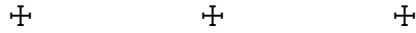




ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Our Mission

*Growing Disciples - Making Christ Known*



FEBRUARY 1, 2026

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

10:30 AM SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

*Who are the blessed ones of God? For Micah, they are those who do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. For Paul, they are the ones who find God's wisdom in the weakness of the cross. For Jesus, they are the poor, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who mourn, and those who hunger for righteousness. Today's readings call us to be visible signs of God's love for a world in dire need of justice and loving-kindness. May you live as a blessing for others.*

GATHERING

*The congregation is invited to join in the **Bold** responses.*

**Prelude**

“Praise to the Lord, the Almighty”

Tune LOBE DEN HERREN

Settings for organ by Gerhard Krapf & Johann Walther

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

**Processional Hymn**

“Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart” ELW 873 stanzas 1-6

MARION

Text: Edward H. Plumptre, 1821-1891, alt.; Music: Arthur H. Messier, 1834-1916

1. Rejoice, ye pure in heart! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing;  
your festal banner wave on high, the cross of Christ your king.  
*Refrain:* Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice, give thanks, and sing!
2. With voice as full and strong as ocean's surging praise,  
send forth the sturdy hymns of old, the psalms of ancient days. *Refrain*
3. With all the angel choirs, with all the saints on earth  
Pour out the strains of joy and bliss, true rapture, noblest mirth. *Refrain*
4. Still lift your standard high, still march in firm array,  
as pilgrims through the darkness wend till dawns the golden day. *Refrain*
5. At last the march shall end; the wearied ones shall rest;  
the pilgrims find their home at last, Jerusalem the blest. *Refrain*
6. Praise God who reigns on high, the Lord whom we adore:  
the Father, Son, and Spirit blest, one God forevermore. *Refrain*

*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.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † on e God,  
the Creator of heaven and earth,  
the Word who spoke life into being,  
the Wind stirring the waters.

**Amen.**

Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

Mighty God, lover of justice,  
**you call us to life in community,**  
**but we have served our own interests**  
**at the expense of our neighbors.**

**We have sown deceit where honesty was needed.**

**We say the right words,**  
**but our hearts are far from you.**

**Turn us to seek your face.**

**Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ,**  
**that we may do justice, love mercy**  
**and walk humbly with you, our God.**

**Amen.**

The former things have passed away,  
and new things God now declares:  
Like a spring of water that never fails,  
God covers you in the righteousness of Christ,  
and forgives your sin in † Jesus' name.

May the Spirit give you strength to live for others,  
and bless you with the gift of peace.

**Amen.**

## Kyrie

“Come, Bring Your Burdens to God” ACS 1009 sing two times

South African melody WOZA NOMTHWALO WAKHO

Text: South African; English text Barbara Clark, Mairi Munro, and Martine Stemerick, T & arr. © 2008 WGRG, Iona Community, admin. GIA Publications;  
Music: South African melody; arr. Welile Sigabi

Wo - za nom - thwa - lo wa - kho; wo - za nom -  
Come, bring your bur - dens to God; come, bring your



thwa - lo wa - kho; wo - za nom - thwa - lo wa - kho, U -  
bur - dens to God; come, bring your bur - dens to God, for  
ye - s' a - ka - so - za - thi hayi.  
Je - sus will nev - er say no.

### 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. Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

### Amen.

*Please be seated.*

## WORD

### First Reading

### Micah 6:1-8

Kay Finlon, lector

<sup>1</sup>Hear what the LORD says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. <sup>2</sup>Hear, you mountains, the case of the LORD, and you enduring foundations of the earth, for the LORD has a case against his people, and he will contend with Israel. <sup>3</sup>“O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me! <sup>4</sup>For I brought you up from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. <sup>5</sup>O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised, what Balaam son of Beor answered him, and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of the LORD.” <sup>6</sup>“With what shall I come before the LORD and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? <sup>7</sup>Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” <sup>8</sup>He has told you, O mortal, what is good, and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?

