



# SAINT MARK

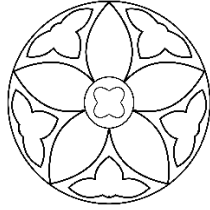
## UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

God's Grace Transforming Lives

**Sunday, February 25, 2024**  
**Eleven O'clock**

Second Sunday in Lent





## 11 AM Morning Worship

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

### The Gathering

Prelude

**Adoration**

**Florence Price**

Words of Welcome and Grace

We welcome each of you to this service! Maybe you've been here more times than you can count. Maybe it's been a while, maybe never. Here is what matters: No matter who you are or where you are from, you are a child of God, and you are welcome here!

Introit

**Weeping Mary**

**arr. Dr. Sharon J. Willis  
sung by Thressa RG. Price**

\*The Call to Worship

One: O come, let us sing to the Lord.

**All: Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.**

One: Let us come into the Lord's presence with thanksgiving

**All: Let us make joyful noise to God with songs of praise.**

One: O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!

**All: For the Lord is our God, and we belong to our God.**

## Praise and Thanksgiving

\*Hymn of Praise

**UMH No. 116 | The God of Abraham Praise**

\*Prayer of Confession & Pardon

**All: Gracious God, you have called us to walk the way of righteousness and submission. You invite us to empty ourselves so you can fill us with your presence. Yet, so often fail to follow the path of Christ, and choose to fill ourselves with the fleeting things of this world. Forgive us we pray. Turn our hearts to You, our Eternal Hope.**

One:Hear the Good News: God will never lead you where Christ has not been. Our Lord has walked the way of the cross, and will walk with you. All you need to do is to follow. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

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

\*Kyrie

**Carl Maultsby**

**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.*

Reception of New Members

Ministry Moment

**What Black History Means to Me**

**Carissa Evans**

Concerns and Celebrations of the Congregation

## Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer

**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.**

## Proclamation of God's Word

Invitation to the Offertory & Offertory Prayer

### Offertory

**Wade in the Water**

**arr. Dr. Sharon J. Willis  
sung by Thressa RG. Price**

### \*Doxology

**Take My Life and Let it Be**

**Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee.  
Take my moments and my days let them flow in ceaseless praise.  
Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of thy love.  
Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for thee.**

### The Scripture Lesson

**Romans 4:13-18a**

One: The Word of God for the people of God

**All: Thanks be to God!**

### Message for the Younger Church

All young in body or spirit are invited to the chancel area.

\*Hymn of Preparation

**UMH No. 474 | Precious Lord Take My Hand**

\*The Gospel Lesson

**Mark 8:31-38**

One: The Gospel of Our Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God!**

Sermon

**The Way of the Cross: Denying Self**

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

One: God of Solidarity, thank you for being a God who enters the suffering of the world – who doesn't run from those in pain but rushes to the site of blood and tears.

**All: Release us from those empty cravings for unity that come at no cost to the oppressor. Lead us toward spaces of costly advocacy.**

One: We confess that in speaking up on behalf of the oppressed, we too soon become enamored with the sound of our own voices. Our egos spoil even our best intentions. Show us when the voices of the vulnerable are being drowned out by the cacophony of the privileged.

**All: Make our presence and dignity known in a world that perpetually eclipses the voices of the marginalized. Guide us into a solidarity that demands something of us.**

One: Let us learn to risk ourselves on behalf of the vulnerable, believing that when one of us is harmed, we all are.

**All: And God, keep us from those who will demonize the fight in us, who would prefer us complacent and far from one another. Secure in us the courage to resist, knowing that together we will restore what the world has tried to suffocate in us. Amen.**

*Response adapted from "Black Liturgies: Prayers, Poems, and Meditations for Staying Human."*

**Cole Arthur Riley**

## \*Affirmation of Faith

### **UMH No. 886 | The World Methodist Social Affirmation**

One: We believe in God, creator of the world and of all people; and in Jesus Christ, incarnate among us, who died and rose again; and in the Holy Spirit, present with us to guide, strengthen, and comfort.

**All: We believe; God, help our unbelief.**

One: We rejoice in every sign of God's Kingdom; in the upholding of human dignity and community; in every expression of love, justice and reconciliation; in each act of self-giving on behalf of others; in the abundance of God's gifts entrusted to us that all may have enough; in all responsible use of the earth's resources.

