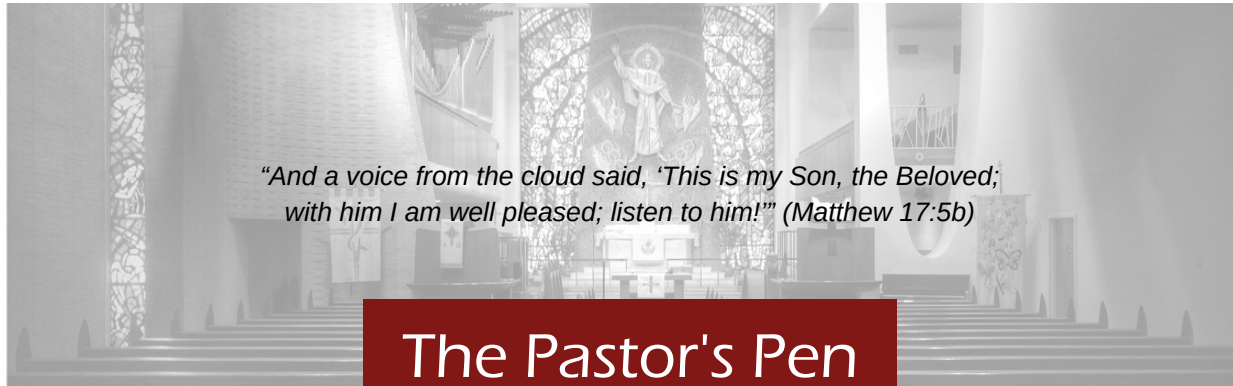


ReMarks

February 2026

St. Mark's Lutheran Church



Dear Friends in Christ,

Nothing reveals the mystery of the Incarnation like the Transfiguration of Jesus. This moment revealing Jesus' divinity hidden in his humanity certainly made an impression upon Peter. Years later, reflecting upon what he saw and heard that day, Peter wrote, "no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (2 Peter 1:21). Peter knew he had heard God's prophetic voice, and years later, that voice now dwelt in him.

Peter's voice encourages us, saying, "You will do well to pay attention to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place." Through Peter, and the voices of many other faithful people you have known, the morning star of God continues to rise in your heart. As God spoke through them, God now speaks through you. This is the work of the Holy Spirit.

The voice heard by Peter on the holy mountain said, "Listen to him!" In my experience, only Jesus' voice calms the troubled heart, lights the darkness, and forgives us our sins. Yet how many other voices do we hear each day, each offering some sort of "salvation" – nationalistic, economic, cultural – relentlessly seeking a place in our hearts. The screens through which we see and hear these voices, exert great power over us. To silence them requires discipline for this technology is addictive, driven by algorithms that monetize your clicks, likes, and movements. Only his voice comes into your heart, not to monetize, but to free you.

Let's be honest: the screens we spend so much time in front of are simply tools. They are never a substitute for his voice. Only in turning off our technology and seeking moments of prayerful solitude, do we know a power that lights the darkness, filling us with purpose and hope. Jesus' voice needs no wi-fi, social media, clicks or "likes." Rather, he calls you to leave yourself behind, follow him, and discover his kingdom within you. Whose voice do you follow each day? Whose voice lights the darkness, transforming you to shine with his light?

This month is an important time of the church year. After Transfiguration Sunday, Lent begins on Ash Wednesday (February 18). This Lent, there are opportunities for fellowship as well as prayerful solitude at St. Mark's. Join us on Shrove Tuesday for a Pancake Supper and pick up a copy of this year's Lenten devotional book. Join us for Wednesday Lenten Suppers at 6 pm and stay for Midweek Prayer (7 pm, in-person and online). Listen for his voice. He is always with you.

In the fellowship of the gospel,
Pastor Timothy McKenzie

1001 Queens Road, Charlotte, NC 28207 | 704.375.9185 | stmarkscharlotte.org

March 2026 ReMarks deadline is 2/16/2026

Email articles/pictures to admin@saintmarkscharlotte.org

January Council Highlights

St. Mark's Congregation Council Meeting Summary

January Council Meeting Recap

Date: January 12, 2026

Meeting Start: 7:10 PM ET

The meeting opened with a welcome to Pastor Ali at her first council meeting, along with greetings to new members. Pastor Ali led the opening prayer.