*The Word of the Lord*

### Thanks be to God

### Psalm 15

Jack Richardson, Kate Suchanek, cantors

Psalm 15:1 (Ronald Nelson) from *Psalter for Worship Year A*; © 2007 Augsburg Fortress



LORD, who may a - bide up - on your ho - ly hill?

<sup>1</sup> LORD, who may dwell in your | tabernacle? Who may abide upon your | holy hill? <sup>2</sup> Those who lead a blameless life and do | what is right, who speak the truth | from their heart; R <sup>3</sup> they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil | to their friends; they do not cast discredit up- | on a neighbor. <sup>4</sup> In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who | fear the LORD. They have sworn upon their health and do not take | back their word. <sup>5</sup> They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes a- | gainst the innocent. Those who do these things shall never be | overthrown. R

**Second Reading**

**1 Corinthians 1:18-31**

Kay Finlon, lector

<sup>18</sup> For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup> For it is written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.” <sup>20</sup> Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? <sup>21</sup> For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of the proclamation, to save those who believe. <sup>22</sup> For Jews ask for signs and Greeks desire wisdom, <sup>23</sup> but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles, <sup>24</sup> but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup> For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength. <sup>26</sup> Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. <sup>27</sup> But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; <sup>28</sup> God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to abolish things that are, <sup>29</sup> so that no one might boast in the presence of God. <sup>30</sup> In contrast, God is why you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, <sup>31</sup> in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

*The Word of the Lord*

**Thanks be to God**

*Please stand as able.*

**Gospel Acclamation**

“Alleluia, Lord to Whom Shall We Go”

from *Holy Communion Setting Three*

S 142a

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

**The Holy Gospel**

**Matthew 5:1-12**

*The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the 5th chapter.*

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup>And he began to speak and taught them, saying: <sup>3</sup>“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the

kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup>“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. <sup>5</sup>“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. <sup>6</sup>“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. <sup>7</sup>“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. <sup>8</sup>“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. <sup>9</sup>“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. <sup>10</sup>“Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>11</sup>“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Please be seated.*

**Sermon**

*“Strength in weakness”*

Pastor Timothy McKenzie

*Please stand as able.*

**Hymn of the Day**

“Build a Longer Table” ACS 1062 from *All Creation Sings*

NOEL NOUVELET

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944, © 1966 Hope Publishing Co.; Music: J. G. Wener, *Choralbuch*, 1815



1 Build a long - er ta - ble, not a high - er wall,  
 2 Build a saf - er ref - uge, not a larg - er jail;  
 3 Build a broad - er door - way, not a long - er fence.  
 4 When we lived as ex - iles, ref - u - gees a - broad,



feed - ing those who hun - ger, mak - ing room for all.  
 where the weak find shel - ter, mer - cy will not fail.  
 Love pro - tects all peo - ple, spar - ing no ex - pense.  
 Christ be - came our door - way to the reign of God.



Feast - ing to - geth - er, strang - er turns to friend,  
 For an - y place where jus - tice is de - nied,  
 When we em - brace com - pas - sion more than fear,  
 So must our ta - bles wel - come those who roam.



Christ breaks walls to piec - es; false di - vi - sions end.  
 Christ will breach the jail wall, free - ing all in - side.  
 Christ tears down our fenc - es; all are wel - come here.  
 None can be ex - clud - ed; all must find a home.

