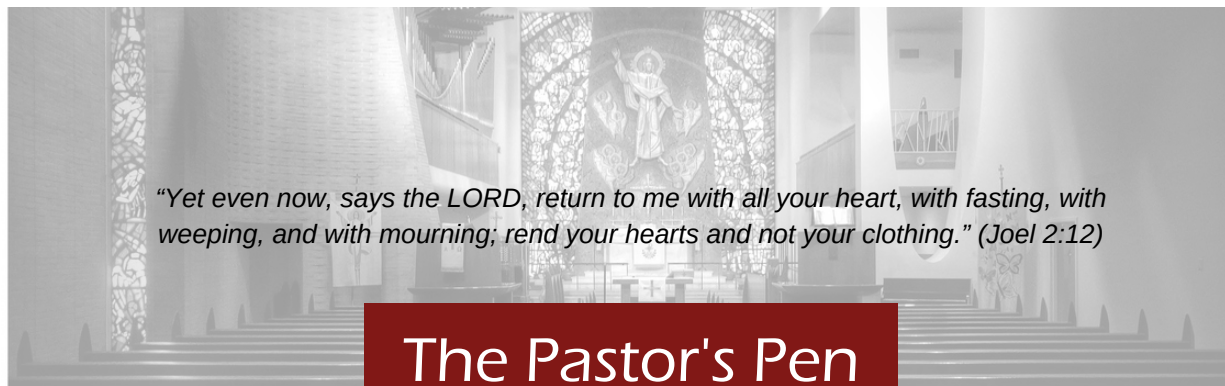


ReMarks

February 2024

St. Mark's Lutheran Church



"Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing." (Joel 2:12)

The Pastor's Pen

Dear Friends in Christ,

This year, the season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14th. Lent is a time in which we remember that our life of Christian discipleship is a lifelong response to Jesus' call to follow him, walking the way of the cross with him in humble service to others. During the season of Lent, we are asked the deepest questions about ourselves and our journey with Jesus. "Who do I follow each day? Whose voice do I allow to rule my heart? What or who am I tempted to place before Jesus in my journey through this world?"

The prophet Joel's words remind us of the Lenten journey of self-denial and the way of the cross. Lent begins in the human heart as we "yet even now" trust anew in Jesus. The Lenten journey of forty days is a discipline of self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love. This journey is always in contrast to the world's many other voices seeking the allegiance of our hearts.

It was while I was attending a Jesuit high school that I first experienced the discipline of fasting. Though I was running 10-15 miles a day on the track team, I along with several friends, fasted for 24 hours once a week. The physical experience of hunger not only drove me to prayer, it also reminded me of the many people I saw daily on the streets of Chicago who lived without enough to eat. This experience of self-denial taught me as a teenager that Lent is more than simply an outward discipline of "doing this" or "giving up that." Lent is a journey of the heart that leads to new perceptions of oneself and the world.

"Yet even now" means we need times of quiet and prayer that renew us to live in this noisy world of great need and great self-centeredness. The journey of Lent is an opportunity to rediscover the true center of our lives in discipleship to Jesus Christ, who underwent temptation and fasting in the wilderness, and who sought quiet moments for prayer.

In addition to Sunday worship, we have many opportunities for the discipline of Lent at St. Mark's. Lenten devotional books will be available at the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper. The Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion will be available on Ash Wednesday, and Wednesdays during Lent we will gather in the Fellowship Hall for a simple evening meal followed by Lenten Midweek Prayer.

Yet even now is a time to return to God in prayer through the discipline of Lent.

In the fellowship of the gospel, Pastor Timothy McKenzie



January Council Highlights

On 1/8/2024, the congregational council held their monthly meeting in the choir room.