Devotion & Minutes

Virginia Molan led the devotional. Minutes from the December 2025 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Financial Updates

Andrea Long reported that the church ended 2025 with a net-positive budget.

Charles Lakeman and Cliff Edahl presented a recommended balanced budget for 2026, which will be brought to the congregation for approval at the annual meeting.

Cliff also shared an update on financing for the fellowship hall and courtyard renovation projects.

Pastors' Reports

- Pastor Tim highlighted Pastor Ali's installation, upcoming music events, and offered thanksgiving for the lives of John Graham (1/10/26) and Pat Fox (1/11/26).
- Pastor Ali shared updates including gatherings with young adults, refreshed Instagram and Facebook pages with increased engagement, her hospice care support for John Graham, sending handwritten notes to families, and her gratitude for preaching four times in the past month.

Council President Report

Tom Puky delivered his first report as council president, reaffirming the church's mission and strategic goals. Council reviewed all church committees and updated liaisons and chair assignments.

The meeting concluded with a reminder of the Annual Congregational Meeting on January 25 and expressions of gratitude for the new year ahead.

Motions Approved

- 2026 budget recommended for congregational approval — Passed unanimously.
- Finance Committee authorization to seek funding from Men in Mission for fellowship hall and courtyard projects — Passed unanimously.

Submitted by Virginia Molan, Council Secretary

2026 Committee Chairs and Liaisons

Committee	Chair	Liaison
Christian Education	vacant	Bonnie Eckerd
Communication/Outreach	Sue Wadgyamar	Pastor Tim McKenzie
Congregational Life	Jane McCall	Kimberly Zimmerman
Family Ministry	Pastor Ali	Andrew Puky
Finance	Cliff Edahl	Andrea Long
Gifts, Memorials, Endowment	Jay Jacob	John Simon
Personnel	Marc Ginns	Tom Puky
Property	Genna Hurley	John Simon
Social Ministry	Susan Ginns	Betsy Wenzel
Stewardship	Melissa Smith	Andrea Long
Partnerships	Cliff Edahl	Tom Puky
Worship & Music	Kevin Feezor	Charles Lakeman

Around St. Mark's

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

Installation of Pastor Ali Rode January 11



Rev. Alexandra Joy Rode was installed as the Associate Pastor for Family Ministry by Rev. Adrienne Ladd, Dean of the Conference, and Bishop Emily Hartner preached. Pastor Ali presided at the Eucharist and the service was followed by a reception. A number of local clergy colleagues attended, and other special guests included her parents, Marilyn and Allen Wood; Bishop Gregory Palmer (ret.) who ordained her; and Rev. Dr. Dan Pezet, Superintendent and Missional Strategist for the Metro District, who represented the United Methodist Church. May God bless Pastor Ali's ministry with us!



Around St. Mark's

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

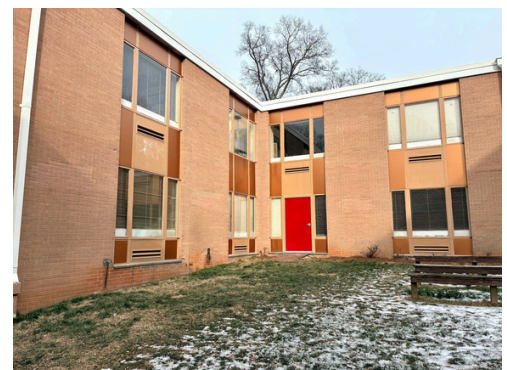
Fellowship Hall and Courtyard Updates



The renovation of the Fellowship Hall has continued with the refinishing of the Fellowship Hall doors by Graves Furniture. The doors have been stained to coordinate with the planned flooring color. Thank you to Layton Campbell for coordinating with Graves Furniture and to Clayton Payne for removing and reinstalling the doors with new hinges.



The Inner Courtyard renovation also has taken a step toward completion with bronze colored aluminum spandrel panels installed that contrast with the tan window frames. These panels have 1" insulfoam panels underneath to improve thermal protection. This color scheme is said to match the look of the courtyard when the building was dedicated in 1960.



