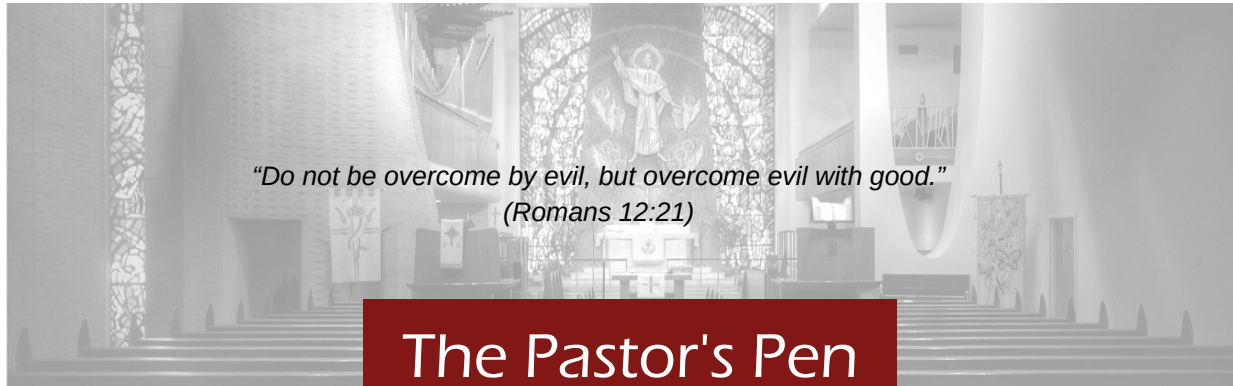


# ReMarks

April 2026

## St. Mark's Lutheran Church



*"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."  
(Romans 12:21)*

### The Pastor's Pen

Dear Friends in Christ,

Following Jesus is never easy. His commandment to love – by forgiving, welcoming, and doing good to others – reminds me of how our lives are measured in God's sight. To be a Christian means struggling with Jesus' inescapable commandment to love others as he has loved us.

Thinking about Jesus' life, it occurs to me that his betrayal by Judas could have elicited the urge for retaliation, yet instead, Jesus gave his disciples a new commandment to love one another, saying, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34). Jesus meets human betrayal, denial, and violence with love.

The words above remind me that Paul had also been overcome by the love of Jesus. Paul's story has been repeated through history down to the present. His story is also our story as Jesus meets us in our sinfulness and evil with a love that transforms us. Every day, he lives in you, helping you work to overcome evil with good in this world.

Far too often, though, people love only those who return the favor. Yet Jesus loves, forgives, and welcomes us, no matter who we are or what we have done. Jesus comes to us daily with an overcoming love, helping us to overcome our old selves so that we might do the good we didn't know we were capable of doing.

Loving others and doing good is perhaps life's hardest work because we must see the face of Jesus Christ in those who are profoundly different from us – those whom we fear or even hate. Jesus continues to meet the world not with violence and retaliation but with love. He urges us pray for our enemies and to do good to those who persecute us. Christians are people who overcome evil with good.

God's love is at the very center of Holy Week and Easter – on Maundy Thursday, we remember Jesus' Holy Supper and the commandment to love; on Good Friday, we remember the cruciform shape of God's love; and on Easter Day, we remember an undying love so great that it overcomes death with life.

Blessed Easter greetings,  
Pastor Timothy McKenzie



# March Council Highlights

## St. Mark's Congregation Council Meeting Summary

Date: March 9, 2026

Meeting Start: 7:00 PM ET

The meeting was called to order by Tom Puky.

### Devotion & Minutes

Betsy Wenzel led the devotional. Minutes from the February 2026 meeting were reviewed and approved.

### Financial Updates

Andrea Long provided a brief financial update, noting giving had a nice rebound in February. Balances in accounts are stable.

Cliff Edahl was in attendance to give an update on the progress of the Fellowship Hall renovation and to seek approval from council to establish a capital campaign to focus exclusively on the completion of Fellowship Hall and paying off the roof repairs. This was approved unanimously.

### Pastors' Reports

**Pastor Tim** shared the following:

- Lenten season underway with midweek prayer and suppers; thanks to Council for hosting the first supper.
- Two memorial services held (John Graham and Pat Fox); appreciation to Congregational Life for receptions.
- Room in the Inn wrapped up successfully—thanks to all volunteers.
- Inner courtyard repairs are complete.
- Pastor Ali 's preaching schedule will be the second and fifth Sundays of the month.
- Approved the Japanese Cultural Association of the Carolinas request for a local TV station to film a 30-minute documentary on the Japanese Spring Festival at Saint Mark's, airing on local TV and YouTube.
- Motion to Approve: Charles Lakeman
- Second: Kim Zimmerman
- Passed unanimously

**Pastor Ali** shared the following:

- Pastor Ali is settling in and connecting with the congregation; held the first Family Ministry Committee meeting with another planned before Easter.
- Actively engaging families through visits and activities (e.g., Charlotte Ballet on 3/21), plus ongoing 1:1s and dinners.
- Easter Sunday Egg Hunt planned.
- Children's sermon on April 12 will follow a new format with added focus on the early service.
- Side Quest Sunday, a monthly intergenerational program after worship, will launch in Spring 2026 to deepen community connections.
- Strong interest from families in serving and volunteering in the community.

