



ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

MARCH 13, 2024

LENTEN MIDWEEK SERVICE OF WORD AND PRAYER

7:00 PM

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

*This year's midweek series theme is "Holy Lament: God's Presence in Times of Distress," remembering that in our laments of grief, regret and mourning, Jesus Christ strengthens us in our weakness. We live in a world that is not only divided and at war, increasingly humanity lives without a sense of optimism and hope for the future. Amid the doubts and fears of modern life - out of our laments - God's steadfast love unceasingly offers us hope and strength that we might boast in our weakness and in the power of Jesus' cross. God bless you on your Lenten journey.*

*Lenten offerings may be placed in the plate at the entrance to the sanctuary.*

***Bold responses are spoken by the congregation.***

GATHERING

*The Holy Spirit gathers us into a community of prayer.*

**Prelude**

"Prelude on 'If You But Trust in God to Guide You'" BWV 647

Johann Sebastian Bach

Tune WER NUR DEN LIEBEN GOTT by Georg Neumark

**Welcome**

**Opening Litany**

The prophet Joel calls us to return to the Lord with all our hearts.

**Lord, use this holy season of Lent to renew our lives in you.**

As we raise our voices in lament,

**comfort us and give us cause for hope.**

Bless our worship, our work, and our play.

**Guide us with your Spirit, that we may follow where you lead in confidence and trust.**

*Please stand as able.*

**Gathering Song**

"If You But Trust in God to Guide You" ELW 769 Stanzas 1 & 2

1 If you but trust in God to guide you with gen - tle  
2 What gain is there in anx - ious weep - ing, in help - less  
hand through all your ways, you'll find that God is there be -  
an - ger and dis - tress? If you are in your Sav - ior's  
side you when cross - es come, in try - ing days. Trust then in  
keep - ing, in sor - row will he love you less? For Christ who



God's un - chang - ing love; build on the rock that will not move.  
took for you a cross will bring you safe through ev - 'ry loss.

## WER NUR DEN LIEBEN GOTT

Text & Music: Georg Neumark, 1621-1681; tr. Composite; Text © 1978 Augsburg Fortress

### Greeting

The love of God poured into our hearts,  
the saving grace of Jesus Christ ✠,  
and the abundant life of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

### Opening Prayer

Let us pray. Gracious God, our lives are a beautiful and sometimes terrifying mix of great joy and deep sorrow. When we grieve, remind us that no matter how personal our experience, we can still lean on the community of faith around us for hope and support. Inspire us to notice those in our midst who need encouragement this day. In Jesus' name we pray.

**Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

## WORD

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, silence, reflection and song.*

**"Individual Lament"**

### Silence

*During this time of silence we quiet ourselves, entering into the mystery of God's presence. The beginning and the end of this period of silence is marked with the sound of a bell.*

### Psalm 13

(read responsively)

<sup>1</sup>How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?

<sup>2</sup>**How long must I bear pain in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all day long? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?**

<sup>3</sup>Consider and answer me, O Lord my God! Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death,

<sup>4</sup>**and my enemy will say, "I have prevailed"; my foes will rejoice because I am shaken.**

<sup>5</sup>But I trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.

<sup>6</sup>**I will sing to the Lord because he has dealt bountifully with me.**

### Reading Matthew 27:45-54

<sup>45</sup>From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. <sup>46</sup>And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' <sup>47</sup>When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, 'This man is calling for Elijah.' <sup>48</sup>At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. <sup>49</sup>But the others said, 'Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.' <sup>50</sup>Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. <sup>51</sup>At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. <sup>52</sup>The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. <sup>53</sup>After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. <sup>54</sup>Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said,

‘Truly this man was God’s Son!’

*The Word of the Lord.*

**Thanks be to God.**

**Lenten Meditation**

*“How long, O Lord?”*

Pastor Timothy McKenzie

*Please stand as able.*

**Song**

“Lamb of God” (Your Only Son) ELW 336

YOUR ONLY SON

Text: & Music: Twila Paris, b. 1958 © 1985 Straightway Music/Mountain Spiring Music

1 Your on - ly Son, no sin to hide, but you have  
2 Your gift of love we cru - ci - fied. We laughed and  
3 I was so lost, I should have died, but you have  
sent him from your side to walk up - on this guilt - y  
scorned him as he died. The hum - ble king we named a  
brought me to your side to be led by your staff and  
sod and to be - come the Lamb of God. O Lamb of  
fraud and sac - ri - ficed the Lamb of God.  
rod and to be called a lamb of God.  
God, sweet Lamb of God, I love the ho - ly Lamb of God. Oh, wash me  
in your pre - cious blood, my Je - sus Christ, the Lamb of God.

## PRAYER

*The Holy Spirit prays with and through us.*

**Prayers of Intercession**

(Pastor McKenzie, prayers)

*The congregation may sit or kneel for the Prayers.*

In Christ Jesus we meet the God who knows our weakness and bears the wounds of the world.

