# St. Mark's Lutheran Church
# September 2026

Discovering, offering, and multiplying what God has placed in your hands

Every congregation is filled with gifts. Some are easy to see: music that lifts the heart, leadership that keeps a ministry moving, teaching that opens Scripture, hospitality that makes a stranger feel at home. Others are quieter: the person who notices who is missing, the steady volunteer who arrives early and stays late, the generous giver who never asks to be thanked, the encourager whose words help someone keep going.

Scripture reminds us that gifts are not given for display, comparison, or personal importance. They are given for service. 1 Peter says, "Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received." (1 Peter 4:10) Paul writes that there are varieties of gifts, services, and activities, but the same Spirit, the same Lord, and the same God at work in all. The point is simple and life-giving: God gives each person something to offer for the good of the whole body.

**Gifts Begin with Grace**
A God-given gift is not a badge of superiority. It is a sign of grace. Gifts are entrusted to us, not owned by us. They may look like spiritual gifts named in the New Testament—teaching, encouragement, generosity, leadership, mercy, faith, wisdom, healing, service—or they may be everyday abilities through which God blesses others: listening well, organizing details, welcoming children, preparing food, visiting the sick, caring for creation, praying faithfully, or making beauty. The question is not, "Do I have a gift?" The question is, "How is God inviting me to use what I have been given?" When we begin there, gratitude replaces insecurity, and service replaces comparison.

**Gifts Grow When They Are Used**
Many people hesitate because they are waiting to feel fully prepared. But gifts often grow through practice. The teacher becomes stronger by teaching. The encourager learns through listening. The leader matures through responsibility.

The servant discovers joy by serving. God does not ask us to begin perfectly; God asks us to begin faithfully.

A good first step is to notice where need and joy meet. What needs in the church or community draw your attention? What kind of service leaves you tired but grateful? What do others consistently affirm in you? These clues can help reveal where God may already be at work.

**No Gift Is Too Small**
The body of Christ needs visible gifts and hidden gifts, public gifts and private gifts, gifts that speak and gifts that simply show up. A ministry of compassion may begin with one phone call. A ministry of welcome may begin with one warm greeting. A ministry of generosity may begin with one act of sharing. In God's hands, ordinary gifts become instruments of extraordinary grace.

**An Invitation**
As we enter a new "church year," consider asking three prayerful questions: What has God placed in my hands? Who might be blessed if I offered it? What is one faithful step I can take now?

Our gifts are not meant to sit unused. They are meant to be shared, strengthened, and offered in love. When each person brings what God has given, the whole community becomes a living sign of grace—many members, one body, serving together for the glory of God.

In this newsletter, you will find brief descriptions of many of the ministries already active at St. Mark's. Let them inspire prayerful consideration. Don't let them limit God's creative work. If you are not sure what God's is calling you to do today, feel free to have a conversation with another member or with Pastor Karen. Often, God speaks through others.

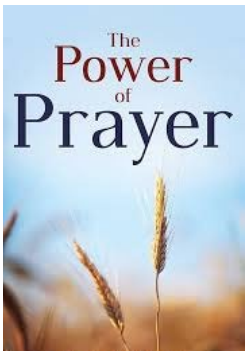
I am excited to see what God has in mind for all of us in this season!

Pastor Karen

## How is God calling you to serve?

Click on the link in the newsletter email to read more about some of the ministry opportunities at St. Mark's. New committees, groups, and ministry teams are always welcome!

# Serving With Care for One Another




## We are praying for…

**Our members**
Ivonne Bradford, Sarajane Hakenen, Gabby Hansen, Jim Hanser& family, Tom Lingel, Pamela Lyons, Gerda Reid, Stu Reid, Nelson Scarrott, and Josie Traughber.

**Those Who Can't Get Out Often:**
Janet Benson, V-Anne Chernock, Kathy Doty, Elsie Edgeman, Flordeliza Maneja and Shirley Quinn.

