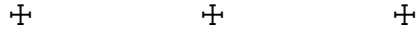




ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Our Mission

*Growing Disciples - Making Christ Known*



FEBRUARY 22, 2026

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

10:30 AM SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

*Today's gospel tells of Jesus' temptation in the desert. His forty-day fast is the basis of our forty-day Lenten pilgrimage. During Lent, we struggle and wrestle with times of temptation and wilderness in our own lives. On Sundays during Lent, hungry for God's mercy, we break the fast and receive the bread of life to nourish us for the days ahead.*

GATHERING

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

**Prelude**

“Elegy in B-flat”

George T. Thalben-Ball

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

**Processional Hymn**

“Eternal Lord of Love, Behold Your Church” ELW 321

OLD 124TH

Text: Thomas H. Cain, 1931-2003; Music: Trente quatre psaumes de David, Geneva 1551; Text ©Thomas H. Cain

1. Eternal Lord of love, behold your church  
walking once more the pilgrim way of Lent,  
led by your cloud by day, by night your fire,  
moved by your love and toward your presence bent:  
far off yet here—the goal of all desire.
2. So daily dying to the way of self,  
so daily living in your way of love,  
we walk the road, Lord Jesus, that you trod,  
knowing ourselves baptized into your death:  
so we are dead and live with you in God.
3. If dead in you, so in you we arise,  
you the firstborn of all the faithful dead;  
and as through stony ground the green shoots break,  
glorious in springtime dress of leaf and flow'r,  
so into life and glory shall we wake.

*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, † one God,  
who forgives all our sin,  
whose mercy endures forever.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Most merciful God,

**We confess that we are captive to sin  
and cannot free ourselves.**

**We have sinned against you in thought,  
word, and deed, by what we have done  
and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.  
for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us.**

**Forgive us renew us, and lead us,  
so that we may delight in your will  
and walk in your ways  
to the glory of your holy name.**

**Amen.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us  
even when we were dead in sin,  
and made us alive together in Christ.

By grace you have been saved.

In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

Almighty God strengthen you with power  
through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may  
live in your hearts through faith.

**Amen.**

**Kyrie**

“Savior, When in Dust to You” ELW 601 stanza one

ABERYSTWYTH

Text: Robert Grant, 1779-1838, alt.; Music: Joseph Parry, 1841-1903

1 Sav-ior, when in dust to you low we bow in hom-age due;  
when, re - pen - tant, to the skies scarce we lift our weep-ing eyes;  
oh, by all your pains and woe suf-fered once for us be - low.



bend-ing from your throne on high, hear our pen - i - ten - tial cry!

**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. Lord God, our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages withing and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us through your Son, 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**

**Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7**

Karen Feezor, lector

<sup>15</sup>The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. <sup>16</sup>And the LORD God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, <sup>17</sup>but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.” Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’” <sup>2</sup>The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup>but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’” <sup>4</sup>But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die, <sup>5</sup>for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” <sup>6</sup>So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. <sup>7</sup>Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves

*The Word of the Lord*

**Thanks be to God**

**Psalm 32**

Nick Matherly, Amy Woodall, cantors

Psalm 32:10 (May Schwartz) from *Psalter for Worship Year A*; © 2007 Augsburg Fortress



Mer-cy em - brac - es those who trust in the LORD.

*Happy are they whose transgressions | are forgiven, and whose sin is | put away! <sup>2</sup>Happy are they to whom the LORD im- | putes no guilt, and in whose spirit there | is no guile! <sup>3</sup>While I held my tongue, my bones with- | ered away, because of my groaning | all day long. <sup>4</sup>For your hand was heavy upon me | day and night; my moisture was dried up as in the | heat of*

summer. R <sup>5</sup>Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not con- | ceal my guilt. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." Then you forgave me the guilt | of my sin. <sup>6</sup>Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in | time of trouble; when the great waters overflow, they | shall not reach them. <sup>7</sup>You are my hiding-place; you preserve | me from trouble; you surround me with shouts | of deliverance. R <sup>8</sup>"I will instruct you and teach you in the way that | you should go; I will guide you | with my eye. <sup>9</sup>Do not be like horse or mule, which have no | understanding; who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will | not stay near you." <sup>10</sup>Great are the tribulations | of the wicked; but mercy embraces those who trust | in the LORD. <sup>11</sup>Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice | in the LORD; shout for joy, all who are | true of heart. R

