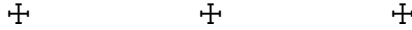




ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Our Mission

Growing Disciples - Making Christ Known



DECEMBER 24, 2023

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

10:30 AM SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

The angel Gabriel says to Mary, "Behold, favored one!" On the fourth Sunday of Advent we behold the promise of the eternal mystery of God revealed through Mary, the servant of the Lord, in the promised birth of Jesus the Messiah. With Mary, we say "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be unto me according to your word."

GATHERING

Bold responses are spoken by the congregation.

Prelude

"Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"

14th Century German Carol IN DULCI JUBILO

Organ settings by Marcel Dupre & Johann Sebastian Bach

Please stand as able.

Processional Hymn

"My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness" ELW 251

KINGSFOLD

1. My soul proclaims your greatness, Lord; I sing my Savior's praise!
You looked upon my lowliness, and I am full of grace.
Now ev'ry land and ev'ry age this blessing shall proclaim-
great wonders you have done for me, and holy is your name.
2. To all who live in holy fear your mercy ever flows.
With mighty arm you dash the proud, their scheming hearts expose.
The ruthless you have cast aside, the lowly throned instead;
the hungry filled with all good things, the rich sent off unfed.
3. To Israel, your servant blest, you help is ever sure;
the promise to our parents made their children will secure.
Sing glory to the Holy One, give honor to the Word,
and praise the Pow'r of the Most High, one God, by all adored.

Text: *With One Voice*, 1995, based on the Magnificat;
Music: English folk tune; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872-1958; Text 1995 Augsburg Fortress; Arr. Oxford University Press

Please be seated.

Welcome

Pastor Timothy McKenzie

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Holy One,
Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Remembering the waters of Holy Baptism, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Gracious God,
have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.
Amen.

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ †, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Please stand as able.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Please be seated.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

As the pastor lights the Advent wreath, verse one of "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" is sung.

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (ELW 257)

VENI, EMMANUEL

8. O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

WORD

First Reading

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Lisa Barnette, lector

¹Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the king said to the prophet Nathan, “See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.” ³Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.” ⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. ⁷Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” ⁸Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; ⁹and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

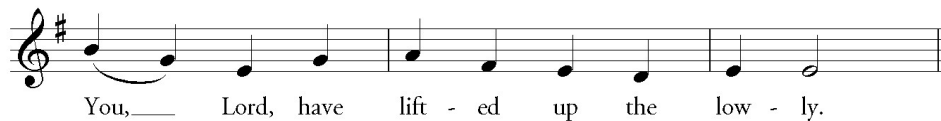
The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Luke 1:46b-55

Christian Souza, Delenn Rumbolo, cantors

Luke 1:(Thomas Pavlechko)



⁴⁶“My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. ⁵²He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

Second Reading

Romans 16:25-27

Lisa Barnette, lector

²⁵Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— ²⁷to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Please stand as able.

Gospel Acclamation

“Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go” from *ACS Holy Communion Setting Twelve*



Al-le-lu - ia, al - le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia.



Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

The Holy Gospel Luke 1:26-38

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 1st chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” ³⁴Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” ³⁵The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

Sermon

“Here am I”

Pastor Timothy McKenzie

Please stand as able.

Hymn of the Day “The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came” ELW 265

GABRIEL’S MESSAGE

Text: Basque carol; para. Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834-1924; Music: Basque carol; arr. C. Edgar Pettman, 1865-1943, and John Wickham; arr. © 1955, 1983 E.H. Freeman, Ltd, admin. Glenwood Music cCorp.

1. The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
with wings as drifted snow, with eyes as flame:
“All hail to thee, O lowly maiden Mary,
most highly favored lady.” Gloria!

2. “For know a blessed mother thou shalt be,
all generations laud and honor thee;
thy son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold,
most highly favored lady.” Gloria!
3. Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head;
“To me be as it pleaseth God,” she said.
“My soul shall laud and magnify God’s holy name.”
Most highly favored lady, Gloria!
4. Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born
in Bethlehem all on a Christmas morn,
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:
“Most highly favored lady.” Gloria!

