

St. Mark's United Methodist Church

601 Eighth Street | Laurel, Maryland 20707

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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, March 19, 2023

Women History Month

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Ushers: Sharon Thomas and Joseph Daniels

Order of Service

Sister Cynthia Augustus, Worship Leader

PreludeRev. 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 WorshipSister Cynthia Augustus

Leader: Incline your ear to me and save me.

People: Be to me a rock of refuge, a strong fortress, to save me.

Leader: For you are my rock and my fortress.

People: Rescue me, o my God, from the hand of the wicked.

Leader: My trust, O Lord, has been from my youth.

People: My praise is continually lifted up to you.

Leader: For opening our eyes that we might see.

People: We praise your name and give thanks for giving us spiritual vision.

**ALL: We Once was Blind, But Now, But Now, But Now.
GLORY...**

Hymn of Praise.....St. Mark's Choir / Congregation

"Amazing Grace"

1. Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
was blind, but now I see.
2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed.
3. Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
'tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.
4. The Lord has promised good to me,
his word my hope secures;
he will my shield and portion be,
as long as life endures.
5. Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
and mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the veil,
a life of joy and peace.
6. When we've been there ten thousand years,
bright shining as the sun,
we've no less days to sing God's praise
than when we'd first begun.

Prayer of Confession and Assurance (*Unison*)

Forgive us, O God, when your words and ways seem difficult.
Soften us when we harden our views about you and about others
into rigid opinions inflexible to the spirit's movement. Refresh us
when we parch ourselves and others dry with formulas instead of
relationships, with offense taken instead of understanding granted.
Remind us through your spirit that even when we stumble, you are
there to renew our spirits, to enlighten our minds to cast away that
which deadens us and others, and to take on that which leads to
Christ. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer (*sung*)

The Invocation.....**Sister Cynthia Augustus**
Song of Meditation **St. Mark's Choir**

The Prayer of Illumination (*In Unison*)

Gracious God, give us humble, teachable, and obedient hearts, that
we may receive what you have revealed and do what you have
commanded. May we find the power and wisdom of God in the
words we hear today.

Scripture Reading #1**Sister Cynthia Augustus**
(*1 Samuel 16:1–13, Common English Bible*)

16 The Lord said to Samuel, “How long are you going to grieve
over Saul? I have rejected him as king over Israel. Fill your horn
with oil and get going. I’m sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem
because I have found my next king among his sons.”

² “How can I do that?” Samuel asked. “When Saul hears of it he’ll
kill me!”

“Take a heifer with you,” the Lord replied, “and say, ‘I have come
to make a sacrifice to the Lord.’” ³ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I
will make clear to you what you should do. You will anoint for me
the person I point out to you.”

⁴ Samuel did what the Lord instructed. When he came to
Bethlehem, the city elders came to meet him. They were shaking
with fear. “Do you come in peace?” they asked.

⁵ “Yes,” Samuel answered. “I’ve come to make a sacrifice to the Lord. Now make yourselves holy, then come with me to the sacrifice.” Samuel made Jesse and his sons holy and invited them to the sacrifice as well.

⁶ When they arrived, Samuel looked at Eliab and thought, That must be the Lord’s anointed right in front.

⁷ But the Lord said to Samuel, “Have no regard for his appearance or stature, because I haven’t selected him. God doesn’t look at things like humans do. Humans see only what is visible to the eyes, but the Lord sees into the heart.”

⁸ Next Jesse called for Abinadab, who presented himself to Samuel, but he said, “The Lord hasn’t chosen this one either.” ⁹ So Jesse presented Shammah, but Samuel said, “No, the Lord hasn’t chosen this one.” ¹⁰ Jesse presented seven of his sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord hasn’t picked any of these.” ¹¹ Then Samuel asked Jesse, “Is that all of your boys?”

“There is still the youngest one,” Jesse answered, “but he’s out keeping the sheep.”

“Send for him,” Samuel told Jesse, “because we can’t proceed until he gets here.”

¹² So Jesse sent and brought him in. He was reddish brown, had beautiful eyes, and was good-looking. The Lord said, “That’s the one. Go anoint him.” ¹³ So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him right there in front of his brothers. The Lord’s spirit came over David from that point forward.

Then Samuel left and went to Ramah.

Scripture Reading #2 Sister Cynthia Augustus
(*Ephesians 5:8–14, Common English Bible*)

⁸ You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord, so live your life as children of light. ⁹ Light produces fruit that consists of every sort of goodness, justice, and truth. ¹⁰ Therefore, test everything to see what’s pleasing to the Lord, ¹¹ and don’t participate in the unfruitful actions of darkness. Instead, you should reveal the truth about them. ¹² It’s embarrassing to even talk about what certain persons do in secret. ¹³ But everything exposed

to the light is revealed by the light. ¹⁴ Everything that is revealed by the light is light. Therefore, it says, *Wake up, sleeper! Get up from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.*

Selection St. Mark's Choir

Acknowledgement of Visitors /

Announcements Sister Cynthia Augustus

Blessing of the Offering Sister Cynthia Augustus

Special Offering – UMCOR

Offertory

Scripture Reading #3 (Gospel)..... Sister Cynthia Augustus

(John 9:1–7, 20–25, Common English Bible)

9 As Jesus walked along, he saw a man who was blind from birth. ² Jesus' disciples asked, "Rabbi, who sinned so that he was born blind, this man or his parents?"