**Second Reading**

**Romans 5:12-19**

Karen Feezor, lector

<sup>12</sup>Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned— <sup>13</sup>for sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. <sup>14</sup>Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin in the likeness of Adam, who is a pattern of the one who was to come. <sup>15</sup>But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. <sup>16</sup>And the gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the gift following many trespasses brings justification. <sup>17</sup>If, because of the one man's trespass, death reigned through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup>Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. <sup>19</sup>For just as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so through the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

*The Word of the Lord*

**Thanks be to God**

*Please stand as able.*

**Gospel Acclamation** "Return to the Lord, Your God" from *Holy Communion Setting Four*

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and mer - ci - ful,  
 slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

**The Holy Gospel**

**Matthew 4:1-11**

*The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the 4th chapter.*

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. <sup>2</sup>He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. <sup>3</sup>The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." <sup>4</sup>But he answered, "It is written, 'One does

not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”<sup>5</sup> Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple,<sup>6</sup> saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’”<sup>7</sup> Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”<sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory,<sup>9</sup> and he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.”<sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’”<sup>11</sup> Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Please be seated.*

**Sermon**

*“Times of wilderness, times of testing”*

Pastor Timothy McKenzie

*Please stand as able.*

**Hymn of the Day**

“When We Are Tested” ACS 922 from *All Creation Sings*

SLANE

Text: Sarum, 15th cent.; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-1866, alt.; Music: English ballad, 15th cent.



1 When we are test - ed and wres - tle a - lone,  
 2 When in the des - ert we cry for re - lief,  
 3 When we are tempt - ed to bar - ter our souls,  
 4 When we have strug - gled and searched through the night,



fam - ished for bread when the world of - fers stone,  
 plead - ing for paths marked by cer - tain be - lief,  
 trad - ing the truth for the pow'r to con - trol,  
 sort - ing and sift - ing the wrong from the right,



nour - ish us, God, by your word and your way,  
 lift us to love you be - yond sign and test,  
 teach us to wor - ship and praise on - ly you,  
 Sav - ior, sur - round us with cir - cles of care,



food that sus - tains us by night and by day.  
 trust - ing your pres - ence, our on - ly true rest.  
 seek - ing your will in the work that we do.  
 an - gels of heal - ing, of hope, and of prayer.

## 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.*

Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

*A brief silence.*

God of all grace, in the wilderness of the world, grant faith to your church and give to all the baptized strength to resist temptation and the will to worship and serve you alone. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

God of all creation, continue to bless and sustain Earth, our home, and its human communities and natural habitats. Where human greed and self-centered interest threaten creation, guide us by your Spirit to advocate for responsible polices and protections so that the Earth and all that has life might continue to prosper. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

God of all nations, bless and preserve the kingdoms of this world that they might offer their glory and gifts to you. Guide the leaders of this nation and all nations onto right paths for your name's sake so that peace might replace violence and war, and welcome and inclusion replace racism and oppression. Merciful God,  
**receive our prayer.**

God of all healing, bring wholeness to all who are sick; strengthen the dying with the hope of eternal life in you; and sustain all caregivers with compassion and wisdom. Bless and heal our church family and friends, especially, James Watson, 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 of all people, provide for the needs of the wider community around our church. For any who hunger for bread, may we give nourishment; for any who need shelter, may we give warmth and safety. Bless this congregation to continue to be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ to others. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God of all life, we thank you for the free gift of grace in Jesus, and humbly ask that you would hold us all the days of our lives in your grace as we love and serve you and our neighbors. And at the last, O Lord, welcome us into your eternal kingdom. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.  
**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** “A Passiontide Carol” Philip Ledger

*Sweet the moments, rich in blessing, which before the cross I spend, life and health and peace possessing, from the sinners’ dying Friend. For thy sorrows we adore Thee, for the pains that wrought out peace, gracious Saviour we implore thee, in our souls Thy love increase. Here I find my hope of heaven, while upon the Lamb I gaze: loving much, and much forgiven, let my heart o’erflow in praise. Lord, in ceaseless contemplation, fix our hearts and eyes on Thee, till we taste Thy full salvation, and thine unveil’d glory see, Thy glory see.*

*Please stand as able.*

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

“Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God” ELW 188

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with your free Spirit.

