

Jesus' Prayer for Us *written by Pastor Matt*

Did you know that in the last hours before his arrest, Jesus prayed for *you*? He specifically prays, not only for the 12 disciples there with him, but also for “those who will believe in me through their word.” Thousands of years later, you, I, and all present and future believers are included in Jesus’ prayer. And do you know *what* Jesus’ prayer is for us? It is that we would be one, even as Jesus and the Father are one. You can find the full prayer in John 17.

Jesus’ prayer for unity among his followers is not, primarily, about a sense of togetherness or mutual support, desirable as those may be. No, the reason our unity is so important, in Jesus’ telling, is that it impacts our witness to the wider world. This really makes so much sense. Because if the witness of believers to the world is that we can’t get along with one another because we’re too caught up in fighting about biblical interpretation, tradition, theology, the color of the carpet, or any or the many other quarrels that followers of Jesus have had over the years, well...who would want to be part of that? What is at stake in the unity of the church is the mission we share to proclaim the good news to all people.

St. Marks is exceedingly fortunate to have nurtured real, meaningful relationships with sisters and brothers from other Christian traditions. In my (Pastor Matt) experience, the kind of shared life we have with our sisters and brothers at St. Eugene Catholic, St. Paul’s Methodist, St. Mary’s Episcopal, and WNC Baptist is none too common. So I give thanks for this gift that we hold. And I am aware that if we want to continue to be in these relationship in a meaningful way, we have to nurture them. Meaning, we have to prioritize showing up and being together. Fortunately, we have many opportunities in the next few months to do just that.



- Sunday September 7th plan to join us at 11:00 at Lutheridge (no 11:00 service at St. Mark’s that day) for a joint service and lunch with WNC Baptist
- Sunday October 5th St. Mark’s will host World Communion Sunday with guests from St. Mary’s and St. Paul’s at 11:00. If you usually worship at 8:30, this would be a great Sunday to attend at 11:00 instead!
- We’ll once again participate in Wednesday night Advent services with our ecumenical friends. Watch for a schedule, and plan to join us each Wednesday in Advent for a light dinner and prayer

When we show up together, we build relationships of trust, collaboration, and mutual respect. And that’s the witness we want the world to see. That’s the unity that Jesus prays we would have. It is what is good for us and for the Body of Christ in the world. But we can’t build it and grow it if we aren’t together. So for the sake of these relationships, our witness to the wider world, and the collaborations we share, let’s show up! I look forward to seeing you there!

Pastor Matt

2025 CROP Walk is October 5!

CROP Hunger Walk for the Asheville/Buncombe area is scheduled on October 5 – World Communion Sunday. CROP Walks support hunger-fighting development efforts around the world. Your donation helps to provide food and water as well as resources that empower people to meet their own needs.

Of the donations collected locally, 25% remain in the Asheville/Buncombe area. Despite the Walk's 2024 cancellation due to Hurricane Helene, the Asheville/Buncombe area raised a little over \$19,000. The members of St. Marks donated around \$7,000. Typically, about \$23,000 is raised locally. The local recipients this year will be Loving Food Resources and ABCCM.

St Marks has participated in CROP Walks for some thirty years. We have assumed a leading role in this work recently. So, as in years past, CROP Walk once again will begin and end at our church. Walk is 2.5 miles long. Walk begins at 2:30pm, registration at 1:30pm. Free Crop Hunger Walk T-shirts available for all our walkers.

To register for the walk and/or make a donation please go to crophungerwalk.org/ashevillenc Registration will also be available at St. Mark's between services. This is a difficult time for all not-for-profits, the sponsors of CROP Walk included. Please consider contributing your time and/or treasure to this important work.

Contact Daniel Dudde for more information.

WALK. GIVE. CHANGE THE WORLD.