**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**

Pastor McKenzie, prayers

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

As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home. *A brief silence.*

God of wisdom, by the power of the Holy Spirit, renew all churches in every nation to do justice, love kindness, live humbly, and proclaim that in Jesus' cross there is righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. We pray for ministries everywhere of social justice, compassion, and peacemaking, that the world might hear and know of your steadfast love. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

God of creation, out of your wisdom you have created our earthly home and the universe in which we dwell. Preserve the earth during these cold days of winter so that new life might again to spring forth. Help us daily, and always, to care for this home that you have entrusted to us. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

God of righteousness, continue to raise up visionary leaders in all nations who work for the dignity and rights of their people and their neighbors, so that freedom is increased in this nation and in all nations. Protect educators, journalists, artists, and religious activists who are daily reviled for speaking your word of truth and love toward all people. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

God our healer, lift and save all who have been brought low by hatred and oppression, by addiction and despair, and by sickness and impending death. Give strength to all caregivers, counselors, and first responders that they might continue to be your hands of healing. Bless, heal, and sustain our church family and friends, especially, Bonnie Sauer, Sarah East, Phaedra & Scott Snow, Bill Bowden, Harry Kendrick, Kendal Turner, Rochelle Dagenhart, Janice Darnell, Pastor Glen Sea, Mark Barbee, Polly Needham, Mark Thornton, Tom Tolbert, 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 & Christopher Shirley, Eileen Dunlap, Dannye Olin Bragdon, Mindy Curley, Louisa & Oakley Coburn, Roxi Tolbert, Bill Schwartz, Arlene Fielding, David Kutscher, Danielle Clausen, Joseph Tolbert, and Jay Harbinson. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

God our advocate, through the prophets and now in Jesus you have called us to do justice, love kindness, and to walk humbly with you. Help us to give hope to all who suffer because of persecution, poverty,

discrimination, and war; and help us to be voices of hope for displaced families and orphaned children that they might know safety and welcome. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

God our strength, we remember with thanksgiving all the saints who walked blamelessly, did what is right, and spoke the truth. So lead us to walk blamelessly, not doing evil or heaping shame upon our neighbors, so that we might also reach your kingdom and dwell upon your holy hill forever. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus 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.**

*Please be seated.*

## MEAL

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

**Anthem** "How Bright Appears the Morning Star"  
Tune WIE SCHON LEUCHTET  
Setting for choir and organ by Johann Kuhnau

*How bright appears the Morning Star, with mercy beaming from afar; the host of heav'n rejoices; O Righteous Branch, O Jesse's Rod! You Son of Man and Son of God! We, too will lift our voices: Jesus, Jesus, holy, holy, yet most lowly, draw Thou near us; Great Emmanuel, come and hear us. Rejoice, you heav'ns; and earth, reply; with praise, all people, fill the sky, for this His Incarnation. Incarnate God, put forth Your pow'r, ride on, ride on, great Conqueror. Till all know your salvation. Amen, amen! Alleluia, alleluia! Praise be given evermore, by earth and heaven.*

*Please stand as able.*

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

"Blest Are They" ELW 728 stanzas one **BLEST ARE THEY**  
Text & Music: David Haaz, b. 1957, © 1985 GIA Publications, Inc.

1. Blest are they, the poor in spirit; theirs is the kingdom of God.  
Blest are they, full of sorrow; they shall be consoled.

*Refrain:* Rejoice and be glad! Blessed are you, holy are you!  
Rejoice and be glad! Yours is the kingdom of God!