### New Business:

Charles Lakeman requested approval to launch another letter-writing campaign in support of the NourishUp advocacy initiative by Bread for the World. Passed Unanimously by council.

### Closing

The meeting concluded with prayer at 8pm ET.

Submitted by Virginia Molan, Council Secretary

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# Around St. Mark's

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

## Carolina Pro Musica



On Friday, March 20, Carolina Pro Musica offered a program titled, "Celebrating America 250!" consisting of music from the colonial period. Musical compositions showed a strong British colonial influence, for example notable selections were, "Rule Britannia!" by Thomas Arne and "God Save the Thirteen States" (to the tune of God Save the King). In addition, the hymn "When Jesus Wept" by William Billings and Handel's "King George's March" reflected this Anglo-American period. Music was performed by Karen Jacob, harpsichord; Andrew Mahon, bass-baritone; Sung Lee, baroque flue, recorder; Janelle Davis, baroque violin, cello. Photos courtesy of John Jacob.

## Jack Richardson Senior Voice Recital



On Sunday March 29, Jack Richardson performed his senior recital for the UNC Charlotte Department of Music. Foreign language pieces reflected the graduation requirement of four foreign languages, while pieces performed ranged from Mozart, Respighi and Puccini to Charbrier, Grever and Lara. In the modern era there were compositions by Nina Simone, Kander and Ebb, Sondheim, and Brodsk. Jack is a faithful member of St. Mark's Choir, and we are delighted as a church to have been a part of Jack's musical development!

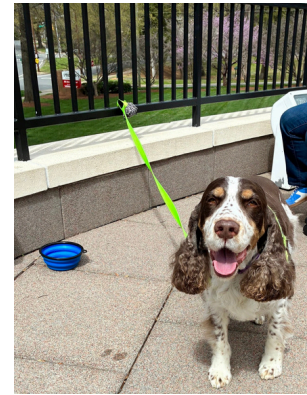
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# Around St. Mark's

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

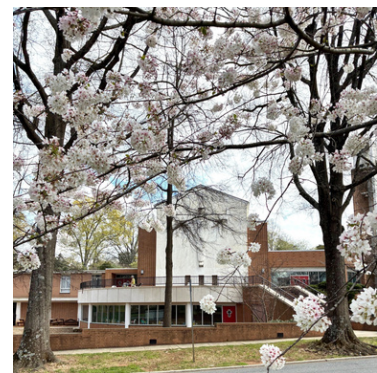
## Spring at St. Mark's



My how seasons change! Just last month we reported on a record setting snowstorm, and now spring has come to Charlotte! During these weeks, St. Mark's has been surrounded by blossoming cherry trees and reemerging shades of green.



The two images above are of the same basic photo, but the image on the right has been AI enhanced to show what Queens Road might look like if this were in Tokyo during the cherry blossom season with lanterns in the trees and the road closed to traffic. (just having fun — The Editor)



Though the cross in the church yard has been covered with purple during Lent, it will soon be covered with a floral sunburst for Easter. The spring season reminds us not only of new life, but of God's love for the world through the resurrection of Jesus Christ! We wish you a blessed Easter!

## Charlotte Flute Association Members' Recital

Charlotte Flute Association held their second Members' Recital on March 22. Highlights were pieces by George Handel, Jean Baptiste Loeillet of London, Telemann, Johann Sebastian Bach, Camille Saint-Saens, among others. Special thank you to St. Mark's member Andrea Long for planning and coordinating the event.

# Around St. Mark's

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

## Japanese Spring Festival



On Saturday, March 28, the Japan Cultural Association of the Carolinas and the Japan-America Society held a Japanese Spring Festival hosted at St. Mark's. Over 250 people attended again this year!



The program included wa-daiko Japanese drums, remarks by Charlotte Council member Danté Anderson, a lecture about Japanese Spring festivals, flower arrangement demonstration, a student chorus, kimono show, and Japanese song and dance. Japanese crafts and foods were also available.



JCAC and the JAC are community partners of St. Mark's. Thank you to our partners for providing this event and to Dr. Tomoko Deguchi for her tireless diligence in planning the festival!

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# Around St. Mark's

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



SAVE THE DATE!