**Our friends and loved ones:**
Kim Arnold, Bruce Atkinson, Makita Bond, Adrian Butler, Tracy Camara, Roxanne Costan, Dave Eubanks, Kyle Forristall, Dave "Frog" Frogget, Ed Goldberg, Naomi Goulart, Tom Gravink, Rob Hakenen, Daryl Halls, Nicholas Hanson, Shaman Houpt, Phil Ladiero, Sandy Larson, Rene Maddox, Mike Michaelsen, Rev. Kirsten Moore, Dalilah Nyquist, Helen Powell, Cheryl Rassmussen, John Scarrott, Toni Scarrott Collins, Bob Stevenson, Rhonda Stokes, John Sylhman, Nardos Tesfaye, Dan and Sarita Turner, Lorna Walter, Jaden Wenn, Beth Williamson, and Laurie Ziegler.

| | |
|---|---|
| Brett Breeding | 09/04 |
| Fay DiSano | 09/11 |
| Pamela Lyons | 09/12 |
| Vic Metz | 09/18 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Bob and Janelle Jolley | 09/25 |
| Rene and Tammy Bojorquez | 09/25 |

## Pat Broschard's new address

1413 Brendel Hill Dr NW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

## Our homebound Members

Janet Benson
3305 Hartford Ave
Fairfield, CA 94534

V-Anne Chernock
10030 Newton Ave
Apt 248, Bloomington MN 55421

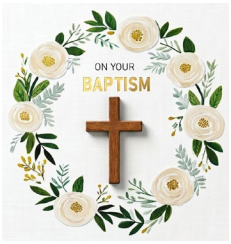
# Serving With Care for One Another

Kathy Doty, Magnolia Court Senior Assisted Living, 1111 Ulatis Dr, Room 204, Vacaville, CA 95687

Elsie Edgeman, Vacaville Village Senior Living, 2061 Peabody Rd., Room 206, Vacaville, CA 95687

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

Please remember them with your cards, visits and calls.




## Welcome to the Family!

On Thursday, August 13 we welcomed Reese Juliet Kimball to our family of faith. Reese is pictured here with her mom, Rachael Mullin-Kimball, dad, Ethan Kimball, Aunt Lauren Mullin—and of course, grandma and grandpa Karen and Sam Mullin.

## Our Contemporary Music Team

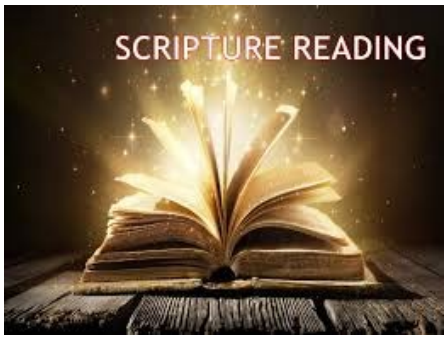
The team will continue to rehearse on Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. in the Worship Center and perform on the first and third Sundays. (

All voices are welcome and we encourage you to share your gifts!

## Choir has Resumed...

The choir provides beautiful music to enhance our worship throughout the program year. Rehearsals are on Tuesdays at 11:30 a.m. and Sundays at 8:30 a.m. beginning September 1 in the Worship Center. Everyone with a voice is welcome to join the fun.

# Serving in Worship & Study




## September 2026 (Year A)

**Sunday, September 6, 2026**
**Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

- Ezekiel 33:7-11
- Psalm 119:33-40
- Romans 13:8-14
- Matthew 18:15-20

**Sunday, September 13, 2026**
**Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

- Genesis 50:15-21
- Psalm 103:8-13
- Romans 14:1-12
- Matthew 18:21-35

**Sunday, September 20, 2026**
**Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost**

- Jonah 3:10—4:11
- Psalm 145:1-8
- Philippians 1:21-30
- Matthew 20:1-16

**Sunday, September 27, 2026**
**Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

- Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32
- Psalm 25:1-9
- Philippians 2:1-13
- Matthew 21:23-32

## Worship Assistants

**September 6**

| | |
|---|---|
| Assisting Minister | Diane Metz |
| Reader | Pamela Lyons |
| Communion Asst. | Josie Traughber |
| Greeter | |
| Slides | Eva Lipke |
| Sound | Jim/Rose Hanser |
| Livestream | Mike Gravink |

**September 13**

| | |
|---|---|
| Assisting Minister | Toni McCallum |
| Reader | Karin MacMillan |
| Communion Asst. | Dan DiSano |
| Greeter | |
| Slides | Eva Lipke |
| Sound | Jackie Marrolli |
| Livestream | Mike Gravink |