The Apostles’ Creed

Together, let us confess our faith in the words of the Apostles’ Creed.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The service continues with the Prayers.

Prayers of Intercession

(Tom Tolbert, prayer assistant)

The congregation may kneel or sit for the prayers.

With hope and expectation of Christ’s coming, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God’s day of restoration. *A brief silence.*

God of possibility, Mary responded with faith and hope in your promise. In our divided world, bless the church with faith and hope to work as servants of your peace and promise for all people through light and love of Jesus the Messiah. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Creator of our planet and all of its bounty, guide us to empower leaders who will engage the complexities of slowing and repairing the abuse of our earthly home, so that generations yet unborn here and abroad may enjoy the nourishing and abundant environment that you provided to our forebears. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Mighty One, as Mary rejoiced in you as her Savior, bless this congregation to rejoice and magnify your love in good works for the sick and anxious, the hungry and the stranger, and for all in need. May we say, “*Here am I, let it be unto me according to your word.*” Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Holy Prince of Peace, look favorably on all your children and cause warfare to cease across Earth. Lead quarreling factions to cease aggressions and to mend the physical and emotional traumas that these actions continue to cause. Inspire rulers everywhere to bind up wounds, heal discord, promote international harmony, and provide food for the hungry, shelter for refugees, and acceptance of all people who depend upon them for safety. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Healer of our every need, sustain all who serve people whose bodies and spirits are wracked by injury, disease, pain, and anxiety. Encourage caregivers and healthcare providers who address medical and emotional needs. Show us how to provide for the homeless, lonely, infirm, and aged with kindness. Protect all administrative workers and uniformed service members who make our energy-grid, communications network, travel resources, and food-supplies secure, especially as the cold and dark of winter cause distress for the vulnerable. Bless and keep our loved ones: Jay Harbinson, David Mathis, Virginia Stackel, Joseph Tolbert, Robert Shirley, Rachel Fulp, Danielle Clausen, Carl Sepmeyer, David Kutscher, Vann Milheim, Oakley Coburn, Arlene Fielding, Sergei Kobiakov, Bill Schwartz, Jimmy Schwartz, Roxi Tolbert, Shirley Larson, Ingrid Keiris, Martha Stackel, Tina Wiland, Ben Watson, Louisa Coburn, Mindy Curley, Dannye Olin Bragdon, Sarah Lindberg, Marilyn Denison, Eileen Dunlap, Jim Middleswarth, Christopher Shirley, Pat & Gary Ragsdale, Tanner Grant, Michael Frye, Ken Foust, and Gene Ellington. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Lord God, blessed are you for Mary and all your servants in every generation who lived according to your promise. Strengthen us by their example and may we also see the coming of your Son in the new heaven and the new earth. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Peace *(Please stand as able, sharing the peace of the risen Christ.)*
The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

MEAL

Please be seated.

OFFERING *(Offerings for the mission of the church are gathered by the ushers.)*

Anthem “Lo, How a Rose e’er Blooming” Michael Praetorius

*Lo, how a rose e’er blooming from tender stem hath sprung! Of Jesse’s lineage coming as seers of old have sung,
it came, a flow’r so bright, amid the cold of winter, when half-spent was the night. Isaiah had foretold it, the rose
I have in mind; with Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind. To show God’s love aright,
when bore to us a Savior, when half-spent was the night.*

Please stand as able.

Offertory *(The offering is brought forward by the ushers)*

“Tidings of Comfort and Joy” stanza 1, from *Light the Candle*
Traditional English Carol; Setting for choir and congregation by Michael Burkhardt

Unison:



1. I - sai - ah, proph - et, seer of old, re - spond-ing to God's
call, pro - claimed the com - ing of the Lord to
peo - ple, great and small. Now on this day we
hear God's word: de - clare good news to all! O
SATB (opt.):
tid - ings of com - fort and joy, com-fort and
joy, O tid - ings of com - fort and joy!

