

ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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*Sunday Worship Service is at 10:00 a.m.
Our Daily Ministers are The People of St. Mark's
Rev. Carrie Hoff, Pastor*

WELCOME

We extend a sincere welcome to all who join us for worship.

March 23, 2025
3rd Sunday in Lent
Order of Worship

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

“Fantasy on Kingsfold ”

St. Mark’s Bell Choir

**** CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

***Stand*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Let us return to God, confessing our sin in the assurance of God’s abiding love.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate One,

you are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, but our lives do not always reflect you and your love for the world. We do not show others the tender compassion you have shown to us. We do not welcome others with the radical hospitality you grant to all people. We oppress others, even though you have set us free again and again. We squander the abundant gifts of the earth. Transform our lives and guide us again in the way of the cross.

Amen.

Beloved in Christ,
God’s arms are always stretched open wide
to welcome the wandering ones home.

In ✝ Christ your sins are forgiven.

You have a place in God’s house forever.

Amen.

**** SHARING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

**** OPENING HYMN**

No. 756

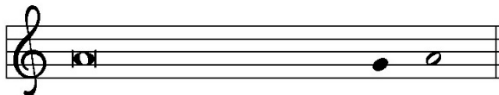
“Eternal Father Strong to Save ”

**** 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.

**** KYRIE**



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



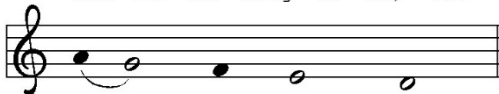
Lord, have mer - cy.



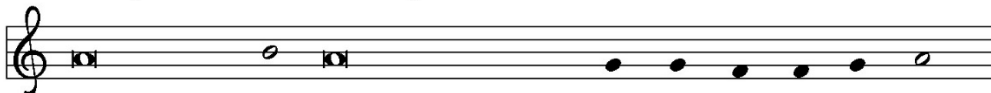
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

**** PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray. Eternal God, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your word and obey it, and bring your saving love to fruition in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING: Isaiah 55:1-9

¹ Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. ² Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. ³ Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. ⁴ See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. ⁵ See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.

⁶ Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; ⁷ let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. ⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. ⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

PSALM: Psalm 63:1-8

We will start with the refrain and repeat where indicated.

Refrain: O God, eagerly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you. (Ps. 63:1)

¹ O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you;
my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

² **Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place,
that I might behold your power and your glory.**

³ For your steadfast love is better than life itself;
my lips shall give you praise.

⁴ **So will I bless you as long as I live
and lift up my hands in your name. R**

⁵ My spirit is content, as with the richest of foods,
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips,

⁶ **when I remember you upon my bed,
and meditate on you in the night watches.**

⁷ For you have been my helper,
and under the shadow of your wings I will rejoice.

⁸ **My whole being clings to you;
your right hand holds me fast. R**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

¹ I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ² and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. ⁵ Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness. ⁶ Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷ Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play.” ⁸ We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. ⁹ We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. ¹⁰ And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. ¹¹ These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹² So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. ¹³ No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

** GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



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.

** GOSPEL: Luke 13:1-9

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke.

Glorify to you, O Lord.

¹ At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ² [Jesus] asked them, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?” ³ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. ⁴ Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? ⁵ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.” ⁶ Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷ So he said to the gardener, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’ ⁸ He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. ⁹ If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Carrie Hoff

“ As Rain from the Clouds ”

** 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.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church, called to be a witness to all peoples. Grant humility and wisdom to bishops, pastors, deacons, elders, councils, and congregations, that they may call upon you in making decisions. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

We pray for the earth, called to provide abundantly. Teach your people the goodness of your generosity, that in sharing what we have been given, all life may flourish on the planet that is our shared home. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

We pray for the nations, called to protect their inhabitants and collaborate in the work of justice and peace. Forge bonds of compassion and mutual care across human borders and boundaries, that all the world may have enough to live. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

We pray for those in need, called to receive your compassion. Comfort those whose lives have been disrupted through natural disasters and human conflict and strengthen all who suffer from illness, grief, or pain of any kind (*especially*). Aid your children in coming together to mourn, heal, and rebuild. God, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

We pray for this assembly, called to welcome its neighbors to the table of your grace. Bless food pantries, community gardens and kitchens, clean water projects, and all ministries that address human hunger and thirst. God, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give thanks for the faithful lives of those who proclaimed your gospel in times of challenge and strife, and for all those whose lives of love and service have ended. May their witness inspire our own. God, in your mercy,

receive our prayer.

Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.

Amen.

OFFERING

CHOIR ANTHEM

“ Lest I Forget Thy Love ”

**** OFFERTORY HYMN**

No. 188

“ Create in Me a Clean Heart ”

**** OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray. Gracious Provider, you set your immense treasures among us, opening your heart to the world. As we prepare to feast on your bountiful love, deepen our commitment to sharing those treasures with others, through our Savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

**** GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

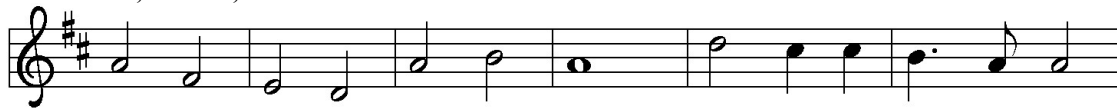
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

**** PREFACE**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**** HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,



heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.



Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes



in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

**** THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

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.

**** 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.**

**** COMMUNION SONG**



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.

COMMUNION

Distribution of Communion

All are welcome to receive the wine and bread at our Lord's table. Grape Juice is in pre-poured glasses and gluten-free wafers are available on the tables as you come forward.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

COMMUNION HYMN

“ I Want Jesus to Walk with Me ”

**** TABLE BLESSING**

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

**** POST COMMUNION CANTICLE**



Now, Lord, you let your ser- vant go in peace: your word has been ful-



filled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va - tion which you have pre -



pared in the sight of ev-'ry peo - ple: a light to re-veal you to the



na - tions and the glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.

**** PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray. Generous Host, you have shared your feast with us and made us new. Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities, that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom, in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**** BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
Amen.

**** CLOSING HYMN**

No. 658

“ O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts ”

**** DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.... We Will!

POSTLUDE

“ Marching to Zion ”

Evan, Trombone



Prayer Requests

Illness: Jeremy Lewis, Anita Scheffel, Cheri Scheffel, John Burk, Emelee DeWitt, Philip, Jim Bosley, Danny Bosley, Gary Wotherspoon, Debbie, Michelle Michaels, Joe Cook, Scott Rohrbaugh, Jason McClung, Bill Roszell, Diane, Ida Durben, Helen Ferrell, Lisa Joy Stowers, Cork Grove, Bob Sr, Gary Thompson, Lauren Orcutt, Valerie Minor, Paul LeDuc, Mike Null, Elaine, Kacey, Dave Hoff, Bradley, Sue, Blake Hogan, Griffith, Erin, John Scriven, Linda, Jimmy

Special Needs: Gary, Chase, Linda, Karen, Bill, Mary, The Null Family, Kim, Erin, Mandie, Bill, Linda, Dan Elliott, Brenda Harvey, Tristyn, Randi, Nancy, Steph & Sarah, Stephanie Lowdermilk, Jason Sisler, Tim Sines

Upcoming Events

Today	Coffee Hour with Guest from Jacob's Ladder
Wednesday, March 26	Lenten Meal & Devotional 5:15 p.m.
Sunday, April 13	Palm Sunday
Thursday, April 17	Maundy Thursday 7 p.m.
Friday, April 18	Holy Friday 7 p.m.
Sunday, April 20	Easter Sunday
Sunday, April 27	Easter Brunch & Hymn Sing
Thursday, May 8	Sight and Sound Bus Trip



Special Offering – Tree 4 Hope

This month, our special offering supports Tree 4 Hope, a nonprofit bringing education, nutrition, and sustainable resources to vulnerable communities in Guatemala. Their mission includes empowering girls through Hope Academy, a school providing education and opportunity for a brighter future. Your generosity helps change lives! Maybe a fun mission trip opportunity in the future?

Sight & Sound St. Mark's Bus Trip

Join us for an unforgettable bus trip on May 8th, 2025, to Lancaster's Sight & Sound Theatre for the spectacular production of Noah! Witness the powerful story of Noah's faith and trust as he embarks on one of the world's most famous voyages. This landmark production, featuring live animals and captivating sets that fill the stage and aisles, returns for one season only to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Sight & Sound Theatre. In addition to the show, we'll enjoy a scenic bus ride through the beautiful countryside and lunch at Hershey Farm Restaurant. The cost of tickets is \$232 per person (includes transportation, premier 1st-floor seating, and lunch). You'll need to secure your spot by signing up soon. Payment for the trip is now due. Ticket forms are located in the narthex. Please HOLD your spot by returning the purple form in the narthex or by talking to Joyce Anderson, Eлда, or Pastor Carrie for more information.

St. Mark's Mission Statement

“United in Christ, Sharing his Good News,
we invite all people to grow in God’s love.”

Church Calendar March 23, 2025 – March 30, 2025

- Today** - Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.
 - with Holy Communion
 - Coffee Hour w/guest from Jacob’s Ladder
- Tuesday** - Yoga at 5:00 p.m.
- Wednesday** - Dinner at 5:15 p.m.
 - Bell Choir at 5:45 p.m.
 - Lenten Devotional at 7 p.m.
 - Chancel Choir at 7:30 p.m.
- Next Sunday** - Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.

