, Bob Stevenson,
Rhonda Stokes, Tammy Stone, Nardos
Tesfaye, Weldon Tunnell, Lorna Walter,
Suzanne Wilson, and Laurie Ziegler.
in the Digerud Room.



**Our homebound
Members:**

Kathy Doty, Magnolia Court
Senior Assisted Living,
111 Ulatis Dr, Room 204,
Vacaville, CA 95687

Judith Eckhart, 3760 Upland Drive,
Auburn, CA 95602

Shirley Quinn, 11 Lemon Tree Cir.,
Vacaville CA 95687



Bob Jolley
8/5

Gabby
Hansen
8/8

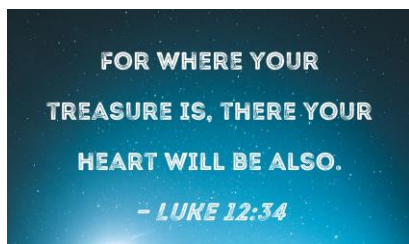
Karen Spengler	8/10
Barbara Nelson	8/11
Jim Hanser	8/16
Ann Hefner Gravink	8/16
Flordeliza Maneja	8/22
Robert McGee	8/27



Rene and Dale Puskas	8/5
Victor Romualdi & Dorothy Rothenbaum	8/23
Mike & V-Anne Chernock	8/24
Sam and Karen Mullin	8/28



We nurture our discipleship when we use our gifts to serve



MONEY
is a powerful
force in our
lives—

and in the World.
No argument there!

And this is not lost on Jesus! After all, in just one chapter in Luke (12), he has at least four, if not more, parables or sayings about MONEY leading folks (he calls at least one of them a “fool”) instead of people leading and directing where their MONEY goes.

Remember the guy who kept building bigger and bigger barns to store all his “stuff”, and JUST when he gets it done perfectly, God calls him out: “You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things [stuff] you have prepared, whose will they be?”

We obviously need to use our financial resources to live, to eat, to support our families. And we support our Church and all of ITS ministries with another part of our income. But, where else do we want to lead for our MONEY to follow?

So take a moment and consider: Does where my MONEY go reflect what my values are? Another way to put it: Complete this sentence: “The best example of aligning my money with my values is. . .” This of course can be anything from local community organizations, like food banks, to state,

national, or even international causes dear to our hearts. One group that is on my mind, and heart, a lot recently is Global Refuge (formerly Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services), as they deal with federal budget cuts, but continue, in HOPE, to welcome refugees and immigrants to our nation.

Last Sunday, as we filled out short surveys asking us where we are giving to God’s mission in the world outside of our congregation, we were reminded just how varied and creative those decisions are! We continue to be reminded of all the examples of God’s Grace in our lives, and how we “pay that forward,” how we “steward” that Grace in our financial and emotional lives. And what Jesus said then still holds today: “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”. Obviously so!

Jim Hanser
Stewardship Ministry



The Ministry focus for the month of August is the Worship & Music Ministry Team. Have you ever wondered how worship happens? You know it doesn’t just happen; it is planned!

During August we will share with you the various components that go into making worship happen. Through a series of announcements, Temple Talks and two Sunday Connections we will explain the how

and the why of our worship services. In addition, we will show you various ways that you can be a part of it. The focus for the first Sunday in August will be on the planning process itself, what are the components of worship and how the service is assembled.

On subsequent Sundays we will focus on the various volunteers that make the service flow, as well as how the music compliments the message. The Worship & Music Ministry Team looks forward to discussing our mutual ministry with you throughout the month of August.



Stu Reid
Worship & Music



Care & Kindness Ministry Update

Nine members of St. Mark's gathered last month to discuss how to use our gifts to minister to those who may be struggling with physical, emotional and or spiritual needs.

We talked about how to serve these needs. We shared our thoughts on how our own gifts are all different, but all are important. We all attended (or watched the video) a class offered by the Sierra Pacific Synod and we learned that when we visit and/or minister to others:

- We don't give advice or provide solutions, but we DO listen.
- We are an extension of St. Mark's and we assure others they are loved and an important part of our community.
- We are present to others with a listening ear.
- The importance of sharing communion when we visit
- When we pray, we remind others of God's presence and love

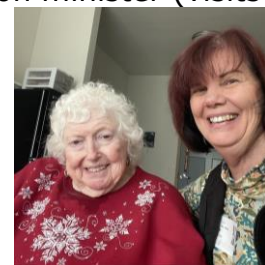
We are gathering more information on what services are available in our general community that can help with the various needs.

We are also developing a Prayer Partner Ministry. This will include the opportunity for anyone present on Sunday mornings to talk one-on-one with a Prayer Partner Minister who will listen and pray with you.

