

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, October 8, 2023

Nineteenth Sunday After Pentecost



Breast Cancer Awareness Month
Domestic Violence Awareness Month



Order of Service

Ushers:

Gemma DeSouza-Ottley and Ralph Laquerre

Thomas Matthews, Worship Leader

Prelude Rev. 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 Bro. Thomas Matthews

Leader: The heavens are telling the glory of God,

People: **and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.**

Leader: Day to day pours forth speech,

People: **and night to night declares knowledge.**

Leader: There is no speech, nor are there words;

People: **yet their voice goes out through all the earth.**

Leader: The law of the Lord is perfect reviving the soul.

All: **The precepts of the Lord are right rejoicing the heart.**

Hymn of Praise St. Mark's Choir / Congregation

"Jesus Is All the World to Me"

1. Jesus is all the world to me, my life, my joy, my all;
he is my strength from day to day, without him I would fall.
When I am sad, to him I go, no other one can cheer me so;
when I am sad, he makes me glad, he's my friend.
2. Jesus is all the world to me, my friend in trials sore;
I go to him for blessings, and he gives them o'er and o'er.
He sends the sunshine and the rain, he sends the harvest's golden
grain; sunshine and rain, harvest of grain, he's my friend.
3. Jesus is all the world to me, and true to him I'll be;
O how could I this friend deny, when he's so true to me?
Following him I know I'm right, he watches o'er me day and night;
following him by day and night, he's my friend.
4. Jesus is all the world to me, I want no better friend;
I trust him now, I'll trust him when life's fleeting days shall end.
Beautiful life with such a friend, beautiful life that has no end;
eternal life, eternal joy, he's my friend.

Prayer of Confession and Assurance (*In Unison*)

O God! Sometimes the wrong is so wrong is so strong and sticky that we cannot escape it, no matter how hard we try. Sometimes the darkness is

so thick that it hides even your light. O God! What are we supposed to do then? Tell us! The answer to your prayer is seen in Jesus, and it is a hard and also a realistic answer in our world. Sometimes the darkness overwhelms the light, and sometimes the darkness overwhelms us. But in the midst of it all stands the grace and love of God. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer (*Sung*)

The Invocation **Bro. Thomas Matthews**

Song of Meditation..... **St. Mark's Choir**

The Prayer of Illumination (*In Unison*)

O God, your Word is more precious than fine gold and sweeter than purest honey. As we turn to your scripture on this day, 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. **Amen.**

Scripture Reading #1 **Bro. Thomas Matthews**

(*Exodus 20:1–4, 7–9, 12–20, Common English Bible*)

20 Then God spoke all these words: ² I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ³ You must have no other gods before me. ⁴ Do not make an idol for yourself—no form whatsoever—of anything in the sky above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth.

⁷ Do not use the Lord your God's name as if it were of no significance; the Lord won't forgive anyone who uses his name that way. ⁸ Remember the Sabbath day and treat it as holy. ⁹ Six days you may work and do all your tasks,

¹² Honor your father and your mother so that your life will be long on the fertile land that the Lord your God is giving you. ¹³ Do not kill. ¹⁴ Do not commit adultery. ¹⁵ Do not steal. ¹⁶ Do not testify falsely against your neighbor. ¹⁷ Do not desire and try to take your neighbor's house. Do not desire and try to take your neighbor's wife, male or female servant, ox, donkey, or anything else that belongs to your neighbor. ¹⁸ When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the horn, and

the mountain smoking, the people shook with fear and stood at a distance. ¹⁹ They said to Moses, “You speak to us, and we’ll listen. But don’t let God speak to us, or we’ll die.” ²⁰ Moses said to the people, “Don’t be afraid, because God has come only to test you and to make sure you are always in awe of God so that you don’t sin.”