Asheville/Buncombe
CROP HUNGER WALK

OCTOBER 5, 2025

ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

Announcements

September 7

Lutheridge Sunday
(No Faith Formation)

September 14

Children and Youth - First Day Faith Formation Classes
(9:45, Sanctuary)
Adults- Welcome Workshop
(9:45, Fellowship Hall)

September 21

Adults - Reconciled in Christ Conversation
(9:45, Fellowship Hall)



Ordination of Jessie Hodgson

We rejoice with St. Mark's member and Luther Seminary Graduate Jessie Hodgson who was ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament on August 23rd. Please pray for Pastor Jessie as he will soon begin his pastoral ministry with the people of St. Mark Lutheran Church in Sioux City, Iowa. Thanks be to God for congregations who raise up leaders and for leaders who are willing to answer God's call!

Calling all Yarn Angels

Tuesday, Sept 9 @ 11:30



We will be resuming our monthly meetings on Tuesday, September 9th (and every second Tuesday) at 11:30 in the Bridge Room downstairs. We welcome anyone interested in yarn craft – whether you knit or crochet or would like to learn. Bring a lunch if you like and come join the fun. This year we will also be meeting on the fourth Wednesday of each month starting September 24th after the morning Work Day, about 12:30.



2026 Budget Request

Can you believe it is time to start preparing for 2026 already? If you are a liaison for a ministry team, please start reviewing your teams current budget and expenses for the 2025 year. If there is a need for a budget change moving into next year, please reach out to Danielle in the church office by October 5 to make this request. Questions? Contact Danielle

Racial Healing Team

WORSHIP CHANGES - SUNDAY, SEPT. 7TH

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP

8:30AM BRIEF SPOKEN WORSHIP @ ST. MARK'S

11:00AM WORSHIP @ LUTHERIDGE

*THERE WILL BE NO WORSHIP AT ST. MARK'S AT 11:00AM!



JOIN US AT LUTHERIDGE!

ADDRESS: 2511 HENDERSONVILLE RD ARDEN, NC 28704

11:00AM WORSHIP
@ THE WHISTNAT CHAPEL

12:30PM LUNCH & GAMES
@ THE PAVILION



National Day of Remembrance for US Indian Boarding Schools

Sept 30 - Wear Orange

...aka Orange Shirt Day, is on Tuesday, Sep 30. Mark your calendar now to remind yourself to wear something orange on that day! **Please take a picture and send it to admin@stmarkslutheran.net.** On Sunday, Sep 28, we will commemorate the occasion with a special prayer during the worship service. But why? What is this day all about?



September 30 is the day we pause to honor the lives of Native children who were taken from their families and never returned. It is also a time to stand in solidarity with the survivors, their families, and tribal Nations still grappling with the generational trauma caused by these horrific institutions.

The US Indian Boarding School system, in operation from the early 1800s to 1970ish, sought to assimilate Native children by forcibly removing them from their homes and communities, severing their cultural ties, and often subjecting them to abuse and neglect. Thousands of children lost their lives in these institutions, while many others were left with lifelong scars.

There are people right now in Cherokee, NC, who were either a part of these schools or whose elders attended these institutions, who are living with these scars. Please take the time to learn about Indian Boarding Schools and the role of the church in them.

In 2021, St. Mark's received this letter, and it's how our congregation began to learn about this. In 2021!! The good news is...it's never too late to learn (and/or UNLEARN) about anything!

<https://orangeshirtday.org/>

MDTMT Gratitude

From all of us on the Racial Healing Team, THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! We could never have had a successful fundraiser for the MDTMT Track Team without all of YOU! To everyone who baked goodies, made raffle baskets, gave items for the silent auction, ran games, welcomed guests, cooked hot dogs, sold hot dogs, ran the raffle basket table, sold the baked goodies, made bubbles, ran the bouncy house, helped set up, helped clean up, and donated money (phew!), we cannot thank you enough. It really does take a village, and we greatly appreciate your support!

Reflections from Lisa Russel of Living Waters

BE LOVED.
BE KIND.
Be You.

I enjoy going without my shoes. Sometimes this can get me into trouble, especially when I jump in the car and arrive at my destination realizing I forgot to wear shoes and have none with me. But there is nothing quite like walking on the ground, feeling the earth beneath my feet. Walking in the creek or river feeling the water, soaking in the feeling of the earth. There is something very grounding about walking barefoot.

Feeling the ground with no barrier.