Around St. Mark's

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

St. Mark's Men's Group



The Men's Group met on 1/10 and accomplished two projects. One group made lunch for Charlotte Hospitality House of vegetable soup, sandwiches and cookies, while a second group disassembled the nativity manger in the church yard, storing it in the basement, along with taking down the wreaths on the church doors and putting away Christmas decorations in the sanctuary. Thank you to all the men who participated, and a special word of thanks to Doug and Carol Milheim for putting up and taking down the Christmas aisle torches.

Bach Charlotte Winterfest!



St. Mark's hosted Bach Charlotte's inaugural "Winterfest", January 28-30. For three nights, we were treated to world-class musicians, featuring, Aisslinn Nosky, violin; Guy Fishman, cello; Ian Watson, organ and harpsichord; Heather Miller Lardin, bass; Esther Jeehae Ahn, piano; Emi Ferguson, flute; Arwen Myers, soprano; MaryRuth Miller, soprano; and many others. The program titles were: (1/28) "Armida Abandoned: Handel's Dramatic Cantatas"; (1/29) "The Romantic Response"; and (1/30) "The Flute and the Cantata Tradition." Sadly, because of an unprecedented snowstorm, the January 31 Organ Recital with Lester Ackerman was postponed to June 7 as part of the Charlotte Bach Festival. St. Mark's is pleased to host this event for the Charlotte community!



Coming Up at St. Mark's

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

Annual Congregational Meeting



St. Mark's Congregational Meeting Rescheduled for

February 15, 2026

immediately following the 10:30 service

One service only at 10:30 am

The 2025 Annual Report printed copies
are in the Gathering Place.

Thank you for your faithfulness in
service together to Christ at St. Mark's!

Folk Singer HoSoVoSo



Japanese singer-songwriter HoSoVoSo creates warm, story-like songs inspired by everyday life and nature. Come enjoy his Acoustic Guitar Concert Sunday, February 8 at 3 pm in the Choir Room. Free event - donations welcome.

Hosted in partnership with:



Japanese Cultural
Association of
the Carolinas

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper 2/17

The Congregational Life Committee will host a Shrove Tuesday pancake supper on Tuesday, Feb. 17, at 6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. We invite you to join us for a fun evening together 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 for those who would like it. 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!




Coming Up at St. Mark's


The Season of Lent
2026

Please make Ash
Wednesday part of your
Lenten journey this year.

**ASH
WEDNESDAY**
February 18, 2026
Imposition of Ashes
Holy Communion
12:15 pm & 7 pm
(7 pm also live on YouTube, St.
Mark's website & Facebook)



Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
February 17 at 6 pm
Sign up!

 **St. Mark's Lutheran Church**
1001 Queens Road | 704.375.9185 | SaintMarksCharlotte.org

Mid-Week
Lenten Prayer
February 25 - March 25
6 - 6:45 pm Supper
7 pm Prayer Service
(also live on YouTube,
St. Mark's website & Facebook)

"Holy
Conversations
with Jesus"



Join us for weekly prayerful
reflection on biblical
conversations with Jesus,
helping us to hear his voice
speaking in our lives.

Carolina Pro Musica

February 27, 2026
7:30 pm

**AN
ITALIAN
SOUVENIR**



Carolina Pro Musica
In Concert

Italy was the source for the creation of new musical ideas by adding much improvisation and ornamentation. Plucked and bowed string instruments were used as the continuo in music of the middle and high baroque. William Simms joins on the orbo.

St. Mark's Lutheran Church
1001 Queens Road

Half price tickets for SMLC!!
Enter StMarksHO on CPM website

704-375-9185
www.SaintMarksCharlotte.org

Ticket reservation:
<https://www.carolinapromusica.org/schedule>

St. Mark's is
pleased to partner
with Carolina Pro
Musica in their 47th
season in
Charlotte!

Congregational Life

St. Mark's Men's Group

In light of a pretty busy month of February, we are recommending that the typical second Saturday morning meeting of the men's group be called off. There are multiple activities that need the men's group support in mid and early February. These activities are as follows.

