



The Messenger

715 24th Avenue South, Grand Forks, ND | www.stmarksgf.org | 701-772-4807

"A Heritage of God's Grace" Since 1910

Member of GIFT of Grace Lutheran Ministry

September 2026



*The JOY (Just Older Youth) group will meet
on Wednesday, September 16th, at noon.
This will be a time for food and fellowship.*

Please sign up on the sheet in the narthex.



Valley Senior Living's 6th Annual Oktoberfest will be held on September 29th

Oktoberfest proceeds benefit the Community
Connections program at Valley Senior Living.

The Community Connections program includes life
enrichments for residents including the opportunity to stay active in clubs and
organizations, go to sporting events, concerts, theater productions and continuing the
connections they have to the community.

Doors Open at 4:30pm Event begins at 5:00pm Event Ends at 7:30pm

An Online Silent Auction will be held beginning September 23rd, at 9:00am and ending
September 29th, at 7:00pm.

More information and tickets are available on their website at

www.valleyseniorliving.org. The first 320 tickets sold will receive a commemorative beer
stein.



A message from Pastor Karen...

Back to School/ Harvest

It is back to school time already. At the end of May, the summer seems to stretch out ahead of us with long days and warm weather. Every year I secretly hope it will never end. It has been a long time since I, or my children for that matter, actually went to school in September. But nonetheless I mark this as chance to start fresh and gear up for the long months ahead before summer returns.

This is also the time of year when our farm families are in high gear with fall harvest. As I write this, a lot of wheat has been harvested and sugar beet pre-pile has begun. I am praying for favorable weather and favorable market conditions for those whose work is to feed the world.

This September, we start with the scripture "love your neighbor as you love yourself." Our readings will highlight just how difficult that commandment is to live out. We will explore Jesus' teachings on being reconciled after a disagreement, the commandment to forgive as many as seventy-seven times, not questioning the generosity of the master when other get more than their fair share, and a parable about two sons who are both unfaithful to their father.

This may be a good time for a fresh start for you. How are your relationships faring? How is your relationship with Jesus needing to be rekindled? Are you studying His Word? How might your congregation and this parish work together to share the Good News of Jesus with those who have never heard of him or those who don't think they need Jesus in their lives?

The time is right to learn, grow, and share in the bounty of God's harvest of love. See you at worship!

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Karen Young Trenne

Key dates in September:

September 13-15	Pastor Karen at Fall Theological Conference
September 23	Gods Work. Our Hands. event at Town Square
September 21-27	Pastor Karen out of office
September 28	Valley Senior Living Annual meeting at VSL on 42nd.

**From the Office of the Presiding Bishop
The Rev. Yehiel Curry
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**



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All Together in One Place

July 28, 2026

Choosing Reconciliation Over Division in a Multifaith America

Dear church,

From its earliest days, the United States has been shaped by religious diversity. Indigenous peoples sustained diverse spiritual and religious traditions long before the nation's founding, and successive waves of settlers, including Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists and others, brought a variety of beliefs that helped define the nation's unique and vital religious landscape.

Throughout the church today, many are struggling with debates regarding the religious identity of our nation. While religious diversity did not begin with the Constitution, the Constitution's framers recognized an important truth: the future of our nation could not be tied to a single religious identity. By rejecting religious tests for public office, the Founders created space for people of any or no faith tradition to participate in public life together. That commitment continues to be foundational to our nation's vitality, especially at a time when people are tempted to identify love of the nation, or the government itself, with a single religion. No one faith tradition should rule the United States, just as the framers desired.¹

As the apostle Paul writes, God has given us "the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:18). Reconciliation involves living in God's future — including through renewed interreligious relationships.

Religious diversity is the reality of the world we live in. Recognizing this, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America adopted "A Declaration of Inter-Religious Commitment," which affirms that mutual understanding with other faith traditions can deepen our own faith. Through encountering neighbors and working side by side in shared commitments to love and compassion and community, our own Christian faith is strengthened. This conviction means that through my call as presiding bishop of the ELCA, our church develops and maintains relationships with Jewish, Muslim and many other faith communities. Like personal friendships we hold, these relationships do not require us to set aside Christian faith. Rather they reaffirm that in a nation as diverse as ours, being a good neighbor across religious differences is not optional. It's a part of the shared American experience. It is an experience we can support as everyday Lutherans in God's call to reconciliation.