For the past 9 months I have been required to wear shoes due to an injury to my leg. (yes, I actually did try my best to wear shoes) During that time I found that it was extremely difficult for me to walk, work, climb and many other things because I could not “feel” what my feet were touching. It was very difficult for me. Fortunately the time went by and I was allowed to start going barefoot again. And I got to thinking about how much easier it was for me to function when I could feel the ground again.

“Do not come any closer,” the Lord warned Moses through the burning bush. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground” (Exodus 3:5,) In God’s presence, Moses faced a turning point: either resist God’s instructions or obey, leading the Israelites out of Egypt.

Maybe going barefoot again can remind me that I am standing in God’s presence. I may not hear a booming voice, and I might just be standing at the kitchen sink doing chores. Or I might be at work, with the opportunity to truly listen to my neighbors. God’s presence permeates life’s big moments as well as the mundane.

How can you “take off your sandals” and realize what God has for you?

Because Jesus came to do such serious work, we often imagine him straight-faced.

Yes Jesus also enjoyed fun times, such as the wedding celebration at Cana.

When the wine ran out, Jesus miraculously produced more.

Jesus also warmly welcomed children. Picture him lifting an infant into the air or tickling a giggling youngster while another child, grinning, climbing on His back.

Summer usually allows more time for fun and play. So use these months to teach the kids in your life – _and to remind yourself – that Jesus came so our “joy may be complete” (John 15:11) laughing, playing, having fun, relaxing and enjoying life are all part of living and loving as faithful disciples.



A Letter from Father Pat

August 5, 2025

Dear Matt,

Before too much time passed, I wanted to thank you for your support when I lived in Asheville as pastor of St Eugene. I can't believe I've already been pastor of St Matthew in Charlotte for a month now.... It feels like 18 years, and 18 minutes have passed at the same time!

Serving as pastor of St Eugene Parish from 2011-2025 was the honor of a lifetime. I now have the opportunity and challenge to serve as pastor of St Matthew in Charlotte. Though St Matt's is around twelve times the size of St Eugene in terms of the number of people, I will lean heavily on the lessons I learned from you and your servant heart my 14 years there.

May God Bless you and all your loved ones now and always.

Very Respectfully,

FR. Pat Ahill

*Appreciated our
fellowship!*



JOIN US FOR THE 4TH
ANNUAL KARES 5K!
SEPT 27, 2025



NOAH'S ARK

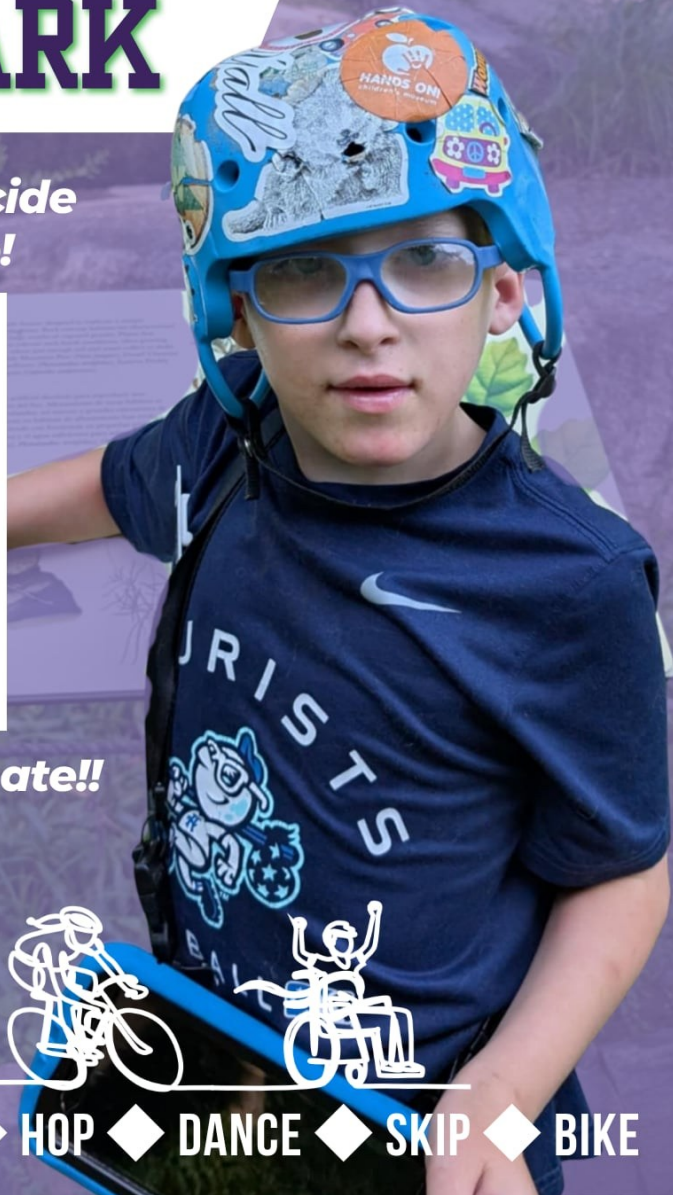
*Virtual Race / You decide
the time and place!*



