

ST. MARK EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF MECHANICSBURG
JANUARY 5, 2025
2nd SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS
HOLY COMMUNION



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

8:30 am - Sanctuary & Zoom Blended Worship Service
9:45 am - Sunday Church School and Children's Choir
11:00 am - Quiet Service

Rev. Marleen Griffith-Stull, Pastor
Pastor's Cell Phone: 878-295-2173
Pastor's Email: revmarleen@stmarkmburg.com

Karen Fisher, Office Manager
Karen's Cell Phone: 717-580-7507
Church Office: 717-766-4482
Office Email: kfisher@stmarkmburg.com
Office Hours: 10:00 AM-1:00 PM - Monday through Thursday

Denise Hirn, Director of Children's Choir
Denise's Cell Phone: 717-802-1064
Email: denisehirn@hotmail.com

Brad Hull, Director of Music
Brad's Cell Phone: 202-738-2795
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St Mark Lutheran Church Mechanicsburg

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INTRODUCTION TO TODAY

Within the gospel reading's profound words lies the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and the wine. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

**Adrian of Canterbury, teacher, died around 710 (TFF)
Thursday, January 9, 2025**

African by birth, Adrian (or Hadrian) worked with Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, in developing the church in England. He was director of a school at which church leaders were trained.

*The asterisk in the margins of the bulletin indicates please stand as able.

PRELUDE

How Far Is It to Bethlehem

P. Manz

***BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P In the name of the Father, and of the ✙ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen.**

P Let us confess our sin before God and one another.

Silence for reflection and self-examination. Please kneel or be seated.

P Merciful God,

C **we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

P In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✙ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

*GATHERING SONG

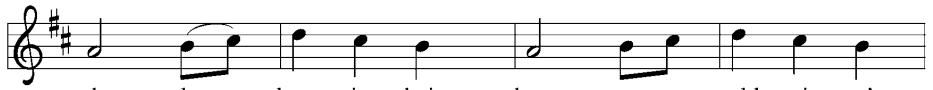
The First Noel



1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to
2 They look - ed up and saw . . a star shin - ing
3 And by the light of that . . same star three . .
4 This star drew near to the . . north-west, o'er . .
5 Then en - tered in those wise . . men three, full . .



cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where
in . . the east . . be - yond . . them far; and to the
wise . . men came . . from coun - try far; to seek for a
Beth - le - hem . . it took . . its rest; and there it
rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . their knee, and of - fered



they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's
earth it gave . . great light, and . . so it con -
king was their . . in - tent, and to fol - low the
did both stop . . and stay right . . o - ver the
there in his . . pres - ence their . . gold, . . . and

Refrain



night that was so deep.
tin-ued both day and night.
star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -
place where Je - sus lay.
myrrh, and frank - in - cense.



el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

*GREETING

- P** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- C** And also with you.

*KYRIE



*CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Refrain



This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God. Al - le -



lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo - ple of God. Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and

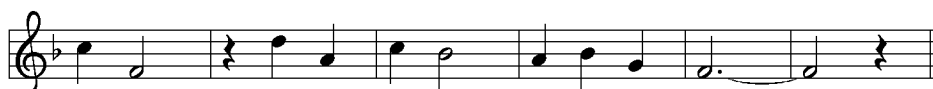


strength, and hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God. Al - le -



lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God, and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing, hon - or, glo - ry, and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

(Continued next page.)

Final refrain

This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God,
 for the Lamb who was slain has be - gun his reign.
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace, empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

FIRST LESSON: Jeremiah 31:7-14

God promises to bring Israel back to its land from the most remote parts of exile. In Zion Israel will rejoice over God's gift of food and livestock. Young women will express their joy in dancing; God will give gladness instead of sorrow.

R A Reading from Jeremiah.

⁷ Thus says the Lord:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
 and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
 proclaim, give praise, and say,
 "Save, O Lord, your people,
 the remnant of Israel."

⁸ See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north,
 and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,
 among them the blind and the lame,
 those with child and those in labor, together;
 a great company, they shall return here.

⁹ With weeping they shall come,
 and with consolations I will lead them back,
 I will let them walk by brooks of water,

in a straight path in which they shall not stumble;
for I have become a father to Israel,
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

¹⁰ Hear the word of the Lord, O nations,
and declare it in the coastlands far away;
say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him,
and will keep him as a shepherd a flock."

