

St. Mark's United Methodist Church

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"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

443.257.2730 | reveugene@comcast.net

Rev. Dr. George F. DeFord, Pastor Emeritus

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, February 5, 2023
Black History Month
Fifth Sunday After the Epiphany



Ushers:
Joseph Daniels and Ralph Laguerre

Order of Service

Rev. Eugene Matthews, Worship Leader

Prelude **Rev. Henry Tindel**

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 **Rev. Eugene Matthews**

Leader: We come celebrating the gifts of people of color.

People: We come to celebrate our contributions to the wider church and world.

Leader: We come to celebrate our African Roots.

People: We come to celebrate the most High God who has been with us all of our days.

ALL: We come to LIFT OUR VOICE and SING!!

Hymn of Praise **Choir / Congregation**

“Lift Every Voice”

1. Lift every voice and sing, till earth and heaven ring,
ring with the harmonies of liberty;
let our rejoicing rise high as the listening skies,
let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us;
sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
let us march on till victory is won.

2. Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod,
felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet
come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered;
we have come, treading our path thru the blood of the slaughtered, out from the gloomy past,
till now we stand at last
where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.
3. God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
thou who hast by thy might led us into the light,
keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met thee; lest our hearts drunk with
the wine of the world, we forget thee; shadowed beneath thy hand, may we forever stand,
true to our God, true to our native land.

Prayer of Confession and Assurance (*Unison*)

Loving God, often we have been unfaithful people. However, you have created us in your image and breathed the breath of life into us and yet we have not kept our covenant with you. We sometimes have marred your image and done deeds of death to ourselves and others. In the name of the Risen Christ have mercy upon us, blot out our sins and forgive us. **Amen.**

The Invocation..... **Rev. Eugene Matthews**
Song of Meditation..... **St. Mark's Choir**

The Prayer of Illumination (*In Unison*)

Guide us, O God, by your Word and Holy Spirit, that in your light we may see light, in your truth find freedom, and in your will discover peace, through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Scripture Reading #1 **Rev. Eugene Matthews**
(*Isaiah 58:1–12, Common English Bible*)

58 Shout loudly; don't hold back;
raise your voice like a trumpet!
Announce to my people their crime,
to the house of Jacob their sins.
²They seek me day after day,
desiring knowledge of my ways
like a nation that acted righteously,
that didn't abandon their God.
They ask me for righteous judgments,
wanting to be close to God.
³"Why do we fast and you don't see;
why afflict ourselves and you don't notice?"
Yet on your fast day you do whatever you want,
and oppress all your workers.
⁴You quarrel and brawl, and then you fast;
you hit each other violently with your fists.
You shouldn't fast as you are doing today
if you want to make your voice heard on high.

⁵ Is this the kind of fast I choose,
 a day of self-affliction,
 of bending one's head like a reed
 and of lying down in mourning clothing and ashes?
 Is this what you call a fast,
 a day acceptable to the Lord?

⁶ Isn't this the fast I choose:
 releasing wicked restraints, untying the ropes of a yoke,
 setting free the mistreated,
 and breaking every yoke?

⁷ Isn't it sharing your bread with the hungry
 and bringing the homeless poor into your house,
 covering the naked when you see them,
 and not hiding from your own family?

⁸ Then your light will break out like the dawn,
 and you will be healed quickly.
 Your own righteousness will walk before you,
 and the Lord's glory will be your rear guard.

⁹ Then you will call, and the Lord will answer;
 you will cry for help, and God will say, "I'm here."
 If you remove the yoke from among you,
 the finger-pointing, the wicked speech;

¹⁰ if you open your heart to the hungry,
 and provide abundantly for those who are afflicted,
 your light will shine in the darkness,
 and your gloom will be like the noon.

¹¹ The Lord will guide you continually
 and provide for you, even in parched places.
 He will rescue your bones.
 You will be like a watered garden,
 like a spring of water that won't run dry.