From the treasurer's report:

- 2023 was a good financial year
- Congregation must consider ways to utilize and preserve the building and how to finance the renovations

From the pastor's report:

- 12/17 – Heidi Holzinger baptism
- 12/24 – Christmas Eve evening service = 230 attendees
- 12/24 – Ella Puky received first communion
- 1/14 – Annual report booklets will be distributed
- 1/16 – 1/21 – Les Ackerman will take PTO
- 1/21 – Bibba Whitener will be guest organist
- 1/21 – Erich Emiliano Wartner baptism
- February – return to offering intinction on 2nd, 4th, 5th Sundays and special services
- Lenten supper schedule:
 - o 2/21 = Council
 - o 2/28 = Social Ministry
 - o 3/6 = Congregational Life
 - o 3/13 = Worship and Music
 - o 3/20 = TBD

From the president's report:

- Please attend Congregational Meeting on 1/28
 - o Followed by light lunch in fellowship hall
- Thank you, Ken Hazen and Finance Committee, for your hard work on the budget

Motions approved:

- Council approved the 2024 budget.

Thank you,

A.J. Pridgen, Council Secretary

Synod Lay Preacher Program

"Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries." 1 Corinthians 4:1

Many in the NC Synod may be unaware of the Lay Preaching Program which trains Lay Preachers to serve in congregations that may not have the resources to call an rostered minister. The 18 month program covers theology, Scripture, preaching, and pastoral care. St. Mark's has benefited from this program on Sundays when we have needed a pulpit supply preacher.

St. Mark's member, Meg Fielding, is currently enrolled in the Lay Preaching Program. Meg will be preaching twice during the upcoming season of Lent in fulfillment of the curriculum requirement for preaching, first on 2/28 during Lenten Midweek Prayer and again on 3/10, the Fourth Sunday in Lent. Please remember Meg in prayer as she seeks to serve in this way in the NC Synod. We give thanks for the many gifts of faithful lay members of our congregation, this synod, and the whole ELCA.

Around St. Mark's

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." (Colossians 3:16)

Annual Congregational Meeting and Luncheon



St. Mark's Annual Congregational Meeting was held on 1/28 after the 10:30 Service, followed by a light luncheon prepared by the Congregational Life Committee. After gathering for word and sacrament worship and approving the 2024 Mission Plan (our annual budget), we continued by breaking bread together in the Fellowship Hall and enjoying table fellowship with our church family.



Thank you to the Congregational Life Committee for lunch and tasty desserts, and to all who stayed to enjoy time together!

Around St. Mark's

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." (Colossians 3:16)

Godspeed to Will Jacob

During worship on 1/21 we gathered around Will Jacob with prayers of Blessing and Godspeed as Will prepared to leave for military service in the U.S. Air Force. Will was baptized and raised in this congregation and we pray that God will strengthen and protect him in his military service to this nation.



2024 Offering Envelopes

If you have not picked up your 2024 envelopes, they are available in the Gathering Place for a limited time. If you do not see your box and would like one, please fill out an order sheet.



Food and Drink in the Sanctuary

A gentle reminder that food and drink should not be brought into the sanctuary. Worship leaders and choristers may have bottled water as it helps them during services.

Christian Education



You are invited!

Join the Faith Forum for lively discussions led by Larry Dagenhart, Jr. during the month of February.

9:30 am in the Large Conference Room

Congregational Life

Kay Sehorn Committee Chairperson

St. Mark's Men's Group Prayer Breakfast



On Saturday 1/13, the Men's Group gathered with spouses and guests for a prayer breakfast and tour of the Duke Mansion. The group enjoyed a continental breakfast in the Ray Dining Room and Pastor Tim led devotions. The theme, "Who do you say that I am?" (Matthew 16:13-19), encouraged us to think about our names and how Christ's forgiveness and love give identity and meaning to the name that we are known by all of our lives. Afterwards, one of Duke Mansion's historians gave us a tour of the building and informing us of its significance in the history of Charlotte and the United States. We are very grateful to our neighbors at Duke Mansion for providing a lovely space, delicious breakfast, and marvelous tour!