**All: Glory be to God on high; and on earth, be peace.**

One: We confess our sin, individual and collective, by silence or action: through the violation of human dignity based on race, class, age, sex, nation, or faith; through the exploitation of people because of greed and indifference through the misuse of power in personal, communal, national, and international life; through the search for security by those military and economic forces that threaten human existence; through the abuse of technology which endangers the earth and all life upon it.

**All: Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.**

One: We commit ourselves individually and as a community to the way of Christ: to take up the cross; to seek abundant life for all humanity; to struggle for peace with justice and freedom; to risk ourselves in faith, hope, and love, praying that God's kingdom may come. The kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

## **Sending Forth**

### \*Hymn of Dedication

#### **UMH No. 534 | Be Still My Soul**

### \*Benediction

Congregational Response  
**Amen**

Postlude  
**He is King**

**arr. Robert J. Powell**

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## **Worship Team**

- Preaching:** Rev. Dr. Carolyn Stephens, *Senior Pastor*
- Liturgists:** Rev. Andy Peabody, *Associate Pastor*  
Madi Dunn, *Children's Minister*  
Meagan Williams, *Assistant Minister for Young Adults*  
Luke Murphy, *Youth Intern*
- Music:** Justin Bowen, *Interim Director of Fine Arts and Organist*
- Audio Visual:** Johnny Sims, *Coordinator of Online Ministry*, Nikki and Tiffany Baltazar, Jay Drew, Deana Hilton, Hayden McArthur, Anna Rader, Paul Spencer, Eric Steverson, and Julie Tootle
- Usher Team:** Buddy Wofford, *Head Usher*, Joel Black, Bob Brown, Deana Hilton, and Yin Xu-Moore
- Greeter Team:** Andy and Pam Davis

## **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.

## **Current COVID-19 Safety Guidelines**

If you are sick, please stay home. If you have come into contact with someone positive for COVID-19, follow the precautions recommended by the CDC. In order to care for our collective well-being, we strongly recommend that anyone who is eligible to be vaccinated do so, especially before participating in indoor activities.





## 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.

## Tithes & Offerings

Please place your offering in the plate during this morning's service, or use one of the QR codes below. Your generosity allows us to love, accept and serve the people of our community.

- Using your Smartphone's camera, scan the QR Code. & follow the prompts.

### SecureGive



### PayPal



### Venmo



### Text to Give



- To give via text, scan the QR code, and replace the \$\$ in the text with the amount you would like to give. For example, to give \$25, text operating 25.

## Saint Mark Green Team Survey

Please fill out this short survey to help steer Saint Mark's engagement with environmental issues and creation care. Whether you are interested in getting involved or not, this survey will help our green team prioritize its goals.

<http://tinyurl.com/SMUMCgreenteamsurvey>

## Safe Sanctuaries Training | March 10 | After Second Service

God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong. Safe Sanctuaries is our response to this church wide challenge.

## 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. Dinner begins at 5:30 PM. Program begins at 6:00 PM. Tickets: \$10 for seniors, \$11 general



### Clint Clark-Duke: Songs of Love and Heartache

Join us for an unforgettable evening of "Songs of Love and Heartache" with **Clint Clark-Duke** on Wednesday, February 28, 2024!

# LGBTQIA+ GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP



**EVERY TUESDAY | 6 PM - 7 PM**  
March 19 - April 23  
October 29 - December 3  
VIRTUAL | FREE

A grief support group for LGBTQIA+ people and for friends and family grieving the death of a loved one from the LGBTQIA+ community. If interested, please RSVP using information below.



Barbara Ingram, Bereavement Coordinator  
[barbara.ingram@wellstar.org](mailto:barbara.ingram@wellstar.org) | (470) 732-6710

## Celebrating Black Excellence | Things to Do for Black History Month

### February 24th- 25th, 2024

#### Blacklisted! Book Fare and Conference

**Where:** Loudermilk Conference Center  
**Time:** morning or afternoon, half day tour  
**Cost:** Free through Eventbrite  
**Description:** Minibook fair and conference featuring African American authors creating work that challenges the status quo and speaks truth to power. More than 1,600 books were banned in 138 school districts across 32 states between 2021 and 2022. The vast majority featured BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) or LGBTQ+ characters or are written by BIPOC or LGBTQ+ authors. There will be moderated panel discussions, interactive exhibitions about banned books, Youth Book Fair with interactive children's activities and more.