Scan to register or donate!!



RUN ♦ WALK ♦ ROLL ♦ HOP ♦ DANCE ♦ SKIP ♦ BIKE



Stewardship

Financial Report

Below you will find July 2025 financial report for both the Operating Fund and the Building Fund. Thank you for your continued contributions.

Financial Report Operating Fund

subject to change from treasurer's report

Income budgeted

<u>July</u>	<u>YTD</u>
\$46,568	\$325,978

Gifts received

<u>July</u>	<u>YTD</u>
\$46,483	\$343,019

Expenditures

<u>July</u>	<u>YTD</u>
\$42,648	\$318,757

Surplus/(Deficit)

<u>July</u>	<u>YTD</u>
\$3,835	\$24,262

Financial Report Building Fund

subject to change from treasurer's report

Income budgeted

<u>July</u>	<u>YTD</u>
\$5,658	\$39,607

Gifts received against Pledges

<u>July</u>	<u>YTD</u>
\$3,825	\$26,991

Loan Payments

<u>July</u>	<u>YTD</u>
\$5,658	\$23,677

includes council approved additional payments

Caring for God's Creation – August Solar Report as of 8/28

August 25th was the highest producing day at 153KWh

Environmental Benefits



306k

Pounds of CO₂
Emission Saved



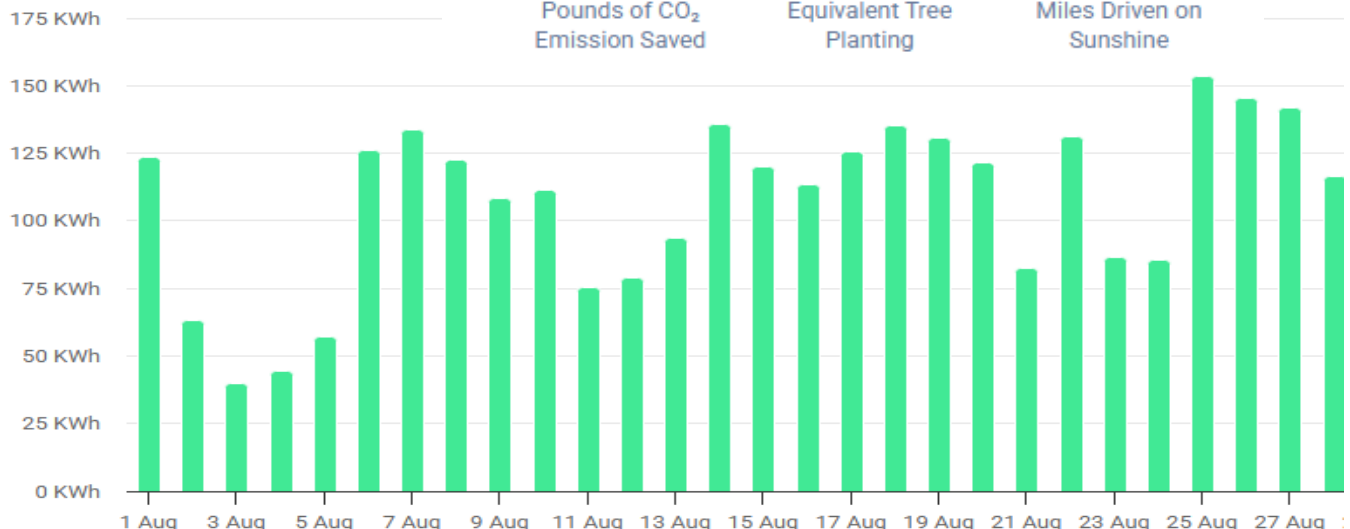
2,312

Equivalent Tree
Planting



347k

Miles Driven on
Sunshine



Sunday Calendar

September 7 - 13th Sunday after Pentecost

Lutheridge Sunday

Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Psalm 1

Philemon 1-21; Luke 14:25-33

8:30am.....Brief Worship

11:00am.....Lutheridge Sunday

September 14 - 14th Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 32:7-14; Psalm 51:1-10

1 Timothy 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-10

8:30am.....Worship

9:45am.....Faith Formation

11:00am.....Worship

September 21 - 15th Sunday after Pentecost

Amos 8:4-7; Psalm 113

1 Timothy 2:1-7; Luke 8:18-9:1

8:30am.....Worship

9:45am.....Faith Formation

11:00am.....Worship

September 28 - 16th Sunday after Pentecost

Amos 6:1a, 4-7; Psalm 146

1 Timothy 6:6-19; Luke 16:19-31

8:30am.....Worship

9:45am.....Faith Formation