April 26, 2026

All Congregation BBQ Lunch Immediately Following 10:30 Service  
(and it's FREE)

Save the date for a free BBQ lunch sponsored by Congregational Life, Visible Partnership and Stewardship Committee! Ok, nothing is really free as there will be an "ask" during the luncheon. More about that later, but here's the deal:

St. Mark's Fellowship Hall has been an important part of the ministry of St. Mark's, both within and outside our walls. In that space alone we offer compassion and hospitality (Soup Kitchen, Room in the Inn, Congregation lunches and events), space for recovery and healing (AA) and cultural connections through community partnerships (Theatre Charlotte, Japan America Society). Our ongoing vision for the Hall is to continue building partnerships in the community and in our church with new and existing partnerships. One step in achieving that vision is to have an attractive, functional and up-to-date meeting space. Our Fellowship Hall is that meeting space. However, the Hall is tired and for some time now has needed a serious facelift with modern technology.

So, are you tired of seeing a 67-year-old bare cement floor? Are you tired of 1970's technology? Well, here's the chance to do something about it and this is the "ask" –

## Let's Finish the Renovation!

We promise this luncheon will not be a time-share sales pitch, even if the BBQ is free! It promises to be fun and exciting, especially as we tell you more about the matching grant program that has doubled in value since we announced it four weeks ago. We now have matching grants available equal to 40% of project budget.

We want you on April 26th to help us make this a complete success!

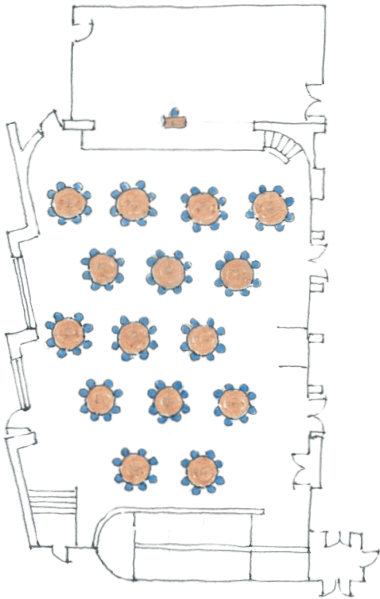
So, save the date with details and RSVP info to follow.

# Around St. Mark's

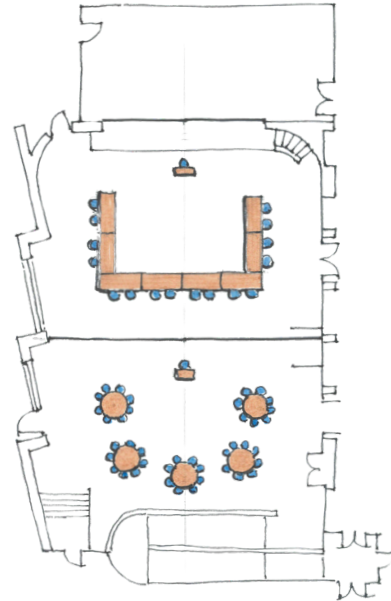
"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." (Colossians 3:16)

## Fellowship Hall Renovation - "God is in the details"

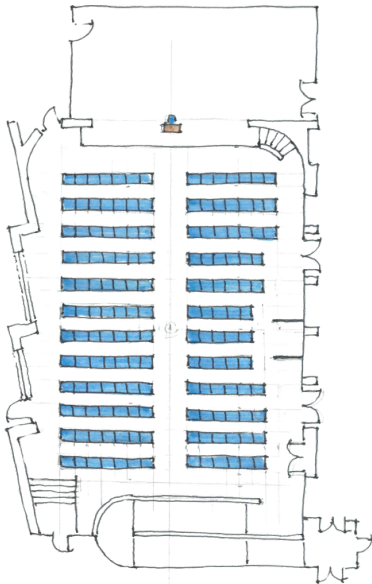
The four drawings below were prepared by Rob Johnson of the Visible Partnerships Committee, showing three possible room configurations for the renovated Fellowship Hall, and a drawing showing the full scope of the new flooring system for the Fellowship Hall, the surrounding hallways, and the Scout Room.



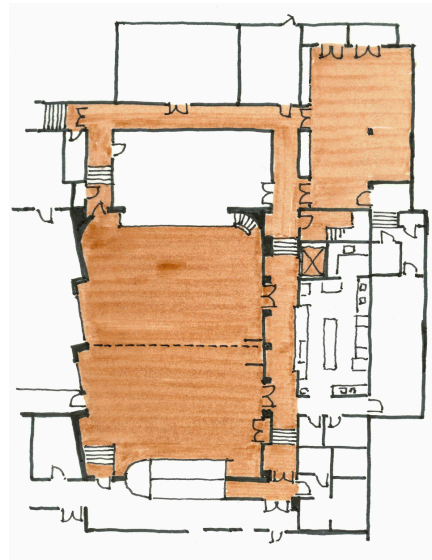
1) The Fellowship Hall configured for a banquet or meal with new circular tables.



2) With the dividing partition up, the room can be configured for dual events/presentations with AV capability on either side of the room.



