



# SAINT MARK

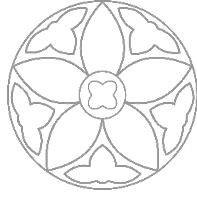
## UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

God's Grace Transforming Lives

**Sunday, December 3, 2023**  
**Eleven O'clock**

First Sunday of Advent  
Holy Communion Sunday





# 11 AM Morning Worship

*\*You are invited to stand as you are able in body and spirit.*

## The Gathering

### Words of Welcome and Grace

We welcome each of you to this service! No matter who you are or where you are from, you are a child of God, and you are welcome here!

### Prelude

### \*The Call to Worship

One: Have you seen it, the Spark of Hope which God is placing among us?

**All: All we can see are hectic lives, crowded stores, darkness, and fear.**

One: Have you not seen it, the Thread of Hope the Spirit is sewing the seams of humanity together?

**All: All we can see is division, culture wars, racial tension, and oppression.**

One: Look again...the spirit of God is moving, bringing hope.

**All: May God bring that light to us today!**

## Praise and Thanksgiving

### \*Hymn of Praise

**UMH No. 202 | People, Look East**

## The Invitation

Christ our Lord invites to his table all who love him, who earnestly repent of their sin and seek to live in peace with one another. Therefore, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

## \*Prayer of Confession & Pardon

**All: Lord of all times, we come asking your forgiveness. We acknowledge our inability at times to see you at work in the world. We long for the day when our lives will be better, when people will be better, when the world will be better, and as such we are always looking to the future. In doing so, we fail to see you in the present, and your blessings each day. Open our eyes to see and our ears to hear, so we can share the good news with others.**

One: Hear the good news: Our hope comes from the creator of all things past, present, and future. Let us remain confident and present in the work of God unfolding before us. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

**All: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.**

## \*Kyrie

**Lord, have mercy. Christ have mercy. Lord, have mercy.**

## \*The Passing of the Peace

One: The Peace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, be with you.

**All: And also, with you.**

*Let us offer each other signs of peace, reconciliation, and love.*

## Lighting of the Advent Candle

Choir: O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

One: Wherever we turn there is cause for deep concern. Children are hungry, people are unemployed or underemployed, many are unhoused, families are breaking up, politicians are pursuing self-promoting ambitions, and our government is out of touch with the masses. The center is not holding, and things are falling apart. If ever there was a time when we needed Advent, it is now. Everywhere around us we see suffering and brokenness, and we experience them even in our own lives, causing us to be teetering on the verge of despair. We need Advent!

**All: The prophet Isaiah cried out for us, “O that you would tear open the heavens and come down ... To make your name known ... so that nations might tremble at your presence.” Our cry is the same, O Lord. Tear through the brokenness in our world and in our lives and come down to us again. We long to be your people, a people of hope.**

One: We light this first candle as a sign of our hope. Hope that you will meet us, even in the brokenness and failings of our world and our lives. Hope that you still see us, though we feel we are lost in the struggle. Hope that you will seek us out and rescue us from the rubble. Let this light be the guide that brings us to Emmanuel once more.

*Light the first candle on the wreath.*

One: Fill us with your hope, Lord.

**All (sung): Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

## Concerns and Celebrations of the Congregation

### Pastoral Prayer

## Proclamation of God’s Word

### Invitation to the Offertory & Offertory Prayer

## Anthem

### **E'en So, Lord Jesus Quickly Come**

**Paul Manz**

Peace be to you and grace from him who freed us from our sin,  
Who loved us all and shed his blood that we might saved be.  
Sing holy, holy to our Lord, the Lord almighty God,  
Who was and is and is to come; sing holy, holy Lord!

Rejoice in heaven all ye that dwell therein, rejoice on earth ye saints below,  
For Christ is coming, is coming soon, for Christ is coming soon!  
E'en so, Lord, Jesus, quickly come, and night shall be no more.  
They need no light nor lamp nor sun, for Christ will be their all.

## \*Doxology

VENI EMMANUEL | *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God all creatures here below, Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Creator, Son, and Holy Ghost! Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

## Old Testament Lesson

### **Isaiah 64: 1-9**

One: The Word of God for the people of God.

**All: Thanks be to God!**

## Sermon

**Waiting for a Savior... Come Now, We Pray**

## **Response to God's Word**

### Celebration of Holy Communion

#### **UMH Page 13 | Musical Setting A**

One: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also, with you.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them up to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

One: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, God (Father) Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets, who looked for that day when justice shall roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream, when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

One: Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ, whom you sent in the fullness of time to be a light to the nations. You scatter the proud in the imagination of their hearts and have mercy on those who fear you from generation to generation. You put down the might from their thrones and exalt those of low degree. You fill the hungry with good things, and the rich you send empty away. Your own Son came among us as a servant, to be Emmanuel, your presence with us. He humbled himself in obedience to your will and freely accepted death on a cross.

