

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church
201 N. Division Avenue
Polo, IL 61064
Church Phone: 815-946-2919
Email: stmarkspolo@frontiernet.net
Website: stmarkspolo.com



2024

Prayer For The 4th Of July

Dear God,

Thank you for this day. Thank you for the freedom we celebrate on the 4th of July. We ask for your blessings on our country and our people.

Help our leaders make wise decisions. Keep our soldiers safe. Give us peace and unity.

Let us always remember to be kind to each other, to help when we can, and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

We give you all the glory and praise.

Amen.



July 2024 St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Polo, Illinois (815) 946-2919

E-mail: stmarkspolo@frontiernet.net Website: stmarkspolo.com

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|---|--|---|-----------|-----------|
| | 1 Sort clothes for Second Hand Rose 11:00-12:30 Kidz Café (Every M,W,F) | 2 10:00am Worship & Hospitality meeting | 3 | 4 Independence Day No Prayer Partners | 5 | 6 |
| 7 9:30 Worship 10:30 Social Time | 8 No Community Meal this month | 9 | 10 7:00pm Church Council meeting at St. Mark's | 11 10:00 Prayer Partners | 12 | 13 |
| 14 Rock River Barbershoppers during worship 9:30 Worship 10:30 Social Time | 15 | 16 9:00am Quilters | 17 | 18 10:00 Prayer Partners Deadline to submit articles for August Newsletter | 19 | 20 |
| 21 9:00am Joint Worship at Faith Lutheran in Forreston <u>(No worship in Polo)</u> 2:00-4:00 Ice Cream Social at Senior Center | 22 | 23 Work Second Hand Rose July 23 rd – 27 th 7:00pm Polo Council of Churches meeting at Faith Discovery | 24 | 25 10:00 Prayer Partners | 26 | 27 |
| 28 9:30 Worship 10:30 Social Time | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Worship Assistant</u> | <u>Altar Flowers</u> | | <u>Tellers:</u> Julie Hoak, Phyllis Dyer, Sharon VanOosten |
|-------------|----------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| July 7 | Tracey Anders | Ken & Laurel Smith | | |
| July 14 | Beth Wiegmann | | | <u>Altar Guild:</u> Kathy Mitchell |
| July 21 | Joint Worship in Forreston | | | <u>Head Usher:</u> Trish Patterson/ Cindy Schryver |
| July 28 | Kent Anders | Lyle & Melody Reap | | |



ST. MARK'S EVANGELICAL

LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

201 N. Division Avenue, Polo, IL 61064

Email: stmarkspolo@frontiernet.net

Church office: 815-946-2919

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Pastor Scott Ralston

Mission statement: *St. Mark's ELCA is a community of believers who gather to hear God's Word in Christ; worshipping, serving, and proclaiming God's love for all people and the world.*

July 14th 9:30am

Rock River Valley Barbershop Chorus will be at St. Mark's during Worship

Join us as this group helps lead worship, followed by light refreshments.



www.rockrivervalleychorus.org

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St. Mark's Ice Cream Social

July 21st, 2024 2:00-4:00pm

Polo Senior Center



Entertainment is TBD. A sign up sheet will be available soon for donations needed.

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Joint Worship in Forreston

July 21st

9:00am (No service in Polo)

*Join us for worship at Faith Lutheran Church, located at 402 S. 2nd Ave, Forreston.
(Polo will host a joint service in October)*

Pastor's thoughts ...

Hello St. Mark's Lutheran,

Welcome to another month held gently in the living arms of God. Beloved, freedom has been on my mind quite a bit lately. As I write it is Juneteenth (June 19), but what is the history of that day. Well it was back on "Freedom's Eve," the eve of January 1, 1863, when the first Watch Night services took place. On that night, enslaved and free African Americans gathered in churches and private homes all across the country awaiting news that the Emancipation Proclamation had taken effect. At the stroke of midnight, prayers were answered as all enslaved people in Confederate States were declared legally free. But not everyone in Confederate territory would immediately be free. Though the Emancipation Proclamation was made effective in 1863, it could not be implemented in places still under Confederate control. As a result, in the westernmost Confederate state of Texas, enslaved people would not be free until later. Freedom finally came on June 19, 1865, when some 2,000 Union troops arrived in Galveston Bay, Texas. The army announced that the more than 250,000 enslaved black people in the state, were free by executive decree. As so the name "Juneteenth" was coined by the newly freed people in Texas.