3) For large scale visual presentations and talks, the room will be able to accommodate seating for up to 160 with a new projector and larger screen able to be easily viewed by all.



4) The terra cotta colored areas show the full scope of the new flooring area (including hall, hallways, and Scout Room).

Thank you for your financial participation in this significant renovation which will be an upgrade to our church facility.

Please put Sunday, April 26th on your calendar and attend the All Congregation BBQ Luncheon!

# Coming Up at St. Mark's

Take the journey  
of Holy Week  
at St. Mark's

*Holy Week*

**April 2, Maundy Thursday**  
7 pm Holy Communion & Stripping of the Altar  
St. Mark's Choir, Cantors, Cello and Organ

**April 3, Good Friday**  
7 pm Service of the Word & Procession of the Cross

**April 5, Easter Sunday**  
8:30 am Cantors, and Piano  
10:30 am St. Mark's Choir, Cantors, Brass Quintet,  
Timpani & Organ  
9:30-10:15 am Coffee & Goodies  
9:45 am Easter Egg Hunt

(7 pm & 10:30 am services also live on YouTube,  
St. Mark's website, & Facebook)

*God is always with us*

Love Circle

*Love Circle*

*Wednesday,*  
*April 8*  
*at 11:00 am*  
*in the Large Conference room.*



St. Mark's Men's Group Our next Men's Group Meeting will be held April 11 at 9 am in the Fellowship Hall. Please plan on attending.



Queen City Ringers

 <p><b>A Brighter Tomorrow</b></p> <p><i>Queen City</i> RINGERS</p> <p>IN CONCERT</p>	<p><b>Sunday, April 26, 2026</b> <b>5:00 PM</b></p> <p><b>St. Mark's Lutheran</b> 1001 Queens Rd Charlotte, NC 28207</p> <p>Concert is free and open to the public. Donations are gratefully accepted. Queen City Ringers is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation.</p> <p>Follow QCR on Facebook, Instagram, X, and YouTube!!</p> <p><a href="http://www.QueenCityRingers.org">www.QueenCityRingers.org</a></p>
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# Congregational Life

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Celebrate with us Easter Sunday, April 5!

9:30 - 10:15 A.M. in the  
Gathering Place  
sponsored by the  
Congregational Life Committee



## Ethnic Restaurant Group

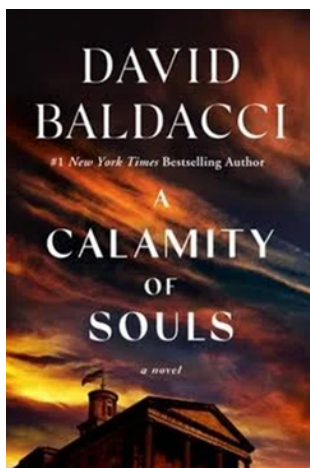


The Ethnic Restaurant Group will dine at Cajun Queen Restaurant for selections of “N’awlin’s” Creole and “Laff-yet” Cajun delights. We can create our own festive “Mardigras.1” as we enjoy exciting and delicious flavors that differ delightfully from French or Spanish or Southern cuisines. Be prepared to enjoy a gumbo or a jambalaya or étouffée or fried oysters or blackened meat – the possibilities seem unlimited. Save room for dessert; be sure to include at least a sip of café au lait (perhaps embellished).

We shall gather at Cajun Queen (1800 E 7th St, 28204) at 6:00 PM on April 21st to experience Louisiana cuisine. Come early if you would like to linger with their full bar service. Download some zydeco music and start the experience on the way to the dinner.

All are welcome! This is an open group. Become a first timer; try a “new flavor”; and then decide when and where to be part of an enjoyable dinner. RSVP to Tom & Judy Tolbert by midnight on April 17th.

## St. Mark’s Book Group



The St. Mark’s Book Group will meet on Thursday, April 23, at 10 am in the large conference room and via Zoom. Our study this month is *A Calamity of Souls* by David Baldacci. Set in southern Virginia in 1968, the story is a legal thriller about a racially charged murder case. It presents unusual circumstances where a Black man, Jerome Washington, is defended against a corrupt legal system by a white lawyer, Jack Lee, and a Black lawyer, Desiree DuBose. The novel explores themes of racism, injustice, and the Civil Rights era’s aftermath, following the unlikely partnership of the two lawyers as they fight for justice in a deeply prejudiced South.

All are welcome to join us in delving into this intriguing study. Please contact Kay Sehorn or Judy Tolbert for more information.

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# Family Ministry

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Pastor Ali Rode Committee Chairperson

Greetings Church family of Saint Mark's!

