



ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Our Mission

Growing Disciples - Making Christ Known



JANUARY 4, 2026

SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

10:30 AM SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

Within the gospel reading's profound words lie the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of baptism, and in the bread and wine of the Eucharist. Through these ordinary gifts, we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.

GATHERING

Bold responses are spoken by the congregation.

Prelude

“Away in a Manger”

Tune CRADLE SONG by William J. Kirkpatrick
Setting for cello and organ by Dale Wood

The congregation stands as the cross is carried into the sanctuary.

Processional Hymn

“Angels, from the Realms of Glory” ELW 275

REGENT SQUARE

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt., sts. 1-3; *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857, st. 4; Music: Henry T. Smart, 1813-1879

1. Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Once you sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:

Refrain: Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king.

2. Shepherds, in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing, yonder shines the infant light. *Refrain*
3. Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great desire of nations, you have seen his natal star. *Refrain*
4. All creation, join in praising God, the Father, Spirit, Son,
evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One. *refrain*

Please be seated.

Welcome

Pastor Alexandra Joy Rode

Confession and Forgiveness

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

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty Savior, Prince of Peace.

Amen.

Trusting God's steadfast love and faithfulness,
let us confess our sin.

Reconciling God,
**We yearn for your presence to transform
our grief, pain, and despair.
We confess that we have not always prepared
room in our hearts for your love;
we have not always recognized
your presence among us;
we have not always embraced your message of peace.
We cry out, weary with the burden of violence,
oppression, and fear.
We confess our failure to make room
for those seeking refuge;
our participation in violent systems
that harm your innocent ones;
our reluctance to embody your good news.
Be born in us today
and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation.
Amen.**

God's grace upon grace flows over you.
† Christ's presence redeems the whole creation.
Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad!
Amen.

Kyrie

“O Lord, Have Mercy” from *All Creation Sings*

Holy Communion Setting Twelve
Jack Richardson, cantor



Se - ñor, ten pie - dad de no - so - tros. Cris - to, ten pie - dad.
O Lord, have . . . mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy.



Se - ñor, ten pie - dad de no - so - tros. Cris - to, ten pie - dad.
O Lord, have . . . mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy.

Leader or All All

Se - ñor, ten pie - dad. Se - ñor, ten pie - dad.
Have mer - cy, O Lord. Have mer - cy, O Lord.

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. Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Please be seated.

WORD

First Reading

Jeremiah 31:7-14

Karen Feezor, lector

⁷ For thus says the LORD: Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, “Save, O LORD, your people, the remnant of Israel.” ⁸ See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor together; a great company, they shall return here. ⁹ With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back; I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path where they shall not stumble, for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. ¹⁰ Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, “He who scattered Israel will gather him and will keep him as a shepherd does a flock.” ¹¹ For the LORD has ransomed Jacob and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. ¹² They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again. ¹³ Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy; I will comfort them and give them gladness for sorrow. ¹⁴ I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty, says the LORD.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Psalm 147:12-20

Taylor McNamara, Amy Woodall, cantors

Psalm 147:12 (Robert A. Hobby) from *Psalter for Worship Year A*; © 2007 Augsburg Fortress

Wor-ship the LORD, O Je - ru - sa - lem; praise your God, O Zi - on.

¹²Worship the LORD, | O Jerusalem; praise your | God, O Zion, ¹³who has strengthened the bars | of your gates and has blessed your chil- | dren within you. ¹⁴God has established peace | on your borders; and satisfies you with the | finest wheat. ¹⁵God sends out a command | to the earth, a word that runs | very swiftly. R ¹⁶God gives snow like wool, scattering | frost like ashes. ¹⁷God scatters | hail like bread crumbs. Who can stand a- | gainst God's cold? ¹⁸The LORD sends forth the | word and melts them; the wind blows, and the | waters flow. ¹⁹God declares the | word to Jacob, statutes and judg- | ments to Israel. ²⁰The LORD has not done so to any | other nation; they do not know God's judgments. | Hallelujah! R

Second Reading

Ephesians 1:3-14

Karen Feezor, lector

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹²so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Please stand as able.