God gave each of us gifts. These gifts are to be shared. We all need to look into our hearts and open them up a little and acknowledge these gifts and share them, whatever they are. One step at a time can make a huge difference. These won't be homeruns as we proceed but rather baby steps that are intentional and helpful to others.

You will be hearing more updates on our ministry as we move forward. We invite you to join us as you feel comfortable in this "Ministry of Presence." There are many ways to serve:

- Visit our homebound, or sick members
- Being a home communion minister (visits with communion)
- Send cards and make phone calls to people on the prayer list
- Serve as a Prayer Partner Minister (see above)
- What else? How is your heart calling you serve?



Should you have any questions please feel free to contact Pastor Karen or me (707-290-8358). Thank you all for what you are already doing for each other.

Pat Broschard
Care & Kindness Ministry

*"90% of Helping Is
Just Showing Up"*

Dr. James Kok



Council met on Thursday, July 10 at 11:30 a.m. in Pastor Karen's office. (NOTE: new council meeting time – second Thursday of the month at 11:30 a.m. in Pastor Karen's office). The full minutes will be available once they have been approved at the August 2025 meeting.

- Finances: June was a good month. We had a couple of generous gifts.
- Pastor is working on a God's Work. Our Hands. project idea (more info below)
- Council voted to use Cheryl Hurd's memorial gift for a new canopy to use at community events.
- Social Media is working on updating our brochure for the upcoming community events.
- Care & Kindness Team will meet on the 18th to assess the ministry.
- The Property Committee was very busy (report will be attached to July Minutes)
- The Crisis Communication Team will have a draft available for the August meeting.
- Discussed possible updates to the Bylaws at the August Congregation Meeting.
- Our next meeting is Thursday, August 14 at 11:30 a.m. in Pastor Karen's office.

Security & Alarm System



Due to generous donations, here is an update to our Security System Goal:

GOAL: \$18,124
RAISED TO
DATE: \$16,715
REMAINING: \$ 1,409
AS OF: JULY 21, 2025

Thank you to everyone that has helped fund not only the security system upgrade, but also the IT/Computer and Social Media need.

June Johnsen



An intergenerational opportunity for service. Everyone is invited and encouraged to join us on this nation-wide day of service in the ELCA as we travel to Magnolia Court Senior Assisted Living. Immediately following worship, we will go to interact with the residents there.

Ann Hefner-Gravink will be working with our children to prepare something special for the seniors living there. We will all join our voices for a favorite hymn sing (no experience necessary) and more. We will have the opportunity to get to know some of the residents and bring joy into their day.

There will be special worship elements that day and a song written just for the ELCA's God's Work. Our Hands. events.

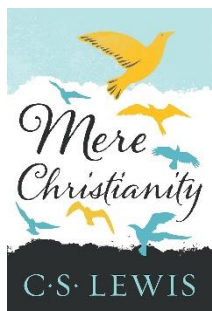
Everyone is encouraged to wear their St. Mark's polo shirt on that day. Special Thrivent shirts will also be available.

Mark your calendars now and [sign-up here](#). If you need a ride or would like to carpool, note that on the sign-up form.





We nurture our discipleship when we
worship and study together



Tuesday Book Study

On July 29 we began
Mere Christianity (2002)
(227 pages) (\$13.00)

by C.S. Lewis

Everyone is welcome to join
us at any time. In person or
on Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88381121677>



Here's what's happening in August

August 3 Worship & Music: What Goes into
Worship Planning?

(Aug. 9th) (Back to school resource fair)

August 10 Gifts at our Table

August 17 Crash Course #

August 24 Semi-Annual Meeting

August 31 Worship & Music:

Our Favorite Hymns

<https://solano-edu.zoom.us/j/81140367265>

Email Ann at drannhg@sbglobal.net for more
information. Everyone is invited to join us
and offer their ideas for events, classes, etc.

Wednesday Bible Study 6:30 p.m.

This is a great way to learn more about the
scripture readings for the coming week.

You'll talk about what they might have in
common (or not!) and get a more in-depth
understanding of the readings. Contact Jim
Hanser (hanserjames@comcast.net) for
more info.



Seeker's Circle

Thursday, August 14, 2025, 9:30 a.m.

Seekers Circle will meet on Thursday, August
14, from 9:30am to 11:30 am in the Digerud
Room. Gathering and Fellowship. Lesson:
10:00 to 11:30 a.m. All are welcome—
service projects for September through
December will be discussed.

Topic for the Lesson: Relationships that push
us to grow: For such a time as this.
Relationships aren't always comfortable.
There are times when we find ourselves
navigating the painful work of growing and
changing in our relationships. This session
explores the story of Queen Esther and her
uncle Mordecai. How can we draw on the
stories of our faith when we face great

challenges in our lives and relationships with others? We'll explore how vulnerability, trust and the power of faithful friendships help us to grow.