Offering Prayer

Let us pray. God our provider, by your hand abundance springs from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty. Let them be a sign of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior.

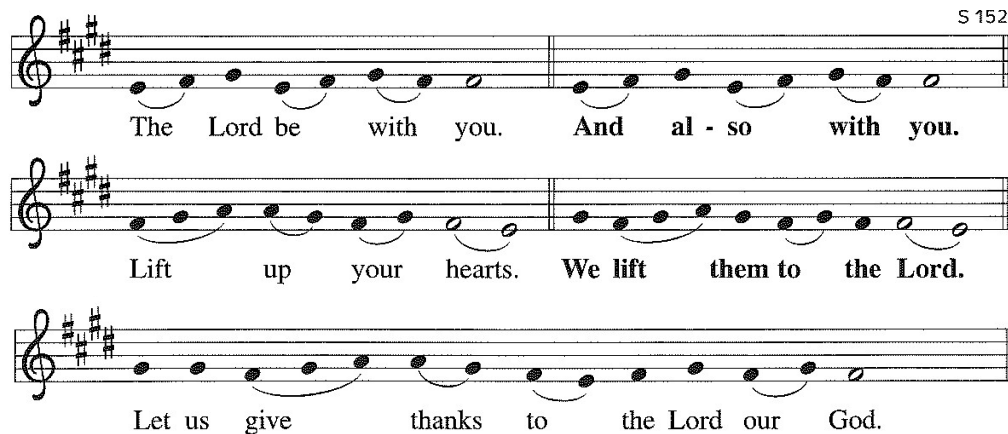
Amen.

Holy Communion

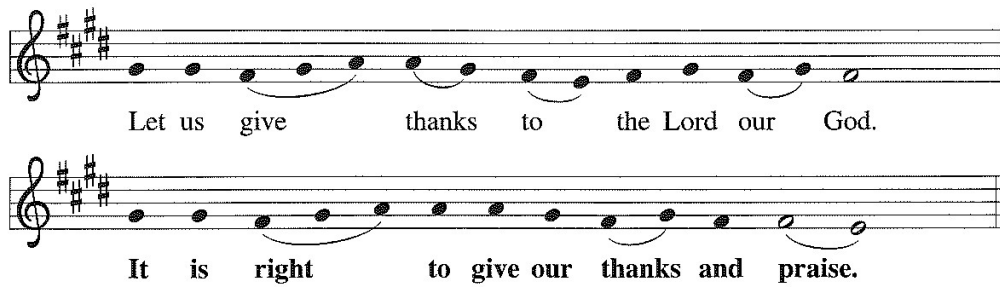
The Great Thanksgiving

Holy Communion Setting Four

S 152



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Proper Preface

Sanctus

“Holy, Holy, Holy” from *All Creation Sings, Holy Communion Setting Twelve*



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and
 God of might, heav - en and earth are full of your
 glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of the
 Lord. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Words of Institution

In the night in which he was betrayed,
 our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
 Broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
 Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
 and gave it for all to drink, saying:
 This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
 shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Invitation

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Please be seated.

Distribution of Holy Communion

Holy Communion is offered continuously in front of the freestanding altar, or at the rail of the high altar in two ways, by wafer and wine in a small cup or "Communion Kit." Please follow the ushers' prompts, walking forward to the desired communion station, and returning via the side aisles. If receiving a "kit" please seal the used utensils in the zip-lock bag, placing the bag after worship in the marked bowl in the Narthex. Gluten free wafers and grape juice are also available.

Communion Music

"Lamb of God" from *Christmas Carol Mass*

Traditional English Carol

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the
world, have mer-cy on us, have mer-cy on us.

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the
world, grant us peace, grant us peace.

"What Child Is This" from *Four Carol Preludes*

16th Century English tune GREENSLEEVES

Setting for organ by Richard Purvis

Please stand as able.

