



But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.

2 Corinthians 4:7



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## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Hello St. Mark!

*“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”*  
**1 Peter 4:10**

A little boy built a model ship, glued all the pieces together, and worked on it for hours. It was perfect. Every detail was correct, down to tiny sailors standing on the deck. He put it in a glass case. He wouldn't let his brother play with it in the bathtub. He was going to keep it perfect by keeping it safe.

His parents bought a real boat so they could spend the weekends sailing out on the harbor. They loved it...at first. It was a lot of work to maintain. At first, they used it a lot. But then they used it less. It was expensive. After a few months passed, they went to spend a day sailing. Unfortunately, their trip was halted before they could even get on the boat. Sitting idle for all that time had resulted in mass amounts of barnacles and algae growing on the side that had to be painstakingly removed before they could set sail. Engines don't do so well sitting for that long either. It wouldn't start at all.

Churches are like the real boat; they are only kept in shape by being used. Churches that are preserved and spared use will eventually fall into disrepair. But churches that pour themselves into serving their communities will find energy, calling, passion, and love. The same could be said of our personal faith and walk with Jesus, following Jesus. Our faith is not a model to be placed on the shelf as if it is finished. God has graciously given us faith, and along with faith, gifts that are to be used in and for faith. “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another.”

A glass can be filled only as much as it is empty. Jesus told the woman at the well in John 4, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty



Connecting People to Jesus

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Continued from Page 1

again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” Through tenderly calling her to repentance, Christ emptied this woman so that He could fill her to overflowing as He promised. What does overflowing look like? It looks like what Peter said, “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another.” John tells us that is what the woman couldn’t help but do. “So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, ‘Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?’”

Serving others is how we empty ourselves of ourselves with the confidence that Christ will fill us to overflowing. There are countless ways that each of you can heed God’s Word and share your gifts with His people here at St. Mark. Ask the Lord and he will show you how He is calling you to be empty, be filled, and serve in His church.

JLY,  
Pastor Jay



**IT ISN'T  
ROCKET SCIENCE.  
IT'S JUST  
THREE WORDS.  
JESUS LOVES YOU**

**JLY**  
JLY.LIFE

**INTERESTED IN  
MEMBERSHIP AT**

**S MARK**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

**WE WILL BE INSTALLING NEW MEMBERS ON SUNDAY, JULY 18TH  
IF YOU WANT TO BECOME A MEMBER, PLEASE CONTACT PASTOR JAY!**



# AN URGENT NEED FOR CHILDCARE TEACHERS

As we get closer to the start of the new school year, students continue to enroll, and our need for qualified staff is becoming more urgent. We also know that God is always faithful to provide what His children need, in His time and according to His will. Would you take a moment to pray, right now, that He would provide for us in this need?

And if you know of anyone looking, please send them our way. Thank you!

## STAFF AND MINISTRY UPDATES



### PRESCHOOL & CHILDCARE



The first week of June the children planted a garden right outside our Childcare entrance. We planted green beans, tomatoes, green peppers, and cucumbers. Each morning the children go out to water the plants, document if there are any new tomato or peppers, and are eagerly waiting to see some cucumbers and green beans. It has been a great learning experience for both staff and students!

On Monday, June 28th, we hosted our first family event for the 2021-22 school year. All families that are enrolled for the fall were invited to come enjoy a morning of camping activities, meet new classmates, catch up with old friends and check out our new indoor playground.



Julie Kyriss, Preschool & Childcare Center Director



### IMPACT IMMIGRANT MINISTRY

Praise God we have two mothers who got US Citizenship at IMPACT. Santa Rai in April a Nepali and Ana Flores from Salvador this week naturalized. Both the husbands are following behind and also get help from the center. We are thankful for St Mark leadership and volunteers.

Blessings, Eddie Mekasha  
Outreach Pastor





## CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY



### KINGDOM KIDS SUNDAY SCHOOL:



Our Kingdom Kids are making a SPLASH! this summer by collecting offerings for Open Door Mission's Hydrate the Homeless program. At the end of the summer, the offerings will be used to purchase bottles of water which will then be gifted to the Open Door Mission who will distribute them to the homeless.

This mission project coordinates with our summer learning theme called "SPLASH." Every week the kids study a water-theme biblical narrative. So far, they have studied Hebrews 6:7, the Crossing of the Red Sea, Water from a Rock, and Elijah with the Prophets of Baal.