### Offering Prayer

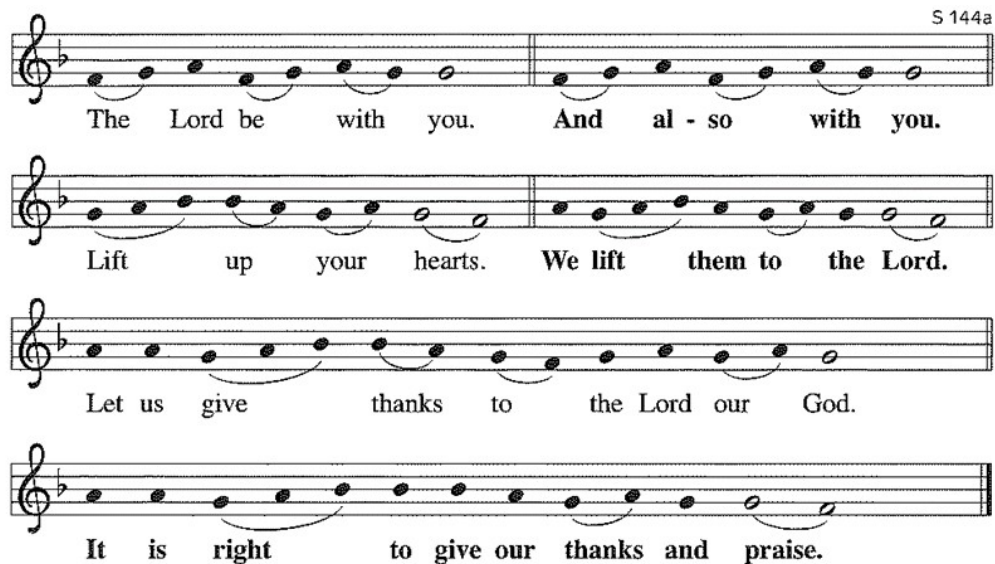
Let us pray. God of majesty, no eye has seen, no ear has heard what you have prepared for those who love you, yet in this meal you reveal the wideness of your mercy. Use what we have gathered to feed us with the reign of God come near, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**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.

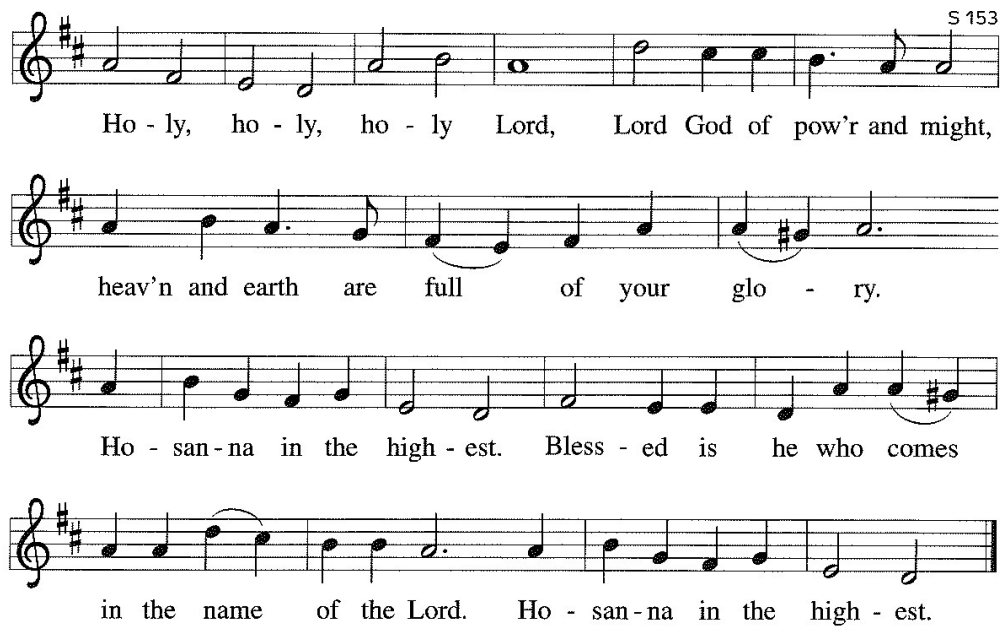
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

### 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.

#### 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

Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!  
 Come to the table; taste and see.