**September 20**

| | |
|---|---|
| Assisting Minister | Ann Hefner-Gravink |
| Reader | Josie Traughber |
| Communion Asst. | Fay DiSano |
| Greeter | |
| Slides | Eva Lipke |
| Sound | Karin MacMillan |
| Livestream | Mike Gravink |

**September 27**

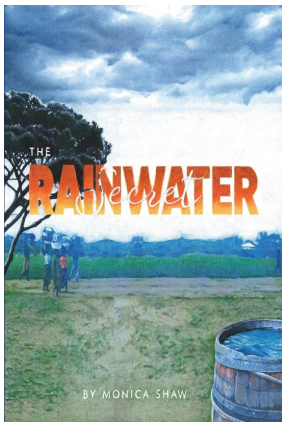
| | |
|---|---|
| Assisting Minister | Jackie Marrolli |
| Reader | Pamela Lyons |
| Communion Asst. | Sherri Scarrott |
| Greeter | |
| Slides | Eva Lipke |
| Sound | Tom Lingel |
| Livestream | Mike Gravink |

## Council Highlights

Council met on August 13th at 11:30 a.m. Highlights include:

- Finance Chair, Stew Irwin, reported that offerings were down significantly in July. However, this seems to be a normal pattern. Expenses were higher than usual due to the payment of our quarterly Alarm System and Liability Insurance bills. Also, the ICON (church database) annual payment was made.
- Council approved the 2027 Budget Committee of: Les Johnsen, Linda Frogett, Pam Lyons, Janelle Jolley and Fay DiSano. Stew will convene the committee in the coming weeks.
- Pastor reported on her continuing education experience at "A Preacher's Retreat" at Ghost Ranch in Abiqui, NM.
- Pastor also confirmed her upcoming vacation.
- Tabled conversation about split a/c units for the Bethel & Mexico Mission rooms in consideration of the $10,800 repair needed for the Preschool Unit.
- Approved a $100 fee for the Solano Symphany to use the Digerud Room for monthly board meetings in August through December. The fee will be reconsidered in December.
- Had a presentation from Connoisseur Media (KUIC Radio's Media Company) about the costs/benefits of Geofencing through their station. Decision tabled until Council receives more information.
- Considered renewing Columbarium agreement with Bryan Braker; tabled while getting more information.
- Discussed how we should respond when someone falls on our campus.
- Voted against participation in the October Travis Airbase Fall Festival.
- Voted to begin the search for a new office administrator.
- June and Pastor Karen will look into the cost of new SMLC shirts.
- The date for God's Work. Our Hands. was changed to September 20.

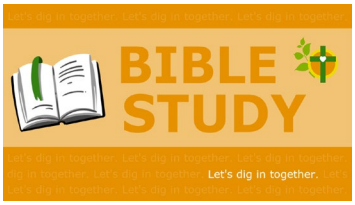
Our next meeting will be Thursday, September 10 at 11:30 a.m.




## Tuesday Book Group

What an amazing book!! On August 25 we finished "Theo of Golden." It was an amazing story – a must read for every reader (in our humble opinion ☺).

We will be taking a break for the month of September. On **October 6** we will begin reading **The Rainwater Secret** by Monica Shaw. It is a deeply moving, historical fiction novel about a woman who becomes a missionary in Africa after the death of her mother. Join us any time. Zoom Link




## Wednesday Bible Study

6:30 p.m. (Zoom)

An in-depth study of the scripture readings for the coming week. How are the readings related (or not!).

Contact Jim Hanser (hanserjames@comcast.net) for more information.

## Seekers Circle

**Meets Thursday, September 10** in the Digerud Room
9:30-11:30a.m.

Karin MacMillan is the Leader of the session. The group will focus on "Bold faith on an unexpected journey," by the Rev. Tiffany Chaney. Session 1- Encountering God in the Wilderness. **ALL are welcome.**

The group also connects with one another for a time of fellowship and plans action projects to live out our faith through the **Advocacy Ministry**. The group purchased 30 Church World Service Kits for the assembly at *God's Work, Our Hands* event.

St Mark's PRESCHOOL

The Preschool has set up an Amazon Wish List (link and QR code below).

