St. Mark's Lutheran
ASHEVILLE, NC
Love • Grow • Serve

ReMARK'S
July 2026

Celebrating Our Country Through a Lutheran Lens

written by Pastor Tim

I love 4th of July fireworks! I love that it's a tradition the extends all the way back to July 4th, 1777, to celebrate the 1st anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, even while the Revolutionary War was far from being won. I love the way fireworks light up the sky with color, and sparkles and streamers. I like the way fireworks create suspense, as we watch the rocket launch and follow to the point of explosion when it can burst into any design or shape or color. I like how they fill the air with sound, especially the "salutes," which explode in a white flash and fill the air with the sound of a signal cannon. I enjoy the communal aspect of a firework display, "oohing and aahing" with other faceless spectators. For many years, I watched fireworks lying on my back with hundreds of campers and staff at Lutheridge applauding each burst and, at the end, lying still for the smoke to clear and for our eyes to adjust to the night sky filled again with stars.



I'm expecting BIG fireworks this year to celebrate 250 years as a nation! We are fortunate to live in a land with such freedoms and civil liberties: of speech, of religion, of the right to gather and assemble. We are fortunate to live in a land of democratic principles giving each of us a voice and a vote in a system that allows a peaceful transfer of power. We are fortunate to live in a land of such economic opportunity and wealth, as well as wonderful educational opportunities. We are blessed with a rich and beautiful land of oceans and rivers and mountains and forests, of which much is protected in wonderful national parks. We are blessed with a rich heritage of cultural diversity that has made our nation stronger. We have many reasons to be thankful to God Almighty for the gift of our nation and it's 250 years of existence.

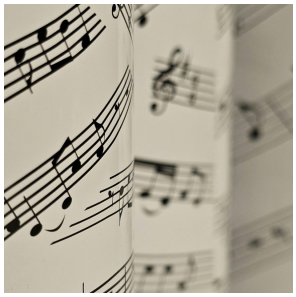
We can also give thanks for our Lutheran heritage which helps us keep the gift of our nation in proper perspective. Martin Luther laid out a theological framework to help understand how God is at work in the world called the 2 Kingdom doctrine. Luther describes God working in the world in two distinct ways: through Spiritual Kingdom (the right hand of God) and the Earthly Kingdom (the left hand of God). The Spiritual Kingdom is ruled by grace and gospel and pertains to the soul and eternal salvation. The WORD of God is supreme and there is no need of the law because the Holy Spirit guides all to live God's way freely and without threat of the law. The Earthly Kingdom is temporal and ruled by law and executed by nations and governments. The Earthly Kingdom is to be governed with justice and fairness, with recognition that sinful people need the law to guide and force them to do "what is right." As Christians, we live with a foot in both kingdoms. (Jesus said, "Give to Caeser what is Caesar's and give to God what is God" (Mark 12:17) We pay taxes, serve in the military, engage in public service, vote, and use our civil liberties to try and create a system of government that is fair and just to all people living in the land. While we can give thanks to God for the gift of our nation, in which we have one foot firmly planted, we also recognize that the United States is not the Kingdom of Heaven, in which we have our other foot planted. The doctrine of 2 Kingdoms allows us to be thankful to live in the United States, while not allowing our country to become an idol, requiring worship and praise. Our nation and form of government is a temporary, earthly vessel that includes sinful people and has not always been in step with God's law. The theological framework of 2 Kingdoms allows us to celebrate living in the United States while still lamenting some of our nation's darker actions like the removal of native people and the slavery of a black population and then using the liberties and freedoms that our nation affords us to help our nation align more and more with God's will. The doctrine of 2 Kingdoms allows us to give thanks for the gift of our nation while preventing it from becoming an idol.

I loved lying flat on my back with campers and staff, cheering on every firework explosion that lit up the night sky, at the end of 4th of July week. We were all proud Americans! And I loved how the last firework gave way to the stars filling the night sky far above the earth, reminding us that we are also citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven, where there is no need for the law because there is only love. Today I give thanks for the fireworks that mark the birth of our nation 250 years ago. God bless America! And today I give thanks for the fireworks of Pentecost that give birth to the church where we pray, "Your Kingdom come, Your Will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

Thanks be to God! Pastor Tim

Faith Formation - Sunday's @ 9:45am

Children Faith Formation, Sunday School, & Coffee Hour will take a Summer break!



July 5: Organ and Piano w/ Cantor David

Join Cantor David for an hour of classics! We'll explore some of the great organ and piano music that rarely gets played during services, and learn a bit about the history and design of both instruments along the way. Meets in the sanctuary at 9:45am.