John Graham's funeral support: February 13 and 14th: columbarium preparation and closure (Doug M. and Mike D)

Erect the Lenten Cross: February 15, 9:30 am, Kevin, Steve, Mike Doyne, and one other volunteer will be responsible for assembling and erecting the Lenten cross on the front lawn between services this Sunday.

Shrove Tuesday pancake dinner: February 17, 5:30 PM: men's group will prepare and serve a simple pancake dinner for the congregation and guest in the fellowship hall: we need volunteers to purchase the food stuffs, prepare and cook the meal components and then clean up the kitchen following the meal. If you can assist please contact Mike Doyne via phone 704-904-1812 or email.

Room in the Inn: February 17/18 the men's group will host Room in the Inn. We need volunteers to drive the van to pick up and return the guest to the urban ministry site, individuals to prepare the evening meal for our guests, two night sitters, individuals to provide breakfast and a different group of individuals to prepare and provide bag lunches for 10 guests. Please sign up in the Gathering Space.

Love Circle

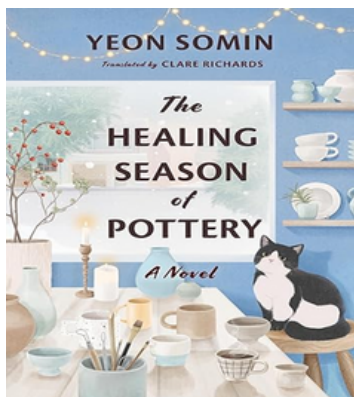


Ethnic Restaurant Group

Ethnic Restaurant Group will celebrate Mardi Gras (a.k.a. "Shrove Tuesday") at St. Mark's Congregational Life Committee's pancake supper on February 17th. Please monitor Congregational Life Committee's announcements and sign-ups for details. Come, bring friends, and be "shriven".



St. Mark's Book Group



The St. Mark's Book Group's next meeting will be 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.

Family Ministry

Pastor Ali Rode Committee Chairperson



Greetings Church Family,

In our first month (plus some) we had a great opportunity to say first hellos whether it be during Advent, Christmas, or other various church gatherings. Despite the winter weather and various traveling schedules we gathered a group of 8 "20-somethings" for fellowship at Topsy Pickle with 3 other adults. We anticipate our first Family Ministry Committee meeting this month to begin making more opportunities and spaces for especially young people to get connected in intergenerational ministry opportunities for the whole church. It's

evident we have wonderful people who are passionate about serving here at St. Mark's. I'm glad to be here and as I pray a prayer of gratitude for this opportunity I ask for your prayers in the fruitfulness of our growth in Family Ministry.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Ali

Follow us on Instagram

We are active as a Family Ministry on Instagram. There you can connect with other St. Marks folks by checking out who we follow. @st.marks.youth

Family Ministry Committee

Our first Family Ministry Committee meeting is February 1st at noon (as long as weather allows). We'll share in a brief lunch together and begin dreaming on how we can grow in Family Ministry. A big thank you to the folks who have said "Yes!" to be a part of this group: Susan Ginns, Tara Thompson, Melissa Smith, Phil Foust, Charles Lakeman, Bonnie Eckerd, and youth representative, Andrew Puky. As Associate Pastor for Family Ministry, Pastor Ali is the Chair of this committee.

Contact List Updates

If you have families who would like to make a connection to St. Mark's feel free to reach out to Pastor Ali so she can get them on our email and contact list.

THEOLOGY ON TAP



February 19 at 7pm
Location is Custom Home Pubs located at 1640 Sardis Rd North Suite 120 in the Galleria Village Shopping Center.

There is a Mexican restaurant next door if you need dinner.

Everyone is welcome!



Pictured: Theology on Tap 1/29 at Marty and Dawn Schwartz's house.

Family Ministry

Pastor Ali Rode Committee Chairperson

Souper Bowl of Caring

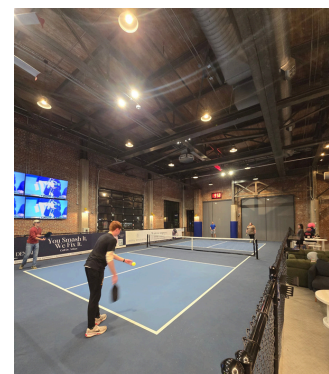
As the big game arrives February 8th, our congregation will participate in a Food Drive for Nourish Up. Bring your non-perishable food items or monetary donation on Sunday February 8th to help alleviate Hunger in Mecklenburg County. We will be hearing about Nourish Up during worship and before or after service you can "vote" on which team you think will win the Superbowl by placing your donation in the provided boxes for the Patriots or the Seahawks.