**Amazon Wish List**

The Preschool classes begin September 2, 2026. Space if still available for anyone who wishes to register

## Sunday Connections
## September Events

**September 6**: What to Do When Someone Dies

**September 13**: Frank Acuna: Estate Planning (Wills & Trusts)

**September 20**: God's Work Our Hands: Period Pack Assembly

**September 27**: Crash Course Video

Zoom link: Sunday Connections

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

## Back-to-School Fair 2026
## What an accomplishment!

74 social/community service agencies
125 free immunizations
40 (approx.) vision screenings
1043 primary grade backpacks
1215 secondary grades backpacks
150 preschool backpacks

Great music and free scooters for the raffle winners!

That is just a bit of the excitement that took place on our campus on August 8th.

Our Annual Back-to-School Fair was a great success and provided so many great resources for our students and their families. Well done everyone!!!

# Serving Others

## Quilting for Lutheran World Relief

Quilt Dedication Day will be Sunday, October 4th. Be there to bless the 70+ quilts completed in the past year. These have been made to share with Lutheran World Relief.

Every Wednesday is devoted to meeting and working on various stages of quilt making—and sharing in fellowship, getting to know one another and home-grown vegetables—truly a sharing of gifts!

New members are ALWAYS welcome! Join us at 10:00 a.m. in the Quilt Room each Wednesday. Contact Diane Metz with questions about donations or how to get involved.

## Stewards of God's Love

*"Getting to Know Our Neighbors"* will finish this quarter's activities in September. How will you practice stewardship with your neighbors this month?

From October through December, we will consider our life as **Stewards of Local and Global Communities**. With its key message: God has called us to serve our neighbors, both near and far. How is God calling us, as individuals and as a congregation, to use the resources that God has entrusted to our care to love God and our neighbors both locally and globally? And Bible verses: Matthew 25:31-46, Proverbs 3:27-28

## Sunday, September 20

Join us for our annual God's Work, Our Hands service day as we come together to serve our neighbors by assembling Period Packs for Church World Service (CWS). Period poverty is a global community health dilemma described as having insufficient access to menstrual products, education, and sanitation facilities.

These Period Packs provide essential hygiene supplies for women and girls facing emergencies, disasters, or difficult circumstances both here in the United States and around the world.

Why Period Packs?
**Reduces Absenteeism:** Globally, approximately 1 in 10 (10%) menstruating adolescents miss school

during their periods due to a lack of access to adequate menstrual products and resources.

**Promotes Health and Well-being:** Improvising with improper products or stretching the use of a single pad/tampon can lead to severe health risks, including infections and toxic shock syndrome.

**Alleviates Stress and Stigma:** Many students feel profound embarrassment or anxiety if caught unprepared. Providing period packs can help destigmatize menstruation and allow students to focus on their learning.

**There are two ways to participate:**
• Donate the supplies needed to assemble a Period Pack.
• Donate $20, the cost of the supplies needed for one complete Period Pack and the shipping.

**Supplies Needed for Each Period Pack**
• Resealable plastic bags (2)
• Hand sanitizer
• Bathroom trash bags
• Travel pack of hand wipes
• Tampons
• Sanitary napkins
• Bath-size bar of soap
• Flushable wipes
• Laundry sheets

We will have a donation box in the Narthex the month of August for monetary donations to purchase period packs. If you prefer to write a check, please be sure to mark it "Period Packs".

Together, we can share God's love in a practical way with people experiencing hardship.

Thank you for sharing God's love and helping make a difference—one Period Pack at a time.

## July 2026 Statistics

The Bette Noll St. Mark's Food Pantry served **3,564** people from our neighborhood. That's an average of **891** people (**201** families) a week!
**YTD**: **28,848** weekly people served.
**6,445** families served.
Total Volunteer Hours **682**

## PLTS Fall Online Seminar with Dr. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda: Building A Moral Economy

Interested in exploring the intersection of faith, justice, and economics? Join Building Moral Economies with Dr. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, an online audit-style seminar this fall that invites lay leaders, Synodically Authorized Ministers, and all who seek to build communities where all creation can flourish within moral economics. Learn more HERE!