³ Jesus answered, "Neither he nor his parents. This happened so that God's mighty works might be displayed in him. ⁴ While it's daytime, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming when no one can work. ⁵ While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶ After he said this, he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and smeared the mud on the man's eyes. ⁷ Jesus said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (this word means *sent*). So the man went away and washed. When he returned, he could see.

²⁰ His parents answered, "We know he is our son. We know he was born blind. ²¹ But we don't know how he now sees, and we don't know who healed his eyes. Ask him. He's old enough to speak for himself." ²² His parents said this because they feared the Jewish authorities. This is because the Jewish authorities had already decided that whoever confessed Jesus to be the Christ would be expelled from the synagogue. ²³ That's why his parents said, "He's old enough. Ask him."

²⁴ Therefore, they called a second time for the man who had been born blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know this man is a sinner."

²⁵ The man answered, “I don’t know whether he’s a sinner. Here’s what I do know: I was blind and now I see.”

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

“Dealing With Blind Spots”

The man answered, “I don’t know whether he’s a sinner. Here’s what I do know, I was blind and now I see.

Matthew 9:25 (Common English Bible)

Praise and Prayer Concerns Rev. Eugene W. Matthews

Invitation / Altar Call Rev. Eugene W. Matthews

Invitation Selection

Benediction

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 — 03/12/2023	
In-Person	70
Zoom	15
Total	85

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.



CONGRATULATIONS!! Men's Day was very successful spiritually, financially, fellowship meal, and especially the message: **"Believe, Speak and Act"**. Much thanks are extended to the leadership team, Brothers Wayne Coffen, Larry Powell and Thomas Matthews. Special kudos to the Male Chorus.

Special Thanks from the DeFord's — Thank God for a blessed Men's Day service. We are most grateful for the blue and white bag filled with wonderful gifts: pastor and wife wall art, bible crossword, pens and inspirational books. Grace and Peace.



Tuesday Women's Roundtable (6:30 p.m.) — Join Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88571184455?pwd=UmpvVERkcjkyVFVoVHRlYlJxK284Zz09>,

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.**

Wednesday, March 22nd (7:00 p.m.) — **It's All Laurel: The Women of Bacontown and Mt. Zion.** Celebrate Women's History Month and the exhibit "**It's All Laurel: City Limits and Beyond**" with members of Mt. Zion United Methodist Church and Bacontown. The community located in Anne Arundel County was established by free and enslaved Black people prior to the Civil War and named after Maria Bacon. **If you are not already registered, sign up here:**

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_nU8mv2RhTdaGk-hR3-pDng

Thursday, March 23rd (7:00 p.m.) — **Choir rehearsal**

Saturday, March 25th (10:00 a.m.) — **Board of Trustee** meeting

Sunday March 26, 2023 (10:00 a.m.) — **Bring A Friend Sunday** — Invite a family member or friend to join us on service.

Friday, April 7th (Noon) — **In-Person Good Friday** service. Additional information forthcoming.

Friday, April 7th (1:00–6:00 p.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 – \$3.00 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.

Saturday, April 22nd (2:00 p.m.) — **"Shout Sister Shout"** — **Ford Theater, Washington, DC.** Donation: \$90 per person. Need 10 people to get this group rate. Contact Cynthia (301.776.2420). Please let me know if you would like to go on this outing.



Inspired by Gayle F. Wald's book *Shout, Sister, Shout!*, this new musical tells the story of Sister Rosetta Tharpe—one of America's most influential rock, R&B and gospel crossover singers and guitarists. Ambitious, courageous and uncompromisingly public, Tharpe became a pioneer of the women's movement for racial and sexual equality and musical legend who redefined the national and international music scene in the 1930s and 40s and beyond.

The **Laurel TV** conducted an interview with **Mr. Gregg** about his **Stamp Collection**. Below is the Youtube link for your viewing:
<https://youtu.be/Szc9nEICGIM>.

Special Note: Our members, Jerral and Umbrenda Fisher's niece had a fire in the Pennsylvania area and has been displaced with 6 children. Below is a link to a GoFundMe page with her story:
[Fundraiser by Mori Barksdale : Recovering from Fire \(gofundme.com\)](https://www.gofundme.com/f/fundraiser-by-mori-barksdale-recovering-from-fire). I'm sure they will appreciate whatever you can do to help.

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 www.nwf.org/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/stmarksmd>)

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.

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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