Boxes for your donations marked with the Superbowl teams are in the Gathering Place. We also accept non-perishable food deliveries directly to St. Mark's.

Our Souperbowl display awaits donations for Nourish Up. Folks who donate are invited to "cheer" the team they want to win by placing donations in the corresponding box.



Tipsy Pickle



Pastor Ali hosted her first "unofficial" Family Ministry Event at Tipsy Pickle, a Pickleball event space in Camp North End. This was an attempt at connecting with Twenty-somethings home for Christmas break as well as former youth living in the Charlotte area. They gathered for food, fellowship, and a little fun. The group had an opportunity to get to know one another and catch up. There's interest among some in playing pickleball again in the future, especially as our own Michael Huang shared paddles and taught us newbies to play. Contact Pastor Ali for interest regarding a next Pickleball outing!

Gifts & Memorials

Jay Jacob Committee Chairperson

In Memory of Pat Fox

Evelyn Gerdes - Roof Above
Barbara Baker - Music Ministry

In Memory of John Graham

Evelyn Gerdes - Property
Doug and Carol Milheim - Soup Kitchen

In Honor of Pastor Ali and Brian Rode

Doug and Carol Milheim - Soup Kitchen

Social Ministry

Susan Ginns Committee Chairperson

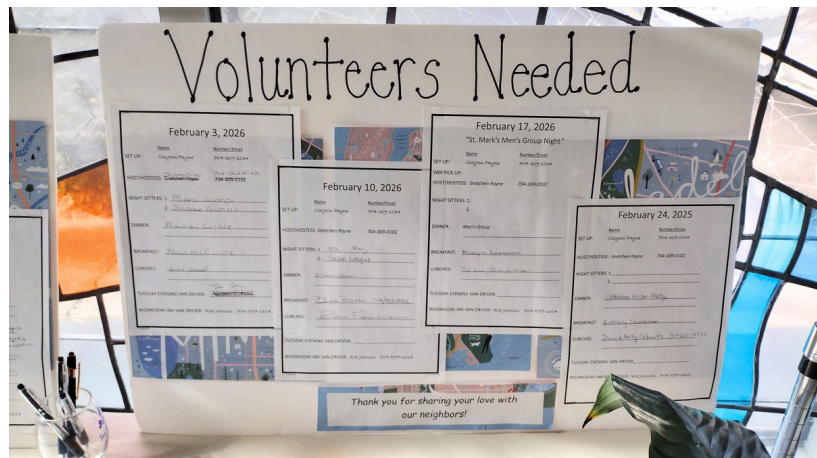


ROOM IN THE INN continues to host 10 homeless men each Tuesday during February.

We are 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.

Volunteers are still needed!

Please sign up in the Gathering Place to help as you are able.



Worship & Music

Kevin Feezor Committee Chairperson

Worship Highlights



John Brumbaugh,
cellist, Second
Sunday of Christmas



Pastor Ali 1/4, Second
Sunday of Christmas



Michael Thompson,
prayer assistant, 1/4



Karen Feezor, lector,
Second Sunday of
Christmas



Andrea Long, Pastor Ali, 1/4,
Second Sunday of Christmas



Jack Richardson, tenor
soloist, Second Sunday
after Christmas



Pastor Tim, 1/11
Baptism of our Lord



St. Mark's Choir, Baptism of Our Lord



Pastor Ali, Baptism
of Our Lord

Worship & Music

Kevin Feezor Committee Chairperson



Michael Huang, crucifer,
Baptism of Our Lord



Susan Lakeman, Kimberly Zimmerman,
communion servers, 1/18



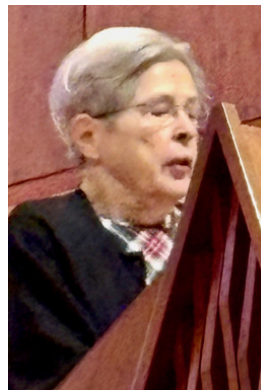
Amy Woodall, Jack Richardson,
Song leaders, 8:30am worship, 1/18