11:00am.....Worship

Additional Dates

Sept 1 - Labor Day: Office Closed

Sept 1 - Executive Mtg. @ 5:45pm

Sept 1 - Christian Action Team @ 6:30pm

Sept 4 - Evangelism Team @ 4pm

Sept 6 - Council Mtg @ 6pm

Sept 9 - Yarn Angels @ 11:30am

Sept 11, 18, 25 - Handbell Rehearsal @ 5:30pm

Sept 11, 18, 25 - Choir Rehearsal @ 7pm

Sept 13 - Lutheran Men in Mission @ 8:30am

Sept 15 - Racial Healing @ 6pm

Sept 27 - Yarn Angels @ 10am

September Birthdays

Sept. 1 Heather Dixon, Doug Johnson

Sept. 2 Nathan Doane, RJ Hronek

Sept. 3 Charissa Gulotta, Dotti Eggan

Sept. 5 Betty Broitzman, Paul Metcalf,
Henry Ulrichs

Sept. 6 Julia Nance

Sept. 7 Judy McKay, Eddie Meadows

Sept. 9 Christopher Mott

Sept. 10 Shelby Lamm, Joseph Pawelek
Sharon Herrmann

Sept. 11 Eleanor Schreck, Sarah Volk,
Dana Fitzsimmons

Sept. 12 Asher Linton, Jackson Penland
Bill Chalmers

Sept. 13 Clara Owen

Sept. 14 Evan Flanders

Sept. 17 Bob Schiller

Sept. 18 Nancy Dodenhoff

Sept. 19 Jack McHenry

Sept. 20 Elizabeth Conte

Sept. 23 Matthew Warren, Cat Slater

Sept. 25 Patti Oppenheim

Sept. 26 Tommy Ransdell

Sept. 27 Vic Allwein, George Hahn

Sept. 29 Reagan Colburn, Andrew Davis,
David Neighbors, Meta Husni

Sept. 30 Nancy Larson, Tom Mock,
Bill Waters

September Anniversaries

Sept. 6 Bill & Susan Badger

Sept. 12 Gwen and Philip Messer

Sept. 18 Nate & Tina Mueller

Sept. 24 Tom & Stella Pagan

St. Mark's Lutheran Church

*10 N. Liberty Street
Asheville, NC 28801*



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

Staff

Pastor:

Reverend Matthew Smith

Director of Discipleship & Faith Formation:

Deacon Katie Rivers

Cantor:

David Anderson

Parish Administrator:

Danielle Barker

Pastor of Caring Ministries:

Reverend Linda McHenry

Facilities Manager:

Steve Henry

Contact Information

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Website:

www.stmarkslutheran.net

Office Hours:

Monday—Friday 8:30am-2:30pm