

MARK TIMES

NEWS and NOTES for November 9, 2025

- Tuesday, Nov. 11:** Office closed for Veterans Day
- Wednesday, Nov. 12:** 12:00PM Ladies Lunch Bunch – Bandana’s
- Thursday, Nov. 13:** 4:00PM Men’s Chorus
4:30PM Chancel choir
6:00PM Bell Choir
6:00PM Yoga – Parish Hall
- Friday, November 14:** 6:00PM Federation Friday “Star Trek” Night – *Parish Hall*
- Saturday, Nov. 15:** 1:00-3:00P GriefShare *Surviving the Holidays* – Parish Hall

GriefShare: *Surviving the Holidays* Event NEXT Saturday

The holiday season can stir difficult emotions, especially after the loss of a loved one. Again this year we are offering the one-day, two-hour session of *Surviving the Holidays* to offer support, encouragement, and practical tools to help you navigate this time with peace and assurance. Join St. Mark’s special session, led by Nurse Becky, NEXT **Saturday, November 15** from **1–3 PM** in the **Parish Hall**. The free event includes a video, group discussion, and a Survival Guide. Pre-registration is required at griefshare.org/events/276776



NOTE: Even if you attended this session last year, please consider attending again; grief and loss affect us differently with the passage of time, and you may benefit from another session of *Surviving the Holidays* in ways that you don’t anticipate.

Ladies Lunch Bunch This Wednesday

The Ladies Lunch Bunch will meet **THIS Wednesday, November 12** at 12 noon at **Bandanas** (4608 N Illinois, Fairview Heights). They don’t take reservations, but we will call ahead to let them know how big a table we need. Please call or text Marva Dowty at 618-363-3060 if you plan on attending!

Pumpkin Palooza returns Next Sunday!

Next Sunday, November 16, our eagerly anticipated **pumpkin bake sale** between and after all three services is back, with proceeds to **benefit our combined Food Pantry**. **Bake, shop, and join the fun!**



“Federation Friday” *Star Trek* Gathering on November 14

Attention St. Mark Trekkies and friends! We will gather from across the quadrant **THIS Friday, November 14** at **6:00PM** in the **Parish Hall**. Join us for out-of-this-world adventure and conversation as we enjoy an episode together and note the theological themes within. Wear your costumes if you’ve got them, and bring a dish to share – fresh or replicated!





Boy Scout Food Drive 11/22

This year's Boy Scout Food Drive is on **Saturday, November 22**. We need **volunteers** to help **sort food** in the **Parish Hall** for a couple of hours starting at about **1:30PM**.

“Angel Tree” Project with Lutheran Child and Family Services (LCFS)

St. Mark and St. George's are again participating in the Angel Tree Project Christmas Drive through LCFS. The project provides Christmas gifts to especially needy families in our area. *Children's names/wish lists with Information/Instructions and gift tags attached will soon be in the narthex.*



Remember, you are not asked to provide everything on the child's wish list—a **\$60 limit per child** is recommended. However, we realize that may not be possible for many so please consider asking other members, family members or neighbors to share the joy of Christmas with you!

The **deadline** for returning the items is **Sunday, December 7**. Give online at <https://shorturl.at/usHZG>

Advent Communion Service & Soup Suppers return **Wednesday, December 3**. Plan to come enjoy a hot meal of soup and salad at 6:00PM in the Parish Hall before joining us in the church for Holden Evening Prayer. **Get a group together and host one of the soup suppers!** A sign-up sheet is in the Parish Hall near the coffee stand.

Proclaim Christ's birth with flowers!

Anyone wishing to donate should watch for a special envelope in the pews, fill out the front portion and return it, with a check/cash, to the offering plate or the office by 12/18 with “Christmas Flowers” in the memo line. *Online donations may be made through VANCO at <https://shorturl.at/ar1Ss>. All dedications will be published in the Christmas bulletin.



Meals on Wheels Needs Help!



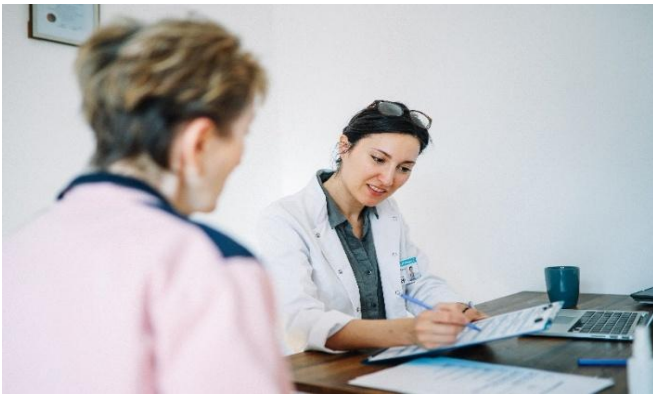
The Meals-On-Wheels services provided out of our Parish Hall need more volunteers, particularly on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Please see Frank Dressel or David Buckley about serving those for whom this food may be the only substantial meal of the day.