¹¹ For the Lord has ransomed Jacob,
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

¹² They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the herd;
their life shall become like a watered garden,
and they shall never languish again.

¹³ Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old shall be merry.

I will turn their mourning into joy,
I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

¹⁴ I will give the priests their fill of fatness,
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,
says the Lord.

R The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: 147:12-21

(Please sing the Psalm responsively. Choir the regular print; congregation the bold print.)



- ¹³ Worship the LORD, | O Jerusalem;
praise your | God, O Zion;
- ¹⁴ **for he has strengthened the bars | of your gates;**
he has blessed your chil- | dren within you.
- ¹⁵ He has established peace | on your borders;
he satisfies you with the | finest wheat.
- ¹⁶ **He sends out his command | to the earth,**
and his word runs | very swiftly.
- ¹⁷ He gives | snow like wool;
he scatters hoar- | frost like ashes.
- ¹⁸ **He scatters his | hail like bread crumbs.**
Who can stand a- | gainst his cold?
- ¹⁹ He sends forth his | word and melts them;
he blows with his wind, and the | waters flow.
- ²⁰ **He declares his | word to Jacob,**
his statutes and his judg- | ments to Israel.
- ²¹ **He has not done so to any | other nation;**
to them he has not revealed his judgments. | Hallelujah!

SECOND LESSON: Ephesians 1:3-14

In Jesus, all of God's plans and purposes have been made known as heaven and earth are united in Christ. Through Jesus, we have been chosen as God's children and have been promised eternal salvation.

R A reading from Ephesians.

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵ He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹ he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹ In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴ this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

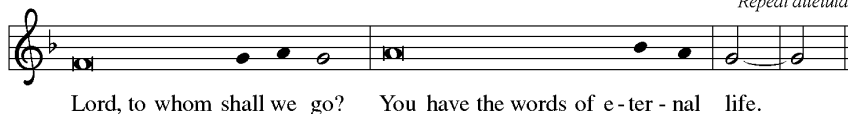
R The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

*ALLELUIA VERSE



Repeat alleluia



*GOSPEL: John 1:1-18

John begins his gospel with this prologue: a hymn to the Word through whom all things were created. This Word became flesh and brought grace and truth to the world.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John the 1st chapter.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

[¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.]
¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who

believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵ (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'")

¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

*HYMN OF THE DAY

In the Bleak Midwinter

1 In the bleak mid - win - ter, frost - y wind made moan,
 2 Heav - en can - not hold him, nor . . . earth sus - tain;
 3 What . . . can I give him, poor . . . as I am?

earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;
 heav'n and earth shall flee a - way when he comes to reign;
 If I were a shep - herd I would bring a lamb;

snow had fall - en, snow on snow, snow on snow,
 in the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble place suf - ficed
 if I were a wise . . . man I would do my part;

in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.
 the Lord . . . God al - might - y, Je - sus Christ.
 yet what I can I give him— give my heart.

***NICENE CREED**

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary,
and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

A Filled with good news of great joy, let us offer our prayers for the church, the earth, and all people.

A God of grace.

C Receive our prayer.

P We commend these prayers to you, O God, trusting your grace made known to all, through the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

***PEACE**

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

P Let us greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy

Words by N. Price/Arr. By D. Besig

INSTALLATION OF 2025 CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS

President:	Karen Heath
Vice President:	Terry Shaner
Secretary:	Amy Gimbel
Treasurer:	Barb Yost*

Church Council meets on the third Thursday of each month at 6:45 pm.

2025 COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS:

Evangelism:	Jo Ann Novinger
Fellowship:	Phyllis Mihalich**
Finance:	Barb Yost*
Property:	Ben Yost
Social Ministry:	Karen Fisher
Stewardship:	Karen Heath
Worship & Music:	Amy Gimbel
Youth & Family Ministry:	Denise Hirn

*Barb Yost, non-council member (Terry Shaner, Council Liaison, to Finance)

**Phyllis Mihalich, non-council member (Karen Fisher, Council Liaison, to Fellowship)

*THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

The musical score is written on four staves in a single system. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is simple and repetitive, with lyrics written below the notes. The lyrics are: 'In - fant ho - ly, in - fant low - ly, for his bed a cat - tle stall; ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know - ing Christ the child is Lord of all. Swift - ly wing - ing, an - gels sing - ing, bells are ring - ing, tid - ings bring - ing; Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!' The piece ends with a double bar line.