Congregational Life

Kay Sehorn Committee Chairperson

New Coffee Cart

You may have noticed a new feel to the Gathering Place due to the updated coffee cart and new coffee makers purchased by the Congregational Life Committee. Thank you to this committee which has worked hard to help us reconnect as a congregation these past two years after so much time apart during the Pandemic.



Ethnic Restaurant Group

The Ethnic Restaurant Group will dine at Portofino's Italian Restaurant on February 20, 2024 (7:00 PM). Portofino has been in Charlotte since 1996 and now has 4 restaurants in the local area. Judy and I have enjoyed eating at Portofino's multiple times. Our most recent dishes were scampi with gluten-free ziti and gorgonzola chicken. Both are recommended. The accompanying salads were crisp and interesting. A baguette made the meal complete. Our plan is to continue sampling the menu. Menus can be found at portofinos-us.com. Portofino is located in Park Selwyn Terrace Shopping Center at 5126 Park Rd, Charlotte, NC 28209. This is the small-ish HarrisTeeter shopping mall close to Park Road/Selwyn Avenue intersection. Portofino promises a warm reception and a warm room in which to dine. Come and be part of an evening of convivial conversation and delicious viands! Contact Tom & Judy Tolbert for a reservation.



Ethnic Restaurant Group at Waldhorn German Restaurant on 19 Dec 2023



Ethnic Restaurant Group at Wan Fu Chinese Restaurant on 19 Jan 2024

Congregational Life

Kay Sehorn Committee Chairperson



LOVE CIRCLE

We meet the second Wednesday of each month. Join us February 14 at 11:00 am in the Large Conference Room.

Piedmont Fiber Guild

Temari Ball Workshop



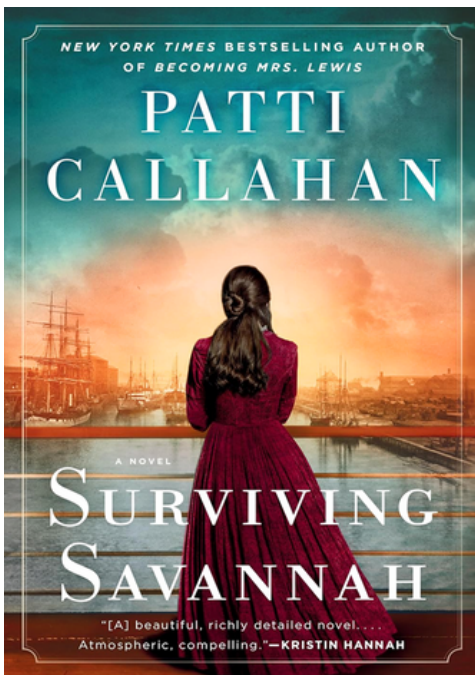
Saturday, February 17

10am - 4pm - please bring your lunch and beverage.

\$75, includes all materials. Register as a PFG Member, indicating that you are a member of St. Mark's.



Sign up /Registration on the Piedmont Fiber Guild website, at piedmontfiberguild.org, by February 12



St. Mark's Book Group

The St. Mark's Book Study Group will meet on Thursday, February 22, 2024, at 10 am in the large conference room and via Zoom. All are welcome to join. Our study this month will be *Surviving Savannah* by Patti Callahan. The wreckage from the steamship *Pulaski* was recovered 180 years after the ship's sinking. When Savannah history professor Everly Winthrop is asked to guest-curate a new museum collection focusing on the recovered artifacts, she can't resist the opportunity to try to solve some of the mysteries and myths surrounding the night of the ship's sinking. Winthrop's research leads her to extraordinary stories of people who were on board. This book is a moving and powerful exploration of what women will do to endure in the face of tragedy, the role fate plays for them, and the myriad ways they survive their surviving.

For more information, please contact Kay Sehorn or Judy Tolbert.