## **New Family Ministry Options on in Spring & Summer**

In the **Spring**, Family Ministry will be preparing for NEW opportunities for young families including:

- A "Family Ministry Moment" for all ages during the 8:30a Worship beginning April 12th
- New Christian Education offerings for Children beginning Summer of 2026 & Fall 2026
- Take Home Materials for growing faith at home

It takes a village to raise a child, and so in order to gather together and prepare for these new offerings there will be two gatherings:

**Family Ministry Informational Session May 3rd 9:30a-** We will gather to review goals and timeline for Family Ministry thru the Fall, receive feedback and coordinate volunteer involvement. All parents & guardians, as well as other potential adult volunteers are welcome. We will gather in the nursery, so children are welcome to play while we join in conversation.

At this time we will also facilitate scheduling training and screening for volunteers to comply with our Safe Gatherings policy.

**All Young Families "Everybody's Birthday Party"**- We'd like to invite families with young children to join together at St. Mark's for a time of fellowship and getting to know one another, kids and adults together. We'll gather according to folks' availability for an "Everybody's Birthday Party" where kids will receive a small birthday gift and we can all (regardless of age) celebrate that we are children of God. Watch your email & text messages for links to a Doodle poll to schedule our time on April 18th, 19th, May 2nd, 3rd, 16, or 17th at 1:00p.

Looking into the **Summer**, save the dates for:

## **July 26th Adult Vacation Bible School**

Topic: "The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness" (2024) by Jonathan Haidt

About the book: "In The Anxious Generation, social psychologist Jonathan Haidt lays out the facts about the epidemic of teen mental illness that hit many countries at the same time. He then investigates the nature of childhood, including why children need play and independent exploration to mature into competent, thriving adults...He presents more than a dozen mechanisms by which this "great rewiring of childhood" has interfered with children's social and neurological development, covering everything from sleep deprivation to attention fragmentation, addiction, loneliness, social contagion, social comparison, and perfectionism."

**August 1st Children's VBS Saturday day program** More information to follow.

**August 16th Back to School Blessing in Worship** - We will pray for children Pre-K-12th grade as well as students studying in Higher Education as a part of our 8:30a and 10:30a services.

I'm looking forward to growth in the area of Family ministries, that we strengthen our purpose of "Growing disciples, and making Christ known!"

Grace & Peace,  
Rev. Alexandra Joy Rode

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# Family Ministry

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Pastor Ali Rode Committee Chairperson



**Celebrate with us Easter Sunday, April 5!**

Easter Egg Hunt April 5th 9:45 am  
between worship services on the  
lower level in the church yard.  
See you there - bring your kids!

## THEOLOGY ON TAP



April 16 at 7pm  
We'll meet at the  
Carolina Beer  
Temple, 215 N. Ames  
St., Matthews.

Everyone is  
welcome!



*Pictured: Theology on Tap 3/19 at  
Rusty Onion.*

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# Gifts & Memorials

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Jay Jacob Committee Chairperson

### In Memory of Eddie Dorton

Sarah Ingle - Music Ministry

### In Memory of John Graham

Benny and Judy Cox - Gifts and Memorials  
Sally McCauley - Columbarium Fund

### In Memory of Pat Fox

Joyce Pruitt - Gifts and Memorials  
Bonnie Moss - Music Ministry  
Sally McCauley - Music Ministry  
Charles and Susan Lakeman - Music Ministry

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# Social Ministry

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Susan Ginns Committee Chairperson

## Lenten Box Offerings

There's still time! Our Lenten box donations will help support NAMI Charlotte (National Alliance on Mental Illness). We no longer accept coins but still accept bills or simply a check made out to St. Mark's. Donations can also be made online. Please return your boxes by Easter.

## A Special Thank You to Linda Carter

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our fearless Social Ministry leader and volunteer, Linda Carter. Linda has faithfully served in every role within the Social Ministry committee—President, Treasurer, and most recently, Secretary—leading with dedication, compassion, and tireless energy. She has been a strong advocate for the many ministries we support, including Nourish Up, Second Harvest, Crisis Assistance Ministries, and Pat's Place, to name just a few. Linda also coordinated Room in the Inn for many years and, over the past decade, has lovingly organized toiletries and pantry shelves for our neighbors in need. Her impact reaches far and wide—especially among women and children in our community. From writing thousands of bulletin announcements to giving countless hours in service, Linda's commitment has truly made a difference. As she prepares to move closer to her daughter, we send our deepest gratitude and warmest wishes. It will take many hands to fill Linda's shoes!

—Social Ministry is always welcoming new members. Please consider joining us in continuing this important work!

## Nourish Up



### April Showers Bring Pantry Power!

Help our shelves bloom this month with:

- Canned meat – tuna, chicken, salmon
- Canned fruit (in juice or no sugar added)
- Low-sodium canned vegetables
- Pasta – canned or boxed
- Whole grain cereal

*(Pop top cans would be appreciated - no can opener needed)*

Your donations help our neighbors weather the storm.