July 12: Hymn Sing w/ Cantor David

You asked for it -- let's do it! One hour of your favorite hymns, chosen entirely by you. Submissions will be accepted on the bulletin insert on July 5, and during the hymn sing on July 12 ("Stump the Chump" style!) Meets in the sanctuary at 9:45am, July 12.



July 19: Partners and Pastries w/ ABCCM

Join us in the Fellowship Hall at 9:45am for Partners and Pastries! Deacon Chandler Carriker, Church Engagement Officer, will join us to share with us about the ministry of ABCCM.



August 2: Welcome Back Pastor Matt!

Pastor Matt will return back from Sabbatical in August! Join us as we welcome him and his family back to St. Mark's on Sunday, August 2. We will enjoy a pot luck breakfast together at 9:45am in the Fellowship Hall.

SAVE THE DATE - LUTHERIDGE SUNDAY
AUGUST 23, 2026

More details to come!

Outreach Opportunities

Food Ingathering Supporting ABCCM Food Pantry
Return by July 26th

The Christian Action Team (CAT) has organized their fourth Food Ingathering to support the ABCCM Food Pantry. On July 12th, you will find a grocery bag in your pew. Take it home, fill it with groceries for the ABCCM pantry, and bring it back before July 26th. Suggested items are listed on the bag label, but other non-perishable food items are welcomed too. Please return your donations by Sunday, July 26, by placing your bag(s) in the hallway by the playground doors. In our three previous Ingathering collections, we collected over 1000 lbs of food items. Let's do it again!

LAST CALL! Gift Cards for Groceries - Supporting the Sarwari Family
Submit by July 5th

Thank you for your support of the Sarwari Family. **We have collected $3420** in gift cards to continue to feed their family. You can still place gift cards in the box marked "Sarwari Family Gift Cards" in the Commons this Sunday! If you are interested in supporting or getting the Sarwari Family, please talk to Cheryl Atkins.



LUTHERIDGE MUSIC WEEK HYMN FESTIVAL
THURSDAY, JULY 9 AT 7:30 P.M.
ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH, HENDERSONVILLE, NC

All are invited to the annual Hymn Festival sponsored by Lutheridge Music Week on Thursday, July 9 at 7:30 p.m. at St. James Episcopal Church, 766 N Main St, Hendersonville, NC. The festival will be led by nationally known conductor, composer, and organist David Cherwien of Minneapolis, Minnesota. The theme of the festival is "Love Is…". A hymnfest chorus of Music Week participants will lead the assembly in ten hymns and speakers will offer reflections from the writings of Susan Palo Cherwien. The event is free and open to the public.

Leader David Cherwien is recognized for his contributions to the field of church music and liturgy, serving often as clinician and hymn festival leader across the country. David served as Cantor at Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Minneapolis from 2001-2024, continuing the tradition of creative hymn singing begun and sustained by predecessors Paul Manz and Mark Sedio. From 2001 until 2022 he also served as Artistic Director of the National Lutheran Choir. Prior to these, David served church music positions in Minneapolis, Chicago, Seattle, and Berlin, Germany. He has composed and published a considerable amount of music for the church with several publishers. During his time with the National Lutheran Choir, he served as editor of the National Lutheran Choir Series of choral music published by Morningstar Music Publishers and produced many recordings – including the "Hymns We Love to Sing" series, still available at www.nlca.com. He is a founding member of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians and has served in its leadership in a variety of capacities, including as National President from 1993 to 1997.

NATIONAL LUTHERAN CHOIR

May Financial Report

Below you will find May 2026 financial report for the Operating Fund.

Thank you for your continued contributions.

General Fund					
	May 2026			**Year To Date** (as of 5.31.26)	
	Actual	**Budget**		**Actual**	**Budget**
Giving	52,056	48,700		292,862	584,398
Expenditures	54,037	48,700		244,772	584,398
Surplus (Loss)	(1,981)			48,090	