To download the lesson, click on the link:
[download lesson 3 here.](#)



Sierra Pacific Synod

There is still time to sign-up for the "Shaping New Communities as Lay Leaders" class on August 14 from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. (Zoom). As we continue to "nurture and exercise" our discipleship, creating and sustaining strong lay leaders, learning more about Shaping New Communities will be a vital part of our ministries. There is no cost. If you have signed up for any of the other classes, you will receive information for this one as well. If not, [click here](#) to register.



When an Alien Resides with You.

"But wanting to justify himself [the lawyer] asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbor?' We recognize this

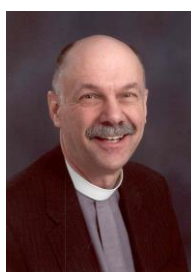
guy from Jesus' parable of the "Good Samaritan" that we just heard about in the readings a few weeks ago. He answers Jesus

rightly when he says the Law is basically "You shall love the Lord God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself."

Jesus of course turns everything on its ear by making the hero in the story a Samaritan, a foreigner basically, an alien to the Jewish people. Who indeed is my neighbor! And Jesus is also reminding the folks there of what was in Leviticus 19:18: "You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord."

And in verses 33-34, "When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God."

We were honored to have Pastor Eric Shafer representing Global Refuge with us on a Zoom presence in July. This group was of course formerly Lutheran Refugee and Immigration Services but changed its name recently to open it to a wider audience. He reminded us of the increasing need to give



support to these new "neighbors" in our land. Their biggest need is financial, as they have lost a lot of federal funding. [Ways to Give | Global Refuge.](#)

So, we are reminded, as we are almost every week in our readings and our prayers, that we are "Matthew 25 Christians", as Jesus declared: "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." So be it and so be us as we love and care for these new neighbors!

Jim Hanser
Education—Growing Together—Ministry



We nurture our discipleship when we serve others



Let's help out
our school
aged
neighbors!

We are once again collecting supplies to help fill 1,200 backpacks for our neighborhood children. Bring your donations to church or the church office (please call first) no later than **Friday, August 1**. Here is this year's list of items needed:

- Youth or standard-size backpack (no solid red or solid blue backpacks)
- Standard-size backpack with laptop sleeve (no solid red or solid blue backpacks)
- Wide ruled filler paper
- Wide ruled notebooks
- 1 subject college-ruled notebooks
- College ruled filler paper
- Pocket folders
- Pack of color markers
- Crayons or colored pencils
- Pair of kids' safety scissors
- Highlighters
- Black dry-erase marker
- Pencils with erasers
- Glue sticks
- Headphones (3.5mm jack, mic)
- Blue or black pens
- On-the-go hygiene kit with:
 - 1 stick travel-size deodorant
 - 1 toothbrush & travel-sized toothpaste
 - 1 travel-sized hand sanitizer
 - 2 elastic hair ties

We will also need a few volunteers on August 9 to staff our table. Please see the sign-up sheet in the lobby or email Pastor Karen.

The school district could also use volunteers. Click [here](#) to sign up.



Feeding more
and more
people each
week!

JUNE Stats:
 Total Served 3,289
 Total Families Served 722
 Weekly Average Served 822
 Average Families Served 181
 YTD Total Served 22,030
 YTD Families Served 4,775
 YTD Weekly Average Served 881
 YTD Weekly Average Served 191

Current Needs: Bags. The food pantry can always use bags.

Special Note: Distilled water is available at the food pantry to anyone in the congregation.





Mondays and
Wednesdays
at noon (Digerud Room)



Senior Food Program

Location: St. Mark's Food Pantry
Dates: First and Third Wednesdays
Time: 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.



Travis Air Force Base Block Party

**Thursday, August 7
from 9:00 a.m. – 2:
00 p.m.**

St. Mark's will pitch
our tent again this

year and let all our military neighbors find
out more about us. Our thanks to Fay & Dan
DiSano, Ann Hefner-Gravink, June Johnsen
and Jackie and Tressa Marroli for coming out
to help.



Sierra Pacific Synod
committed to being re-formed

There are a number of great things
happening in our Synod! Please sign up for
their newsletters and participate in
conversations, special worship services,
education opportunities and more. Go to
<https://www.spselca.org/> and click the
button in the upper right corner to stay
informed.

Fairfield News:

Click here for the latest local events:

[Fairfield Weekly](#) | [Latest News](#) | [Fairfield, CA](#)

Fairfield Farmers Market

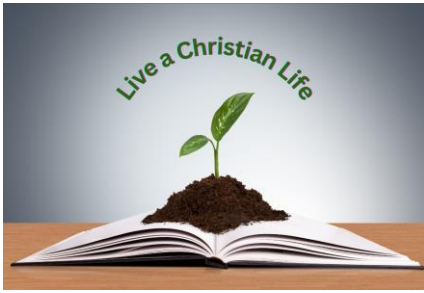
continues through Sept. 25 every Thursday
evening from 3-7pm at the corner of Texas &
Jefferson Streets.