Therefore, let us be bold as we pray, trusting that God draws near to those in any kind of need. *A brief silence.*

*“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46)*

**All: God of grace, Let the prayers of your church come before you and incline your ear to our cries. We remember all who feel forgotten, abandoned, and alone in this world. May they know your saving grace and again experience the love of community with and through you. How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?**

*I will sing to the Lord because he has dealt bountifully with me.*

**All: Lord of hope, Daily cries of pain and anguish come before you. Bless those suffering pain in body and in soul that they might prevail and rejoice; may they again experience fullness of life through you. How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?**

*I will sing to the Lord because he has dealt bountifully with me.*

**All: God of grace, Nations and people bear sorrow deep in their hearts, crying out with loud voices as many breathe their last in places of strife and war. Answer their prayers and laments and come quickly ending such pain and suffering. How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?**

*I will sing to the Lord because he has dealt bountifully with me.*

**All: Lord of hope, You have given light to the eyes of the faithful who trusted in you; give light to my eyes so that I might know how to live, dealing bountifully with others as you have dealt bountifully with me. How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?**

*I will sing to the Lord because he has dealt bountifully with me.*

*“But I trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.” (Psalm 13:5)*

Into your wide embrace, O God, we place all our prayers, spoken and unspoken, trusting that you will receive them into your heart of mercy, Jesus Christ, your Son and our Savior.

**Amen.**

### The Lord's Prayer

(musical setting by Michael Austin Miller)

Our Fa-ther in heav-en, hal-low-ed be your name,  
your king-dom come, your will be done on earth as in heav'n.  
Give us to-day our dai-ly bread and for-give us of our sins  
as we for-give those who sin a-gainst us.  
Save us from the time of tri-al and de-liv-er us from e-vil.  
For the king-dom, and the pow-er, and the glor-y are yours,  
now and for-ev-er. A-men.

Please stand.

## SENDING

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

### Blessing

The Lord watches over your going out and your coming in. The Lord shields your joys and holds your sorrows. God, the Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and keep you this day and always.

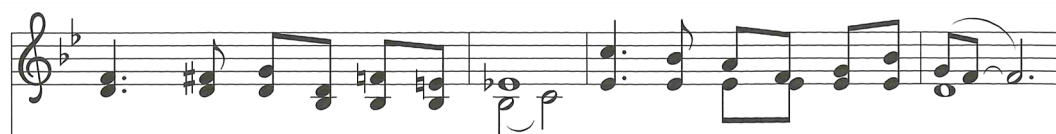
**Amen.**

### Sending Song

“Just a Closer Walk with Thee” ELW 697, Stanzas 1 & 2

CLOSER WALK

Text & Music: Rolf Vegdahl, b. 1955, based on Romans 14:8, Psalm 103; T&M © 2009, 2016 Augsburg Fortress



Refrain Just a clos - er walk with thee, grant it, Je - sus, is my plea;  
1 I am weak but thou art strong: Je - sus, keep me from all wrong;  
2 Through this world of toil and snares, if I fal - ter, Lord, who cares?



dai - ly walk - ing close to thee, let it be, dear Lord, let it be.  
I'll be sat - is - fied as long as I walk, let me walk close to thee. *Ref.*  
Who with me my bur - den shares? None but thee, dear Lord, none but thee. *Ref.*

### Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

**Thanks be to God.**

† † †

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Worship Leaders: Pastor Timothy McKenzie; live streaming camera: A. J. Pridgen; Musicians: Lester Ackerman, Director of Music Ministry and Organist

**Lenten Mid-Week Worship series:** “Holy Lament: God’s Presence in Times of Distress” During Lent, please join us online, Wednesdays (2/21-3/20), at 7 pm at St. Mark’s and live on Facebook, for the weekly worship series.

### Lenten Schedule February 21-March 20

**Lenten Wednesday Supper** 6 pm-6:45 pm Fellowship Hall

**Lenten Midweek Worship** 7 pm (in-person and online)

**Lenten Devotional Booklets** are available in the Gathering Place. Make Lent a time for prayer.

**LENTEN BOX OFFERINGS:** During Lent we focus on Jesus’ path to the cross and his sacrifice for us. One of our small sacrifices during this period is our donations into a small Lenten box. The letter with the boxes explains the recipient of this year’s donations - REFUGEE SUPPORT SERVICES. Infant care kits will be purchased for the little ones of our recently arrived refugees. Be sure to put your name on the box along with your envelope number if you have one. Donations can be made several ways - daily loose change, paper money, or simply write a check to St. Mark’s and put it in the box. Keep the box where you can see it as a constant reminder of Jesus’ sacrifice and the infants we will be helping. Please return to church before Easter. *Lenten Boxes are available in the Gathering Place.*

## St. Mark's Prayer List

Grey Hamilton, Jettie Leslie, Angie Blackwelder Malone, Linda Carter, Drew Goodson, Norma Alexander, Laura Elliott, Gene Ellington, Ken Foust, Michael Frye, Tanner Grant, Christopher Shirley, Eileen Dunlap, Sarah Lindberg, Danyne Olin Bragdon, Mindy Curley, Louisa Coburn, Ben Watson, Tina Wiland, Martha Stackel, Ingrid Keiris, Shirley Larson, Jimmy Schwartz, Roxi Tolbert, Bill Schwartz, Sergei Kobiakov, Arlene Fielding, Oakley Coburn, David Kutscher, Carl Sepmeyer, Danielle Clausen, Rachel Fulp, Joseph Tolbert, Virginia Stackel, David Mathis, and Jay Harbinson.

Please feel free to email Pastor McKenzie with Prayer List and other prayer requests ([pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org))



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](mailto:pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org))



## *Our Ministers*

**All the people of God at St. Mark's**

**Rev. Dr. Timothy McKenzie, Senior Pastor**  
[pastortimsmc@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:pastortimsmc@saintmarkscharlotte.org)

**Lester Ackerman,**  
**Director of Music Ministry, Organist**  
[les@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:les@saintmarkscharlotte.org)

**Sue Wadgymer, Parish Administrator**  
[admin@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:admin@saintmarkscharlotte.org)

**Jessie Craig, Financial Administrator**  
[finance@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:finance@saintmarkscharlotte.org)