

St. Mark's United Methodist Church

601 Eighth Street | Laurel, Maryland 20707

301.776.8885 | stmarkslmd@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

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, September 17, 2023

Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost

Ushers:

Sharon Thomas and Jacqueline Vaughn

Order of Service

Sister Erica Roy, Worship Leader

Prelude..... Rev. Henry Tindal

Lighting of the Candles Usher

Gathering SongSt. 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 Erica Roy

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

"God Is A Wonder To My Soul"

God is a wonder to my soul
God is a wonder to my soul
Came into my life one day, And took all my sins away
Oh, God is a wonder to my soul.
My God's truth has set me free.
My God's truth has set me free.
Came into my life one day, And took all my sins away
My God's truth has set me free.
Now I can live abundantly.
Now I can live abundantly.
Came into my life one day, And took all my sins away
Now I can live abundantly.

Prayer of Confession and Assurance *(In 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 spirits 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 Invocation **Sister Erica Roy**

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. **Amen.**

Scripture Reading #1 **Sister Erica Roy**

(Exodus 14:19–31, Common English Bible)

¹⁹ God's messenger, who had been in front of Israel's camp, moved and went behind them. The column of cloud moved from the front and took its place behind them. ²⁰ It stood between Egypt's camp and Israel's camp. The cloud remained there, and when darkness fell it lit up the night. They didn't come near each other all night.

²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord pushed the sea back by a strong east wind all night, turning the sea into dry land. The waters were split into two. ²² The Israelites walked into the sea on dry ground. The waters formed a wall for them on their right hand and on their left. ²³ The Egyptians chased them and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and cavalry. ²⁴ As morning approached, the Lord looked down on the Egyptian camp from the column of lightning and cloud and threw the Egyptian camp into a panic. ²⁵ The Lord jammed their chariot wheels so that they wouldn't turn easily. The Egyptians said, "Let's get away from the Israelites, because the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt!"

²⁶ Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the water comes back and covers the Egyptians, their chariots, and their cavalry." ²⁷ So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. At daybreak, the sea returned to its normal depth. The Egyptians were driving toward it, and the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. ²⁸ The waters returned and covered the chariots and the cavalry, Pharaoh's entire army that had followed them into the sea. Not one of them remained. ²⁹ The Israelites, however, walked on dry ground through the sea. The waters formed a wall for them on their right hand and on their left.

³⁰ The Lord rescued Israel from the Egyptians that day. Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹ Israel saw the amazing power of the Lord against the Egyptians. The people were in awe of the Lord, and they believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

Scripture Reading #2..... Sister Erica Roy
(*Romans 14:1–12, Common English Bible*)

14 Welcome the person who is weak in faith—but not in order to argue about differences of opinion. ² One person believes in eating everything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. ³ Those who eat must not look down on the ones who don't, and the ones who don't eat must not judge the ones who do, because God has accepted them. ⁴ Who are you to judge someone else's servants? They stand or fall before their own Lord (and they will stand, because the Lord has the power to make them stand). ⁵ One person considers some days to be more sacred than others, while another person considers all days to be the same. Each person must have their own convictions. ⁶ Someone who thinks that a day is sacred, thinks that way for the Lord. Those who eat, eat for the Lord, because they thank God. And those who don't eat, don't eat for the Lord, and they thank the Lord too. ⁷ We don't live for ourselves and we don't die for

ourselves. ⁸ If we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we belong to God. ⁹ This is why Christ died and lived: so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰ But why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you look down on your brother or sister? We all will stand in front of the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ Because it is written,

*As I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow to me,
and every tongue will give praise to God.*

¹² So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.

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

Acknowledgement of Visitors /

Announcements..... Sister Erica Roy

Blessing of the Offering..... Sister Erica Roy

Offertory

Scripture Reading #3 (Gospel) Sister Erica Roy

(Matthew 18:21–35, Common English Bible)

²¹ Then Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, how many times should I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Should I forgive as many as seven times?”

²² Jesus said, “Not just seven times, but rather as many as seventy-seven times.