Family Ministry



Souper Bowl of Caring

“Souper Bowl of Caring” will culminate on Sunday 2/11. Please donate non-perishable food items to tackle hunger in our community. Sue Bruce from Loaves and Fishes will speak to us on 2/4 at the 10:30 service about the work they do responding to hunger in our community.

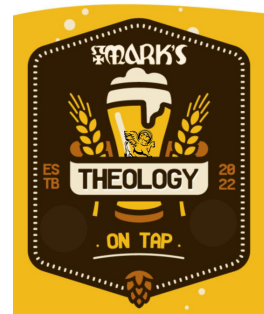


THEOLOGY ON TAP

Theology on Tap will be Thursday Feb 22 at 7P at Lower Left Brewing Company located at 4528 Nations Crossing Road.

Everyone is welcome!

No photo was taken at Edge City on Jan 18, but our St Mark's group in attendance won 4th Place in the Trivia Contest!



Gifts & Memorials

Jay Jacob Committee Chairperson

In Memory of Drew Robinson Smith

Phoebe Droege & Kristy Hawkins - Gifts & Memorials

In Memory of James Westbrook

Doug & Carol Milheim - Soup Kitchen Fund

In Memory of Charlie Cox

Steve & Jane McCall - Pastor's Discretionary Fund

In Memory of Avery Grace Lepkowski

Anonymous - Gifts & Memorials

In Honor of Jill Cochrane

Gene & Jackie Ellington - Room in The Inn Fund

In Honor of students/athletes Matthew, John, and Melissa Kroll

Marilyn Kroll - Music Fund

Social Ministry

Susan Ginns Committee Chairperson



Room in the Inn

For over 25 years St. Mark's has been participating in the Room in the Inn program in Charlotte and we are grateful that we were able to continue to serve again this year. During the first four Tuesdays of January, we hosted a total of 40 homeless men. We provided them with a hot dinner, shower & laundry facilities, a warm place to sleep, breakfast in the morning and a sack lunch to take with them. This was accomplished by many caring St. Mark's volunteers which are gratefully listed.

NIGHT SITTERS: Susan League, Dave Dunlap, Chris Stevenson, Pastor Tim McKenzie, Mike Doyne, Susan Ginns and Marc Ginns.

DINNER: Jane McCall, Dianne Thomas, Marilyn Graham, Kim Zimmerman, Micalyne Zimmerman, Gretchen Payne, Bonnie Grote, Jay Jacob, Will Jacob, Steve McCall, Jim Metz, Eddie Goodall, Lowell Engelhardt, St. Mark's Men's Group, and Grace Circle (Susan Lakeman, Dawn Schwartz, Genna Hurley, Karen Feezor, Carol Goodall, Jill Nelson, Dawn Weisenberger, Laura Foust, Paula Connolly, Charlotte Dixon, Tara Thompson)

BREAKFAST: Mark & Diane Thornton, Grace Circle, and Susan Lakeman

LUNCHESES: Lisa Barnette, Susan League, Flora Chance, Micalyne Zimmerman, Kim Zimmerman, Kaitlyn Thomas, Marcia Kromah, Rebecca Huang and Grace Circle

SET UP & CLEAN UP: Clayton Payne

VAN DRIVERS: Rob Johnson, Dave Dunlap, Ken Williams, Marc Ginns and Clayton Payne

VAN RENTAL ARRANGEMENTS: Clayton Payne

VAN RETURN: Marty Schwartz, Clayton and Gretchen Payne, Marc and Susan Ginns

BEHIND THE SCENES SET UP, SUPPORT AND TOILETTRIES: Linda Carter

LAUNDRY ARRANGEMENTS: Susan Ginns

Special thanks to Sue Wadgymer (parish administrator), Jessie Craig (financial administrator), Clayton Payne and the Social Ministry Committee members who played a role in getting everything organized ahead of time. Coordinators, Gretchen Payne and Susan Ginns, are very grateful to ALL volunteers. It truly takes teamwork to continue this ministry. Hopefully your service was a heartwarming experience, and the committee can look forward to working with you all next year!