Post-Communion Blessing

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and keep you in his grace.

Post-Communion Prayer

Let us pray. Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

SENDING

SENDING BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

Amen.

Recessional Hymn

“What Child Is This” ELW 296

GREENSLEEVES

1. What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!
2. Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary!
3. So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby,
joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898; Music: English ballad, 16th cent.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news.

Thanks be to God.

Please be seated.

Postlude

“Toccata on ‘Joy to the World’”

18th Century English Melody
Organ setting by Michael Bedford

✠ ✠ ✠

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10:30 am Worship Leaders: Pastor Timothy McKenzie; prayer assistant: Tom Tolbert; crucifer/acolyte: Brady Ferner; lector: Lisa Barnette; live streaming camera: A.J. Pridgen; soundboard: Kevin Feezor; ushers: Doug Milheim, Marc & Susan Ginns, Eddie Goodall, Sean Fielding; greeters: Patrick & Rebecca Huang; Dale & Mary Lou Hopp; communion assistants: Alexandra Jacob, Jay Jacob, A.J. Pridgen; communion helper: Karen Covington; tabulators: Kevin Feezor, Dawn Schwartz; musicians: St. Mark's Choir; Delenn Rumbolo, Christian Souza, cantors; Lester Ackerman, Director of Music Ministry and Organist

8:30 pm Worship Leaders: Pastor Timothy McKenzie (prayer assistant); crucifer: Michael Lakeman; acolytes/torchbearer: Maddie Thompson, Riley Smith; Bible bearer: Jonathan Lakeman; lector: Maddie Thompson; live streaming camera: Ron Wenzel; soundboard: Alan Harms; ushers: John Simon, Sean

Fielding, Dale Hopp, Tom Sehorn; greeters: Mary L. Hopp; communion assistants: Cliff Edahl, Jay Jacob, Kevin & Karen Feezor, Gretchen Payne; communion helper: Kay Finlon

Next Sunday Leaders: prayer assistant: Larry Dagenhart, Jr.; crucifer/acolyte: Needed; lector: Flora Chance; live streaming camera: A.J. Pridgen; soundboard: John Brumbaugh; ushers: Team B; greeters: Millie Cansler, Jay Jacob; communion assistants Lisa Barnette, Rebecca Huang, Nick Wartner; communion helper: Kay Finlon; tabulators: Meg Fielding, Doug Milheim, Charles Lakeman



Parish News

From the pastor -

"Watch, Prepare, Rejoice, and Behold" are the four themes we think about and dwell upon in worship during Advent this year. Week 1 in Mark, Jesus tells us to "Watch" as we wait for the coming of the Son. Week 2, Isaiah writes that we are to "Prepare the way of the Lord" making straight paths for him in this world. Week 3 in 1 Thessalonians, Paul writes "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing." And Week 4 in Luke, the angel Gabriel says to Mary, "Behold, you will conceive and bear a Son, and you shall name him Jesus."

These themes of Advent encourage us to be attentive and awake to Christ's ongoing advent in our lives and relationships. These themes encourage us to be prayerful and alert, always ready to point to Christ's ongoing presence in this world. I encourage you to take time for quiet and prayer during this busy season, that your hearts might be open to Jesus Christ raised and alive in your life and through you in this world.

In the peace and light of Christ,
Pastor Tim McKenzie
pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org

Coming Up at St. Mark's

Worship and Congregational Life

Altar Flowers Today are given in Honor of the Birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Blessed Christmas to you! The church office will be closed 12/25 Christmas Day, in celebration of the Nativity of Our Lord.

12/31 First Sunday of Christmas (New Year's Eve morning) ONE SERVICE at 10:30am

REMINDER: To our able bodied members please park across Queens Rd in our church parking lot or on the side of the church along Edgehill Rd and come in side door saving the parking lot by the church for less able bodied members. Thank you.

