

St. Mark's United Methodist Church

601 Eighth Street | Laurel, Maryland 20707

301.776.8885 | stmarksmd@gmail.com



"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

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, September 25, 2022

Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost

Annual Homecoming

“God Is Not Through With Us Yet”

“I’m sure about this: the one who started a good work in you will stay with you to complete the job by the day of Christ Jesus”. Philippians 1:6 (CEB)

Order of Service

Ushers:

Joseph Daniels, Ralph Laguerre, Thomas Matthews

Sister Erica Roy, Worship Leader

PreludeRev. 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 WorshipSister Erica Roy

Leader: For welcoming us here today.

People: We bless you, Lord.

Leader: For your grace and merciful generosity.

People: We bless you, Lord.

Leader: For drawing us in, for the promise of new life and hope.

People: We bless you, Lord.

**All: We are here to offer you our worship and praise. Let
all God's people praise your holy name.**

Hymn of Praise..... Choir/Congregation

"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

- 1 Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
there is no shadow of turning with thee;
thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not;
as thou hast been, thou forever wilt be.

Refrain:

Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed thy hand hath provided;
great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

- 2 Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
join with all nature in manifold witness
to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. ***Refrain***

- 3 Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! ***Refrain***

Prayer of Confession and Assurance (*Unison*)

We confess that we come to you as imperfect people. We are sinners who need redeeming: we are lost without your love. Forgive us for insisting on our own way. Forgive us for holding you and others at arm's length. Forgive us for not welcoming others as we should. Relying on Jesus Christ as our advocate, we lean into your promised victory over evil, and pray for reconciliation with you. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer (*sung*)

The Invocation.....Sister Erica Roy
Song of Meditation St. Mark's Choir

The Prayer of Illumination (*Unison*)

O God, your Word is more precious than fine gold and sweeter than purest honey. As we turn to your scripture, send your Holy Spirit to infuse your Word with truth and grace so that the good news of your love would shine before our eyes and delight our senses. In the name of Jesus we pray.

Scripture Reading #1Sister Erica Roy
(*Jeremiah 32:1–3a, 6–15, King James Version*)

Nothing is too hard for the Lord

32 Jeremiah received the Lord's word in the tenth year of Judah's King Zedekiah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar's rule. ² At that time, the army of the Babylonian king had surrounded Jerusalem, and the prophet Jeremiah was confined to the prison quarters in the palace of Judah's king. ³ Judah's King Zedekiah had Jeremiah sent there after questioning him: "Why do you prophesy, 'This is what the Lord says: I'm handing this city over to the king of Babylon, and he will occupy it;

⁶ Jeremiah said, The Lord's word came to me: ⁷ Your cousin Hanamel, Shallum's son, is on his way to see you; and when he arrives, he will tell you: "Buy my field in Anathoth, for by law you are next in line to purchase it." ⁸ And just as the Lord had said, my cousin Hanamel showed up at the prison quarters and told me, "Buy my field in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, for you are next in line and have a family obligation to purchase it." Then I was sure this was the Lord's doing.

⁹ So I bought the field in Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel, and weighed out for him seventeen shekels of silver. ¹⁰ I signed the deed, sealed it, had it witnessed, and weighed out the silver on the scales. ¹¹ Then I took the deed of purchase—the sealed copy, with its terms and conditions, and the unsealed copy— ¹² and gave it to Baruch, Neriah's son and Mahseiah's grandson, before my cousin Hanamel and the witnesses named in the deed, as well as before all the Judeans who were present in the prison quarters. ¹³ I charged Baruch before all of them: ¹⁴ "The Lord of heavenly forces, the God of Israel, proclaims: Take these documents—this sealed deed

of purchase along with the unsealed one—and put them into a clay container so they will last a long time. ¹⁵ The Lord of heavenly forces, the God of Israel, proclaims: Houses, fields, and vineyards will again be bought in this land.”

Selection St. Mark’s Choir

Scripture Reading #2Sister Erica Roy
(*Philippians 1:1–30, Common English Bible*)

Greeting

1 From Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus.

To all those in Philippi who are God’s people in Christ Jesus,
along with your supervisors and servants.