### FIRST WEDNESDAY KINGDOM KIDS CLUB:

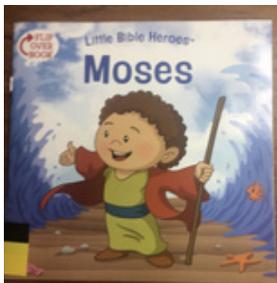
On July 7th we welcomed Nate and Lisa Steinbach as our guest activity leaders. They led the club members in baking their own individual tarts for dessert. Our focus question for bible study was "How Did the World Come to Be?". It gave us time to talk about different Christian perspectives and the importance of believing the biblical account.

### AND THE KINGDOM KIDS ATTENDANCE AWARD GOES TO:

10 classes: Avery Rygol • 20 classes: Elizabeth Jay

### KINGDOM KIDS LIBRARY: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR JULY:

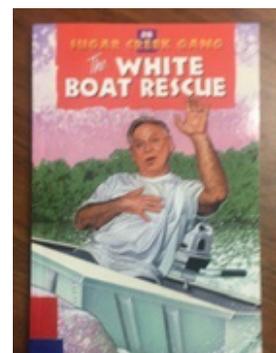
Find these library selections and others on the Kingdom Kids Kiosk and in the Kingdom Kids classroom. The Kingdom Kids Library is a self-checkout-style library for kids ages 3-12 years.



Ages 3-5



Ages 5-8



Ages 8-12

Blessings!

Kirsten Suhr, Director of Children and Family Ministry



## ADMINISTRATION & OPERATIONS

June was a month of moving, painting, moving, cleaning out... and did I mention moving? We now have a shipping container in the southwest parking lot which will be used for long term storage of items that are only accessed occasionally. We have

already moved numerous items to the container which has freed up the various storage areas to be more functional and organized, with designated areas for ministry and facility items that need to be stored in the building.

We relocated one preschool classroom to a new space which opened up a room for the preschool to set up an inside playground for the children attending childcare and the preschool this fall. This room has direct gym access, so the children are having a great time with their new expanded play area!

Other things that happened in June: we hosted another homeschool graduation reception in the Fellowship Hall; the gym floor was resurfaced; the bleachers and basketball backstops were serviced and repaired; and we had a new building HVAC controller installed so we have remote access to some of the rooftop units that were until now only accessible by climbing on the roof. We also have just started an electrical project to troubleshoot and repair numerous lights and fixtures inside and outside the building, as well as prepare for lighting up the new signage that will be installed in the coming months. By the way, Daren has been BUSY! I am not going to pretend to be the one who actually does all the real work! Daren is an invaluable member of the staff who can always be relied on to get things done: moving (!), painting, building flower boxes and tricycles and bookshelves for the preschool, drywalling...all in addition to his regular duties around the church.

Kelly Thompson, *Director of Administrative Operations* & Daren Clark, *Facility Technician*



## CREATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

It's JLY time again! You know...that time of the year where we are all reminded how it is God's job to convert hearts, but our King has commanded us to share the beautiful message of His Gospel. We know that it's truly as simple (and not scary) to share the truth that "Jesus Loves You." In order to reinforce that message (and motivate us), we've created some hopefully humorous "ads" that bring the simplicity of this message to mind. You'll be seeing them around the church, on social and in the Worship announcements. Please share them!

Chip Thompson, *Director of Creative Communications*  
PS: Don't forget to pick up your JLY Pin!



# OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Helen and I want to thank everyone for their contributions so far this year. We also want to make sure that you know what a blessing this program is around the world. In each shoebox, Samaritan's Purse adds a booklet called The Greatest Gift. Along with this booklet, which is printed in 80 different languages, the children are offered a 12-week course to study the booklet and learn more about the love and gifts of God and Jesus. At the end they receive a graduation certificate and a Bible.

More than **23.3 million children** have enrolled in this ministry since 2009. Not only are the children brought to Christ but also their siblings and parents.

The stories that you read on the Operation Christmas Child website are very heartwarming. The faith that comes from this ministry is truly amazing. Many of the stories are adults who received a shoebox as a child and make an effort to build shoeboxes for others – they know the joy they had and are thankful for the knowledge of the love of Christ.