¹² They will rebuild ancient ruins on your account;
 the foundations of generations past you will restore.
 You will be called Mender of Broken Walls,
 Restorer of Livable Streets.

Scripture Reading #2 **Rev. Eugene Matthews**
(1 Corinthians 2:1-16, Common English Bible)

² When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I didn't come preaching God's secrets to you like I was an expert in speech or wisdom. ² I had made up my mind not to think about anything while I was with you except Jesus Christ, and to preach him as crucified. ³ I stood in front of you with weakness, fear, and a lot of shaking. ⁴ My message and my preaching weren't presented with convincing wise words but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power. ⁵ I did this so that your faith might not depend on the wisdom of people but on the power of God.

⁶ What we say is wisdom to people who are mature. It isn't a wisdom that comes from the present day or from today's leaders who are being reduced to nothing. ⁷ We talk about God's wisdom, which has been hidden as a secret. God determined this wisdom in advance, before time began, for our glory. ⁸ It is a wisdom that none of the present-day rulers have understood, because if they did understand it, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory! ⁹ But this is

precisely what is written: *God has prepared things for those who love him that no eye has seen, or ear has heard, or that haven't crossed the mind of any human being.* ¹⁰ God has revealed these things to us through the Spirit. The Spirit searches everything, including the depths of God. ¹¹ Who knows a person's depths except their own spirit that lives in them? In the same way, no one has known the depths of God except God's Spirit. ¹² We haven't received the world's spirit but God's Spirit so that we can know the things given to us by God. ¹³ These are the things we are talking about—not with words taught by human wisdom but with words taught by the Spirit—we are interpreting spiritual things to spiritual people. ¹⁴ But people who are unspiritual don't accept the things from God's Spirit. They are foolishness to them and can't be understood, because they can only be comprehended in a spiritual way. ¹⁵ Spiritual people comprehend everything, but they themselves aren't understood by anyone. ¹⁶ *Who has known the mind of the Lord, who will advise him?* But we have the mind of Christ.

Selection **St. Mark's Choir**

Acknowledgement of Visitors /

Announcements **Rev. Eugene Matthews**

Blessing of the Offering **Rev. Eugene Matthews**
Offertory

Scripture Reading #3 (Gospel)..... **Rev. Eugene Matthews**
(Matthew 5:13–20, Common English Bible)

¹³“You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its saltiness, how will it become salty again? It's good for nothing except to be thrown away and trampled under people's feet. ¹⁴ You are the light of the world. A city on top of a hill can't be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead, they put it on top of a lampstand, and it shines on all who are in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before people, so they can see the good things you do and praise your Father who is in heaven.

¹⁷“Don't even begin to think that I have come to do away with the Law and the Prophets. I haven't come to do away with them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸ I say to you very seriously that as long as heaven and earth exist, neither the smallest letter nor even the smallest stroke of a pen will be erased from the Law until everything there becomes a reality. ¹⁹ Therefore, whoever ignores one of the least of these commands and teaches others to do the same will be called the lowest in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever keeps these commands and teaches people to keep them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ I say to you that unless your righteousness is greater than the righteousness of the legal experts and the Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

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. Dr. George F. DeFord**

“Make a Difference”

“¹³ These are the things we are talking about—not with words taught by human wisdom but with words taught by the Spirit—we are interpreting spiritual things to spiritual people. ¹⁴ But people

who are unspiritual don't accept the things from God's Spirit. They are foolishness to them and can't be understood, because they can only be comprehended in a spiritual way. ¹⁵ Spiritual people comprehend everything, but they themselves aren't understood by anyone. ¹⁶ *Who has known the mind of the Lord, who will advise him?* But we have the mind of Christ.

1 Corinthians 2:13-16, Common English Bible

Praise and Prayer Concerns **Rev. Dr. George F. DeFord**

Invitation / Altar Call **Rev. Dr. George F. DeFord**
Invitation Selection

Holy Communion

Rev. Eugene W. Matthews, Celebrant

Thanksgiving and Communion

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. You have made from one every nation and people to live on all the face of the earth, And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

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.