² May the grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Thanksgiving and prayer

³ I thank my God every time I mention you in my prayers. ⁴ I’m thankful for all of you every time I pray, and it’s always a prayer full of joy. ⁵ I’m glad because of the way you have been my partners in the ministry of the gospel from the time you first believed it until now. ⁶ I’m sure about this: the one who started a good work in you will stay with you to complete the job by the day of Christ Jesus. ⁷ I have good reason to think this way about all of you because I keep you in my heart. You are all my partners in God’s grace, both during my time in prison and in the defense and support of the gospel. ⁸ God is my witness that I feel affection for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus.

⁹ This is my prayer: that your love might become even more and more rich with knowledge and all kinds of insight. ¹⁰ I pray this so that you will be able to decide what really matters and so you will be sincere and blameless on the day of Christ. ¹¹ I pray that you will then be filled with the fruit of righteousness, which comes from Jesus Christ, in order to give glory and praise to God.

Priority of the gospel

¹² Brothers and sisters, I want you to know that the things that have happened to me have actually advanced the gospel. ¹³ The whole Praetorian Guard and everyone else knows that I’m in prison for Christ. ¹⁴ Most of the brothers and sisters have had more

confidence through the Lord to speak the word boldly and bravely because of my jail time. ¹⁵ Some certainly preach Christ with jealous and competitive motives, but others preach with good motives. ¹⁶ They are motivated by love, because they know that I'm put here to give a defense of the gospel; ¹⁷ the others preach Christ because of their selfish ambition. They are insincere, hoping to cause me more pain while I'm in prison.

¹⁸ What do I think about this? Just this: since Christ is proclaimed in every possible way, whether from dishonest or true motives, I'm glad and I'll continue to be glad. ¹⁹ I'm glad because I know that this will result in my release through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. ²⁰ It is my expectation and hope that I won't be put to shame in anything. Rather, I hope with daring courage that Christ's greatness will be seen in my body, now as always, whether I live or die. ²¹ Because for me, living serves Christ and dying is even better. ²² If I continue to live in this world, I get results from my work. ²³ But I don't know what I prefer. I'm torn between the two because I want to leave this life and be with Christ, which is far better. ²⁴ However, it's more important for me to stay in this world for your sake. ²⁵ I'm sure of this: I will stay alive and remain with all of you to help your progress and the joy of your faith, ²⁶ and to increase your pride in Christ Jesus through my presence when I visit you again.

Live worthy of the gospel

²⁷ Most important, live together in a manner worthy of Christ's gospel. Do this, whether I come and see you or I'm absent and hear about you. Do this so that you stand firm, united in one spirit and mind as you struggle together to remain faithful to the gospel.

²⁸ That way, you won't be afraid of anything your enemies do. Your faithfulness and courage are a sign of their coming destruction and your salvation, which is from God. ²⁹ God has generously granted you the privilege, not only of believing in Christ but also of suffering for Christ's sake. ³⁰ You are having the same struggle that you saw me face and now hear that I'm still facing.

Tithes and Offering

Blessing of Offering.....Sister Erica Roy

Selection St. Mark's Choir

Occasions for celebration

15 All the tax collectors and sinners were gathering around Jesus to listen to him. ² The Pharisees and legal experts were grumbling, saying, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

³ Jesus told them this parable: ⁴ “Suppose someone among you had one hundred sheep and lost one of them. Wouldn’t he leave the other ninety-nine in the pasture and search for the lost one until he finds it? ⁵ And when he finds it, he is thrilled and places it on his shoulders. ⁶ When he arrives home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Celebrate with me because I’ve found my lost sheep.’ ⁷ In the same way, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who changes both heart and life than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need to change their hearts and lives.

⁸ “Or what woman, if she owns ten silver coins and loses one of them, won’t light a lamp and sweep the house, searching her home carefully until she finds it? ⁹ When she finds it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Celebrate with me because I’ve found my lost coin.’ ¹⁰ In the same way, I tell you, joy breaks out in the presence of God’s angels over one sinner who changes both heart and life.”

¹¹ Jesus said, “A certain man had two sons. ¹² The younger son said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the inheritance.’ Then the father divided his estate between them. ¹³ Soon afterward, the younger son gathered everything together and took a trip to a land far away. There, he wasted his wealth through extravagant living.

¹⁴ “When he had used up his resources, a severe food shortage arose in that country and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ He hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ He longed to eat his fill from what the pigs ate, but no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have more than enough food, but I’m starving to death!