Caring for God's Creation: June Solar Report *(as of 7.1.26)*

June 4th was the highest producing day at 153.51KWh



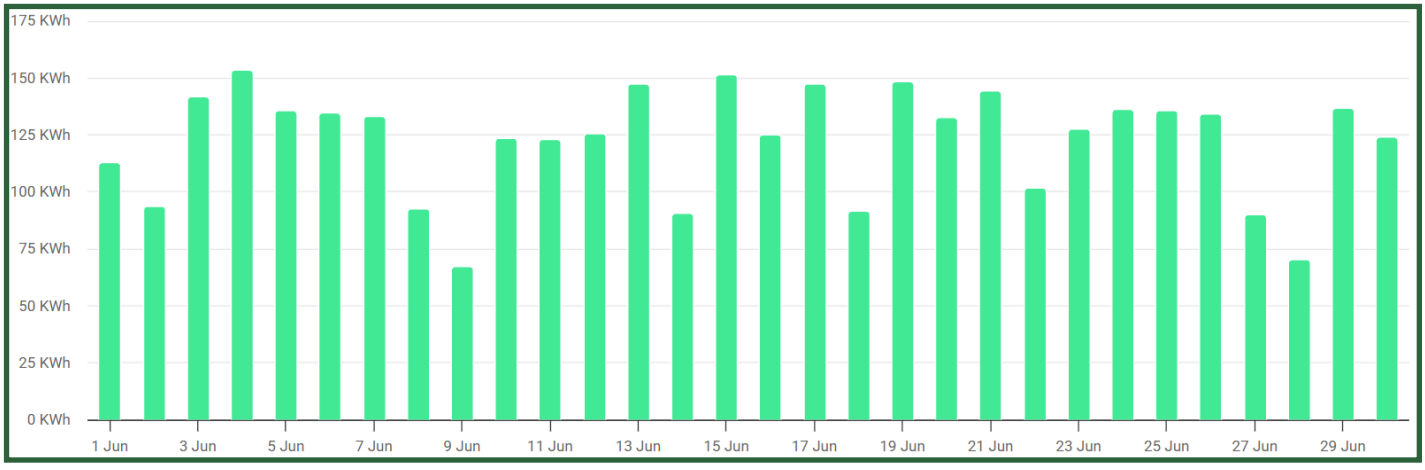
2,668

Equivalent Tree Planting



401K

Miles Driven on Sunshine



Sunday Calendar

July 5 **Sixth Sunday after Pentecost**

8:30am	Worship
9:45am	Faith Formation
11:00am	Worship

July 12 **Seventh Sunday after Pentecost**

8:30am	Worship
9:45am	Faith Formation
11:00am	Worship

July 19 **Eighth Sunday after Pentecost**

8:30am	Worship
9:45am	Partners & Pastries
11:00am	Worship

July 26 **Ninth Sunday after Pentecost**

8:30am	Worship
9:45am	Faith Formation
11:00am	Worship

Updated Contact Information

If you or anyone in your household has new contact information, please let Danielle in the church office know. If you aren't sure - better safe than sorry! Send Danielle your current address, email, and phone number and she will cross reference the information she has on file.
Danielle Barker - admin@stmarkslutheran.net

July Birthdays

July 1	Carl Hughes
July 3	Lucie Hartmann
	Noah Schreck
	Stephanie Baer
July 4	Max Hartmann
	Deanna Jordan
July 6	Pat Patton
July 8	Joshua Kersey
	Marcus Ransdell
	Theodore Ransdell
July 9	Mae Reilly Mueller
	Mary Schreck
July 10	Tom Pagan
	Katherine Laveck
	Ken Lane
July 12	Bobbie Epley
	Ari Stone
July 13	Chuck Johnson
	Claire Maloney
July 15	Shelby Montgomery
	Annette Pal
July 16	Marcus Smith
July 17	Bryan Noel
July 18	Kelly Davis
July 21	Nathan Crownover
	Alicia Richard
	Kendra Miller
July 23	Anne Mock
	Annalise Roe
July 24	Gloria Sainio
	Emilee Hendrix
July 26	Bill Badger
	Eric Van Tassel
July 27	Carl Schreck
	Theresa Reboulet
	Gaston Miller
July 28	Courteney Mackuen
July 29	Lori Kemper
July 31	Maximilian Schmidt
	Sadie David

St. Mark's Lutheran

ASHEVILLE, NC

Love • Grow • Serve

10 North Liberty Street · Asheville, North Carolina 28801

(828) 253-0043 · www.stmarkslutheran.net

Our Vision

Making disciples by loving Christ, growing in faith, serving all people

Our Mission

Transforming lives through God's grace as an inclusive, intergenerational congregation through Worship, Outreach, Learning and Fellowship

Temporary Office Hours

Monday through Thursday: 8:30am to 2:30pm

Ministers

The People of God at St. Mark's

Staff

Pastor: The Reverend Matt Smith
pastormatt@stmarkslutheran.net

Director of Discipleship and Faith Formation: Vicar Katie Rivers
vicarkatie@stmarkslutheran.net

Cantor: David Anderson
cantordavid@stmarklutheran.net

Parish Administrator: Danielle Barker
admin@stmarkslutheran.net

Facilities Manager: Steve Henry
facilities@stmarkslutheran.net

Pastor of Caring Ministries: The Reverend Linda McHenry
pastorlinda@stmarkslutheran.net