Gospel Acclamation

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” ELW 270 stanza one

MENDELSSOHN

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.; Music: Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831-1915.

1. Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king;
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled.”
Joyful, all you nations rise; join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic hosts proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king!”

The Holy Gospel

John 1:1-18

The Holy Gospel according to St. John the 1st chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. ⁶There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who

were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

Sermon

"I'm just the messenger"

Pastor Ali Rode

Please stand as able.

Hymn of the Day


"Word of God, Come Down to Earth" ELW 510

LIEBSTER JESU, WIR SIND HIER

Text: James Quinn, sj, b. 1919, © James Quin, sj, admin. Selah Publishing Co., Inc.; Music: Johann R. Ahle, 1625-1673




1 Word of God, come down on earth, liv - ing rain from
 2 Word e - ter - nal, throned on high, Word that brought to
 3 Word that speaks God's ten - der love. one with God be -



heav'n de - scend - ing; touch our hearts and bring to birth
 life cre - a - tion, Word that came from heav'n to die,
 yond all tell - ing, Word that sends us from a - bove



faith and hope and love un - end - ing. Word al - might - y,
 cru - ci - fied for our sal - va - tion, sav - ing Word, the
 God the Spir - it, with us dwell - ing, Word of truth, to



we re - vere you; Word made flesh, we long to hear you.
 world re - stor - ing, speak to us, your love out - pour - ing.
 all truth lead us: Word of life. with one bread feed us.

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.

Please be seated.

Prayers of Intercession

Michael Thompson, prayer assistant

The congregation may kneel or sit for the prayers.

Empowered by the news of Christ's birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need. *A brief silence.*

God of joy, You call us home from every corner of this world, healing and restoring us back to the image that You created. You turn our sorrow into celebration, our angst into hope, our pain into mercy, and with grateful hearts we turn to You for salvation. Renew that zeal in us to share the Good News with others, so that we might gather together again and lift each other up towards eternal life with You. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God our shepherd, You reveal yourself in holy communion. Sustain all who provide food and fellowship in this congregation and in the wider community. Make our tables signs of your welcoming presence among us. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of blessings, through Your kindness You call us to be part of Your family in heaven. We thank You for Your grace and forgiveness, which opens for us the door to eternal life with You. Remind us that we belong to You, that we are made in Your image, and that we were created to praise and share Your glory, wisdom, and mercy with others, so that Your family may grow. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of all creation, You reveal yourself in blessed diversity. Help us to look for you in people near and far, in bodies of all kinds, and in kindred young and old. Let us seek you in many places, praising you in many tongues. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of compassion, You are the Word, the truth, and the light in our lives. Through You, all things were made, and we thank and praise You for shining Your light on our world, for granting us the mercy we don't deserve, and for giving us the hope we can't feel on our own. Help us remember that through You all things are possible, so that we remain open to the grace, love, and eternal life that only You can offer. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of hope, You reveal yourself in new life. Support those beginning a new job, a new relationship, or a new living situation, especially those displaced because of tragedy or loss. Be with all others who need

your life-giving touch this day. Bless, heal, and sustain our family and friends whom we daily remember on our Prayer List, along with those we especially remember this week: Pat Fox, Bill Bowdon, Harry Kendrick, Mary Lou R., Kendal Turner, Sheila Pierfelice, Rochelle Dagenhart, Janice Darnell; and now hear us as we name before you, either aloud or in our hearts, other names and concerns close to us... *a brief silence for names or concerns spoken aloud or in silence...* Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

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

“I Wonder As I Wander”

Appalachian Carol, Arr. John Jacob Niles
Jack Richardson, tenor soloist

I wonder as I wander, out under the sky, how Jesus the Savior did come for to die for poor on'ry people like you and like I...I wonder as I wander, out under the sky. When Mary birthed Jesus, 'twas in a cow's stall, with wise men and farmers and shepherds and all. But high from God's heaven a star's light did fall, and the promise of ages it then did recall. If Jesus wanted any wee thing, a star in the sky, or bird or bird on the wing, or all of God's angels in heav'n to sing, he surely could have it, 'cause he was the King. I wonder as I wander, out under the sky, how Jesus the Savior did come for to die for poor on'ry people like you and like I...I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.