Doxology – “Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures
here be low; praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father,
Son, and Holy Ghost. **Amen.**

Introduction of SpeakerSister Erica Roy

Hymn of Preparation St. Mark’s Choir

Inspirational Message..... Rev. Dr. Sonia L. King
Brooklyn Community UMC
Brooklyn Park, MD

“It Ain’t Over”

Praise and Prayer Concerns

Invitation / Altar Call Rev. Dr. Sonia L. King
Invitation Selection St. Mark’s Choir

Welcome of Visitors

Announcements

Pastor’s Moment

Benediction



Rev. Dr. Sonia L. King is an ordained elder in the Baltimore Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church and has been under appointment since 2005. She served Asbury – Jessup, MD (2005–2009), Mt. Zion – Magoth, Pasadena, MD (2009–2014), St. Mark’s – Laurel, MD (2014–2019) and currently serving Brooklyn Community in Brooklyn Park since 2019.

Rev. Dr. King received her Doctorate in Ministry in May 2013 from Wesley Theological Seminary. Her project title: *Caring for our own: A ministry of restorative justice*. She has a passion for the least, last and the lost. It is her desire to assist churches in becoming Stations of Hope for our brothers and sisters returning from incarceration through the Healing Communities Curriculum, which she is a lead trainer.

Rev. Dr. King co–chaired the Criminal Justice and Mercy Ministry Team of the Baltimore Washington Conference along with Rev. Dr. Brian Jackson from 2010–2021 and currently serves in an advisory capacity. Currently Dr. King serves on the District Committee on Ordained Ministry, Baltimore Metro District.

In 2015, Dr. King and Dr. Jalene Chase-Sands co–authored *The Spirit of Sisterhood*, as requested by their Prince Georges County graduate chapter, Delta Zeta Zeta of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. *The Spirit of Sisterhood* is a six-week devotional written by friends who have shared a bond since tenth grade. More than any of this, Dr. King is a child of God who loves God’s people.

Announcements

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

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.



The following Bible selections are provided for this week:

September 26th – October 2nd

Day 269 — Luke 23:32–49	Day 272 — Matthew 28:8–15
Day 270 — Matthew 27:57–66	Day 273 — Luke 24:13–43
Day 271 — John 20:1–18	Day 274 — John 20:24–21:14
	Day 275 — John 21:15–25

Ladies Roundtable (6:30 p.m.) — **Tuesday, October 4th**. Zoom information forthcoming.

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, September 29th (7:00 p.m.) — **Choir** rehearsal

Sunday, October 2nd — World Communion Sunday – United Methodists, in conjunction with other denominations and believers worldwide, participate in communion to recognize our unity in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. This universal and inclusive connection is the foundation of the **special offering** for World Communion Sunday.

Note: Members of the **Outreach Ministry** will be present in St. Mark's Fellowship Hall, **Saturday, October 1st** between the hours of **11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.** for distribution of communion elements (packets) to members who will not be present for in-person worship on World Communion Sunday (October 2nd).

Saturday, October 8th (2:00 p.m.) — **“Paint & Fellowship”** — Women of St. Mark’s please join us at the church for an afternoon of fun fellowship. Image we will be painting **“LOVE”**. Everyone asked to bring a **dish to share**.

Donation for canvas and paints: **\$20**. For additional information and to RSVP, please see Ms. Cynthia.



Sunday, October 16th (10:00 a.m.) — **132nd Church Anniversary** — **“God Is Not Through With Us Yet”**. Preacher of the hour, Rev. Dr. Douglas B. Sands, Sr. **Please be present and bring a family member or friend**. If possible, a sacrificial offering is \$1 for each year is requested.

Tuesday, November 15th (6:00 p.m.) — **Annual Church Conference**. All reports are due in the Annapolis District office by **October 1st**.

Sunday, November 20th (10:00 a.m.) — **Annual Women’s Day**. Additional information forthcoming on theme and speaker (if you have any suggestions, please reach out to Women’s Day Committee (Cynthia Augustus, Charlotte and Sharon Thomas). Our color this year will be an array of Fall colors and women are asked to get a sacrificial donation of \$100.

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/stmarkslmd>)

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 (cell), 410.379.0600 (home), reveugene@comcast.net)

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

Eunice Dumas
1909 Sheffield Court
Severn, MD 21144
410.551.2435

Umbrenda Fisher
9160 Charlton Place
Douglasville, GA 39135

Ruth Miller
1206 Peachwood Ln.
Bowie, MD 20716
240.245.4560

Edlin Chambers
14904 4th Street
Laurel, MD
347.423.2764

Mildred Awkward
301 Braddock Ct., #103
Odenton, MD 21113