Financial note: To ensure that your 2023 donation/gifts/contribution are received and processed for this tax year, contributions must be received by noon on Wednesday, Dec. 27. If you have not done so, please consider making a pledge for 2024. Thank you for your faithfulness to Christ's ministry at St. Mark'

ROOM in the INN is just around the corner. We will be hosting 10 homeless men each Tuesday during January. Volunteers will be needed to supply DIN-

NERS, BREAKFASTS and bag LUNCHES. Especially needed will be NIGHT SITTERS and VAN DRIVERS. Look for more information and a signup poster in the gathering place. Another way to help is to donate BEDTIME SNACKS for our guests such as lunch size bags of pretzels, goldfish, chips; granola bars (preferably without nuts); small bags of fruit snacks. Reminder - We DON'T NEED soap, shampoo or conditioner as we have dispensers in the showers. We CANNOT OFFER mouthwash as ordered by Roof Above. A collection basket is in the hall across from the restrooms. We thank you in advance for your participation in this outreach to the homeless in our community.

Thinking of joining St. Mark's? Please see Pastor Tim to set up a time to talk. All people are welcome at St. Mark's!

The Christian Education Hour is at 9:30 am on Sundays. Please join us as you are able in the Large Conference Room for "New Testament Lessons."

Online worship continues to be streamed every Sunday at 10:30 am on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/SaintMarksLutheran/>).

Ushers for Sunday Worship The ministry of ushering is a crucial part of worship because it is one of the most visible ministries in the Church. Please volunteer by contacting the church office or John Simon.

St. Mark's email list If you are not receiving emails from St. Mark's, we may not have your correct email address. Please contact the church to let us know. We send at least 2 emails every week.

Family Ministry

Nursery: A fun-filled nursery, staffed by volunteers, is located downstairs. An usher is available to show you the way. Our safety protocols offer peace of mind so you can worship without worry.

Youth Classes

Sundays at 9:30: Youth Group in the Youth Room. Godly Play has been temporarily paused.

Confirmation Class meets every Sunday at 9:30.

Stewardship 2024

Sharing our gifts is important to St. Mark's ongoing mission. A pledge is a prayerful commitment to giving in response to God's grace. A pledge may be offered at any time, but pledges help a congregation establish a responsible budget for the coming year. Please consider making a financial pledge to St. Mark's. Brochures are available in the Gathering Place. Thank you for your faithful gifts to St. Mark's ministries. An online pledge option is also available from our website, or you may use the QR code.

You may use the QR code at left (hover your phone camera to connect) for immediate access to St. Mark's website donation page. Pledges and donations for Altar Flowers may also be made using this code.



2024 Altar Flower Sponsorship If you would like to sponsor live flowers for our Sunday worship service, please sign up on the calendar by the mailbox room or contact the church office.

Social Ministry

We continue to remember the hungry and homeless through our social ministries.

LOAVES & FISHES The baker's rack is a permanent collection location for **NON-BREAKABLE NON-PERISHABLE** food. And remember, all families need condiments, salt & pepper and sugar, along with basic food.

Soup Kitchen St. Mark's Soup Kitchen is serving lunch in the Fellowship Hall every Thursday for our neighbors. If you would like to serve, please contact us. You may also support the Soup Kitchen through financial donations sent to the church, or through St. Mark's online giving portal. Help us share God's love!

Announcements

AA meets in the Fellowship Hall: Monday nights "Third Tradition", 7 p.m.; Wednesday nights "Just the Basics", 7:30 p.m.; and Thursday nights "Not a Glum Lot", 6:30 p.m.; in Room 210: Saturday morning 10:30 a.m. "SLAA".

Music Notes

"My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness" ELW 251, is a paraphrase and musical setting of the passage from Luke's Gospel, the Magnificat, Mary's song of praise. This hymn was co-written by Martin Seltz (b. 1951) and Frank Stoldt (b. 1958), and first included in *With One Voice* (1995), the supplement to the *Lutheran Book of Worship* (1978). The tune **KINGSFOLD** was arranged by English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) from a folk tune he heard in a town named Kingsfold in Surrey, England.