# Worship & Music

Kevin Feezor Committee Chairperson

## Worship Highlights



John Brumbaugh, cellist,  
Third Sunday in Lent



Allison Drenkow, Charlotte  
Symphony cellist, Sunday,  
March 15, 2026



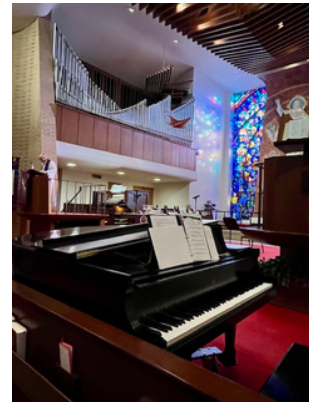
Taylor McNamara, Nick  
Matherly, 8:30 am Song  
Leaders, Fifth Sunday in Lent



Nick Matherly, Jack Richardson,  
8:30am Song Leaders, Sunday,  
March 22, 2026



8:30am worship, Fourth Sunday in Lent



Dave McKenzie, Scottish Highland Bagpiper,  
Palm/Passion Sunday, March 29, 2026

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# Worship & Music

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Kevin Feezor Committee Chairperson

We Sing the Faith

Historical and Spiritual Insight Into the Hymns We Sing  
Reflections by Lester Ackerman

## "Jesus Christ Is Risen Today" ELW 365

has found its rightful place as the expected processional/opening hymn for Easter Day worship. We do not know who wrote either the text or the tune, with the exception of the fourth stanza penned by the great English hymn writer Charles Wesley (1707-1788). The text first appeared in an anonymous fourteenth-century Latin manuscript. A number of translations were made into German and English, with the first known publication in English by John Walsh in 1708, in a collection entitled *Lyra Davidica*. This hymn expresses the meaning of eternal life and the significance of our participation in Christ's victory over death and the fear of the grave. The final stanzas join to celebrate praise and love as signs of resurrection power already joining heaven and earth. The tune **EASTER HYMN** is often regarded as one of the first examples of the new "evangelical revival tunes" that became popular in eighteenth-century England.

## "Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia" ELW 364

This Swahili hymn was written in 1966 by Bernard Kyamanywa (b. 1938) while he was a student at the Lutheran seminary in Makumira, Tanzania. Howard S. Olson (1922-2010) made the first translation into English in 1969., with its inclusion in *With One Voice* (1995). Paul Westermeyer writes: "What we have here is an announcement of Christ's resurrection with a narrative about it in five stanzas, followed by an exuberant congregational refrain. In East African call-response fashion, the structure suggests a soloist or small group who make the announcements, with the assembly responding by taking up the song, recounting a summary about death's destruction, and summarizing the whole with the church's Alleluia". The tune **MFURAHINI, HALELUYA** comes from the Haya people of northwestern Tanzania, transcribed by Howard Olson.

## "All Glory, Laud, and Honor" ELW 344

has established its place as the traditional Palm Sunday processional hymn. It is based on the accounts of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem found in Matthew 21, and Luke 19, as well as portions of Psalms 24 and 118. This hymn was written by Bishop Theodulph of Orleans (c.760-821), a leading French theologian and poet of his time. We believe he may have written this hymn while imprisoned in the year 818, falsely accused for conspiring against King Louis the Pious. This is one of our oldest Latin hymns, and in original form included thirty-eight two-line stanzas plus the refrain! John Mason Neale (1818-1866) translated eight stanzas from Latin into English, first published in 1851. *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* prints his first five stanzas plus refrain. Melchior Teschner (1584-1635), a German pastor, cantor and teacher, wrote the tune **VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN** ("Farewell I Gladly Bid Thee") that we associate with this hymn.

## "Beneath the Cross of Jesus" ELW 338

Elizabeth C. Clephane (1830-1869) is the author of this Lenten hymn. She was a member of the Free Church of Scotland and devoted her life to serving the poor and the sick in her community. She was nicknamed "Sunbeam" to reflect her sunny personality and philanthropic work among the disadvantaged. This hymn was written shortly before her death and is a meditation on the cross and its importance in the faith of the believer. The numerous scriptural allusions are indicative of the poet's thorough knowledge of the Bible. The tune **ST. CHRISTOPHER** was composed for Clephane's hymn by Frederick Charles Maker (1844-1927) an organist and conductor in Bristol, England. Clephane's hymns were popularized in the United States by Ira Sankey, who collected gospel hymns and was the musical assistant of the American evangelist Dwight Moody (1837-1899).

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# Worship & Music

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Kevin Feezor Committee Chairperson

## "What Wondrous Love Is This" ELW 666

This anonymous folk hymn is from nineteenth-century America and is paired with the Southern Harmony (1835) tune **WONDROUS LOVE**. This tune first appeared in the valleys of the Southern Appalachian Mountains and shows signs of Celtic influences. The earliest publication of the text was included in a Methodist book compiled by Stith Mead (1766-1834), *A General Selection of the Newest and Most Admired Hymns and Spiritual Songs Now in Use* (Lynchburg, Virginia, 1811) where it had six stanzas. Each stanza presents a single thought, which is underscored by repetition. God's love is so great that he would give up his crown for a sinner's soul.