Please stand as able.

Offertory

(The offering is brought forward by the ushers)

“The First Noel” ELW 300 stanza one

THE FIRST NOEL

Text: English traditional; Music: English traditional; arr. John Stainer, 1840-1901

1. The first Noel the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deed.

Refrain: Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.

Offering Prayer

Let us pray. God of glory, great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior.

Amen.

Holy Communion

The Great Thanksgiving

S 144a

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.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The image shows four staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp). The first staff has a double bar line in the middle. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables across notes. The music is a simple, melodic line.

Proper Preface

Sanctus

“Holy, Holy, Holy” from *Holy Communion Setting Four*

S 153

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

The image shows four staves of musical notation in D major (two sharps). The first staff has a double bar line in the middle. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables across notes. The music is a simple, melodic line.

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

God is now in flesh appearing.

Come to the feast of joy!

Please be seated.

Distribution of Holy Communion

Holy Communion is offered continuously at the Lord's table and at the high altar. Please follow the ushers' prompts, walking forward to the desired communion station and returning via the side aisles. On the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, distribution is by wafers and small cups, and on the 2nd, 4th, and 5th Sundays of the month distribution is by intinction. Gluten free wafers and grape juice are always 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.

“In the Bleak Midwinter”

Tune CRANHAM by Gustav Holst
Setting for cello and organ by David Cherwien

Communion Anthem

“Away in a Manger”

American Folk Tune

Setting for choir, cello and organ by David Ashley White

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus lay down His sweet head. The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay. The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay. The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes. I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky, and stay by my side til morning is nigh. Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay close by me forever, and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

“Pastorale on ‘O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright’”

Tune by Philipp Nicolai

Setting for cello and organ by Michael Burkhardt

Please stand as able.

Post-Communion Blessing

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

Amen.

Post-Communion Prayer

Let us pray. Incarnate God, you are among us at this table. May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence. Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us.

Amen.

SENDING

Sending Blessing

The triune God,
glorious Mystery,
holy Incarnate One,
abiding Comforter,
✠ bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy.

Amen.

Recessional Hymn

“Go Tell It on the Mountain” ELW 290

TELL IT

Text: African American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work, Jr. 1872-1925, sts. alt; Music: African American spiritual

Refrain: Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere;
go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

1. While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. *refrain*
2. The shepherds feared and trembled when, lo, above the earth
rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. *refrain*
3. Down in a lonely manger the humble Christ was born;
and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *refrain*

DISMISSAL

Glory to God in the highest!

And peace to God's people on earth!

Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

Thanks be to God.

Worship has ended. You are free to depart or you may remain for the postlude.

Postlude

“Toccata on 'Angels from the Realms of Glory'”

Tune REGENT SQUARE by Henry Smart

Setting for organ by Lani Smith



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Worship Leaders: Associate Pastor Alexandra Joy Rode; prayer assistant: Michael Thompson; crucifer/acolyte: Needed; lector: Karen Feezor; live streaming camera: Joe Barrett; soundboard: Bob Chernet; ushers: Larry Dagenhart, Jr., Alan Harms, Jenny Dagenhart, Sally McCauley; greeters: Gretchen Dodge, Michael & Tara Thompson; communion assistants: Karen & Kevin Feezor, A.J. Pridgen, Nick Wartner; communion helper: Chris Miller; tabulators : Meg Fielding, Janice Miller; musicians: St. Mark's Choir; John Brumbaugh, cello; Jack Richardson, Amy Woodall, Taylor McNamara, cantors; Jack Richardson, tenor; Lester Ackerman, Director of Music Ministry and Organist