By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: "*Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.*"

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: "*Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.*"

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

**All: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

One: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God (Father), now and for ever.

**All: Amen.**

## The Breaking of the Bread

### The Lord's Prayer

One: And now, with the confidence of children of God, let us pray:

**All: Our Father (God), 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. Amen.**

## The Communion of the People

### The Prayer of Dedication

**Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## **Sending Forth**

\*Hymn of Dedication

**UMH No. 706 | Soon and Very Soon**

\*Benediction

## Postlude

### **Worship Team**

**Preaching:** Rev. Dr. Carolyn Stephens, *Senior Pastor*

**Liturgists:** Madi Dunn, *Children's Minister*

Meagan Williams, *Assistant to the Pastor of Youth and Young Adults*

**Communion Servers:** Kim and Paul Winslow, *Lay Members*

**Music:** Justin Bowen, *Interim Director of Fine Arts and Organist*

**Audio Visual:** Johnny Sims, *Coordinator of Online Ministry*, Jay Drew, Deana Hilton, Anna Rader, Eric Steverson, and Julie Tootle

**Usher Team:** Buddy Wofford, *Head Usher*, Joseph Hackett, Mark Jefferson, and Russell McKinney

**Greeter Team:** Deana Hilton and David Wilson

Music reproduced within this document is done so with permission under license A-740638

### **We Welcome You**

*As a United Methodist Church, we are proud to be a congregation with open hearts, open minds, and open doors. We strive to be a congregation that embodies God's absolute love and hospitality, proclaiming Jesus as our savior and as our model of the ultimate embodiment of God's love. We believe that all persons are of sacred worth and dignity as part of God's good creation. Saint Mark United Methodist Church welcomes all persons into the full life and ministry of our congregation, regardless of race, culture, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, family, or socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability, or faith history.*





### **Attendance**

Please sign the attendance pad located at the end of your row or scan this QR code to register your attendance and share prayer requests using our online Connection Card.

### **Tithes & Offerings**

Please place your offering in the plate during this morning’s service, or use the Secure Giving App, or Saint Mark’s assigned number for text donations is 844-703-1444 and the keyword is 'operating'. To give via text, text the word ‘operating’, a space, and the amount you would like to give. For example, to give \$25, text 844-703-1444 operating 25. Your generosity allows us to love, accept and serve the people of our community.



### **We Invite You to Stay Connected with Saint Mark**

Visit [www.stmarkumc.org](http://www.stmarkumc.org) and subscribe to the newsletter on the homepage. We send our Remarks newsletter every Wednesday, a message from our Senior Pastor every Friday, and a Sunday Morning at Saint Mark email.

### **Wednesday Night Fellowship Dinners**

For reservations, please email Robert Gilleo at [RJGilleo@stmarkumc.org](mailto:RJGilleo@stmarkumc.org) or complete the Microsoft Forms survey (<https://forms.office.com/r/29Xbv198wy>) no later than 5 PM Tuesday.

### **Upcoming Meals**

November 29	Lemon Baked Salmon
December 6	Homemade Chili
December 13	Pork Tenderloin
December 20 - January 10	NO MEALS



# PRIDE FOR PARENTS

**Donations accepted from now through  
Monday, December 11, 2023.**

This year, Saint Mark is again proud to support Pride for Parents. We will collect toys through Monday, December 11, 2023 at Saint Mark or you can order directly off their Amazon and Target wish lists below. The December 11th deadline is so that they can pick up, sort, and price the toys before the store opens. The store will be officially open this year from December 14th to 23rd.

Pride for Parents is an opportunity for South Atlanta families to provide for their loved ones at Christmas. Toys and gifts area available to purchase at a reduced cost. Families from the neighborhood get to shop for that perfect toy for their loved ones. The revenue generated from the store goes right back to the community supporting affordable housing.

## **Toy donations are needed!**

Amazon Wish List: <https://tinyurl.com/4ccj8ur6>

Target Wish List: <https://tinyurl.com/4z626zs9>



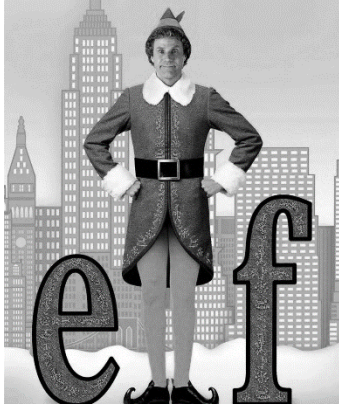
**amazon**



**TARGET®**

## **Volunteer at the Store**

Once the store is open, Pride for Parents is always welcoming the support of community partners. There are various tasks, including gift wrapping, register support, toy sorting, pricing, and stocking. If you are interested, in volunteering use the following link to register: [https://form.jotform.com/FCS\\_/pride-for-parents-join-the-joy](https://form.jotform.com/FCS_/pride-for-parents-join-the-joy)



## **Holly Jolly Family Movie Night! Friday, December 8 | 6:00 PM**

Join us for a Holly Jolly Family Movie Night!