Clayton & Gretchen Payne in the Fellowship Hall setting up for RITI.

Worship & Music

Kevin Feezor Committee Chairperson

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper



Tuesday, February 13
6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall

Hosted by Congregational Life, there is no charge, and everyone is welcome. Lenten devotional booklets will be available for each family to pick up at the dinner.

We hope you'll join us for a casual, fun dinner with our church family!

**Click on the link or copy it to your browser,
or call the church office to sign up:**

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0D4DAFAB23A6F49-47548322-shrove>

ASH WEDNESDAY

February 14, 2024
Imposition of Ashes
Holy Communion
12:15 pm & 7 pm
(7 pm also live on Facebook)



Mid-Week *Lenten* Services

February 21-March 20, 2024

6 - 6:45 pm Supper

7 pm Service

(in-person & live on Facebook)

"Holy
Lament:
God's
Presence in
Times of
Distress"

**Lenten Wednesday Suppers
before the Lenten Midweek
Prayer service.**

The schedule is as follows:
2/21 Congregation Council
2/28 Social Ministry
3/6 Congregational Life
3/13 Worship & Music
3/20 Men's Group

Please join us for supper and evening prayer!

Worship & Music

Kevin Feezor Committee Chairperson

Holy Communion by Intinction Returns

It has been four years since Holy Communion by intinction was stopped because of the pandemic. As announced at the Annual Meeting, the Congregation Council has approved resuming the pre-pandemic Communion schedule. Communion will be distributed on the 1st and 3rd Sundays by small cups, and on 2nd, 4th, 5th and all festival Sundays by intinction. This schedule will resume on the Second Sunday of Lent, February 25. Let us celebrate Christ's presence among us!



Vespers at St. Mark's



In Concert

Handel's Banner Year 1724!
February 23, 2024 at 7:30 pm

Handel premiered three operas in London in 1724. His output of music was tremendous. Experience Handel's world in works little-known today!

Tickets for this concert are half price for SMLC! Enter SMHalfOff at [HTTP://www.CarolinaProMusica.org/schedule](http://www.CarolinaProMusica.org/schedule)

January Worship Highlights



Christmas Eve cantor
Amy Woodall



St. Mark's Choir,
Fourth Sunday of Advent



Christmas Eve cantor
Delenn Rumbolo

Worship & Music

Kevin Feezor Committee Chairperson

January Worship Highlights



Kate Suchanek, Christmas Eve vocal soloist



Christmas Eve brass quintet



Madeline Phillips, Christmas Eve vocal soloist



Communion Assistants, January 14th



Sunday, January 14th, 8:30 worship song leaders Jack Richardson & Delenn Rumbolo



Cantors, Amy Woodall & Christian Souza, January 21st



Communion Assistants, January 21st



Communion anthem, Sunday, January 21st

Worship & Music

Kevin Feezor Committee Chairperson

January Worship Highlights



Communion anthem, Sunday, January 21st

Orgelkids pipe organ workshop



St. Mark's hosted a training session Saturday morning, January 27th for organists interested in serving as facilitators for Orgelkids, a small pipe organ designed with kids in mind! The kit is entirely interactive, with children (and adults) learning about the workings of a pipe organ, assembling the instrument piece by piece! St. Mark's will be housing the kit for the next six months or so, where local churches and organizations can sign-out the kit, and transport to their church or school. We are planning to have an interactive session for our choristers at St. Mark's, and will let you know when Orgelkids is assembled, and you can stop by the music room #223 to give it a try!