## "Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery" ELW 334

This Lenten hymn was written by American composer and musician Marty Haugen (b. 1950). Haugen is also the composer of *Holy Communion Setting Two* in our *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. Haugen wrote this hymn about the tree of life, who also turns out to be Jesus the Christ. Following the first three stanzas and the general one, he writes "I added five additional stanzas to reflect the 'A' cycle readings for the Lenten season, in keeping with the Lutheran tradition that the congregation sings back the scripture they have heard in the sermon." The five stanzas for the five Sundays of Lent move from creation to blessing to the living water of salvation to shining gospel to beyond fear and sorrow. Haugen composed the tune **THOMAS** for this hymn and named for the middle name of his son.

## "There Is a Balm in Gilead" ELW 614

"Balm of Gilead" was an aromatic medicinal ointment. In Jeremiah 8:22 the question is asked, "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?" and the expected answer in "No." But this spiritual turns the negative into affirmation, and hopelessness into hope. It is the Holy Spirit who "revives my soul," and it is Jesus who "is your friend" and "died for all." The balm is in Gilead and in every other place in this world. The African American tune **BALM IN GILEAD** comes anonymously from an oral tradition of the nineteenth century, where a vocal soloist sings the stanzas, with the refrain as a response by the congregation. This hymn and its tune had its first appearance in print in the collection *Folk Songs of the American Negro* (1907).

## "In the Cross of Christ I Glory" ELW 324

comes to us from the pen of John Bowring (1792-1872) first published in his book *Hymns: As Sequel to the Matins* (London, 1825). Like the famous hymn by Isaac Watts "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" ELW 803, the text is based on a verse from Galatians 6:14 "May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ". Kenneth Osbeck writes in his collection *101 Hymn Stories* "It is claimed by some writers that Sir John Bowring had visited Macao, on the South Chinese coast, and was much impressed by the sight of a bronze cross towering on the summit of the massive wall of what had formerly been a great cathedral. This cathedral, originally built by the early Portuguese colonists, overlooked the harbor and had been destroyed by a typhoon and left crumbled in its wake--except for one wall topped by the huge metal cross. The scene is said to have so impressed Bowring that it eventually served as inspiration for this beloved hymn". The tune **RATHBUN** was composed by Ithamer Conkey (1815-1867) in 1849, and was named for Mrs. Beriah S. Rathbun, a soprano soloist in his church in Norwich, Connecticut where he served as Organist and Choirmaster.

## "Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me" ELW 623

Augustus M. Toplady (1740-1778) an Anglican priest and writer, published this hymn in 1776. He was a staunch Calvinist and a contemporary of John and Charles Wesley, with which he carried on an open feud over the role of free will in salvation. This hymn is his response to John Wesley's views. The metaphor "Rock of Ages" is found in Isaiah 26:4, Exodus 33:22, and I Corinthians 10:4. Austin Lovelace writes: "The theme is the gospel message that Jesus' suffering and death alone provide the way to salvation. The water and blood which gushed from his side provide life everlasting, just as the water from the rock provided physical life for Hebrews wandering in the desert." Thomas Hastings (1784-1872) wrote the tune **TOPLADY** for this hymn.

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# Worship & Music

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Kevin Feezor Committee Chairperson

## Hymn Suggestions: Easter Day, Second, Third & Fourth Sundays of Easter 2026

### April 5, 2026 Resurrection of Our Lord/Easter Day

This is the day the Lord has made! Christ is risen, and through him all creation is made new! Indeed, “God shows no partiality” (Acts 10:34): Christ’s resurrection truly brings life to everyone. We sing hymns of praise, gather around sacred words, and proclaim God’s faithfulness, power, and love in the feast of holy communion. With the women at the tomb, we are astonished, elated, and grateful. We depart with joy to proclaim the good news of God’s endless love.

Hymns: ELW 365 Jesus Christ Is Risen Today EASTER HYMN  
ELW 364 Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia! Stanzas 1, 2 & 3 MFURAHINI, HALELUYA  
ELW 376 Thine Is the Glory (stanza one) (Offertory) JUDAS MACCABAEUS  
ELW 369 Christ the Lord Is Risen Today; Alleluia! LLANFAIR

### April 12, 2026 Second Sunday of Easter

In today’s gospel the risen Christ appears to the disciples and offers them the gift of peace. Even amid doubts and questions, we experience the resurrection in our Sunday gathering around word and meal, and in our everyday lives. Throughout the coming Sundays of Easter the first two readings will be from the Acts of the Apostles and the first letter of Peter. Even as the early Christians proclaimed the resurrection, we rejoice in the new birth and living hope we receive in baptism.