"The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came" ELW 265 This hymn has its origins as a Basque carol (Basque Country is an autonomous region in northern Spain on the border with France). This hymn tells the story that begins with the angel Gabriel's announcement in Luke 1:26, then summarizes Mary's song (Magnificat) in verses 46 through 55, with each stanza concluding with the single word "Gloria." The last stanza tells us that we are heading to Christ's birth on Christmas morning, though the focus remains on Mary and her song. **GABRIEL'S MESSAGE** is a Basque tune in a compound meter (three pulses to a beat) that possibly dates to as early as the sixteenth century .

This Week: From the Lutheran Church Calendar

December 26, Stephen, Deacon and Martyr

Stephen was a deacon and the first martyr of the church. He was one of those seven upon whom the apostles laid hands after they had been chosen to serve widows and others in need. Later, Stephen's preaching angered the temple authorities, and they ordered him to be put to death by stoning, with Saul (later Paul) as one of the observers. As he died, Stephen witnessed to his faith and spoke of a vision of heaven.

December 27, John Apostle and Evangelist

The son of Zebedee and brother of James, John was the one among the twelve disciples known as "beloved," and was a witness to the Transfiguration. Tradition has named him the writer of the Gospel of John, the three New Testament letters that bear his name, and the Book of Revelation. Tradition has also witnessed to John being the youngest of the disciples, and one who lived to an advanced age in Ephesus, having taught Polycarp, who was later to teach Irenaeus. John is a saint for Christmas through his proclamation that the light shines in the darkness, and the Word became flesh, dwelling among us.

December 28, The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

The infant martyrs commemorated on this day were the children two years old and younger of Bethlehem, killed by Herod who worried that his reign was threatened by the birth of a new king. Augustine called these innocents, "buds, killed by the frost of persecution the moment they showed themselves." Those linked to Jesus through their youth and innocence encountered the same hostility Jesus encountered later in his ministry.

Adapted from "Sundays and Seasons"

St. Mark's Prayer List

Jay Harbinson, David Mathis, Virginia Stackel, Joseph Tolbert, Robert Shirley, Rachel Fulp, Danielle Clausen, Carl Sepmeyer, David Kutscher, Vann Milheim, Oakley Coburn, Arlene Fielding, Sergei Kobiakov, Bill Schwartz, Jimmy Schwartz, Roxi Tolbert, Shirley Larson, Ingrid Keiris, Martha Stackel, Tina Wiland, Ben Watson, Louisa Coburn, Mindy Curley, Dannye Olin Bragdon, Nathaniel Coburn, Sarah Lindberg, Marilyn Denison, Eileen Dunlap, Jim Middleswarth, Christopher Shirley, Pat & Gary Ragsdale, Tanner Grant, Michael Frye, Ken Foust, and Gene Ellington.

Please email Pastor McKenzie with Prayer List and other prayer requests (pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org)

Readings for 12/31/2023,

First Sunday of Christmas (10:30 am only)

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

Psalm 148

*The splendor of the Lord is over
earth and heaven. (Ps. 148:13)*

Galatians 4:4-7

Luke 2:22-40

Birthdays

12/25 Marc Ginns

12/25 Tyler Andujar

12/25 Phillip Foust

12/27 Sally McCauley



Do you feel like you are in crisis? In Isaiah it is written, "Fear not, for I am with you; do not be dismayed for I am your God." Stephen ministers are here to show the Lord's love and comfort for you in times of trial. If you would like to confidentially speak to a Stephen Minister, please contact Pastor Tim (pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org)



Our Ministers

All the people of God at St. Mark's

Rev. Dr. Timothy McKenzie, Senior Pastor

pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org

Lester Ackerman,

Director of Music Ministry, Organist

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Jessie Craig, Finance Administrator

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St. Mark's Lutheran Church

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