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. 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. He commissioned us to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth and to make disciples of all nations, and today his family in all the world is joining at his holy table.

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.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

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.

Renew our communion with your Church throughout the world, and strengthen it in every nation and among every people to witness faithfully in your name.

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 Father, now and for ever. **Amen.**

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

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

Breaking the Bread

Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf. The bread which we break is a sharing in the body of Christ.

The cup over which we give thanks is a sharing in the blood of Christ.

Giving the Bread and Cup

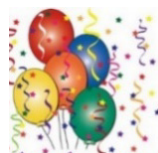
The body of Christ, given for you. Amen.

The blood of Christ, given for you. Amen.

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

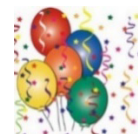
in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, **Amen.**

Benediction



Happy Birthday February Members

Birthday



Jeffrey King — 10th
Nena Hughes — 16th

Charles Gregg — 27th
Charlotte Thomas — 29th

Heavenly Birthdays



Ellen Gibson — 8th
William Gibson — 14th
Eleanora Davis — 14th

Elva Wesley — 17th
Ellen Brooks — 20th
Bessie Matthews — 25th

William & Ellen's Anniversary — 17th

Announcements

Reminder from Pastor Matthews: With the new variants of Covid, please remember to wear your mask while you are in the sanctuary.

Worship Attendance — 01/29/2023

In-Person	54
Zoom	15
Total	69
January Average: 65	

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.



Yearly Contributions are ready for pick up in the Finance Room after Church

Tuesday Women's Roundtable (6:30 p.m.) — Join Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88571184455?pwd=UmpvVERkcjkyVFV0VHR1YlJxK284Zz09>,

Meeting ID: 885 7118 4455; **Passcode:** 459563

One tap mobile: +13017158592, 88571184455#, *459563#

Wednesday Night Experience (7:15 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, February 9th (7:00 p.m.) — **Choir rehearsal**

Sunday February 12th (morning service) — **A Service of Commissioning Class Leaders.** This service will officially commence St. Mark's newest ministry (Class Leader Ministry).

Friday, February 17th (11:00 a.m.) — **Variety Dinner** sponsored by Emancipation Committee (call church to order – 301.776.8885). Dinner: ½ Chicken (White/Dark meat or Fried Fish), Fresh Greens, Baked Beans, Potato Salad, Bread, no substitutions). **Donation: \$18.50.** Side orders – \$2.00 each, desserts – \$2.00 and sodas – \$1.00. If you have additional questions, please talk with member of committee: Tommy, Tiara, Patricia, Larry or Tina). Thank you in advance for your participation.

Sunday, February 19th (following service) — In recognition of Black History Month, **Stamp Exhibition** presented by Mr. Gregg. Light fanfare will be served.

Wednesday, February 22nd (7:00 p.m.) — **Ash Wednesday** service — this service will be held in church and on Zoom. If you are on Zoom, please have ashes available for blessing.

Sacred Grounds: Free Native Plants! Our Mother's Day Native Plant giveaway has been scheduled for **Sunday, May 14, 2023.** To receive plants, please register online at <https://www.nwf/NativePlantPledge>. If you have questions, please contact Jackie Jones.

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/stmarks/md>)

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



*“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), reveugene@comcast.net.

Elizabeth Day, Rev. Henry Tindal, Rev. George F. DeFord, Janet Carey, Lafayette Harvey, All branches of the Military, Bernice Jackson, Brenda Jackson, Floyd Hughes Sr., Shawn Settles, Jannette Shuford-Reeves, Chantel Ashley, Beverly Wright, Phillip Reese, Naomi Williams (Ms. Cynthia's Mom), Leah Henry, Sonja Smith, Marvin Hebron, Francis Desouza (Gemma's son), Eric Smith, Nena Hughes, Gloria Thomas, Wanda Dumas, Tyrone Mundell, Ernestine Gibson, James Matthews, Birdie Walker, Paul Browder, Lamar Payne, Kevin Miller, Hannah Polk

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