St. Mark's Choir, Sunday, 1/18,
Second Sunday after Epiphany



Nick Hanewinkel, Amy Woodall, cantors, 1/18



Kay Finlon, lector,
Second Sunday
after Epiphany



Taylor McNamara, alto
soloist, Second Sunday
after Epiphany

Worship & Music

Kevin Feezor Committee Chairperson

We Sing the Faith

Historical and Spiritual Insight Into the Hymns We Sing

Reflections by Lester Ackerman

"Angels, from the Realms of Glory" ELW 275

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

"Songs of Thankfulness and Praise" ELW 310

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

"Come and See" ACS 976

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

"Baptized in Water" ELW 456

Michael Saward (b. 1932), a priest in the Church of England, wrote this hymn in 1981, with its first publication in *Hymns for Today* (1982). Paul Westermeyer writes: Each stanza begins with allusions to John 3:5 and Ephesians 1:13 and then runs out aspects of what God does in baptism--cleanses, makes us heirs of salvation, promises, brings death and life in Christ, frees, forgives, marks, and gives new life in the Spirit as God's children--so that in trust we thankfully and joyfully sing praise to God." Saward's text is wedded to the nineteenth century Scottish tune **BUNESSAN**, the name of Scottish town on the Isle of Mull. Our *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* pairs this tune with three additional hymns: "Morning Has Broken" ELW 556, "This Is a Day, Lord, Gladly Awaited" ELW 586, and "Praise and Thanksgiving" ELW 689.

"Down Galilee's Slow Roadways" ACS 916

is from the "Time After Epiphany" section of *All Creation Sings*. Written by Sylvia Dunstan, (1955-1993) an ordained pastor in the United Church of Canada, wrote this hymn at the request of a worship panel, seeking new resources for hymns that specifically address adult baptism. Dunstan calls this hymn a "meditation for the Feast of the Lord's Baptism". *All Creation Sings* pairs her hymn with the tune **MERLE'S TUNE** by American composer and musician Hal H. Hopson (1933-2025), from his collection *Hymns for Our Time: The Collected Tunes of Hal H. Hopson* (2009).

Worship & Music

Kevin Feezor Committee Chairperson

"You, Lord, Are Both Lamb and Shepherd" ACS 954

from *All Creation Sings*. Susan Dunstan (1955-1993) was ordained in the United Church of Canada and has served as a pastor and as a duty chaplain in a maximum-security jail. Dunstan says she wrote this hymn in 1984 while commuting on a bus after a particularly bad day at the jail. It was later published in *In Search of Hope & Grace* under the title "Christus Paradox." *All Creation Sings* pairs Dunstan's text with the seventeenth century French folk tune PICARDY, named for that region of France.

"As with Gladness Men of Old" ELW 302

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

"Lamb of God" (Your Only Son) ELW 336

This hymn text and its tune **YOUR ONLY SON**, were written by Twila Paris (b. 1958) a popular songwriter, author, vocalist, and pianist from Fort Worth, Texas. For three years she was the Gospel Music Association Female Vocalist of the Year. This hymn is what might be called a trope, or an embellishment or amplification on the historic "Lamb of God" which we sing most Sundays during Holy Communion. Paul Westermeyer writes of Paris' hymn: "In the Agnus Dei the weight falls on what God does and communal petition in response. Here what God does is present but personalized and individualized so that the emphasis falls on the sweet Lamb of God, his precious blood, and the individual singers emotive love in response. This is a solo singers voice bending toward a more communal form."

"Faith Begins by Letting Go" ACS 1004

This text was written by Carl Daw (b. 1944) an American Episcopal priest who has served as the Executive Director of the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada. This text was first published in Daw's *New Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (1996) and now is included in our collection *All Creation Sings* (2020). Daw writes of his text: "this hymn affirms that faith is not a state of being, but a process of becoming what we are called to be in relationship to God, other people, and the world". Daw's hymn is paired with the tune **RATISBON**, an early eighteenth-century tune by Johann Werner (1777-1822), also paired with the hymn by Charles Wesley (1707-1788) "Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies" ELW 553.