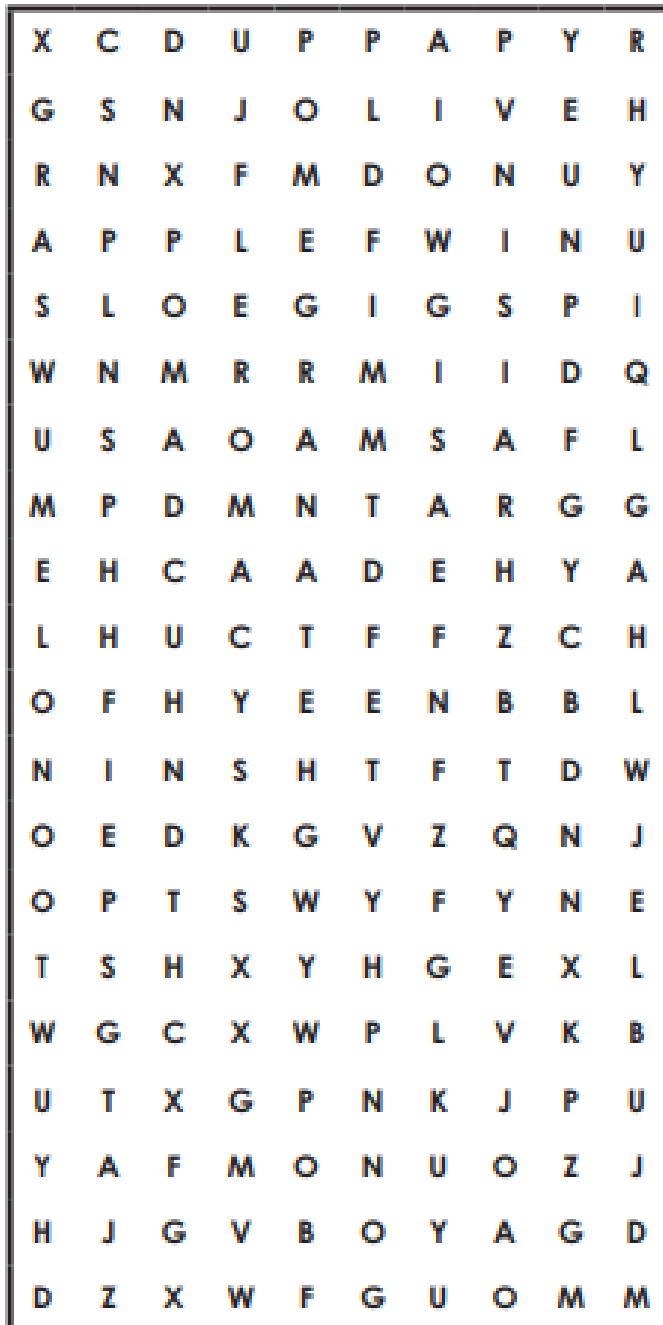
Serving Today

Acolyte:	Riley Feathers
Lector:	Peggy Jamison
Organist:	Sean Beachy
Co-Directors of Music:	Sean & Debi Beachy
Recording:	Stephanie Berger
Safekeeper:	Joyce Anderson
Ushers:	Paul Lewis, Capt.
	Liz Lewis, Dave Hoff, Bob Dempsey

Pastor Carrie can be reached by email at carriehoff@outlook.com or
phone 443-974-1738 for any pastoral needs or concerns.

Finding Fruit

Today's Gospel story is a parable about a fig tree. Find the fruits and nuts mentioned in the Bible in the word search!



- ALMOND
- APPLE
- DATE
- FIG
- GRAPE
- MELON
- OLIVE
- PISTACHIO
- POMEGRANATE
- RAISIN
- SYCAMORE





March 23, 2025, Third Sunday in Lent Luke 13:1-9

Use this resource at home to guide your household's daily devotions.



Pray: Light a candle and open your devotion time with a prayer.

Merciful God, we are often slow to bear fruit for the good of creation. Relieve us of the cares and worries about the things of the world, that we might act in love and service for you and our neighbors, and delight in the joy such living brings. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.



Read: Read the key verse from Sunday's reading.

⁸He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. ⁹If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"' (Luke 13:8-9)



Reflect: Reflect on the scripture summary.

The culture of Jesus' day made stark distinctions between those who were worthy and those who were not. Jesus challenged these prejudices with a parable about a fruitless fig tree—maybe there would be one more chance for the people to get it right.



Connect: Connect in conversation with others in your household.

- **What was a high point of your day? What was a low point?**
- **Tell of a time you had to try just one more time (or more) before you achieved success (or didn't) How did it feel? How did it turn out?**
- **For the littles: What do plants need to grow? What do kids need to grow?**



Bless: Close your devotion with a blessing.

May God show you mercy and love. Amen.



Do: By acting on what we learn, we make God's word come alive. Do the following activity this week.

Learn about the cultivation of fruit trees by going online or checking out a book from the library. Come up with an instruction manual for nurturing your faith by drawing parallels between the things a fruit tree needs to flourish and the things your spirit needs to flourish.



Go Deeper: Read and reflect on the readings for each day of the week.

Sunday, Isaiah 55:1-9; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13; Luke 13:1-9

Monday, Psalm 39; Jeremiah 11:1-17; Romans 2:1-11

Tuesday, Psalm 39; Ezekiel 17:1-10; Romans 2:12-16

Wednesday, Psalm 39; Numbers 13:17-27; Luke 13:18-21

Thursday, Psalm 32; Joshua 4:1-13; 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:5

Friday, Psalm 32; Joshua 4:14-24; 2 Corinthians 5:6-15

Saturday, Psalm 32; Exodus 32:7-14; Luke 15:1-10