Franklin School Lunch Packing

We pack 20 bag lunches for needy students at Franklin school for all long weekends, and we welcome volunteers! Packing requires about an hour on the day before most holiday weekends. See Peggy Andersen (618-791-0992) to sign up or for questions. Your support is so much appreciated!

Offerings (11/2): General Fund: \$4,242.77; Andersen Music Ministry Memorials: \$355; John Andersen Memorials: \$10.10; Woodrome Memorials: \$75





St Mark Lutheran Church
Parish Nurse Corner
Rebecca Schnitzius RN
November 2025

Welcome to the first edition of the Parish Nurse Corner.

This will be a monthly publication with health-related information that you can use to promote your health and that of your family, friends, and neighbors. I welcome any suggestions on topics or ideas you may have that will benefit the congregation.

HEALTH LITERACY

Health Literacy focuses on helping people understand health information so they can make informed decisions. It is about clear communication between providers and patients.

What Is Health Literacy?

Health literacy is your ability to find, understand and use health information and services to make decisions for yourself and others. It also refers to how well health organizations support people in accessing and using health information.

Why is health literacy important?

People with health literacy are more likely to manage chronic conditions, follow treatment plans and engage in preventive care such as screenings and vaccinations. This will lead to better health outcomes.

Having limited health literacy leads to poorer health outcomes especially in low-income communities and communities where English is not the primary language.

When healthcare providers use plain language and communication appropriate for the culture, it assists to build trust and encourages people to engage more actively in their care. Misunderstanding medical instructions can lead to unnecessary ER visits, hospitalizations, and complications. Health literacy helps reduce these risks.

Imagine someone who does not understand when to take their medication or how to interpret symptoms. That misunderstanding can lead to profound consequences. Health literacy bridges that gap—making healthcare more accessible, humane, and effective.

Assessing your health literacy is a smart step toward taking control of your well-being. It is not just about reading ability; it is about how confidently and effectively you can navigate health information and services.

Ways to Assess Your Health Literacy Ask yourself:

- Can I understand instructions on prescription bottles?
- Do I feel confident filling out medical forms?
- Can I explain my symptoms clearly to a doctor?

- Do I know how to find reliable health information online?

If you struggle with any of these, it might be a sign to strengthen your health literacy.

Low health literacy is not just a communication issue, it is a public health crisis with ripple effects across individual lives, healthcare systems, and entire communities. Here is a breakdown of the most significant implications:

For individuals:

- Poor health outcomes due to misunderstanding medical instructions, skipping preventive care and mismanage chronic conditions like diabetes or hypertension.
- Higher number of emergency visits and rehospitalization rates within 90 days of hospital discharge.
- Medication errors due to difficulty interpreting dosage instructions or warning labels which can lead to underuse, overuse, or dangerous interactions.
- Limited engagement in care. Patients may feel intimidated or confused during medical visits, leading to less questioning, less shared decision-making, and lower adherence to treatment plans.

Society Implications:

Spread of Misinformation occurs when low health literacy makes people more susceptible to false claims, especially in the digital age when misinformation spreads quickly.

- During a public health crisis, like pandemics, low health literacy can hinder vaccine use, deter mask usage, and misunderstanding of public health guidelines.
- Poor health leads to reduced workforce productivity due to absenteeism and lower productivity, impacting economic stability at both home and national levels 🛠️

In conclusion, health literacy is not just about reading; it is about empowering yourself to learn as much as you can about your medications, health history, and your personal diagnoses. When people understand their health, they make better choices, reduce risks, and contribute to healthier communities. Addressing low health literacy requires change throughout the health system, clear communication, and culturally sensitive outreach.

Reminder: For those on Medicare: it is open enrollment time. You have until December 7 to decide on the type of Medicare coverage you will want for 2026. You have many choices for health and drug plans under Medicare.

Annual Out-of-Pocket Cap: Medicare Part D will cap annual out-of-pocket drug costs at \$2,100. Once you hit this cap, you won't pay copays or coinsurance for covered drugs for the rest of the year

Lower Prices on High-Cost Drugs: Prices will drop for 10 popular high-cost medications, including insulin and certain cancer treatments.

Automatic Enrollment in Payment Plan: Beneficiaries will be automatically enrolled in the Medicare Prescription Payment Plan unless they opt out.

If you have any questions, please contact me at:

Becky Schnitzius

618-531-6003