## Fall Online Seminar with Dr. Adam Braun: Revelation in Critical Perspectives

Want to learn more about Revelation (also known as John's Apocalypse)? Join Revelation in Critical Perspective with Dr. Adam Braun, an online audit-style seminar this fall that invites lay leaders, Synodically Authorized Ministers, and rostered leaders to explore the book of Revelation through historical, theological, and diverse contemporary perspectives. Learn more **HERE!**

## Happening in the Sierra Pacific Synod & the ELCA

Click the link for September events and sign up for the ELCA newsletter. **Congregational Happenings — Sierra Pacific Synod**

ELCA

For more info: ELCA News

ELCA ADVOCACY ACTION ALERT

In case you'd like the alerts sent directly to you, follow link. —Diane Subscribe to ELCA Advocacy - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

# Serving with Ministry Partners

## Senior Food Program

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

For additional food distribution sites click here.

## Monday and Wednesdays

12:00 noon
Digerud Room

Al-Anon (meaning Alcoholics Anonymous) is a mutual support group for people who have been affected by a loved one's drinking. Alateen is a similar family group that supports young people who live with or who have been affected by alcohol.

## Fairfield News

Join neighbors and friends supporting our community. For ongoing news and events **subscribe here**

## Welcome Sweet Anointing Ministry (Church of God in Christ)

On July 1, this community of faith joined our campus ministries.

They will worship in the Community Center from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Please take time to stop by and say hello.

Find out more at: https://www.sweetanointing.org/

## Clergy Action Network

### Mark your calendars now!

The Fairfield CAN (Clergy Action Network) will host its annual Thanksgiving Dinner for our neighbors in need on Tuesday, November 24 at 12:30 p.m.

St. Mark's will be collecting coats, socks and hygiene kits for distribution. Watch the lobby for a donation box.

# What's happening at St. Mark's September 2026

## Recurring Calendar of Events

Sunday
- 8:30 a.m. Choir Rehearsal (Worship Ctr)
- 8:30 a.m. Sweet Anointing Ministry (Comm. Cen.)
- 9:30 a.m. SMLC Worship (Worship Center/Live Streaming)
- 10:30 a.m. Fellowship (Worship Ctr)
- 10:45 a.m. Sunday Connections (Digerud/Zoom)
- 11:00 a.m. Pentecost Temple (Comm. Cen.)
- 2:30 p.m. Ministerios Ebenezer (Comm. Center)

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

Tuesday
- 10:30 a.m. Book Group (July 7)
- 11:30 a.m. Choir Rehearsal (Worship Ctr)
- 2:00 p.m. St. Mark's Food Pantry

Wednesday
- 9:30 a.m. Solano Food Bank Senior Program (Fd Ptry 1st/3rd)
- 10:00 a.m. Quilt-fest (Quilt Rm)
- 12:00 p.m. Al-Anon (Digerud Room)
- 6:00 p.m. Bible Study (Zoom)

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

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

## Additional Events

Tuesday, September 1
- 5:30 p.m. Worship and Music (Zoom)

Wednesday, September 2
- 9:30 a.m. Preschool Welcome
- 10:00 a.m. Bible Study @Magnolia Ct

Thursday, September 10
- 9:30 a.m. Seeker's Circle (Digerud Room)
- 11:30 a.m. Council Meeting (Pastor's Study)

Monday, September 14
- 11:30 a.m. Widow's Lunch at Mimi's

Tuesday, September 15
- 12:15 p.m. Preschool Board (Zoom)

Saturday, September 19
- 9:00 a.m. Synod Assembly Budget Meeting (Zoom)

Sunday, September 20
- 10:45 a.m. God's Work, Our Hands

Tuesday, September 22
- 3:00 p.m. Fairfield CAN

Join us for worship every Sunday

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

on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/@SMLCFairfield (or click HERE)

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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."

ELCA

St. Mark's Lutheran Church
1600 Union Avenue, Fairfield, CA 94533
707-422-4741
office@stmarksfairfield.org;
www.stmarksfairfield.org

Sierra Pacific Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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: Ann Hefner-Gravink (President) June Johnsen (Vice President), Jacqueline Marrolli (Secretary), Stew Irwin (Finance Chair), Toni McCallum and Karin MacMillan (Members at Large).
Elected Leaders: Linda Froggett (Financial Secretary), Les Johnsen (Treasurer)
Fay DiSano, Personnel Committee Chairperson