### **Offering Prayer**

Let us pray. O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus’ name.

**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.

Detailed description: This block contains four staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, consisting of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are printed below each staff, with hyphens indicating syllables across notes. The first staff ends with a double bar line, and the second staff begins with a repeat sign.

## Proper Preface

### Sanctus

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

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

Detailed description: This block contains six staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is more rhythmic and varied than the Thanksgiving piece, featuring eighth and sixteenth notes. The lyrics are printed below each staff, with hyphens indicating syllables across notes. The first staff ends with a double bar line, and the second staff begins with a repeat sign.

## 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

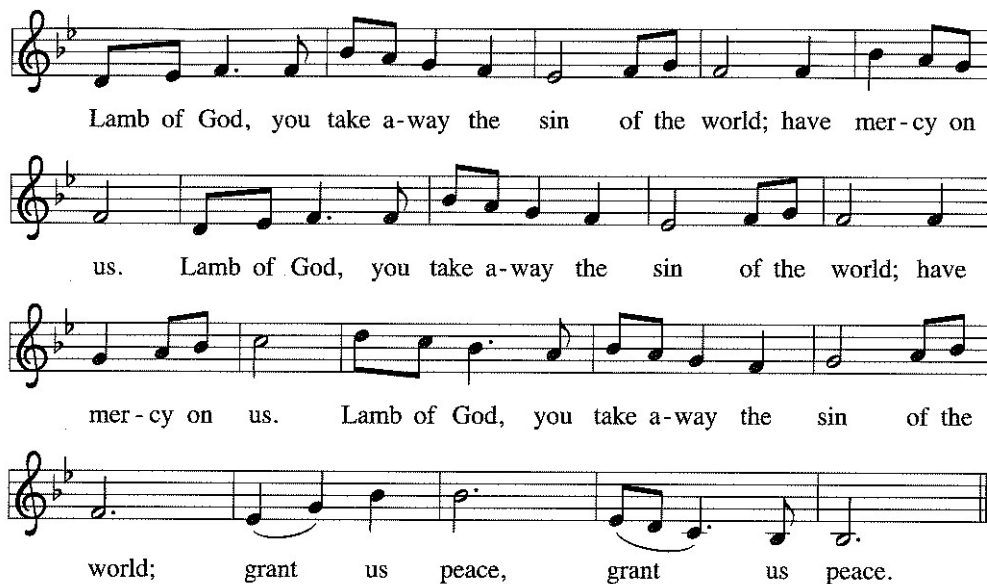
Come to the table.  
Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

*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 Twelve*



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.

“Improvisation on ‘When We Are Tested’”

Traditional Irish tune SLANE; Piano setting by Bob Kauflin

**Communion Hymn**

“I Want Jesus to Walk with Me” ELW 325

SOJOURNER

Text & Music: African American spiritual; Music arr. hymnal version; Arr. © 2006 Augsburg Fortress

- 1 I want Jesus to walk with me;  
I want Jesus to walk with me;  
all along my pilgrim journey,  
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.
2. In my trials, Lord, walk with me;  
in my trials, Lord, walk with me;  
when my heart is almost breaking,  
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.
3. When I’m in trouble, Lord, walk with me;  
when I’m in trouble, Lord, walk with me;  
when my head is bowed in sorrow,  
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.

*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. God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ’s body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

SENDING

**Sending Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

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

**Amen.**

**Recessional Hymn**

“The Glory of These Forty Days” ELW 320

ERHALT UNS, HERR

Text: Latin hymn, 11<sup>th</sup> cent.; tr. Maurice F. Bell, 1862-1947, alt. Music: J. Klug, *Geistliche Lieder*, 1543 Text Oxford University Press

1. The glory of these forty days we celebrate with songs of praise;  
for Christ, through whom all things were made, himself has fasted and has prayed.
2. Alone and fasting Moses saw the loving God who gave the law;  
and to Elijah, fasting, came the steeds and chariots of flame.