"Will You Come and Follow Me" (The Summons) ELW 798

This hymn was written by John Bell (b.1949) in 1986-87 for the Iona Community in Scotland. In his own words: "this text was written for the sending out of one of our youth volunteers. Young people gave a year or two to live in impoverished parts of Scotland. When they finished, my colleague and I would often write a song for their farewell ceremony. The words reflect the experience of the volunteer concerned." The tune name **KELVINGROVE** is named for a place in Glasgow, Scotland.

"I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light" ELW 815

This hymn and tune were written by Kathleen Thomerson (b. 934), a Methodist music director and organist. She considers her hymn to be a scriptural meditation and prayer on the subject of light. The theme of light can be heard in Revelation 21: "And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light" and summarized in Ephesians 5:8 "For once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light." **HOUSTON** is the tune name, its name derived from Church of the Redeemer in Houston, Texas, the first place this hymn was sung, and the family church of Kathleen Thomerson.

Worship & Music

Kevin Feezor Committee Chairperson

Hymn Suggestions: Third, Fourth, Fifth Sundays after Epiphany,
Transfiguration of Our Lord, & First and Second Sundays in Lent 2026

January 25, 2026 Third Sunday after Epiphany—Lectionary 3

Jesus begins his public ministry by calling fishers to leave their nets and follow him. In Jesus the kingdom of God has come near. We who walked in darkness have seen a great light. We see this light most profoundly in the cross—as God suffers with us and all who are oppressed by sickness, sin, or evil. Light dawns for us as we gather around the word, the font, and the holy table. We are sent to share the good news that others may be “caught” in the net of God’s grace and mercy.

Hymns: ELW 511 Thy Strong Word (stanzas 1-4) EBENEZER
ACS 1004 Faith Begins by Letting Go RATISBON
ELW 798 Will You Come and Follow Me (stanza 1) (Offertory) KELVINGROVE
ELW 696 Jesus Calls Us; o’er the Tumult GALILEE
ELW 815 I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light HOUSTON

February 1, 2026 Fourth Sunday after Epiphany—Lectionary 4

We 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 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. In baptism we find our blessed identity and calling in this countercultural way of living and serving.

Hymns: ELW 873 Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart (stanzas 1-6) MARION
ACS 1062 Build a Longer Table NOEL NOUVELET
ELW 728 Blest Are They (stanza 1) (Offertory) BLEST ARE THEY
ELW 307 Light Shone in Darkness LUX IN TENEBRIS
ELW 546 To Be Your Presence ENGELBERG

February 8, 2026 Fifth Sunday after Epiphany—Lectionary 5

Light shines in the darkness for the upright, the psalmist sings. Isaiah declares that when we loose the bonds of injustice and share our bread with the hungry, the light breaks forth like the dawn. In another passage from the Sermon on the mount, Jesus, the light of the world, calls his followers to let the light of their good works shine before others. Through baptism we are sent into the world to shine with the light of Christ.

Hymns: ELW 673 God, Whose Almighty Word ITALIAN HYMN
ELW 715 Christ, Be Our Light CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT
ELW 712 Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service (stanza 1) (Offertory) BEACH SPRING
ELW 611 I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say KINGSFOLD
W & P 22 Bring Forth the Kingdom

Worship & Music

Kevin Feezor Committee Chairperson

Hymn Suggestions: Third, Fourth, Fifth Sundays after Epiphany,
Transfiguration of Our Lord, & First and Second Sundays in Lent 2026

February 15, 2026 Transfiguration of Our Lord

Today's festival is a bridge between the Advent-Christmas-Epiphany cycle that comes to a close today and the Lent-Easter cycle that begins in several days. On a high mountain Jesus is revealed as God's beloved son, echoing the words at his baptism. This vision of glory sustains us as Jesus faces his impending death in Jerusalem. We turn this week to Ash Wednesday and our yearly baptismal journey from Lent to Easter. Some churches put aside the alleluia at the conclusion of today's liturgy. This word of joy will be omitted during the penitential season of Lent and will be sung again at Easter.

