

Pastor's Message

Many of you know that I am not much of a gardener although I keep trying. I enjoy fresh produce and beautiful flowers – I just have never been very good about remembering to weed and water. This year I haven't really done very well - although I will say that I have several tomatillo plants growing in the garden that are "volunteers". They must have been planted from birds or likely fruit that fell off the vine and left over the winter.

I also enjoy the weeds. One particular weed I love is the milkweed. We have many of these in our yard and while not particularly attractive they serve an important function. For several years now we have become a host site for Monarch butterflies. Monarch butterflies lay their eggs on milkweed plants. I have heard that it is only on milkweed that they lay their eggs. And so for several summers we see these beautiful butterflies flying and floating around in our backyard – often in twos or more. We get to see very small Monarch caterpillars grow as they eat the milkweed. It is a wonderful sight. It has also been fun sharing this with our youngest members of the church during Children's Time in worship.

But I often wonder, "How do they know to come here?" The migration and return of Monarch's have been researched and studied extensively. Every year

– they migrate south for the winter and then their prodigy make the return trip north to lay eggs in the same place their parents and grandparents did. It is a wondrous mystery. Every summer is a homecoming of sorts.

Rally Sunday – September 8th– has traditionally been understood as a homecoming as well. Summer is unofficially over and school has officially begun. Fall schedules are in full swing for many and we return to a different rhythm than in the summertime. I pray and hope that you have had an opportunity to enjoy the summer weeks. I hope that you have had an opportunity to slow down and restore your spirit. I hope that you have had an opportunity to enjoy God's beautiful creation – either with a walk around a lake or a trip to another part of the country.

But I also want to welcome you back home as we celebrate and recognize another year ahead of learning and growing in our faith lives, caring and loving for one another and the world in which we live and worshipping God who gives us all good things.

Blessings,

Jennifer

What's Happening

Choir Rehearsals Resume

Choir rehearsal will resume Sunday mornings at 8:30 am SHARP! Our first rehearsal will be September 8th – and we will begin singing in worship September 15th . This year promises another year of challenging music, beautiful melodies, powerful messages and "no breathing!" Come join us!

Rally Sunday is September 8th!

After the summer spent hearing about and singing beloved hymns - we will begin another year in the Narrative Lectionary. In the Fall the preaching texts begin with the early chapters of Genesis, move through the stories of Israel's early history, the exodus, the kings, prophets, exile and return. From Christmas to Easter we will focus on the Gospel of Mark and from Easter to Pentecost the texts are

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chosen from Acts and Paul's letters. It all begins with Rally Sunday where we will gather in worship and then enjoy our traditional root beer floats after worship! See you there!

Mark Your Calendars! September 16th – 7-8:30 pm

Do you have an advanced Directive or Living Will? Do you have questions? Have you been putting doing one off? Wait no longer! A registered nurse and licensed graduate social worker from Park Nicollet Hospice will give a brief presentation and be able to address questions you might have. Rev. Shuji Moriichi (hospice chaplain) and Pastor Jennifer will also be present. There will be forms available for you to take home or even begin to work on right away. Refreshments will be served. Invite neighbors and friends and anyone who has not filled one of these out yet. It is a blessing to your family to have Living Will completed. Don't put it off any longer!

Venture Sunday

Thanks to all who ventured out to worship with other faith communities this summer. Hopefully it was a time of renewal - new experiences - and sabbath rest. Because of the many surveys filled out and experiences shared - the Crossroads Team has quite a bit of feedback to examine and discuss. We plan to share the feedback given with you in newsletters and during worship as well. We ask that you continue to pray for the team as well as St. Mark's as we journey together toward the future.

Summer Sounds

A special thank you to all who shared music with us while the choir took a short hiatus during the summer months! There was such a variety of beautiful music shared which enhanced the worship service. Thanks again!

Messenger Articles Due

I will be out of town at the end of September and will need Messenger articles by Sunday September 22.

The Sheridan Story Ministry

St. Mark's will once again be partnering with The Sheridan Story and Washburn Elementary to provide food for children in need over the weekends. At our local elementary school, (Washburn), 65% of the kids qualify for free or reduced lunch. The Sheridan Story organization takes care of the purchasing, packing and delivering the bags of food to the schools. The church then takes care of the distribution and funding. This will be our 5th year of participating in this important ministry of caring for our neighbors in need. The cost of sponsorship per child is \$215/child/school year. This is for 100% of the cost and it is for 37 weeks (including an extra bag for Thanksgiving, Winter and Spring Break). As we have in the past - we are looking for individuals to sponsor additional kids for the 2019/

20 school year. The cost per child for a full school year is \$215/child. Please contact Pastor Jennifer if interested in learning more or if you are interested in sponsoring a child. We will also be looking for volunteers on Friday mornings to distribute the food at Washburn Elementary. You can distribute food alone or pair up with a friend! It only takes about 20 minutes and is done before the school day begins. We will have two community folks helping us to distribute food but we are always open to more if you are interested. Forms to sponsor kids will be in the church office. If you are unable to pick up a form - you can email Pastor Jennifer and she will fill one out for you. Thank you for caring for these kids in real need in our neighborhood.