3. So Daniel trained his mystic sight, delivered from the lion's might;  
and John, the Bridegroom's friend, became the herald of Messiah's name.
4. Then grant, O God, that we may, too, return in fast and prayer to you.  
Our spirits strengthen with your grace, and give us joy to see your face.

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

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

## Postlude

“Kyrie, God, Holy Spirit” BWV 671

Johann Sebastian Bach



This service adapted/reprinted from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, copyright 2019 Augsburg Fortress and *Sundays and Seasons*, copyright 2020 Augsburg Fortress. CCLI #11377824

**Worship Leaders:** Pastor Timothy McKenzie (prayers); Pastor Alexandra Joy Rode; crucifer/acolyte: Needed; lector: Karen Feezor; live streaming camera: Joe Barrett; soundboard: John Brumbaugh; ushers: John Simon, Mike Doyne, Jay Jacob, Larry Lippert, Jim Metze, Michael Thompson; greeters: Evelyn Gerdes; communion assistants: Barbara Baker, Andrew Puky, Chris Stevenson, Betsy Wenzel; communion helper: Sandy Rach; tabulators : Karen Feezor, Janice Miller, Dwan Schwartz; musicians: St. Mark's Choir; Nick Matherly, Amy Woodall, cantors; Lester Ackerman, Director of Music Ministry and Organist

**Next Sunday Leaders:** prayer assistant: Melissa Smith; crucifer/acolyte: Needed; lector: Flora Chance; live streaming camera: Joe Barrett; soundboard: Kevin Feezor; ushers: Team A; greeters: Eddie & Carol Goodall, Tara & Michael Thompson; communion assistants: Charles & Susan Lakeman, Andrea Long, Tom Puky; communion helper: TBD; tabulators : Susan League, Charles Lakeman

**From the Pastor -**

"If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." (Matthew 16:24)

Lent is the forty-day journey of renewal in discipleship to Jesus, who calls us daily to self-denial and the way of the cross. Jesus' words about self-denial invite us to examine ourselves in the most profound way. Who is this person I think I am? Who is this "self" I think I know well, yet remains elusive? The Lenten journey of forty days is an invitation to see and understand ourselves on the way of the cross that Jesus walks. To follow Jesus is not the work of a single day, or even forty days; it is the discipleship of a lifetime. Lent provides an opportunity to sharpen our focus upon Jesus and his suffering love, so that freed from self-centered desires, we might live more fully for Jesus in service to others. This Lent may you rediscover his renewing grace and may we serve him in our life together at St. Mark's.

In the fellowship of Christ,  
Senior Pastor Tim McKenzie  
pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org

*Coming Up at St. Mark's*

**Worship and Congregational Life**

**Altar Flowers Today** are given in celebration of the birthday of Charles Lakeman on January 3 by his family, Susan, Jonathan and Michael.

**Souper Bowl of Caring 2026** extended through today. Thank you for your help "Tackling Hunger" by donating non-perishable food items (no glass) for the hungry in our community!

**Family Ministry Committee today** at 12 noon in the Small Conference Room.

**Room in the Inn:** This Tuesday is the last RITI for the year. Thank you to all who have volunteered for this ministry!

**Lenten Schedule**

Lenten Wednesday Suppers, 6 pm-6:45 in the Fellowship Hall, beginning 2/25.


**2/25 meal** provided by St. Mark's Council.

Lenten Midweek Prayer, 7 pm (in-person and online), beginning 2/25. Make Lent a time of prayerful renewal.

**Carolina Pro Musica Concert Friday 7:30 PM "An Italian Souvenir"** Half price tickets for SMLC using code StMarksHO at <https://www.carolinapromusica.org/schedule>

**LENTEN BOX OFFERINGS:** Lenten boxes will be in the Gathering Place today along with a letter noting that our donations will help support NAMI Charlotte (National Alliance on Mental Illness). Please construct it with your name on it and put it in a visible location to remind you daily of Jesus' sacrifice for you. We will not accept coins but will accept bills or simply a check made out to St. Mark's. Donations can also be made online. Please return your boxes by Easter.