Freedom... what does it mean? Earlier this month we saw Pride parades throughout our county and state, where people again are seeking freedom to live out their truth and to share the same rights as other people. And of course, July 4 is coming quickly when we celebrate the signing of the Declaration of Independence proclaiming our freedom from control of the British Empire.

All these celebrations of freedom are important and help us to remember the ideals we claim as fundamental for our democracy. But, as I read somewhere recently, "Freedom isn't won or finished with a signature". We must continue to work for justice and peace. We often use the word "freedom" in relation to our nation but forget its importance in our faith lives. I don't just mean the freedom from the government establishing a state religion guaranteed in the Bill of Rights. The freedom that we have been given in Christ ranks higher than any other understanding of freedom. Martin Luther's understanding of justification by Grace teaches us that we cannot, nor must we, earn our salvation through the works that we do but only trusting in the promise of God's gift given through Jesus. We have already been forgiven and can live free from shame and guilt. Beloved, our freedom from the requirement of perfection to earn God's love doesn't however separate us from the responsibilities of our faith. **Galatians 5:13-14** says, "For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. ¹⁴ For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Martin Luther also addressed this in one of his most important treatises known as "On Christian Liberty" or "Freedom of the Christian": "A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject of all, subject to all. "As we celebrate our freedom as a nation and continue to work to ensure that this freedom applies to all people, may we also remember our freedom as disciples of Jesus. God's love and grace are free to all people, and we are called to announce that love and grace through all that we do as a congregation and as individuals. We have been made free. Let us share that freedom through service to our community and one another.

Peace and Blessings to you and yours,

Pastor Scott

2024 Polo Church of the Brethren

Vacation Bible School

July 17th, 18th, & 19th

Dinner for families at 5:00pm

Program 6:00-8:00pm



Join us as we explore God's love through songs, games, snacks, and crafts! This is a FREE EVENT and all children ages 3-5th grade (Just finished) are invited to join us!

Confirmation Class:

Summer dates TBD

Make sure to check the Team Reach app to stay up to date!

Quilters are looking for help!

The Quilters are looking for people to make quilt tops at home and bring them to church for us to assemble. We have fabric squares you can use. You do not need experience, we can teach you! If interested, contact Joyce Gatz.

Polo Community Meal

There are no meals in June and July. We will resume in August.

Polo Lifeline Food Pantry Needs:

Soup (any kind but tomato and vegetable), fruit, macaroni, mixed vegetables, sugar, toilet paper

If you would like a Devotional book for July, August, September, please let the office know. One will be sent or dropped off at your home.



May Finance Report

| Income | Expenses | Net Income |
|--------|----------|------------|
| 9,384 | 9,820 | -436 |

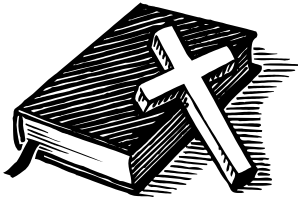


Happy 54th Anniversary to Lyle & Melody Reap on June 20th!

Thank you!

- ~ Thank you to Becky Patterson for donating artificial flowers to be used as altar flowers when needed.
 - ~ Thank you to the Faith Lutheran Youth Group for buying pizza for our Confirmation students.
 - ~ Thank you to Merla Brooks, Hailey Walker and Pastor Scott for representing St. Mark's and attending Synod Assembly.
- “Thank you for the privilege of attending Synod Assembly. We had a fantastic experience.” ~ Merla & Hailey

Please let us know if someone needs a thank you.



