



*"Proclaiming Christ to the generations...  
Equipping disciples to transform the world"*

**Special Prayers / Sick and Shut-In List:** If you hear of anyone that needs special prayer or is taken to the hospital, please contact: Rev. Eugene Matthews (443.257.2730 (cell), 410.379.0600 (home), [reveugene@comcast.net](mailto:reveugene@comcast.net))

Beverly Wright, Phillip Reese, Larry Powell, Naomi Williams (Ms. Cynthia's Mom); Hayden Harris (Gemma's cousin), Floyd Hughes Sr., Leah Henry, Sonja Smith, Marvin Hebron, Shelford Henry, Francis Desouza (Gemma's son), Eric Smith, Brian Bailey, Nena Hughes, Gloria Thomas, Jeanette Reeves, Rev. George F. DeFord, Wanda Dumas, Tyrone / Pat Mundell, Joan Moore, Ernestine Gibson, Mildred Awkward, Grace Elaine Catchings, James Matthews, Birdie Walker, Paul Browder, Lamar Payne, Kevin Miller, Nancy Daniels, Hannah Polk

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**St. Mark's United Methodist Church**

601 Eighth Street | Laurel, Maryland 20707

301.776.8885 | [stmarksmd@gmail.com](mailto:stmarksmd@gmail.com)

**Third Sunday of Advent: Joy**



*"We come together at St. Mark's to praise God, celebrate His love for us, and grow together in Christ by equipping the people of God to implement and spread His Word to the world."*

**Rev. Eugene W. Matthews, Pastor**

401.379.0600 | 443.257.2730 (cell) | [reveugene@comcast.net](mailto:reveugene@comcast.net)

**Bishop LaTrelle Millet Easterling**

Baltimore/Washington Conference

**Rev. Sarah Schlieckert**

District Superintendent  
for the Southern Annapolis Region

*Welcome, as we gather here to worship!*

*Sunday, December 12, 2021*

*Third Sunday of Advent: Joy*

*Order of Service*

*Ushers: Elaine Harvey and Joseph Daniels*

*Sister Venita Stratford, Worship Leader*

**Prelude** ..... **Brother Henry Tindal**

**Lighting of the Candles** ..... **Usher**

**Gathering Song**..... **St. Mark's Choir/Congregation**

***“Sweet, Sweet Spirit”***

There's a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place, and I know that it's the spirit of the Lord; There are sweet expressions on each face, and I know they feel the presence of the Lord. Sweet holy Spirit, sweet heavenly Dove, stay right here with us filling us with your love; and for these blessings we lift our hearts in praise; without a doubt we'll know that we have been revived when we shall leave this place.

**Greeting/Call to Worship** ..... **Sister Venita Stratford**

**Leader:** The Lord has done great things for us!

**People:** **Our mouths are filled with laughter and “JOY”.**

**Leader:** The Lord has done great things for us.!

**People:** **That which was parched is now watered anew.**

**Leader:** The Lord has done great things for us.

**People:** **Tears of sorrow has now turned to “JOY”.**

**Leader:** The Lord has done great things for Us.

**All:** **The Lord has done great things for us let's shout for “JOY, JOY”.**



**Note from Finance:** First, let us give a big thank you to all that have been giving. This is a reminder that there are several ways to get your offering to the church:

1. You can drop it off at the church and place it in church mailbox
2. You can mail it to the church (601 Eighth Street, Laurel, MD 20707)
3. You can use on-line giving (Give–St. Marks — <https://www.shelbygiving.com/app/giving/stmarks1md>)

Again, thank you. Just remember, even during the pandemic, the church building still has obligations that need to be met.

# Announcements

**Pastor's Hrs.** — Tuesday and Thursday (11:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.)

**Millicent Hrs.** — Tuesday and Thursday (10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.)

## Pray Daily at Noon

Please remember to pray daily at NOON. Some areas to include in your prayer, can include the pandemic, racial healing, government leaders, educational challenges, and most importantly for our sick and shut-ins and each other.



“A FRESH START (NOW)” — We desire to have many members as possible active in all the various areas of Ministry.

**Tuesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>** (7:00 p.m.) — Men's Bible Study.

Zoom information/call in: [Click Here To Join Zoom Meeting](#).

Copy and paste into your browser if the link above does not work:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84876087048?pwd=K201NEwzWmpl](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84876087048?pwd=K201NEwzWmplMFZMenVqTnJlL0d0QT09)

[MFZMenVqTnJlL0d0QT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84876087048?pwd=K201NEwzWmplMFZMenVqTnJlL0d0QT09); **Meeting ID:** 848 7608 7048,

**Passcode:** 803201; **Phone Option** — One tap mobile:

+13017158592,,84876087048#,,,,\*803201# US (Washington DC)

**Wednesday Night Experience** (7:00 p.m.) — This is our weekly Bible Study, based on the Wednesday reading in Upper Room.