"The ELCA will explore and encourage inter-religious friendship, accompaniment, and partnership with all who seek justice, peace, human wholeness, and the well-being of creation (ELCA Constitution, Chapter 4.03.f)." —"A Declaration of Inter-Religious Commitment," p. 10

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All Together in One Place – continued

“The ELCA will defend the full participation of all in our religiously diverse society, ‘strengthening public space as a just place for all’ regardless of religion or worldview (‘The Church in the Public Space: A Statement of The Lutheran World Federation,’ 2016).” —“A Declaration of Inter-Religious Commitment,” p. 11

The ministry of reconciliation is both local and national. God invites us to love one another across differences. Trusting in God’s grace, we boldly form relationships with neighbors of all faiths who share a commitment to justice, peace and the flourishing of all creation. I encourage you to engage in this essential ministry, which offers a powerful opportunity to heal divisions, deepen respect across differences and strengthen the bonds of our common life.

In Christ,



Highlights from the August St. Mark's Council Meeting

- Delegates to Valley Senior Living's Annual Meeting are: Linda Simmons, Art Ruud, Iver Buchmann and Rose Keeley.
- Discussions and information is being gathered to clarify St. Mark's insurance responsibility relating to the Scout troop.

ST MARK'S FINANCIAL REPORT - 01/01/26 through 07/31/26

BUDGETED GIVING:	\$ 37,988.00
(2025 YTD Giving \$ 50,218.00)	
2026 YTD Fund Income	\$ 75,036.00
2026 YTD General Fund Expenses	\$ 76,210.00
GENERAL FUND <u>Deficit</u>	- \$ 1,174.00



Everyone have a safe and relaxing
Labor Day weekend.



The Parents of Loss group will meet on Tuesday, September 8th, at 7:00 p.m. in the chapel at St. Mark's. This group is for all who are grieving the loss of a child or grandchild, regardless of age. They meet here the 2nd Tuesday of each month.



MARK THESE UPCOMING EVENTS ON YOUR CALENDAR:

Men's Breakfast – Thursday, Sept. 3rd, at **9:00 am (Please note change)**
 St. Mark's Council - Tuesday, September 8th, at 6:30pm
 Parents of Loss – Tuesday, September 8th, at 7:00pm in the chapel
 WELCA – Monday, September 14th, at 2:00pm
 JOY – Wednesday, September 16th, at noon

Abiding Memorials Ministry

Please remember that if you have any requests for project funds, they should be submitted to Abiding by the last week of each quarter. This will give them sufficient time for all members to review the paperwork. Requests should be sent to Iver Buchmann. Thank you!

September Birthdays and Anniversaries...

Birthdays:

1 Ashley Mahoney
14 Garlynn Helmoski
19 Michele Peterson
20 Kristen Rundquist
20 Linda Simmons
21 Gabe Keeley
22 Kensi Hubbard
26 Audrey Glick
29 Steven Metcalf

Anniversaries:

5 Jerry & Mary Berge
10 Michael & Kimberly Moon
17 Iver & Sandra Buchmann



(Please contact the church office if you have any corrections.)



President	Mark Peterson	
Vice President	Iver Buchmann	
Secretary		
Treasurer	Rose Keeley	
	Donna Hubbard	Marsha Oss Art Ruud

Interim Pastor: Pastor Karen Young Trenne
Ministers: Every member of the congregation
Missionaries: Willie & Annie Langdji

Office: 701-772-4807 **Office Email:** stmarkselca@msn.com
(Office Hours will vary – please call ahead)

Websites: St. Mark's www.stmarksgf.org
GIFT www.giftofgracegf.org



Please look for our logo and "Like" us on Facebook at St. Mark's Lutheran Church



Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



Eastern North Dakota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

September 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 10:00 Quilting	3 9:00 Men's Breakfast	4	5
6 10:30 Worship	 LABOR DAY	8 6:30 Council 7:00 Parents of Loss	9 10:00 Quilting	10	11	12
13 10:30 Worship (Calile-Special Music) 5-7:00 Global Friends Picnic at Univ. Park	14 2:00 WELCA 7:00 Scouts Pastor Karen @ Fall Conference	15 Pastor Karen @ Fall Conference	16 10:00 Quilting Noon JOY Pastor Karen @ Fall Conference	17	18	19
20 10:30 Worship	21 7:00 Scouts Pastor Karen out of the office	22 Pastor Karen out of the office	23 10:00 Quilting God's Work God's Hands at Town Square Pastor Karen out of the office	24 Pastor Karen out of the office	25 Pastor Karen out of the office	26
27 10:30 Worship (Pastor Stephanie Larson)	28 5:00 VSL Annual Meeting 7:00 Scouts	29 VSL Oktoberfest 5-7:30pm	30 10:00 Quilting			