The Garden Update

The garden started out a bit slow this year because of the cooler spring weather. Once the summer heat came, the plants have really taken off.

I have been able repeatedly harvest green beans ,cucumber, tomatoes, kale and even some beets. First year for the beets! I will grow them again.

We also have two other gardeners who took over empty plots and are making regular donations to VEAP. I appreciate their willingness to take over the two empty plots.

The Japanese Beetles did make an appearance in the garden this year. They are chewing on a few plants but they seem to be less of a pest this year than in previous years. Some squash bugs also showed up and proceeded to destroy a few plants. Always something going on...deer...bunnies.....

It has rained a lot this summer. Watering the garden has been super easy. The flowers are thriving. Lots of bees and butterflies are out there every day.

Hopefully we will be able to have a late harvest of beans, kale and lettuce.

People to Keep in Our Prayers

Gaylynn Miller, who received a new kidney.

Mary Gordenier, who had a partial hip replacement July 15th due to a fall.

The family of Jacquie Clemens. Jacquie died June 12th. A memorial service was held July 27th

Kim Vacanti, whose mother, Pat, died unexpectedly June 14th. Her service was held August 3rd.

Laura Vande Waa, as she adjusts to her new Assisted Living home at Martin Luther Manor.

Jack Vande Waa, at home recovering from a blood clot.

Matt Brokl, receiving treatment for a brain tumor.

Joanne Olson and her family, as they care for Joanne living with dementia.

Marilyn Leaf, friend of Brokl's, dealing with cancer as well as other health issues.

Dick Pappin, uncle of Deb Barger, dealing with pain after back surgery. Prayers for healing of nerves so he can walk again. Also prayers for his wife, Bonnie, as she cares for him – separated due to hospitalizations and long term care.

Johnny, Laura Vande Waa's neighbor, as he receives chemotherapy for recurring cancer.

Steven Gamm, friend of Drew Brokl, receiving chemotherapy for bladder cancer.

Scott Mayforth, close friend of the Jaimez family living with the effects of a serious stroke.

Andy Krohn, nephew of Mary Ann and Russ Dunne, two-time kidney transplant patient now diagnosed with a malignant melanoma.

Doug Settle and family, Jim Settle's nephew, affected with a serious illness.

Tiger (Edwin) Wing, nephew of Helen Wing, suffering with many illnesses.

Linda Settle Mitchner, niece of Jim Settle, with serious health concerns.

All those suffering with chronic health issues.

The heart of worship

The worship to which we are called in our renewed state is far too important to be left to personal preferences, to whims or to marketing strategies. It is the pleasing of God that is at the heart of worship. Therefore, our worship must be informed at every point by the Word of God as we seek God's own instructions for worship that is pleasing to him.

August 13, 2019 Council Meeting Highlights

Reports of the Ministry Team Leaders

Care of Members: No report

Spiritual Development: discussed the status of the children's area in the back of the sanctuary, which we are trying this summer. Mostly this is accepted well by members. Jackie and Karla have volunteered to do nursery duty in the new school year.

Outreach: purchased 6 backpacks and some school supplies for the VEAP back to school drive. The donations were somewhat lower than normal, possibly due to the short time between drives and the Venture Sunday shortening the opportunities to give.

Property: We are retaining the same vendor for snowplowing this winter season. Discussed a couple of unknown cars parked at the church overnight and/or for several days. Keeping the tables locked has caused Jennifer to have to come to the church a few times when they were needed by known people.

Minister's Report: Jennifer and Kirsten will volunteer at a Back to School Night with VEAP at St. Bonaventures. Crossroads team planning on the church hosting a community/neighborhood event on three consecutive months beginning Sept. 16, 7 – 8:30 p.m.. The Sept. topic for the neighborhood is Living Wills and will be lead by Shuji. There will

be one held in October, hopefully a Mayoral candidate forum, and November, a presentation on Bloomington for families. Jennifer conducted two memorial services before leaving for vacation. She will be leaving for a trip to AZ on August 16. Leah Santiago and Jackie Bernbrock will be leading the service on 8-18.