In - fant ho - ly, in - fant low - ly, for his bed a cat - tle stall;
ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know - ing Christ the child is Lord of all.
Swift - ly wing - ing, an - gels sing - ing, bells are ring - ing, tid - ings bring - ing;
Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!

Text: Polish carol; tr. Edith M. G. Reed, 1885–1933, alt.
Music: W ŻŁOBIE LEŻY, Polish carol

*OFFERTORY PRAYER

- A Let us pray.
- A God of heaven and earth, from the beginning, you have called forth life, in which you take delight. The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy. Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty, that we may join the chorus of creation to tell of your salvation from day to day.
- C Amen.

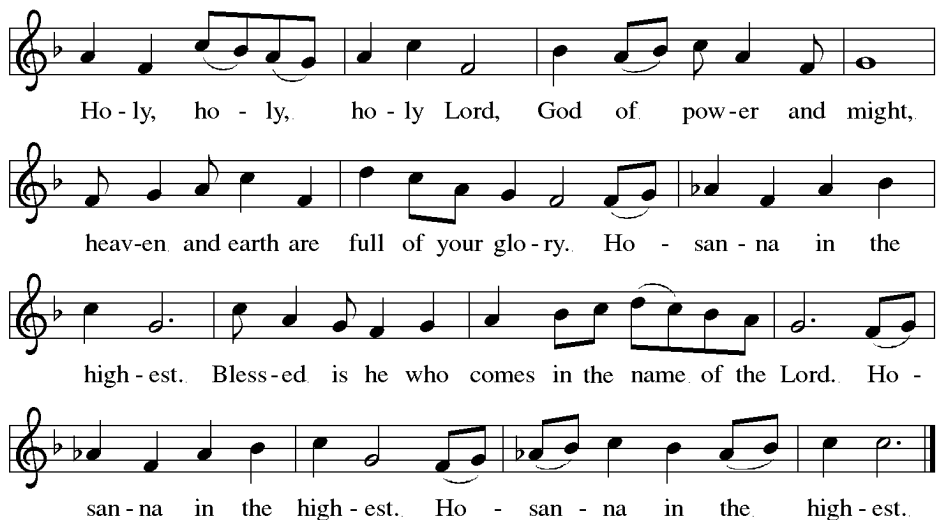
*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

- P The Lord be with you.
- C And also with you.
- P Lift up your hearts
- C We lift them to the Lord.
- P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- C It is right to give him thanks and praise.

*PREFACE

P 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. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh, you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*SANCTUS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,
heav - en 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. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

P Holy God,
Creator of all and Source of life,
at the birth of time
your word brought light into the world.
In the fullness of time,
you sent your Word, born of Mary,
to shine in our darkness
and to make us your daughters and sons.
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.

Remembering, therefore,
his birth and life among us,
his death and resurrection,
we await his coming again
when all things will be restored in him.

By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup,
that, held and nourished by you,
we may live as your children,
shining with the light of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church,
both now and forever.

C Amen.

***THE LORD'S PRAYER**

C 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.

*P A child has been born for us; a Son given to us. Come, receive the gift of Jesus.

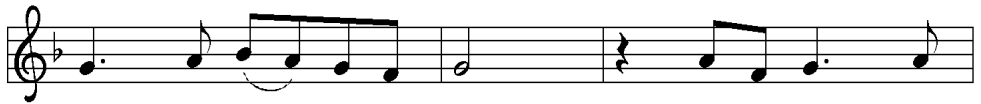
COMMUNION



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.

Congregation may be seated. Please follow the directions of the ushers for the distribution of Communion.

All baptized, communing Christians are welcome to partake of the Holy Sacrament.

We have gluten free bread available and white grape juice (in addition to our traditional homemade bread and red wine) for those who need or prefer those. Simply let the pastor or assisting minister know if you prefer something other than bread and wine.

Remember that we are promised that Christ is truly present in, with, and under each element.

P The body of Christ given for you.

C Amen.

A The blood of Christ shed for you.

C Amen.

-COMMUNION-

Please sing the following hymns during the distribution.