We are hoping for a great showing this year (200-250 boxes) so we will soon return the Giving Tree to the gathering space to again ask for your help with items we are still in need of – so look for that soon. Hard to believe but it will soon be time for school supplies to go on sale so be on the lookout!

And.... Don't forget we always need old or unwanted t-shirts that we use to make jump ropes.

Thank-you, Rhonda Zebolsky and Helen Oldenkamp



**July 17th @ 9am**  
"Right Relationships in a World Gone Wrong."  
**RSVP at [www.echojc.com](http://www.echojc.com).**

Lydia and Rebekah Circles  
will meet on  
**Tues July 27, 10:00 am**  
in the Gathering Space.

This month's topic:  
Lives of Jochebed  
and Miriam.

**RED CROSS  
BLOOD DRIVE**  
**SUN, AUG 1ST**  
**8AM - 2PM**  
**ST. MARK GYM**



**YOUR MINISTRY  
SUPPORT  
IS ESSENTIAL!**

**Setting Up Your  
Online Giving is Easy!**

**[SIGN UP TO GIVE BLOOD HERE!](http://stmarkomaha.org/giving)** **[stmarkomaha.org/giving](http://stmarkomaha.org/giving)**

# HANDBELL & CHOIR KICK-OFF DINNER NIGHT JULY 29TH @ 6PM

**CLICK HERE  
TO REGISTER  
YOUR KIDS  
FOR VBS!**

ST. MARK'S  
**WHERE IN THE  
WORD?**  
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

**JULY 19TH - 23RD, 2021  
9AM - NOON  
WE STILL NEED VOLUNTEERS!  
CONTACT KIRSTEN OR CHIP**



## The Eternal Connection

[Click Here to Listen!](#)

PART 2  
**SPECIAL EDITION  
ON-LOCATION EPISODE**

**JOINED BY THE YOUTH OF ST. MARK!**

# Get to KNOW you!

## MEET YOUR PLC: JOLENE SCALZO



**Introduce you and your family (ie. Kids /where you are from originally... a background).**

I am Jolene Scalzo. I have a son, Christopher, and a new daughter-in-law, Julie, as well as a grand-puppy, Jameson (he counts as family as well). I grew up in Columbus, NE and attended Immanuel Lutheran School for elementary school and Columbus High School. I came to Omaha after graduation and attended Methodist School of Nursing getting a diploma in nursing in 1974. I also graduated from Concordia University, Seward in 1997 with a degree in Organizational Management.

**What do you do for a living?**

I worked at Methodist Hospital for 44 years and retired 3 years ago. Many of those years were in the Surgical Services department, working in Surgery, Surgery Scheduling, and Pre-op Holding. I am now my own boss and work at retirement mostly doing what makes my happy!

**What is something (a hobby, an interest, an achievement) that most folks don't know about you.**

I spend my time in the summer doing yard work and gardening. I enjoy seeing the many flowers that actually grow in my flowerbeds. During the winter, I spend a lot of time crocheting, I have donated many baby blankets to Assure Women's Services for the new moms when they have their babies. I enjoy sewing but don't do much of that at this time. My next goal is to remodel my wedding dress into baptism gowns.

**How long have you been a member at St Mark?**

I have attended St. Mark since when I was a student at Methodist but didn't actually join until I permanently moved into this neighborhood probably 45 years ago. I have been involved in leadership many years starting with the Fellowship Ministry Action Team member and leader. I went on to fill the secretary position for the Church Council which continues with the Parish Leadership Council.

**What does being a member on the PLC here at St Mark mean to you?**

Being on the PLC allows me to be involved in the ministry of our church. God has given me talents that I can use to help to spread the Gospel to those around me I feel like I need to use them in service to God.

**Do you have a favorite Bible verse and/or story (and maybe why?)**

I have several "favorite" Bible verses that I recall often. The first is my confirmation verse, Psalm 27:1 KJV (which was the only version of the Bible used at that time): "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" Through turbulent times in my life, I remembered this and knew that God would help me through it all.

The second verse that I have referred to many, many times is from Psalm 46 (NIV):

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, He says, "Be still, and know that I am God.

This helps me to stay grounded and know that I cannot do anything on my own. God has my life in His hands and will care for me according to His plan, not mine.