Worship & Music

Kevin Feezor Committee Chairperson

We Sing the Faith

Historical and Spiritual Insight Into the Hymns We Sing
Reflections by Lester Ackerman

"As with Gladness Men of Old" ELW 302

This popular Epiphany hymn is based on the Gospel lesson from Matthew 2:1-12 for Epiphany Day and tells of the visit of the Magi. William Chatterton Dix (1837-1898) is the writer of this hymn. He was a marine insurance manager by trade, and fortunately for us, had a second career as a writer of Christmas and Easter carols and other devotional writings, including the carol "What Child Is This" ELW 296. The tune DIX was composed by German musician and composer Conrad Kocher (1786-1872) and is also wedded to the great hymn of praise "For the Beauty of the Earth" ELW 879.

"Angels, from the Realms of Glory" ELW 275

Raised in a Moravian family of missionary parents, English hymn writer and poet James Montgomery (1771-1854) published this hymn on Christmas Eve, 1816, under the title "Nativity" in a paper he edited called The Sheffield Iris. He wrote over four hundred hymns, four of which are included in Evangelical Lutheran Worship, including "Hail to the Lord's Anointed" ELW 311, "Go to Dark Gethsemane" ELW 347 and "Lord, Teach Us How to Pray Aright" ELW 745. This poem is based on Luke 2, Matthew 2, and Malachi 3, and is a call for everyone, including the angels, shepherds, wise men, and saints, to come and worship the newborn King. The tune REGENT SQUARE was composed by Henry T. Smart (1813-1879) and named for St. Philip's Regent Square Church in London, one of the churches where Smart served as organist.

"Songs of Thankfulness and Praise" ELW 310

This hymn received its first publication in 1862 in the journal The Holy Year by Christopher Wordsworth (1807-1885). "Epiphany" means "manifestation" of Christ to the world, and the author used "manifest" twelve times to describe Christ's birth, baptism, appearance at the wedding feast of Cana, healing the sick, and his powers over evil. Thus this hymn becomes not only praise to God, but a time to learn more about Epiphany and about Christ himself. The tune SALZBURG is a late-seventeenth century German tune, probably written by Jakob Hintze (1622-1702), and the harmonization in our Evangelical Lutheran Worship is based on a setting by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750).

"Here I Am, Lord" ELW 574

Daniel Laurent Schutte (b. 1947), an American Jesuit priest, and composer of Catholic liturgical music, wrote this hymn for commitment and sending forth of Christ's disciples for a service of ordination in 1979. It is based on Isaiah 6:8 "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I; send me!'" God's mission and purpose is clearly stated, with each stanza telling the needs of the people and then the care God will provide. This hymn comes to Evangelical Lutheran Worship from With One Voice (1995). Schutte composed the tune HERE I AM, LORD. He has written over 150 hymns and Mass settings.

Worship & Music

Kevin Feezor Committee Chairperson

We Sing the Faith

Historical and Spiritual Insight Into the Hymns We Sing
Reflections by Lester Ackerman

"Come and See" ACS 976

This hymn comes to us from All Creation Sings by American composer and musician Robert Hobby (b. 1962). He wrote this hymn on a visit to England, while participating in a one-week conference seeking to reverse declining trends in the witness/ministry of Christianity. Inspired by John 1:35-37. Hobby writes: "I had considered adding additional verses from other parts of scripture...but simply sticking to the question and answer keeps it general enough for each person gathered in worship to hear the invitation in the context of their own life issues." The tune COME AND SEE was written by Hobby for this hymn text.

"Rise, Shine, You People!" ELW 665

was written by Ronald A. Klug (b. 1939) for the Fourth Sunday after Epiphany in 1974. Paul Westermeyer says in his Hymnal Companion to Evangelical Lutheran Worship "the gospel for that day was Luke 4:21-30, where Jesus went to the synagogue with the people on the sabbath and read the scroll from Isaiah 4: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me...to bring good news to the poor...release to the captives. Or in the words of the hymn, Christ the Lord has entered our human story. So rise, shine, celebrate, and hurl your songs and prayers against the darkness." The tune WOJTKIEWIECZ was written by American composer and musician Dale Wood (1934-2003) for this hymn, and was published in Lutheran Book of Worship (1978). The tune bears Dale Wood's Polish family name, which was simplified when his family came to the United States.