Love Has Come



1 Love has come— a light in the dark - ness! Love shines forth in the
2 Love is born! Come, share in the won - der. Love is God now a -
3 Love has come and nev - er will leave us! Love is life ev - er -



Beth - le - hem skies. See, all heav - en has come to pro - claim it;
sleep in the hay. See the glow in the eyes of his moth - er;
last - ing and free. Love is Je - sus with - in and a - mong us.



hear how their song of joy a - ris - es: Love! Love! Born un - to
what is the name her heart is say - ing? Love! Love! Love is the
Love is the peace our hearts are seek - ing. Love! Love! Love is the



you, a Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo - ry to God on high.
name she whis - pers; Love! Love! Je - sus, Im - man - u - el.
gift of Christ - mas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

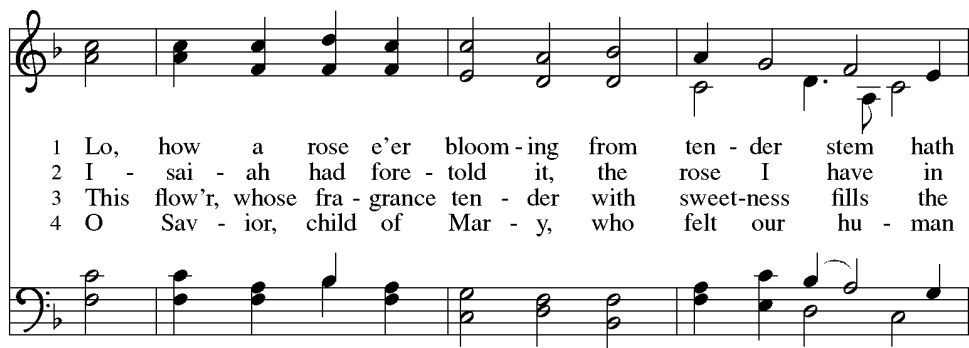
Text: Ken Bible, b. 1950

Music: UN FLAMBEAU, F. Seguin, *Recueil de noëls composés en langue provençale*, 1856

Text © 1996 Integrity's Hosanna! Music (ASCAP), c/o Integrity Media, Inc., 1000 Cody Road, Mobile, AL 36695.

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Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming



1 Lo, how a rose e'er bloom - ing from ten - der stem hath
2 I - sai - ah had fore - told it, the rose I have in
3 This flow'r, whose fra - grance ten - der with sweet-ness fills the
4 O Sav - ior, child of Mar - y, who felt our hu - man



sprung! Of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing as
mind; with Mar - y we be - hold it, the
air, dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor the
woe; O Sav - ior, king of glo - ry, who



seers of old have sung, it came, a flow'r so bright, a -
vir - gin moth - er kind. To show God's love a - right, she
dark-ness ev - 'ry - where. True man, yet ver - y God, from
dost our weak - ness know: bring us at length, we pray, to



mid the cold of win - ter, when half - spent was the night.
bore to us a Sav - ior, when half - spent was the night.
sin and death he saves us and light - ens ev - 'ry load.
the bright courts of heav - en and in - to end - less day.

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

C 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.

***POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

A We thank you, wondrous God, for Jesus, God with us, in these gifts of bread and wine. As we have shared this feast of love, strengthen us to share your love with all the world. In Jesus' name we pray.

C Amen.

***BLESSING**

P The God of love, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, lavish you with grace, illumine your path, and increase your joy, today and always.

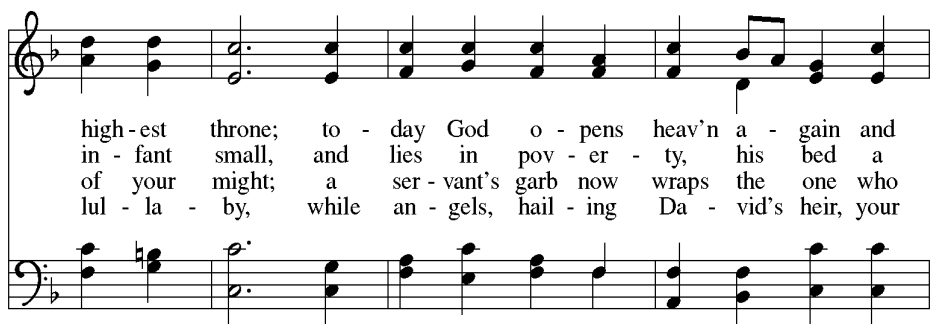
C Amen.