Prayers for those in need of healing: Kent Anders, Darlene Barnhart, Shelby Hose, Tommy Knipple, Pat McPherson, Beulah Nelson, Mary Ann Olson, Lyle Reap and Laurel Smith. **Those in care facilities:** Sibyl Acker, Tammy Karrow, Trudy Karrow and Marian Schnulle. **Those in Military service:** Dustin Knapp, Brad Reigle, Travis Roop and Nathaniel Yingling.

July Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

| | | | |
|----|-----------------|----|--------------------|
| 3 | Joey Bardell | 19 | Ashley Liedberg |
| 4 | Erika Decker | | Kevin Dyer |
| 5 | Tony Karrow | | Mark Wooden |
| 7 | Travis Roop | 20 | Robert Hoak |
| | Sydney Brown | 21 | Tim Gipe |
| 10 | Veronica Acker | | Robert Bargas, Jr. |
| | Matt Slager | 22 | Jerry Hose II |
| 11 | Rodney Garkey | | Grace Gabaldon |
| | Elsie Hackbarth | 25 | Pamela Lotz |
| 12 | Tammy Karrow | | Barb Grobe |
| 13 | Hannah Grobe | 26 | Brady Bushman |
| 14 | Lyle Reap | | Raymond Lopez |
| | Linda Shank | 27 | Lyle Grobe |
| | Yasmine Bargas | 28 | Ellia Escobar |
| 15 | Brian Lopez | 29 | Kalah Mitchell |
| | Josh Christen | | Pat McPherson |
| 16 | Tom Suits | 30 | Amy Bardell |
| | Paige Roop | | Kathy Toms |
| | Natalie Nelson | 31 | Kale Grobe |
| 17 | Joan Rienstra | | Kameron Grobe |

Anniversaries

| | |
|----|---------------------------|
| 3 | Leo & Joan Rienstra |
| 5 | Charles & Linda Gall |
| 6 | Andy & Lisa Hinrichs |
| 8 | Scott & Melanie Armstrong |
| 11 | Kenneth & Laurel Smith |
| | Josh & Lori Christen |
| | Sharon & James VanOosten |
| 12 | Mike & Kim Bowman |
| 21 | Brent & Beth Shipman |
| 23 | Mark & Renee Boyle |
| 26 | Cliff & Amy Bardell |
| 27 | Dan & Amanda Powell |

POLO SUMMER LUNCH PROGRAM

June & July 2024

Two programs providing free and healthy lunches for the community of Polo!



Kidz Cafe

Offering hot meals

every Monday, Wednesday, Friday

11:00am-12:30pm

Faith United Methodist Church

702 E Dixon Street in Polo

Van pickup available at the Pool Park & Polo Public Library or call Wheels of Faith to arrange for transport 815.677.8194

Facebook.com/PoloKidzCafe for the weekly menu

Summer Eats

Offering Grab-and-Go lunch bags



3 kid-friendly meals in each bag
one Grab-and-Go bag per child per week

Pick up at the Polo Library
during business hours Thursdays, 10am-7pm.



The **diakonia™** Program

2024 – Free Summer Sampler

+

Book Study and Invitation

+ +

6:00-9:00 PM Central Time

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Thursdays – July 11, 18, 25

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Book Study: The World is About to Turn: Mending a Nation's Broken Faith
by Rick Rouse & Paul O. Ingram

Chalice Press: Copyright 2020 – ISBN #978-08272-3721-6

- A. Session I – Introduction, Chapter 1 & 2 – pages 1-27
+ overview of Growing in Faith - Year A
- B. Session II - Chapters 3,4, & 5 – pages 28—69
+ overview of Growing in Faith - Year B
- C. Session III – Chapters 6, 7 & Epilogue – pages 70-105
+ additional offerings 'beyond diakonia.

Facilitator: Rev. Kenn Storck

Note:

The Book Study
will consist of three 3-hour sessions
on Thursdays – July 11,18, 25 – 2024

To participate contact:
Mr. Douglas Wood
dwood1955@hotmail.com

Participants need to purchase the book.