**The St. Mark's Book Study Group's** Thursday, February 26, at 10 am in the large conference room and via Zoom. Our selection for this month is *The Healing Season of Pottery* by Yeon Somin. Often compared to other "comfort" reads, this story is a cozy Korean novel about a burned-out TV writer, Jungmin, who quits her job and finds healing and community at a pottery studio in Seoul. The book follows her journey as she slowly rebuilds her life, learns to work with clay, and forms new friendships, all while exploring themes of self-discovery, slowing down, and finding balance in a fast-paced world. Everyone can benefit from the ideas expressed in this story. All are welcome to participate. Please contact Kay Sehorn or Judy Tolbert for more information.

**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 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**

**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: Thursdays at 6:30 pm; Fridays women only at 6 pm & Saturday mornings 10:30 am.

## Music Notes

**"When We Are Tested"** ACS 922 Our Hymn of the Day comes to us from the new collection of songs and hymns *All Creation Sings* (2020). Ruth Duck (b.1947) an American writer, liturgical theologian and ordained United Church of Christ pastor, was asked to write a hymn that told the story of Jesus' forty days in the wilderness. It is included in her book *The Poetry of Grace* (2015). Duck's hymn is paired nicely with the familiar Irish tune **SLANE**, which is named for the hill where Saint Patrick is said to have defied the king by lighting the new fire at the Easter Vigil. This tune appears two times in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (2006) ELW 793 "Be Thou My Vision" and ELW 765 "Lord of All Hopefulness"

**"I Want Jesus to Walk with Me"** ELW 325 This hymn is usually classified as an African American spiritual in most hymnals and songbooks, though some call it "an American folk hymn" one of the many "white spirituals" which thrived for more than two hundred years in the rural Appalachian culture. Hence, we do not know it's author. Paul Westermeyer says of this hymn: "the double entendre of these spirituals means the faith expressed in them is more multivalent and profound than what may appear on the surface. For example, this one may look like a request for Jesus to walk along the pilgrim journey. Though it is that, what makes it authentic and possible for the people is what lies behind it, an affirmation that the Jesus of their salvation is with those who sing." This tune **SOJOURNER** has no refrain, which is uncharacteristic of most African American tunes, and has more in common with an English/Welsh folk tune, probably brought to America by early settlers. The tune is named for Sojourner Truth (1797-1883) a slave, who after escaping, preached, sang, and advocated for women's rights and abolition. She met Harriet Beecher Stowe and President Abraham Lincoln..

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

### **February 23, Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, martyr (69-155)**

Polycarp was a link between the apostolic age and the church at the end of the second century. He is said to have been known by John, the author of Revelation, and was known by Irenaeus, bishop of Lyon in France. As the age of eighty-six he was martyred for his faith. Urged to save his life and renounce his faith, Polycarp replied, "Eighty-six years I have served him, and he never did me any wrong. How can I blaspheme my King who saved me?" Polycarp was burned at the stake, his death a testimony to the cost of following Christ. Ignatius of Antioch, who was also martyred (c.110), wrote to Polycarp, "Stand firm like an anvil being struck by a hammer. It is the mark of a great athlete to be bruised, yet still conquer. Wait for him who is above time: the Eternal, the Invisible, who for our sake became visible; the Intangible, the Un suffering, who for our sake suffered, who for our sake endured in every way."

### **February 25, Elizabeth Fedde, deaconess (1850-1921)**

Fedde was born in Norway and trained as a deaconess. In 1882, at the age of thirty-two, she was asked to come to New York to minister to the poor and to Norwegian seamen. She founded the Norwegian Relief Society to work among immigrants. Her influence was wide-ranging, and she established the Deaconess House in Brooklyn to train women as deaconesses, which eventually became NYU Lutheran Medical Center. Fedde founded the Deaconess House and Hospital of the Lutheran Free Church in Minneapolis, and helped plan hospitals in Chicago and North Dakota.

## St. Mark's Prayer List

James Watson, 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 3/1/2026

#### Second Sunday in Lent

Genesis 12:1-4a

Psalm 121

Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

John 3:1-17

### Birthdays

2/23 Judy Tolbert

2/24 Alice Blackwelder

2/25 Donnie Eckerd

2/26 Cynthia Little



*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**

[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**