*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 *Holy Communion Setting Four*

S 154

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on  
 us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have  
 mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the  
 sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

“Prelude on ‘Light Shone in Darkness’”

Tune LUX IN TENEBRIS by Mark Sedio  
 Organ setting by Aaron David Miller

## Communion Hymn

## “Light Shone in Darkness” ELW 307

LUX IN TENEBRIS

Text : Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939 © 2001, 2003 GIA Publications, Inc.; Music: Mark Desio, b. 1954 © 2003 Augsburg Fortress



1 Light shone in dark - ness at the world's cre - a - tion,  
2 Light shone in dark - ness at the new cre - a - tion;  
3 Light shines in dark - ness till the full cre - a - tion;



bath - ing in beau - ty na - ture's rev - e - la - tion. All that has be - ing,  
Christ rose in glo - ry, won for us sal - va - tion. Sing, earth and heav - en,  
Christ's bod - y, groan - ing, suf - fers trib - u - la - tion, longs for God's jus - tice,



cry in ad - o - ra - tion, “Praise for the light. A - men!”  
hymns of ju - bi - la - tion, praise for the light. A - men!  
glob - al trans - for - ma - tion, prays for the light. A - men!

*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. Radiant God, we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. In the sacrament of his body and blood you have drawn us to your heart. Send us from this table with delight, that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love, and bear witness to all we have seen and heard, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## SENDING

### Sending Blessing

May the triune God,  
who has put a new song in your mouth  
and tuned your heart for praise  
✠ bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

### Recessional Hymn

## “To Be Your Presence” ELW 546

ENGELBERG

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939 © 2000, 2003 GIA Publications, Inc; Music: Charles V. Stanford, 1852-1924

1. To be your presence is our mission here, to show compassion's face  
and list'ning ear, to be your heart of mercy ever near, alleluia!
2. To be your presence is our mission bold, to feed the poor and shelter  
homeless cold, to be your hands of justice, right uphold, alleluia!
3. To be your presence is our mission blest, to speak for all the broken  
and oppressed, to be your voice of hope, you love expressed, alleluia!

4. We are your heart, O Christ, your hands and voice, to serve your people  
is our call and choice, and in this mission we, the church, rejoice, alleluia!

## DISMISSAL

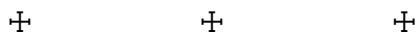
Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.

**Thanks be to God.**

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

**Postlude** "Toccata" from *Partita on 'O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright'*

Michael Burkhardt



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**Worship Leaders:** Pastor Timothy McKenzie (prayers); Pastor Alexandra Joy Rode; crucifer/acolyte: Needed; lector: Kay Finlon; live streaming camera: A.J. Pridgen; soundboard: Alan Harms; ushers: John Simon, Mike Doyne, Jay Jacob, Larry Lippert, Jim Metze, Michael Thompson; greeters: Susan Lakeman, Dawn Schwartz; communion assistants: Bonnie Eckerd, Nick Wartner, Betsy Wenzel, Kimberly Zimmerman; communion helper: Sandy Rach; tabulators : Joe Barrett, Kevin Feezor, Charles Lakeman; musicians: St. Mark's Choir; Kate Suchanek, Jack Richardson, cantors; Lester Ackerman, Director of Music Ministry and Organist

**Next Sunday Leaders:** prayer assistant: Larry Dagenhart, Jr.; crucifer/acolyte: Needed; lector: TBD; live streaming camera: Ron Wenzel; soundboard: Bob Chernet; ushers: Team A; greeters: Neil & Charlotte Dixon, Ted Seman, David Thomason; communion assistants: Karen & Kevin Feezor, Janice Miller, John Simon; communion helper: Catherine Metze; tabulators : Joe Barrett, Kevin Feezor

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## *Parish News*

### **From the Pastor -**

"God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Corinthians 1:9)

The season of Epiphany is four to nine weeks (depending on the date of Easter), lasting from the Feast of Epiphany (January 6) through the day before Ash Wednesday (this year, February 18). The season of Epiphany as a whole focuses upon the humanity and the divinity of Jesus Christ. At Epiphany, Jesus' birth is announced through the Magi to the nations, and the season continues to witness to the beginning of Jesus' ministry, his baptism, the calling of his disciples, and his proclamation of the good news. The focus of this season is ever outward toward the world and all nations, hinting at the scope of our proclamation and work as modern-day Christians. On the final Sunday of this season, The Transfiguration (February 15), we see

the fullness of Christ's divinity revealed in his humanity, again hinting at the gift of his Spirit which dwells in us. Epiphany is a season in which we respond in faith and service to Jesus Christ, as his contemporary day disciples and messengers, always moving ever outward with faith active in love.