²³ Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ When he began to settle accounts, they brought to him a servant who owed him ten thousand bags of gold. ²⁵ Because the servant didn’t have enough to pay it back, the master ordered that he should be sold, along with his wife and children and everything he had, and that the proceeds should be used as payment. ²⁶ But the servant fell down, kneeled before him, and said, ‘Please, be patient with me, and I’ll pay you back.’ ²⁷ The master had compassion on that servant, released him, and forgave the loan.

²⁸ “When that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him one hundred coins. He grabbed him around the throat and said, ‘Pay me back what you owe me.’

²⁹ “Then his fellow servant fell down and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I’ll pay you back.’ ³⁰ But he refused. Instead, he threw him into prison until he paid back his debt.

³¹ “When his fellow servants saw what happened, they were deeply offended. They came and told their master all that happened. ³² His master called the first

servant and said, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you appealed to me.’³³ Shouldn’t you also have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?’³⁴ His master was furious and handed him over to the guard responsible for punishing prisoners, until he had paid the whole debt.

³⁵ “My heavenly Father will also do the same to you if you don’t forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

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 Lord Will Make A Way”

“Israel saw the amazing power of the Lord against the Egyptians. The people were in awe of the Lord, and they believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.” (Exodus 14:31)

Praise and Prayer Concerns Rev. Eugene W. Matthews

Invitation / Altar Call Rev. Eugene W. Matthews

Invitation Selection

Benediction

Announcements

Wearing a mask while in the sanctuary is at your discretion.

**Worship Attendance —
09/10/2023**

On-Line Service	24
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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.



Chair / Co-Chairs needed for **Women's Day**. If you are interested, please let Jackie or Millicent know. Thank you.

Sunday, September 17th (following service) — quarterly **Class Leader Meeting**

Monday, September 18th (6:30 p.m.) — **Lay Leadership Development**

(aka Nominations Committee) meeting. Zoom information will be forthcoming. If you know you are a member of this committee, please plan to attend the meeting. Committee members: Rev. Matthews, Shimaine, Floyd, Judith, Cynthia, Desiree, Vaune, and Anthony. **As a member of the congregation if there is a committee that you would like to participate in, please let one of the members of the committee know, there is room and much work to be done. No contribution is too small.** Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88356438558?pwd=RFJJTfI0RFNiWUZDME52MkRHWURsZz09>; Meeting ID: **883 5643 8558**; Passcode: **563867**. Thank you in advance.

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88571184455?pwd=UmpvVERkcjkyVFVoVHR1YlJxK284Zz09>; Meeting ID: **885 7118 4455**; Passcode: **459563**

Wednesday Night Experience (7:15 p.m.) — This study is based on the Upper Room reading for Wednesday. **Call in info:** 267.807.9611, **Access Code:** 331960.

Thursday, September 21st (6:30 p.m.) — **Choir Rehearsal**

Sunday, September 24th (10:00 a.m.) — **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)). Preacher: **Rev. Robert Morgan**, First Bethel Baptist Church, Kettering MD. A **special sacrificial offering** will be taken during the service. **Please invite a family member or friends to join us in the sanctuary. Box lunches will be available following service.**

Saturday, September 30th — **Nena's Cold Oven Pound Cake Challenge** is back in memory of Mrs. Mildred Awkward. If you would like to participate, please see Jackie Jones for details and a recipe.

Sunday, October 1st — **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.

Saturday, October 21st (11:00 a.m.) — **Annual Church Conference**, Nichols Bethel UMC (1239 Murray Road, Odenton, MD). **Asking all reports to be given to the church office to meet the District deadline of October 11th.** All members of the congregation are invited to be present with authorization to have their voice and vote.

Sunday, October 22nd (10:00 a.m.) — **133rd Church Anniversary — “God Is Not Through With Us Yet”**. If possible, a sacrificial offering of \$1 for each year is requested.

Note from Finance: First, 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), reveugene@comcast.net.

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

Eunice Dumas

1909 Sheffield Court
Severn, MD 21144
410.551.2435

Edlin Chambers

14904 4th Street
Laurel, MD
347.423.2764

Umbrenda Fisher

9160 Charlton Place
Douglasville, GA 39135

Grace Elaine Catchings

15505 Clayburn Drive
Laurel, MD 20707
301.312.7465 (Grace cell)

Ruth Miller

1206 Peachwood Ln.
Bowie, MD 20716
240.245.4560