*HYMN

Let All Together Praise Our God



1 Let all to - geth - er praise our God be - fore the
2 From God's right hand the Son de - scends, is born an
3 O ten - der Child, you veil in flesh the splen - dor
4 Your moth - er feeds you ten - der - ly, sings you a



high - est throne; to - day God o - pens heav'n a - gain and
in - fant small, and lies in pov - er - ty, his bed a
of your might; a ser - vant's garb now wraps the one who
lul - la - by, while an - gels, hail - ing Da - vid's heir, your



sends the on - ly Son, and sends the on - ly Son.
man - ger in a stall, a man - ger in a stall.
clothed the sky with light, who clothed the sky with light.
glo - ry mag - ni - fy, your glo - ry mag - ni - fy.

5 A wonderful exchange you make:
you take our flesh and blood,
and in return give us to share
the shining realm of God,
the shining realm of God.

6 Unlock the door again today
that leads to paradise;
the angel bars the way no more.
To God let praises rise,
to God let praises rise!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

*DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. The Word of God dwells in you richly.
C Thanks be to God.

*POSTLUDE

Good Christian Men, Rejoice

P. Manz



To the Glory of God by the Altar Guild.

TODAY'S ASSISTANTS

Ushers:	Keith Hensel, Frankie Hensel
Assisting Minister:	Sean Gimbel
Lay Reader:	Alma Gimbel
Acolyte:	Joan Murphy
Altar Guild:	Phyllis Mihalich, Jo Ann Novinger
Council Money Duty:	Ben Yost, Karen Heath

THIS WEEK AT ST. MARK

Sunday, January 5

2ND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS
INSTALLATION OF COUNCIL
MEMBERS

8:30 am

Blended Worship Svc.-Communion

9:45 am

Sunday Church School

9:45 am

Children's Choir

11:00 am

Worship Svc.-Communion

Monday, January 6

2:45 pm

Violin Lessons

6:45 pm

Youth & Family Ministry

7:00 pm

German Group

Tuesday, January 7

Wednesday, January 8

11:00 am

Bible Study

1:00 pm

Finance Committee

6:00 pm

Bell Choir

7:00 pm

Adult Choir

Thursday, January 9

9:00 am

Property Committee

Friday, January 10

3:45 pm

Violin Lessons

Saturday, January 11

9:00 am

Take Down Christmas Decorations

Sunday, January 12

8:30 am

EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

10:00 am

Blended Worship Svc.-Communion

11:00 am

Brunch and a Movie

Worship Svc.-Communion

LESSONS:

JANUARY 12, 2025

FIRST READING

Isaiah 60:1-6

PSALM

Psalms 72:1-7, 10-14

SECOND READING

Ephesians 3:1-12

GOSPEL

Matthew 2:1-12

-ANNOUNCEMENTS-

SOUP-ER BOWL IS ON

Support your favorite team—Shannon's Super Duper Tomato Soup-ers or Karen's CHICNS (Creating Hope in Chicken Noodle Soup) by bringing in cans of Tomato and/or Chicken Noodle Soup.

BIBLE STUDY RESUMES

Bible Study with Pastor Marleen will resume **Wednesday, January 8, at 11:00 am in the parlor. ALL ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND!**

UNDECK THE HALLS

Volunteers are needed to help take down the Christmas decorations. We will be meeting at the church at **9:00 am on Saturday, January 11.** Please consider volunteering.

BRUNCH AND A MOVIE

On **January 12 at about 10:00 am**, we will watch the new movie *Bonhoeffer* in Fellowship hall. Bring a brunch dish to share or simply come enjoy what we provide.

WOMEN IN GOD'S SERVICE (WinGS)

All are welcome to join the WinGS group on **Tuesday, January 14, at 6:30 pm** in Fellowship Hall. They will be holding their annual Chinese Auction gift swap game. Each individual is asked to bring 2 wrapped gifts. These items can be something you no longer want, something you received but would like to regift, or if you prefer—but not necessary—something new. In addition, please bring a snack to share. Come and join in the fun with this wonderful group of faithful women.

ROLLER SKATING PARTY

On **February 10**, join us at Olympic Skating in Enola from **6:00 pm—8:00 pm** for an evening of roller skating. Bring your own skates or rent them for \$3.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES

St. Mark will have Ash Wednesday services at **Noon and 7:00 pm on Wednesday, March 5.** Join us as we start the Lenten journey to the cross with Jesus.

LENTEN BREAD AND BROTH SUPPERS

Come share a soup meal with your friends at St. Mark in our Fellowship Hall at 5:30 pm every Wednesday evening in Lent (March 12-April 9). After each meal, we hope you join us in the sanctuary for an interactive service as we explore the Bible's "metanarrative." There will be separate special activities for kids during each service.