Next Sunday Leaders: prayer assistant: Charles Lakeman; crucifer/acolyte: Needed; lector: Meg Fielding; live streaming camera: Charles Lakeman; soundboard: Neil Dixon; ushers: Team C; greeters: Evelyn Gerdes, Eddie & Carol Goodall, Patrick & Rebecca Huang; communion assistants: Lisa Barnette, Jay Jacob, Rebecca Huang, Virginia Molan; communion helper: Catherine Metze; tabulators :TBD

Parish News

From the Senior Pastor -

“For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:6)

At Christmas, God's kingdom draws near to us in the birth of Jesus the Messiah, whose kingdom crosses all borders of nation, culture, and language. In Jesus, human time now forever includes God's eternity. Isaiah's words about Jesus, “born for us,” reveal God's kingdom of peace established, not in one nation or people, but for all

nations and people. He is the eternal now, Emmanuel, God with us.

Jesus is born anew in the manger of your heart and in the hearts of fellow sisters and brothers around the world in every nation and language. Jesus Christ seeks to dwell in your heart, that through you, he might extend his reign of peace and love to all people. He lives your humanity that you might share his peace and love with all whom you meet.

Blessed Christmas!

Senior Pastor Tim McKenzie

pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org

Coming Up at St. Mark's

Worship and Congregational Life

A blessed Christmas season to you! In

Jesus, the light shines in the darkness. Jesus has overcome the darkness of the world with his eternal light, peace and love. May you know his light, love, and the peace be with you this season and always!

Pastor Ali Rode's Installation: 1/11 at 3 pm. Bishop Emily preaching. Please join us for the Rite of Installation, followed by a reception.

Set the Date! The 2026 Annual Meeting is scheduled for 1/25/2026 following the 10:30 service.

St. Mark's Men's Group On Saturday, 1/10 at 9am we will have our regular meeting, prepare, deliver and serve a meal for Hospitality House of Charlotte, and disassemble and store the manger scene. On 1/20 & 21, we are hosting 10 homeless men for Room in the Inn. Come help.

Love Circle will meet January 14 at 11 am in the Large Conference Room

Ethnic Restaurant Group will enjoy delicious food at Wan Fu Chinese Restaurant at 6:00 PM on January 20, 2026. Wan Fu has satisfied customers since 1989. Flavors range from cold sesame noodles with peanut sauce, lo mein, and chow fun to clearly marked Hunan and curry dishes. Chinese Guardian Lions (Shishi statues, "Foo Dogs") welcome diners at the front door. Exquisite wood carvings enliven the interior. "Wan Fu" translates as 10,000 Happiness. Wan Fu is located at 10719 Kettering Dr, Charlotte, NC 28226. Directions (if headed):


- West on NC-51 (Pineville-Matthews Road): turn right onto Kettering Drive at Outback Restaurant.
- South on Park Road & Johnston Road: turn right onto NC-51 (Pineville-Matthews Road), then turn right onto Kettering Drive at Outback Restaurant.
- East on NC-51 (Pineville-Matthews Road): be careful and turn left onto Kettering Drive at Outback Restaurant (there is no traffic light at this T-intersection).

All are welcome! Bring a friend, neighbor, or business associate and be part of the fun. RSVP to Tom & Judy Tolbert by midnight on Sunday, January 18th.

The St. Mark's Book Group will meet on Thursday, January 22, at 10 am in the large conference room and via Zoom. Our book this month is *The Christmas*

Train by David Baldacci. All are invited to join us for this discussion. Please contact Kay Sehorn or Judy Tolbert for more information. Disillusioned journalist Tom Langdon must get from Washington D.C. to L.A. in time for Christmas. Forced to travel by train, he begins a journey of rude awakenings, thrilling adventures and holiday magic. He has no idea that the locomotives pulling him across America will actually take him into the rugged terrain of his own heart, as he rediscovers people's essential goodness and someone very special he believed he had lost. *The Christmas Train* is filled with memorable characters who have packed their bags with as much wisdom as mischief and shows how we do get second chances to fulfill our deepest hopes and dreams, especially during this season of miracles.