**Call in #267.807.9611; Access Code: 331960**

**Thursday, December 16<sup>th</sup>** (7:00 p.m.) — **Choir Rehearsal**

**Fingers and Toes Initiative** — Eli Coffen is participating in a Fingers and Toes Initiative. Over the next couple of Sundays if you could please, in a gallon bag, put a six-pack of socks (babies thru teenagers) and a pair of gloves to share with the less fortunate.

**Christmas Tree Ornaments for Sale** — The Laurel History Museum has unveiled its 2021 ornament of a famous tree in The Laurel Grove. The cost is \$20.00. Several years ago, the Laurel Museum featured a Christmas ornament displaying the image of our St. Mark's church. The cost is \$20.00. You may purchase both ornaments for \$35.00. Both ornaments are here and ready to be purchased. Please see Jackie Jones, Sandy Johnson or Millicent George after the worship service. If paying by check, please write checks to The Laurel Historical Society.

**Hymn of Praise**.....**St. Mark's Choir/Congregation**  
*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

<sup>1</sup> Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King: peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!” Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies; with th'angelic hosts proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!” Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King”

<sup>2</sup> Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord, late in time behold him come, offspring of the Virgin's womb: veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th'incarnate Deity, pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel. Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King”

<sup>3</sup> Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness! Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings. Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die, born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth. Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King”

**Prayer of Confession and Assurance** (*In Unison*)

It is getting more and more difficult, Lord, for us to keep our attention on the holy things. Our lives are caught up in the planning, parties, gifts, and other such things. We get side-tracked too easily and exhausted, we fall into restless sleep. The cries of those in need abound and we are overwhelmed by the need. Too often we turn a deaf ear because we feel we just can't meet all the needs that are presented to us. Heal our hearts and spirits, Lord. Help us understand that you do not ask us to heal everything but rather to find a simple way in which we might lighten someone else's burden, as you have lightened our lives. You have brought hope and peace to us. Now cause us to rejoice in the wondrous things that you have done. Teach us to use our gifts for the common good, and that in helping, we find great and abundant joy. In Jesus' Name, we pray. **Amen.**

**The Lord's Prayer** (*sung*)

**The Invocation**..... **Sister Venita Stratford**  
**Song of Meditation**..... **St. Mark's Choir**

## *Lighting of Advent Candle: Joy*

**Scripture Reading #1** ..... **Sister Venita Stratford**  
(*Isaiah 12:2–6*, *Common English Bible*)

<sup>2</sup> God is indeed my salvation;

I will trust and won't be afraid.

Yah, the Lord, is my strength and my shield;  
he has become my salvation."

<sup>3</sup> You will draw water with joy from the springs of salvation.

<sup>4</sup> And you will say on that day:

"Thank the Lord; call on God's name;  
proclaim God's deeds among the peoples;  
declare that God's name is exalted.

<sup>5</sup> Sing to the Lord, who has done glorious things;  
proclaim this throughout all the earth."

<sup>6</sup> Shout and sing for joy, city of Zion,  
because the holy one of Israel is great among you.

**Scripture Reading #2** ..... **Sister Venita Stratford**  
(*Philippians 4:4–7*, *Common English Bible*)

<sup>4</sup> Be glad in the Lord always! Again I say, be glad! <sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness show in your treatment of all people. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup> Don't be anxious about anything; rather, bring up all of your requests to God in your prayers and petitions, along with giving thanks. <sup>7</sup> Then the peace of God that exceeds all understanding will keep your hearts and minds safe in Christ Jesus.

**Selection** ..... **St. Mark's Choir**

**Blessing of the Offering** ..... **Sister Venita Stratford**  
**Offertory**

**Scripture Reading #3** ..... **Sister Venita Stratford**  
(*Luke 3:7–18*, *Common English Bible*)

<sup>7</sup> Then John said to the crowds who came to be baptized by him, "You children of snakes! Who warned you to escape from the angry judgment that is coming soon? <sup>8</sup> Produce fruit that shows you have changed your hearts and lives. And don't even think about saying to yourselves, Abraham is our father. I tell you that God is able to raise up Abraham's children from these stones. <sup>9</sup> The ax is already at the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree that

doesn't produce good fruit will be chopped down and tossed into the fire."

<sup>10</sup> The crowds asked him, "What then should we do?"

<sup>11</sup> He answered, "Whoever has two shirts must share with the one who has none, and whoever has food must do the same."

<sup>12</sup> Even tax collectors came to be baptized. They said to him, "Teacher, what should we do?"

<sup>13</sup> He replied, "Collect no more than you are authorized to collect."

<sup>14</sup> Soldiers asked, "What about us? What should we do?"

He answered, "Don't cheat or harass anyone, and be satisfied with your pay."

**The Gloria Patri – "Glory Be to the Father" (Hymnal, #71)**

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.  
**Amen.**

**Hymn of Preparation** ..... **St. Mark's Choir**

**Inspirational Message** ..... **Rev. Eugene W. Matthews**

## *"The Gift of Joy"*

**Praise and Prayer Concerns**

**Invitation / Altar Call**

**Invitation Selection**

**Acknowledgement of Visitors**

**Announcements**

**Benediction**