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

### *Coming Up at St. Mark's*

#### **Worship and Congregational Life**

**Annual Meeting** has been moved to Sunday, 2/15 following the 10:30 am service (Only one service)

**Bach Charlotte Winterfest: Feb. 1 at St. Mark's featuring Les Ackerman's organ recital!** Our first-ever WinterFest brings together the extraordinary musicians of Bach Charlotte for an unforgettable week of music-making. **St. Mark's members tickets are half off at the door.**

**Souper Bowl of Caring 2026** Help “Tackle Hunger” in our community by donating non-perishable food items (no glass) for the hungry in our community, through Sunday 2/8.

**Folk singer, HoSoVoSo**, 2/8 3pm. In the Choir Room. All are welcome.

**Love Circle** will meet Wednesday, 2/11 at 11 am, Large Conference room. Join us!


**The John Graham Memorial Service** will be Saturday, February 14 at 1 pm. Music will begin at 12:30. A time of Visitation will take place, 12 pm - 1 pm, and a Reception will follow the service.

**Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper** On 2/17 Congregational Life will host a pancake supper at 6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. We invite you to join us for a fun evening as we celebrate the last day before Lent starts. Please sign up on the Sign Up Genius link (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0D4DAFAB23A6F49-61747917-shrove>) or call the church office to register. The menu will include pancakes, bacon, fruit salad, and juice. There will be a gluten free option. We ask that you sign up on the provided link and check the “Gluten Free” box if you need this option. There is no charge, and all are welcome. We hope to see you there!

**2/18 Ash Wednesday Services** 12:15 and 7 pm. (7 pm streamed live). Lent begins.

**Lenten Midweek Prayer** on Wednesdays at 7 pm. Series theme: “Holy Conversations with Jesus”.

**2026 Offering Envelopes** are in the office. If you have not gotten yours, please call or stop by.

**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 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** There is a need for paper handled grocery bags used to transport food from the baker's rack to Nourish Up. If you have bags to spare, please take them to the mail room and leave them in the corner to the left as you come in.

**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

**"Build a Longer Table"** ACS 1062 This hymn comes to us from *All Creation Sings* (Augsburg Fortress, 2020) where it is included in the "Justice, Peace" section, though also listed in the topical index under "Hunger." David Bjorlin (b. 1984), a native of Duluth, Minnesota, wrote this hymn in 2017 inspired by a proposed collection of new hymns by the Hymn Society entitled *Singing Welcome: Hymns and Songs of Hospitality to Refugees and Immigrants*. Bjorlin writes about an early usage of his hymn: "Our pastor planned to preach about hunger and noted that this hymn seemed more about justice than hunger--longer tables, not walls; safe refuges with justice, not jails; doorways, not fences." Bjorlin paired his hymn with the French Christmas carol **NOEL NOUVELET**, the name of this tune being the first line of the seventh century carol. Additionally, ELW #379 pairs this tune with the Easter text "Now the Green Blade Rises."

**"Light Shone in Darkness"** ELW 307 text by Delores Dufner (b.1939) and tune **LUX IN TENEBRIS** by Mark Sedio (b.1954). Mark Sedio says of this contemporary late twentieth century hymn: "I was taken by the rather declamatory character of the first two stanzas--the first focusing on creation, the second on salvation, and the third morphing into a more eschatological forward-looking sense, all three ending curtly with the phrase 'praise (prays) for the light. Amen!'" This is only the fourth time we have sung this hymn, last sung in worship February 2020.