Financial Secretary's report

Financial Secretary's report was provided by Rick Pribnow. June and July saw lower than normal contributions, with \$2,500 under the budgeted amount each month on average.

Treasurer's Report:

	July	YTD
Total Receipts:	\$4,911.08	\$46,422.90
Total Disbursements:	<u>\$8,465.69</u>	<u>\$62,996.50</u>
Difference:	(\$3,554,.61)	(\$16,573.60)

New Business:

- 1) Fall Clean up date will be selected next month.
- 2) We should ensure that the church public areas look ready before our neighborhood night Sept. 16.
- 3) Need to remove Ken and add Gail as check signers on the bank accounts.

Back-to-school humor

What kind of school do you go to if you're ...
... an ice cream man? Sundae school
... a giant? High school
... a surfer? Boarding school
... King Arthur? Knight school

Teacher: What's the chemical formula for water?

Student: H-I-J-K-L-M-N-O

Teacher: What are you talking about?

Student: Yesterday you said it was H to O.

Math teacher: A person from LA drove toward New York at 250 miles per hour as a person from New York drove toward LA at 150 miles per hour. Where did they meet?

Student: In jail!

Global Ministries Mission Moment: (a ministry of the Disciples of Christ and the United Church of Christ)

Holistic Health Care by Monica Liddle

Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay. Matthew 10:8

The road to the village of Motara in East Timor is a virtual mud-bog during the rainy season. When we pull up at 9:00 AM for a mobile clinic dozens of patients have already gathered. Moms and young children make up the majority but there are elderly men and women too. Two Clinic Immanuel staff and a government doctor unload several boxes of medical supplies and start consulting. By the time the clinic is over more than 60 patients will have had the opportunity for health care they otherwise wouldn't have had. This clinic is a collaborative effort between Clinic Immanuel and the Timorese Ministry of Health.

As a ministry of Global Ministries partner the Protestant Church of Timor-Leste, for the past 25 years Clinic Immanuel has been a steady presence in the town of Lospalos. Five women, all members of Immanuel Church, staff the clinic. Patients come from several hours away for a

consultation. Most of our work is outpatient care in this traditional clinical setting.

In recent years we have been developing a more community-based approach to health care. Part of that involves outreach to remote communities where the government does not have health posts.

Like in the typical clinical setting, health care of this kind is holistic. It's part consultation, part counseling, part education, and part social work. And quite often we end up providing ambulance service as well! We start and end each day in prayer, always giving thanks for the call and opportunity to be part of God's mission in this part of the world.

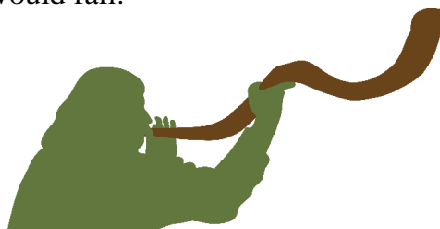
Monica Liddle serves with the Protestant Church of East Timor (IPTL). Her and her family are members of the MN Conference!

Bible Quiz

What number fits in all the blanks to reveal God's instructions to Joshua about the city of Jericho?

Israelite warriors, led by ___ priests blowing ___ ram's-horn trumpets for ___ days, would march around the city once a day, except for the last day, when they would march around it ___ times; then the walls of Jericho would fall.

- A. one
- B. three
- C. five
- D. seven



Answer: D (See Joshua 6:1-5)



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Just do it!

A young man told a pastor he wanted to be a Christian, so the pastor instructed him to prepare by reading the book of Acts. After many weeks went by, the pastor wondered if the man had changed his mind about this important decision.

Almost a year later, he finally reappeared. “Where have you been?” asked the bewildered pastor.

The man replied, ““Every time I started to read, I felt prompted to do something like the apostles did: help the poor, tell someone about Jesus. So I stopped reading and started doing. I’ve just been too busy to return.”

Christian Symbol

PEARL — The pearl is a symbol of the surpassing value of the kingdom of God, based on Jesus’ parable in Matthew 13:45-46 (ESV): “The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine

pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.”



Keep Singing

None can sing a new song who has not the new life. But many who have the new life seem to have lost the song. The first thing that goes when we begin to backslide is the joy of the Lord.

—Evan H. Hopkins

Labors of Love

Thomas Merton, an American monk, writer and social activist, said, “It is in the ordinary duties and labors of life that the Christian can and should develop his spiritual union with God.” As the United States observes Labor Day, may we find meaning not simply in marking summer’s end but in celebrating the ways nearly all “duties and labors of life” can empower ministry and faith.