Hymns: ELW 318 Alleluia, Song of Gladness PRAISE, MY SOUL
ELW 316 Oh, Wondrous Image, Vision Fair DEO GRACIAS
ELW 661 I Love to Tell the Story (stanza 1) (Offertory) HANKEY
ELW 838 Beautiful Savior SCHONSTER HERR JESU
ELW 834 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise ST. DENIO

February 22, 2026 First Sunday in Lent

Today's gospel tells of Jesus' temptation in the desert. His forty-day fast becomes the basis of our Lenten pilgrimage. In the early church Lent was a time of intense preparation for those to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. This catechetical focus on the meaning of faith is at the heart of our Lenten journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. Hungry for God's mercy, we receive the bread of life to nourish us for the days ahead.

Hymns: ELW 321 Eternal Lord of Love, Behold Your Church OLD 124TH
ACS 922 When We Are Tested SLANE
ELW 188 Create in me a Clean Heart (Offertory) FREYLINGHAUSEN
ELW 325 I Want Jesus to Walk with Me SOJOURNER
ELW 320 The Glory of These Forty Days ERHALT UNS, HERR

March 1, 2026 Second Sunday in Lent

In today's Gospel Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born of water and spirit. At the font we are given a new birth as children of God. As God made a covenant with Abraham, in baptism God promises to raise us up with Christ to new life. From worship we are sent forth to proclaim God's love for all the world.

Hymns: ELW 660 Lift High the Cross CRUCIFER
ELW 323 God Loved the World ROCKINGHAM OLD
ELW 811 On My Heart Imprint Your Image (Offertory) DER AM KREUZ
ELW 592 Just As I Am, without One Plea WOODWORTH
ELW 803 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross HAMBURG

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February Serving Schedule

Crucifer/Acolyte

2/1 C/A: Needed
2/8 C/A: Needed
2/15 C/A: Needed
2/22 C/A: Needed

Sound System

2/1 Alan Harms
2/8 Bob Chernet
2/15 Neil Dixon
2/18 Kevin Feezor
2/22 John Brumbaugh

Tabulators

2/1 A.J. Pridgen
Dawn Schwartz
2/8 Joe Barrett
Kevin Feezor
2/15 Janice Miller
Dianne Thomas
2/22 Karen Feezor
Janice Miller
Dawn Schwartz

Ushers

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

Prayer Assistants

2/1 Pastor McKenzie
2/8 Larry Dagenhart, Jr.
2/15 Youth
2/22 Dave Dunlap

Lectors

2/1 Kay Finlon
2/8 Lisa Barnette
2/15 Chuck Baynard
2/22 Karen Feezor

Communion Helpers

2/1 Chris Miller
2/8 Catherine Metze
2/15 Kay Finlon
2/22 Sandy Rach

Video Streaming

2/1 A.J. Pridgen
2/8 Ron Wenzel
2/15 Ron Wenzel
2/22 Joe Barrett

Greeters

2/1 Susan Lakeman
Dawn Schwartz
2/8 Neil & Charlotte Dixon
Ted Seman, David Thomason
2/15 Patrick & Rebecca Huang
Kay & Tom Sehorn
2/22 Gretchen Dodge
Evelyn Gerdes

Communion Assistants

2/1 Bonnie Eckerd, Nick Wartner
Betsy Wenzel, Kimberly Zimmerman
2/8 Karen & Keven Feezor
Janice Miller, John Simon
2/15 Lisa Barnette, Rebecca Huang
Jay Jacob, Virginia Molan
2/22 Barbara Baker, Andrew Puky
Chris Stevenson, Betsy Wenzel

February Birthdays

2/3 Scott Howarth
2/3 Charles Lakeman
2/6 Charlotte Dixon
2/9 Davis Ferner
2/10 Finley Lepkowski
2/12 Elizabeth Williams

2/13 Jake Weckerle
2/14 Rebecca Huang
2/16 Gene Daniels
2/17 Claire Dixon
2/17 Daniel Adden
2/18 Barry Fulp

2/18 Eleanor Taylor
2/21 Max Doyne
2/23 Judy Tolbert
2/24 Alice Blackwelder
2/25 Bonnie Eckerd
2/26 Cynthia Little