### February 24th-25th, 2024

#### Sistah Shop Black History Month Market

**Where:** Atlantic Station (1380 Atlantic Drive NW, Suite 14125 – next to Publix)  
**Time:** 11am-6pm daily as indicated  
**Cost:** Free  
**Description:** The market will feature more than 40 Black women-owned brands, live music, giveaways, a hot chocolate bar and more.

FAITH HOPE LOVE



GIVE BLOOD

Saint Mark  
United Methodist Church  
Blood Drive

Sunday, March 3

9 a.m. – 1 p.m.



*Click or scan the QR code!*

*All donors will receive a \$20 gift card!*

All donors will receive a recognition item and a free cholesterol screening. Donors must be 16 or older, weigh at least 110 pounds, and show photo I.D. 16-year-olds require written parental permission.

**LIFESOUTH**  
Community Blood Centers



## Find your Small Group Community at Saint Mark

Now during the season of Lent, is a good time to reestablish your spiritual discipline of going to a Sunday School or Spiritual Growth class. At Saint Mark, we have 5 classes that meet on a regular basis most Sundays from about 9:45 AM until 10:45 AM.

### **Interactions**

**Room 206-207**

The Interactions class is a diverse group of individuals. Every week, we rotate between many different presenters, who cover a wide range of topics. We are an interactive group that likes to have variety in how we conduct class.

### **Faith-Seekers**

**Room 205**

All are invited to the Faith Seekers Class beginning Sunday, February 18, when Robert Giacomini will be leading the Class in the Lenten Study: The Way, Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus by Alan Hamilton. This video presentation was produced in the Holy land with Adam Hamilton actually walking in the footsteps of Jesus from his time of baptism in the Jordan River to his last days in Jerusalem. While Robert will be using the video in the presentation, an optional companion book is also immediately available through Amazon for \$14.99.

The Faith Seekers Class is a Bible oriented adult Christian education class which meets every Sunday from 9:30 AM to 10:30 AM in room 205 of the education building. Coffee and refreshments are served. Come early to enjoy fellowship and listen to favorite hymns and gospel songs.

For more information about the Faith Seekers Class and its programs, contact Jerry Becker at [JerryB390@gmail.com](mailto:JerryB390@gmail.com).

## **Foundations**

**Room 111**

Meets from 9:45-10:50 - Beginning February 18th, we will start a new Lenten Series - "Luke: Jesus and the Outsiders, Outcasts, and Outlaws." In this study pastor and bestselling author Adam Hamilton explores the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus as told in the Gospel of Luke. Through Luke's stories we find Jesus' care and compassion for all as he welcomes sinners and outcasts. As we study Luke and see Jesus' concern for those who were considered unimportant, we hear a hopeful and inspiring word for our lives today.

There is a companion book you can purchase, but it isn't required (<https://www.cokesbury.com/Luke-5?refq=Luke>) to participate, and you can attend one or all six sessions. If you have questions about the class please contact Michelle Levan 404-405-0274 or Sherri Graham who is teaching the study 404-550-7170.

## **Vision**

**Room 209**

We spend our Sunday mornings discussing our life experiences in relation to the Gospel of Jesus. We are frank, understanding, irreverent and open-minded. Please join us as we continue to churn through the daily confusion of today's world, our place in it day-to-day, and how best to apply Christianity to our complicated lives.

## **Young Adult Sunday School**

**Room 200-201**

Join us for this weekly Sunday school class for young adults to connect with others and grow in community as we dive into conversations about life and faith. Our gatherings will focus on opportunities for fellowship, collaborative discussion, and spiritual formation. Here, all questions are encouraged and topics range from the mundane to the mysterious as we seek to find meaning in all of it.

## **Children's Ministry-**

**Children's Ministry Hallway 1st floor**

The Children's ministry at Saint Mark is a growing program focused on play-based learning and finding opportunities to laugh as we learn! All Children (birth-5th grade) have a place in Children's Sunday school! During Lent, we will be exploring Jesus's ministry through the colors and traditions of the season using a mix of story, craft, and games that all children of God will enjoy! Feel free to join us as we explore coloring outside the lines and as we grow in love with the wonderful world the Lord has made!

For more information about the Children's Ministry and its programs, contact Madi Dunn at [mdunn@stmarkumc.org](mailto:mdunn@stmarkumc.org).