Hymns: ELW 376 Thine Is the Glory JUDAS MACCABAEUS  
ELW 635 We Walk by Faith SHANTI  
ACS 939 Touch That Soothes and Heals (stanza one) (Offertory) CIVILITY  
ELW 373 Christ the Lord Is Risen Today! (stanzas 1-4) ORIENTIS PARTIBUS  
ELW 384 That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright PUER NOBIS

### April 19, 2026 Third Sunday of Easter

Today’s gospel begins with two disciples walking to Emmaus, overcome with sadness, loss, and disappointment. They had hoped Jesus, who was crucified, would be the one to redeem Israel! Yet the risen Christ walks with them and then opens their eyes in the breaking of the bread. Each Sunday our hearts burn within us as the scriptures are proclaimed and Christ appears to us as bread is broken and wine poured. The story of Emmaus becomes the pattern of our worship each Lord’s day.

Hymns: ELW 368 With High Delight Let Us Unite MIT FREUDEN ZART  
ELW 374 Day of Arising RAABE  
ACS 939 Touch That Soothes and Heals (stanza one) (Offertory) CIVILITY  
ELW 501 Come with Us, O Blessed Jesus WERDE MUNTER  
ELW 377 Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen! EARTH AND ALL STARS

### April 26, 2026 Fourth Sunday of Easter

Today is sometimes called “Good Shepherd Sunday.” Jesus is called the “gate” of the sheep in today’s gospel. The risen Christ opens the way to abundant life. He anoints our heads with oil and guides us beside the still waters of our baptism. Each Sunday he spreads a feast before us amid the world’s violence and war. We go forth to be signs of the resurrection and extend God’s tender care to all creation.

Hymns: ELW 385 Good Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing! GELOBT SEI GOTT  
ACS 954 You, Lord, Are Both Lamb and Shepherd PICARDY  
ELW 782 My Shepherd, You Supply My Need (stanza one) (Offertory) RESIGNATION  
ELW 789 Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us BRADBURY

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# Worship & Music

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Kevin Feezor Committee Chairperson

## April Serving Schedule

### Crucifer/Acolyte

4/5 C/A: Riley Smith  
4/12 C/A: Needed  
4/19 C/A: Needed  
4/26 C/A: Needed

### Sound System

4/5 Kevin Feezor  
4/12 Alan Harms  
4/19 Bob Chernet  
4/26 John Brumbaugh

### Tabulators

4/5 Karen Feezor  
Charles Lakeman  
4/12 Kevin Feezor  
A.J. Pridgen  
4/19 Karen Feezor  
Dianne Thomas  
4/26 Meg Fielding  
Doug Milheim  
Dawn Schwartz

### Prayer Assistants

4/5 Pastor McKenzie  
4/12 Larry Dagenhart, Jr.  
4/19 Youth  
4/26 Mike Doyne

### Lectors

4/5 Marty Schwartz  
4/12 Margaret Poplin  
4/19 Diane Thornton  
4/26 Lisa Barnette

### Communion Helpers

4/5 Catherine Metze  
4/12 Sandy Rach  
4/19 Chris Miller  
4/26 Kay Finlon

### Video Streaming

4/5 Ron Wenzel  
4/12 Ron Wenzel  
4/19 A.J. Pridgen  
4/26 A.J. Pridgen

### Greeters

4/5 Eddie & Carol Goodall  
Tom & Kay Sehorn  
4/12 Gretchen Dodge  
Evelyn Gerdes  
4/19 Eddie & Carol Goodall  
Patrick & Rebecca Huang  
4/26 Dale & Mary Lou Hopp  
Jay Jacob

### Communion Assistants

4/5 Andrew Puky, Tom Puky  
John Simon, Chris Stevenson  
4/12 Barbara Baker, Charles Lakeman  
Susan Lakeman, Betsy Wenzel  
4/19 Lisa Barnette, Bonnie Eckerd  
Karen & Kevin Feezor  
4/26 Rebecca Huang, Jay Jacob  
Andrea Long, Janice Miller

### Ushers

Team C: Larry Dagenhart, Jr., Alan Harms, Dale Hopp, Sally McCauley

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## April Birthdays

4/4 Linda Wyatt  
4/6 William Jacob  
4/8 Lou Feola  
4/10 Alan Harms  
4/11 Clayton Wall  
4/12 Ken Hazen  
4/14 John Brumbaugh  
4/15 Nancy Deal

4/16 Drew Basinger  
4/16 Betty Kendrick  
4/16 Meg Johnson  
4/16 Jennifer Dagenhart  
4/16 Sandy Rach  
4/20 Ann Connor  
4/21 Mary Timm  
4/23 Layton Campbell  
4/23 Shelley Ferner

4/24 Emily Ritchie  
4/25 Riley Smith  
4/27 Timothy McKenzie  
4/28 Catherine Metze  
4/29 Ella Puky  
4/29 Jim Stone  
4/30 Sophie Schwartz  
4/30 Ainsley Stevenson