Whether as a dentist, parent, artist, teacher, mechanic, gardener, city councilor, farmer, day laborer, attorney or anything else, a Christian can begin each workday or shift by praying for opportunities to serve whoever they’ll encounter. We also can pray for and seek ways to grow in “spiritual union with God”: cultivating spiritual fruits; actively loving God and neighbor; seeing Jesus in the vulnerable; practicing humility, gratitude and praise.

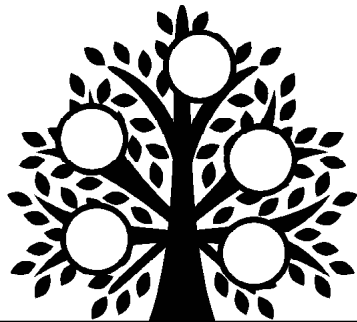
In Labor Day, may we find inspiration to make all our labors loving and faithful!

Stop the Hopping

A church is an imperfect mix of imperfect believers, so it’s easy for members to find faults or feel disappointed. That, in turn, may tempt us to shop around.

C.S. Lewis addresses that in *The Screwtape Letters*. “If a man can’t be cured of churchgoing,” Screwtape advises his demon protégé, “the next best thing is to send him all over the neighborhood looking for the church that ‘suits’ him until he becomes a taster or connoisseur of churches.” How Satan must hate when Christians maintain long-term commitment to one church!

The urge to church-hop harms congregations as well as believers. “Spiritual depth isn’t fostered by satiating your sense of felt needs,” writes James Emery White. “It’s receiving a balanced diet of teaching and challenge, investing in service and mission, living in community and diversity that you



GROWING generations

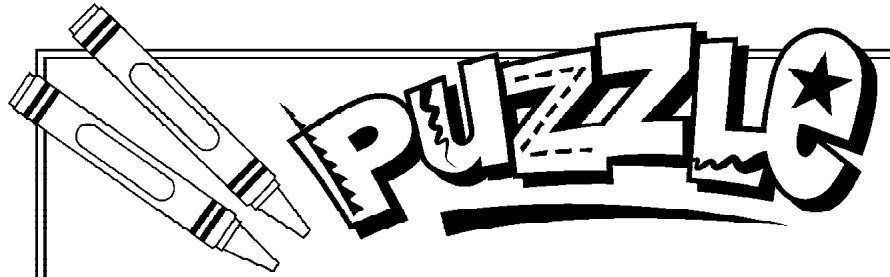
Honor your grandparents with a gift that all generations can enjoy.

What you need:

- Cups (various sizes)
- Pencil
- Family photos
- Scissors
- Colored paper
- Hot glue (and adult help)
- Clothespins
- A small potted tree or bush

What you do:

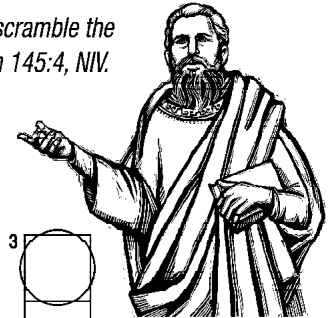
1. Use a cup to trace a circle around faces in the photos. Cut out the circles.
2. Cut larger circles out of paper. Glue each photo onto a paper circle.
3. Glue a clothespin to the back of each photo. Clip photos to the branches.
4. Present the gift to your grandparents, and tell them you're glad to be in their family tree.



Grandparents of the Old Testament

Can you name these biblical grandparents? If you get stuck, find an Old Testament family tree in your Bible or online.

Directions: After filling in the crossword, unscramble the circled letters to complete Psalm 145:4, NIV.



ACROSS		DOWN
2. David's grandfather	1. Judah's grandmother	
5. Jacob's grandfather	3. Joseph's grandfather	
6. Esau's grandmother	4. Solomon's grandfather	
	7. Jesse's grandmother	

One G _ N _ _ _ _ _ N commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts. Psalm 145:4, NIV

Answers: ACROSS 2. Obed, 5. Abraham, 6. Sarah; DOWN: 1. Rebekah, 3. Isaac, 4. Jesse, 7. Ruth. Generation

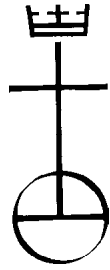
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First Class

A vertical graphic of a staircase with a cross at the top, rendered in a light gray color, serving as a background for the title text.

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September 2019*

St. Mark's United Church of Christ Mission Statement

St. Mark's is a welcoming Christian community whose mission is to worship God, to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to serve all humankind in the spirit of love.