ALTAR FLOWER SPONSORSHIP PROCEDURES FOR 2025

The cost will be \$25 for one vase and \$50 for two vases. Altar Flower Sponsorship Forms are available at the church entrances or by contacting Connie Kuntz at 717-503-5244. If you wish to sponsor flowers, please complete the form and place it in the offering plate with your check/cash or mail to the church office. ***Checks should be made payable to St. Mark Lutheran Church and note "Altar Guild" in the memo line.*** If you desire to sponsor on a special date, then please complete your requests for 2025 as soon as possible and provide the appropriate amount. Others may desire the same date so if you are willing to share the date, please indicate that on the form. You can also sponsor one vase and allow someone else to sponsor the other.

PLEASE NOTE: We are in need of sponsors for January 12, January 26, February 16, and February 23.

YOUNG AT HEART HONORED AT ST. MARK

As we completed acknowledging several of the "Over 85, Young at Heart" members of our congregation during 2024 worship services, we would also like to thank and acknowledge the following individuals for their time and service to our congregation:

Charlene Albert

Jean Eckert

Walt Fake

Diann Foltz

Betty Kearney

Mary Mumma

Andrea Sassaman

John Stoner

Doris Berger

Mary Jane Erby

Ed Fencil

Mary Jones

Pearl Lehmer

Velma Mumper

Dolores Stevens

It has been my honor and privilege to recognize all these individuals that have done so much for so long for our congregation.

Shannon Weaver



YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS A THING**

January 2025	Soup-er Bowl
January 11	Un-Deck the Halls
January 12	Brunch and a Movie
January 14	Women in God's Service
January 30	Ladies & Friends Night Out
February 10	Roller Skating Party
March 5	Ash Wednesday
March 12-April 19	Bread and Broth Wednesdays



The Christmas Story



ANGEL
ANIMALS
BABY
BETHLEHEM
CAMEL
DONKEY
EAST
EMMANUEL

GIFTS
GOLD
HOLY SPIRIT
INCENSE
JESUS
JOSEPH
MAGI
MANGER

MARY
MYRRH
PEACE
SAVIOR
SHEEP
SHEPHERDS
STAR
WISE MEN

Altar Flower Sponsorship Form

Please check the one that applies to your sponsorship and complete the following statements:

- In memory of _____
- In honor of _____
- To the Glory of God

Sponsor Name: _____

Sponsor Phone #: _____

Sponsor Email: _____

Date Requested: _____

- Willing to Share

Circle Payment Enclosed:

\$25.00 One Vase of Flowers

\$50.00 Both Vases of Flowers



Checks should be made payable to St. Mark Lutheran Church and note "Altar Guild" in the memo line. Place in the offering plate or mail directly to the church office



Please check any that apply!

- Flowers will be picked up by sponsor.
- Deliver one vase of flowers to shut-in or hospital
- Deliver both vases of flowers to shut-in or hospital

Please contact Connie Kuntz at 717-697-0436 with any questions.

SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

BEYOND BOUNDARIES

One difficulty with the Gospel of John as we read it in our own context is grappling with passages that draw boundaries between who is “in” and who is “out.” The gospel sometimes edges toward contempt, or at least uncharity, for those who reject Jesus’ identity and message. Historically, this gospel has been used to perpetuate anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic rhetoric, so we need to approach it with care and love.

The verses in our reading today reflect a concern with Jesus’ identity and the boundaries between those who do and those who do not accept him. Verses 10 and 11 refer to the ignorance and rejection Jesus faces on earth. The passage continues by lifting up the benefits of choosing to receive and follow Jesus: the power to become children of God (as Jesus himself is a child of God).

Because Jesus, the Word made flesh, has come to earth to reveal the grace, truth, and glory of God—a God who pours out an abundance: “grace upon grace”! (John 1:16)—we read today’s passage not as guidance about who gets cut out of God’s inheritance but, rather, as assurance of the wideness of God’s love.

Jesus will make God known to the world, despite conflicts and hostilities that might threaten this work. At many later places, the gospel also points to the expansiveness of this mission, whether the assurance in John 3 that “God so loved the [whole] world” or Jesus’ promise in John 10 that he has sheep from other folds.

We cling to a Jesus who crosses boundaries—even the final boundary of death. There are no conflicts, powers, divisions, disagreements, or hostilities that can turn Jesus away from his message of abundant life for all.