January Theology on Tap will be Thursday, January 29 at 6:30 pm (not the usual 7pm) at the home of Marty and Dawn Schwartz located at 4627 Arborloft Court Charlotte, 28270. Please bring an appetizer to share and BYOB.

Aid for Hurricane Helene Victims If you would like to help, please hover your phone camera over the  QR code to connect to the NC Synod's website.

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. You are invited to join the Faith Forum for lively discussions. The class meets in the Large Conference room. New members are always welcome.

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.

Confirmation Class meets every other Sunday at 9:30.

Stewardship

Your pledge helps St. Mark's ministries of worship, service and fellowship continue over the coming year. **2026** Pledge cards 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.



2026 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

ROOM IN THE INN Requesting donations of BEDTIME SNACKS for our 10 homeless men we host every Tuesday during January and February ----- lunch size bags of chips, pretzels goldfish; granola bars (preferably without nuts); small bags of fruit snacks. The collection basket is in the hall on the table across from the large conference room. All donated toiletries have been bagged and ready. Your donations are greatly appreciated by the Social Ministry committee and the homeless men we serve.

NOURISH UP With your generous donations, we were able to deliver **554 lbs** of food to NOURISH UP in November and December. The baker's rack in the

gathering place is always available for your donations of non perishable , non breakable food items. If you would prefer assisting financially, make a check payable to St. Mark's with NOURISH UP on the memo line. Monetary donations enable NOURISH UP to purchase perishable dairy products, meats and bread. All foods are available to low-income families who have been recommended by teachers, pastors, or social workers. Please remember those in need of assistance as you do your grocery shopping and add a couple items to your cart to bring to the baker's rack.

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 pm; Wednesday nights "Just the Basics", 7:30 pm; & Thursday nights "Not a Glum Lot", 6:30 pm; "SLAA" meets in Room 106: Mondays men only at 6 pm; Thursdays at 6:30 pm; Fridays women only at 6 pm & Saturday mornings 10:30 am.

Music Notes

"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.

St. Mark's Prayer List

Pat Fox, Bill Bowden, Harry Kendrick, Mary Lou R., Kendal Turner, Sheila Pierfelice, Rochelle Dagenhart, Janice Darnell, Pastor Glen Sea, Mark Barbee, Mark and Diane Thornton, Polly Needham, John Graham, Tom Tolbert, Dr. Samuel Davis, Bob Roach, Payton McAdams, Dale Hopp, Bill Coppedge, Marcia Newlin, Andres & Silvia Puky, Ashlyn Bordelon, Betsy League, Carmelita Harris, Lucille Johnson, Marilyn Stevens, Satoko Yamada, Judy Cox, Ross Boheler, Charlene Oppermann, Elaine Ketner Sherman, Gene Ellington, Tanner Grant, Christopher Shirley, Eileen Dunlap, Dannye Olin Bragdon, Mindy Curley, Louisa and Oakley Coburn, Roxi Tolbert, Bill Schwartz, Arlene Fielding, David Kutscher, Danielle Clausen, Joseph Tolbert, and Jay Harbinson.

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

Readings for 1/11/2026

Baptism of Our Lord /

Epiphany 1

Isaiah 42:1-9

Psalm 29

Acts 10:34-43

Matthew 3:13-17

Birthdays

1/4 Brady Ferner

1/4 Mary Lou Hopp

1/8 Diane Thornton

1/10 Steve McCall



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)

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Our Ministers

All the people of God at St. Mark's

Rev. Dr. Timothy McKenzie, Senior Pastor

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Rev. Alexandra Joy Rode, Associate Pastor

for Family Ministry

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Lester Ackerman,

Director of Music Ministry, Organist

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St. Mark's Lutheran Church

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