Get ready to spread Christmas cheer with our FREE Outdoor Family Movie Night featuring the heartwarming classic, "ELF"!

Free movie, popcorn and hot cocoa for everyone!

Bring your family, friends, and your coziest blankets (and one blanket to DONATE to our Saint Mark Outreach Ministry Closet) to our festive movie night.

Dress in your comfiest PJs as this will be outside, in the neighborhood and bring your holiday spirit. Share the joy and invite your neighbors and loved ones. The more, the merrier! Let's celebrate the season with Buddy the Elf and his hilarious adventures!

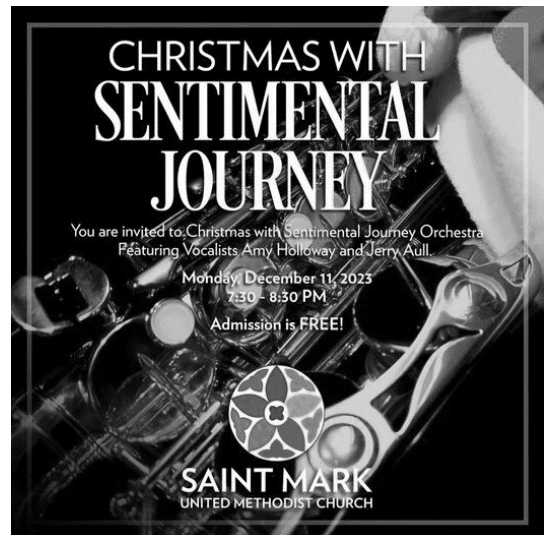
## **Christmas with Sentimental Journey Orchestra and Amy Holloway Monday, December 11 | 7:30 PM**

Join us for an unforgettable night of music and nostalgia!

Experience the magic of the season with our "Christmas with Sentimental Journey" concert, where timeless classics and heartwarming melodies come to life.

Get ready to be swept away by the enchanting sounds of the holiday season. Share this special evening with loved ones and create cherished memories.

Let's make this holiday season even more memorable together.



## **Trinity Table Volunteers Needed Today, December 3**

**December 3 | 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm**

Pass out meals at Trinity Methodist Church Table  
10 volunteers needed.

### **Come Be a Part of the Table**

For more information or to volunteer, contact Jena Mozley at [jenamozley@yahoo.com](mailto:jenamozley@yahoo.com) or text at 770-329-1445.

## **Supper Club Volunteers**

Every Tuesday afternoon, Supper Club prepares and serves a hot meal to 60 people who are in need. Similar to Breakfast Club, this ministry provides a meal to individuals in a loving and respectful environment.

In 2024, similar to Breakfast Club, we are looking for people to volunteer on a rotational basis a few times a month. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Viveca Richards at 864-884-1206 or via email at [viveca1956@gmail.com](mailto:viveca1956@gmail.com).

## **Give Poinsettias in Honor or Memory of a Loved One \$10 each | Order before December 13**

A Saint Mark tradition, the beautiful, red-leafed plants adorn our Sanctuary during the weeks leading up to Christmas Day. The plants are \$10 each (purchased from a local nursery). The last day to order for our annual poinsettias list is Wednesday, December 13. The poinsettias list will be published on Sunday, December 17, 2023.

<https://www.stmarkumc.org/store>

## **Today's Communion Offering**

Today's Communion offering goes to support Saint Mark's Outreach ministries.



ST MARK YOUNG ADULT

# CHRISTMAS PARTY

7pm

WEDNESDAY 12/20

@ AARON AND ANNA'S  
199 14TH ST NE  
APT 2003

PARKING IS TRICKY SO  
TRY TO CARPOOL  
FROM ST MARK IF  
POSSIBLE :)

WHAT TO BRING:  
A SHAREABLE SNACK  
OR DRINK  
A \$10 MAX GOOFY  
GIFT



# Christmas Poinsettia Order Form

Purchase a Christmas Poinsettia in honor or memory of someone special this Advent season. Order online at [stmarkumc.org/store](http://stmarkumc.org/store) or by completing this form and place it in the offering plate with your payment, or return both to the church office by **Thursday, December 14, 2023**.

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Your Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Your Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

<u>In HONOR of:</u>	<u># of Plants</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

<u>In MEMORY of:</u>	<u># of Plants</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



Total # of Poinsettias Ordered \_\_\_\_\_

@ \$10 Each

Total Order \_\_\_\_\_