**Do you have a "St Mark" story for us (anything stand out that you want to share)?**

I have enjoyed getting to know so many people through the years I have been a member here. I feel like my church family is a big part of my life and are always here to support me if I need as I would for them. The smaller size of our church is important to me as relationships can form in the fellowship of a Christ-like atmosphere.



Date \_\_\_\_\_

# YOUTH TRIP

## WINTER PARK, COLORADO

GOCO 2021! The St Mark Youth and their leaders spent four days in Colorado learning, spending valuable time together and having fun.

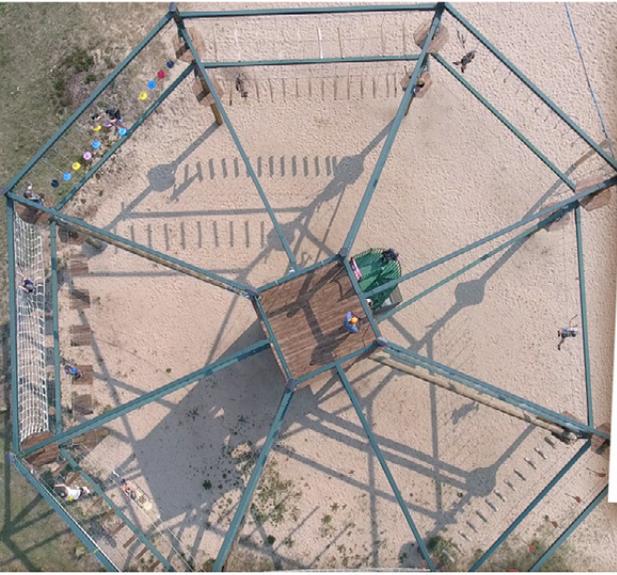
We were able to enjoy and see the splendor of God's creation as we spent most of our time outdoors. Among the activities were horseback riding, many hikes, driving to the top of one of the mountains, white-water rafting, a challenging rope course, cooking meals together, worshiping and communing in an outdoor chapel and even participating on The Eternal Connection radio show.

A moose even visited as he passed by the cabin one morning.

The whole group challenged ourselves and each other as we rode, hiked, prayed, studied and worshiped our Lord.

Thanks for your support of youth ministry!  
Dan Conell







## DEVOTIONAL BITE

from Pastor Jay's July 1, 2021 Devotional "Paid For, Not Ignored"

Scripture: Jeremiah 31:33-34

*For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."*

Why is it, even as those who genuinely believe in Christ and know of God's love and mercy, that we can still cling so tightly to the sins of our past and guard the guilt of which Christ died to set us free from? It is because we do not have the capacity or even a frame of reference as sinful people to fathom, understand, or quantify the immeasurable love and grace of God. We know in our hearts that we would never love our enemies as God has loved us. We would never be as patient and long-suffering as God is with our pride and stubbornness. We certainly wouldn't hesitate to sacrifice our own life for the sake of those who love us...but sacrificing yourself for someone who wants to kill you?! That kind of compassion and incomprehensible love can only come from God.

We find it hard to forget all the ways other people have wronged us. Almost without thinking, we can pull up the mental Rolodex of all the ways certain people in our life have hurt us or wronged us; even those we feel we have truly forgiven. Yet as God promised in Jeremiah 31, "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Such forgiveness is foreign to us, but we can be certain that God indeed has forgotten our sins because Christ rose from the dead.

[READ THE FULL DEVOTIONAL HERE](#)

## MEN OF ST. MARK - LET'S FELLOWSHIP IN THE WORD!

Join us on Saturday mornings at 9am in the Youth Room (Just off the fellowship hall) for a time of fellowship and studying God's Word together.



We are currently using St. Mark's Radio Ministry, *The Eternal Connection*, as the foundation for our Bible studies. Join us for a great time of brothers sharing with one another in the Word!

If you are not on the email list, contact Jack Swanda at [jswanda@cox.net](mailto:jswanda@cox.net).