"Jesus Shall Reign" ELW 434

This is one of more than 600 hymns written by Isaac Watts (1674-1748), who is often referred to as the father of English hymnody. Written in 1719 as a paraphrase of Psalm 72, it is one of the earliest hymns written with a missionary emphasis, and a fine example of Christianizing the psalms, with Watts' paraphrase clearly indicating that the "King" in the psalm was Christ. The tune DUKE STREET was composed by English Presbyterian John Hatton (d. 1793), who lived on Duke Street in St. Helen's in the township of Windle, Lancaster (or Lancashire).

"There Is a Balm in Gilead" ELW 614

"Balm of Gilead" was an aromatic medicinal ointment. In Jeremiah 8:22 the question is asked, "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?" and the expected answer in "No." But this spiritual turns the negative into affirmation, and hopelessness into hope. It is the Holy Spirit who "revives my soul," and it is Jesus who "is your friend" and "died for all." The balm is in Gilead and in every other place in this world. The African American tune BALM IN GILEAD comes anonymously from the oral tradition of the nineteenth century, where a vocal soloist sings the stanzas, with the refrain as a response by the congregation. This hymn and its tune had its first appearance in print in the collection Folk Songs of the American Negro (1907).

Worship & Music

Kevin Feezor Committee Chairperson

February Serving Schedule

Crucifer/Acolyte

2/4 C/A: Needed
2/11 C/A: Michael Lakeman
2/18 C/A: Needed
2/25 C/A: Brady Ferner

Sound System

2/4 Bob Chernet
2/11 Kevin Feezor
2/18 Alan Harms
2/25 Neil Dixon

Tabulators

2/4 Doug Milheim
Joe Barrett
8/11 Karen Feezor
Carol Goodall
2/18 Doug Milheim
Janice Miller
2/25 Kevin Feezor
Meg Fielding
Charles Lakeman

Prayer Assistants

2/4 Michael Thompson
2/11 Michael Lakeman
2/18 Youth
2/25 Charles Lakeman

Lectors

2/4 Cindy Little
2/11 Marty Schwartz
2/14 Needed
2/18 Maddie Thompson
2/25 Lisa Barnette

Communion Helpers

2/4 Sandy Rach
2/11 Catherine Metze
2/18 Kay Finlon
2/25 Intinction returns

Video Streaming

2/4 A.J. Pridgen
2/11 A.J. Pridgen
2/18 Ron Wenzel
2/25 Ron Wenzel

Greeters

2/4 Jackie Ellington
Evelyn Gerdes
2/11 Gretchen Dodge
Patrick & Rebecca Huang
2/18 Jay Jacob
Susan Lakeman
2/25 Millie Cansler
Eileen Dunlap

Communion Assistants

2/4 Charles & Susan Lakeman
Michael Lakeman, Flora Chance
Gretchen Payne
2/11 Barbara Baker, Chris Stevenson
Nick Wartner, Betsy Wenzel
Kimberly Zimmerman
2/18 Lisa Barnette
Cliff Edahl, Rebecca Huang
Karen & Kevin Feezor
2/25 Jay Jacob, Janice Miller
Gretchen Payne, A. J. Pridgen
John Simon

Ushers

Team A: John Simon, Mike Doyne, Jenny Dagenhart, Larry Lippert, Jim Metze, Jay Jacob, Bill Thompson, Michael Thompson

February Birthdays

2/3 Scott Howarth
2/3 Charles Lakeman
2/6 Charlotte Dixon
2/9 Davis Ferner
2/12 Elizabeth Williams

2/13 Jake Weckerle
2/14 Rebecca Huang
2/16 Gene Daniels
2/17 Claire Dixon
2/17 Daniel Adden

2/18 Barry Fulp
2/21 Max Doyne
2/23 Judy Tolbert
2/24 Alice Blackwelder
2/26 Cynthia Little