Dine Out Downtown

Participating downtown restaurants are
offering Farmers Market customers 15-20%
off of their ENTIRE bill (excluding alcohol) on
Thursdays during
Farmers Market season, May-September!
The special will be available from 3 pm until
the restaurant closes. Visit the Fairfield
Farmer's Market, grab a Dine-Out Downtown
postcard, and present it to the restaurant of
your choice to redeem your special
(Participating restaurants, addresses, and
hours are listed on the postcard).

Participating Restaurants

Cedars Bar & Kitchen 20% (Food Only)
Casa Agave 20%
Pizza Twist 20%
Evelyn's Pizza 20%
Saffron 20%
Three Restaurant 20%



What's Happening at St. Mark's

August 2025

Recurring Calendar of Events

Sunday

- 9:30 a.m. SMLC Worship (Worship Center/Live Streaming)
- 10:30 a.m. Fellowship (Worship Center)
- 10:45 a.m. Sunday Connections (Digerud/Zoom)
- 11:00 a.m. Pentecost Temple (Comm. Cen.)
- 2:30 p.m. Ministerios Ebenezer (Community Center)

Monday

- 12:00 p.m. Al-Anon Meeting (Digerud Room)

Tuesday

- 10:30 a.m. Book Study (Zoom)
- 2:00 p.m. St. Mark's Food Pantry Distr.

Wednesday

- 9:30 a.m. Solano Food Bank Senior Program (Food Pantry 1st & 3rd Wednesday)
- 11:00 a.m. Quilter's gathering (Youth Room)
- 12:00 p.m. Al-Anon (Digerud Room)
- 6:30 p.m. Bible Study

Thursday

- 5:30 p.m. Contemporary Music Team Rehearsal (Worship Center)

Friday

- 7:00 p.m. Ebenezer Mission (Community Center)

Additional Events

Tuesday, August 5

- 5:30 p.m. Worship and Music Committee Mtg.

Thursday, August 7

- 9:00 a.m. Travis AFB Block Party

Saturday, August 9

- 9:30 a.m. Back to School Resource Fair

Monday, August 11

- 11:30 a.m. Widow's Lunch at Mimi's Café

Tuesday, August 12

- 3:00 p.m. Stewardship Meeting

Wednesday, August 13

- 5:30 p.m. Solano Symphony Board

Thursday, August 14

- 9:30 a.m. Seeker's Circle
- 11:30 a.m. Council Meeting

Thursday, August 21

- 10:00 a.m. Capitol Valley Conference Mtg

Sunday, August 24

- 10:30 Semi-Annual Meeting



Save the Date: Semi-Annual Meeting

Mark your calendars now for our Semi-Annual Congregation Meeting – **Sunday, August 24** immediately following our worship service. Join us to see what's been happening and what we are doing for the next several months.

Join us for worship every Sunday

9:30 a.m. for in person & live streaming service

on Facebook at www.facebook.com/SMLCFairfield (or click [HERE](#)) and on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/@SMLCFairfield> (or click [HERE](#))

St. Mark's Mission: To Nurture Discipleship, Communicate the Gospel and Serve the Community.

St. Mark's Vision: To transform each church member into Christ-led disciples, nurtured and equipped by God's Word, whose purpose is to build up the Body of Christ in Solano County and the world.

St. Mark's Welcoming Statement: Adopted January 19, 2020

"We are St. Mark's Lutheran Church where everyone is welcomed and everyone is loved. We invite all into the grace, love and acceptance we have from God. We welcome YOU: who you are, as you are."



- All who are single, married, partnered, divorced, with or without children
- All sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions
- All racial, ethnic, and social backgrounds
- All who are homed or homeless
- All who are struggling with addictions or other personal hardships
- All ages and levels of physical and mental health and abilities
- All faith backgrounds, those questioning their faith and those new to faith

We invite you to fully participate in the life and ministry of St. Mark's Lutheran Church where we seek to share God's love and grace through word and action."

St. Mark's Lutheran Church



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

1600 Union Avenue, Fairfield, CA 94533

707-422-4741

office@stmarksfairfield.org; www.stmarksfairfield.org

Rev. Karen Stetins, Senior Pastor

Kim Worthen, Office Administrator

Semyon Lohss, Accompanist, Choral Director

Lucille Bowers, Preschool Director

Michelle Aas, SMLC's bookkeeper

Council Members

June Johnsen (President), Dan DiSano (Vice President), Jacqueline Marroli (Secretary), Stew Irwin (Finance Chair), Toni McCallum and Josephine Traugher (Members at Large).

Elected Leaders

Linda Froggett (Financial Secretary), Les Johnsen (Treasurer)

Victor Romualdi, Personnel Committee Chairperson,