## PRAYERS



**Cancer:** Michele Brase (friend of member Linda Wegner); Dale Harmon (friend of Pastor Jay); Levi Rundlett (great-grandson of Donna Rundlett and great-nephew of Lorrie Wacker); Bill Rolles (member); Pastor Aaron Staub; Brian Burke, Samuel Varner (father-in-law of member Jordan Boetcher), Evelyn Urbatch (member); Marlene Fix (member)

**Health & Healing:** Lori (daughter in of of Marj Garabrandt) – doctors trying to find a diagnosis; Fred Schleicher (difficulties recovering from surgeries...asks for prayers of encouragement); Donna Rundlett (in hospital with infection in her legs)

**Military:** Jordan Hammond, Meghan Murry, Andrew Toman, Zach Karels, Scott Lewis, Quenten Oldenkamp, Amber Phipps, Jarod Suhr

To request public Prayers of the Church e-mail Kelly Thompson at [kthompson@stmarkomaha.org](mailto:kthompson@stmarkomaha.org) or call the church and ask for Kelly.



**July 1**  
Dillon Meyer  
Halle Meyer  
Kathy Nelson

**July 2**  
Michael Crnkovich  
Connee Willis

**July 3**  
Evelyn Brueggemann  
Logan Hansen  
Ruth Koop  
Mac Morgan  
Larry Nelson

**July 4**  
Mark Cherney  
Glen Dahlkoetter  
Jason Ossenkop

**July 5**  
Kim Burger  
Kristal Platt  
Tom Winge

**July 7**  
Jessica Maas

**July 8**  
Leah Johnson  
Cathy Ringler

**July 10**  
Emersyn Oldenburg  
Everett Welch

**July 11**  
Jerald Kersten

**July 12**  
Randy Kersten  
Kate Kielhold  
Kirsten Suhr

**July 16**  
Chloe Monaco

**July 18**  
Grant Barry  
Margaret Burt  
Jessica Hoppmann

**July 19**  
Gerry Burke

**July 18**  
Robert Chapman  
Lisa Monter  
Matt Tilford

**July 21**  
Eric Nelson  
Michael Sharp

**July 23**  
Hayley Hallberg  
Lauren Johnson  
Bill Liebsack  
Julia Vanderloo

**July 25**  
Travis Charter  
Landon Schlabs  
Keaton Tabbert

**July 26**  
Kynnley Bruhn  
Georgia Fleharty

**July 27**  
Sue Pedersen  
Andy Rygol  
Zoe Schlabs

**July 28**  
Natalie Dallman  
Dale Olson  
Gale Suhr  
Robert Watson

**July 31**  
Kit Harwick  
Lydia James  
Lucas Nelson

**July 1**  
Robert & Holly Nickos: 4 Years  
Grant & Grace Siekman: 4 Years

**July 2**  
Jason & Brooke Ossenkop: 15 Years

**July 3**  
Marvin & Melissa Rosenthal: 39 Years  
Chris & Julie Scalzo: Just Married

**July 6**  
Thomas & Kelly Volksen: 30 Years

**July 8**  
John & Cheryl Lawson: 43 Years

**July 11**  
Steve & Diane Bang: 34 Years  
Daniel & Sheri Galde: 23 Years

**July 22**  
Ryan & Allison Nelson: 4 Years  
Harold & Connee Willis: 32 Years

**July 23**  
William & Becky Niemack: 16 Years

**July 24**  
Denis & Deeann Goeser: 39 Years

**July 25**  
Johnnie & Jayne Dunn: 63 Years

**July 26**  
Michael & Carolyn Bunch: 52 Years

**July 28**  
Mark & Patti Cherney: 42 Years  
Joshua & Brenda Neal: 14 Years  
Steve & Mary Kay Swale: 20 Years

## CHURCH STAFF & LEADERSHIP

Rev. Eric Jay, **Senior Pastor**  
Rev. Eddie Mekasha, **Outreach Pastor**  
Julie Kyriss, **Preschool & Childcare Director**  
Kelly Thompson, **Director of Administrative Operations**  
Kirsten Suhr, **Director of Children and Family Ministry**  
Chip Thompson, **Director of Creative Communications**  
Daren Clark, **Facility Technician**  
Glenda Bock, **Organist**

**Elders:** Doug Doerr, Andy Groothuis, Mike Ringler, Jack Swanda, Greg Zebolsky

**Parish Leadership Council:** Gerry Burke – President; Bruce Sharp – Vice President; Mike Munderloh – Treasurer; Jolene Scalzo – Secretary; Lisa Buchele, Lisa Hayes, Chuck Kuntz, Gale Suhr, and Andy Rygol

**Would you kindly leave a Google Review for St. Mark?**  
*(it helps us get the Word out!)*



[Click to Leave a Review](#)