**"Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart"** ELW 873 This hymn was written as a processional hymn for a choir festival in Peterborough Cathedral, Cambridgeshire, England, in May of 1865. It originally contained eleven stanzas, necessary to get all the choirs in! Written by Edward H. Plumptre (1821-1891), an ordained Anglican priest, teacher, theologian, scholar and writer, this hymn was first published in *Lazarus and Other Poems* (London, 1865). It is based on Psalm 20:4, Psalm 147:1, and Philippians 4:4, and it is a call for everyone to rejoice in the present, in the future, and in the life to come. Arthur H. Messiter (1834-1916) wrote **MARION** for this hymn in 1883. Messiter was born in England, but moved to the United States, and eventually became organist and choirmaster at Trinity Episcopal Church in New York City.

## *This Week: From the Lutheran Church Calendar*

### **February 2, The Presentation of Our Lord**

Forty days after the birth of Christ we mark the day Mary and Joseph presented him in the temple in accordance with Jewish law. There a prophet named Anna began to speak of the redemption of Israel when she saw the young child. Simeon also greeted Mary and Joseph. He responded to the presence of the consolation of Israel in this child and his words have become the "*Nunc dimittis*" ("Now you dismiss") sung after Holy Communion, describing Jesus as "light for the nations."

### **February 3, Ansgar, Bishop of Hamburg, missionary to Denmark and Sweden (801-865)**

"The Apostle of the North," Ansgar was a monk who led a mission to Denmark and later to Sweden, where he built the first Christian church. His work ran into difficulties with the rulers of the day, and he was forced to withdraw into Germany. In 832 he was appointed bishop of Hamburg, and in 848 of Bremen. In 852 Ansgar returned to Birka in Sweden and worked to establish good relations with King Olaf I. He later helped consecrate the first bishop of Sweden, Gautbert.

### **February 5, The Twenty-Six Martyrs of Japan, died 1597**

The "Twenty-Six Martyrs of Japan" were crucified on this date for their Christian faith by the feudal government of Japan on Nishizaka, a hill in Nagasaki. Earlier in 1549, Jesuit missionaries, led by Francis Xavier, introduced Christianity to Japan. However, rivalry between Jesuits and other monastic orders led to tension with the feudal government. Coupled with the tensions of trade and diplomacy between Japan, Portugal and Spain, Christianity was outlawed in 1614 and expelled from Japan beginning in 1633 with a series of expulsion edicts. The martyrs included twenty Japanese Christians and six foreign Christians, both lay and ordained. They are remembered on this date in Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Lutheran churches. The edict against Christianity was finally lifted in 1872 due to diplomatic pressure by western governments.

## St. Mark's Prayer List

Bonnie Sauer, Sarah East, Phaedra & Scott Snow, Bill Bowden, Harry Kendrick, Kendal Turner, Rochelle Dagenhart, Janice Darnell, Pastor Glen Sea, Mark Barbee, Mark Thornton, Polly Needham, Tom Tolbert, 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 & Christopher Shirley, Eileen Dunlap, Dannye Olin Bragdon, Mindy Curley, Louisa & 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](mailto:pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org))

### Readings for 2/8/2026 Fifth

#### Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 58:1-12

Psalms 112:1-9

1 Corinthians 2:1-12

Matthew 5:13-20

### Birthdays

2/3 Scott Howarth

2/3 Charles Lakeman

2/6 Charlotte Dixon



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))

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## Our Ministers

All the people of God at St. Mark's

**Rev. Dr. Timothy McKenzie, Senior Pastor**

[pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org)

**Rev. Alexandra Joy Rode, Associate Pastor  
for Family Ministry**

[pastorali@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:pastorali@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)

**Elaine Johnson, Finance Administrator**

[finance@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:finance@saintmarkscharlotte.org)

St. Mark's Lutheran Church  
1001 Queens Road, Charlotte, NC 28207 | [saintmarkscharlotte.org](http://saintmarkscharlotte.org) | 704.375.9185