Scripture Reading #2 Bro. Thomas Matthews
(Philippians 3:4b–14, Common English Bible)

⁴ though I have good reason to have this kind of confidence. If anyone else has reason to put their confidence in physical advantages, I have even more: ⁵ I was circumcised on the eighth day. I am from the people of Israel and the tribe of Benjamin. I am a Hebrew of the Hebrews. With respect to observing the Law, I’m a Pharisee. ⁶ With respect to devotion to the faith, I harassed the church. With respect to righteousness under the Law, I’m blameless. ⁷ These things were my assets, but I wrote them off as a loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ But even beyond that, I consider everything a loss in comparison with the superior value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. I have lost everything for him, but what I lost I think of as sewer trash, so that I might gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him. In Christ I have a righteousness that is not my own and that does not come from the Law but rather from the faithfulness of Christ. It is the righteousness of God that is based on faith. ¹⁰ The righteousness that I have comes from knowing Christ, the power of his resurrection, and the participation in his sufferings. It includes being conformed to his death ¹¹ so that I may perhaps reach the goal of the resurrection of the dead. ¹² It’s not that I have already reached this goal or have already been perfected, but I pursue it, so that I may grab hold of it because Christ grabbed hold of me for just this purpose. ¹³ Brothers and sisters, I myself don’t think I’ve reached it, but I do this one thing: I forget about the things behind me and reach out for the things ahead of me. ¹⁴ The goal I pursue is the prize of God’s upward call in Christ Jesus.

Selection St. Mark’s Choir

Acknowledgement of Visitors /

Announcements Bro. Thomas Matthews



Presentation by Laurel Police Department

Blessing of the Offering Bro. Thomas Matthews
Offertory

Scripture Reading #3 (Gospel) Bro. Thomas Matthews
(Matthew 21:33–46, Common English Bible)

³³ “Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a fence around it, dug a winepress in it, and built a tower. Then he rented it to tenant farmers and took a trip. ³⁴ When it was time for harvest, he sent his servants to the tenant farmers to collect his fruit. ³⁵ But the tenant farmers grabbed his servants. They beat some of them, and some of them they killed. Some of them they stoned to death. ³⁶ “Again he sent other servants, more than the first group. They treated them in the same way. ³⁷ Finally he sent his son to them. ‘They will respect my son,’ he said. ³⁸ “But when the tenant farmers saw the son, they said to each other, ‘This is the heir. Come on, let’s kill him and we’ll have his inheritance.’ ³⁹ They grabbed him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰ “When the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenant farmers?” ⁴¹ They said, “He will totally destroy those wicked farmers and rent the vineyard to other tenant farmers who will give him the fruit when it’s ready.” ⁴² Jesus said to them, “Haven’t you ever read in the scriptures, *The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. The Lord has done this, and it’s amazing in our eyes?*” ⁴³ Therefore, I tell you that God’s kingdom will be taken away from you and will be given to a people who produce its fruit. ⁴⁴ Whoever falls on this stone will be crushed. And the stone will crush the person it falls on.” ⁴⁵ Now when the chief priests and the Pharisees heard the parable, they knew Jesus was talking about them. ⁴⁶ They were trying to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, who thought he was a prophet.

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 PreparationSt. Mark’s Choir

Inspirational MessageRev. Eugene W. Matthews

“Keep Focusing on the Goal”

“It is not that I have already reached the goal, or have already been perfected, but I pursue it, so that I may grab hold of it, because Christ grabbed hold of me for just this purpose”.....”The goal I pursue is the prize of God’s upward call in Christ Jesus”

Philippians 3:12 and 14 (CEB)

Invitation / Praise and Concerns

Altar CallRev. Eugene W. Matthews

Benediction

Announcements

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

Worship Attendance — 10/1/2023

In-Person	38
YouTube	13
Total	51

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, our youth and most importantly for our sick and shut-ins and each other.



Tuesday Women's Roundtable (6:30 p.m.) — **Book Study — Purpose Driven Life.** Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88571184455?pwd=UmpvVERkcjkyVFVoVHRlYlJxK284Zz09>; 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, October 12th (6:30 p.m.) — **Choir Rehearsal**

Friday, October 13th (7:00 p.m.) — St. Mark's Choir will be rendering music at Queens Chapel United Methodist Church (7410 Old Muirkirk Rd, Beltsville, MD) for their pre-Homecoming Celebration

Sunday, October 15th (10:00 a.m.) — **133rd Church Anniversary — “God Is Not Through With Us Yet”.** **Preacher: Rev. Terry McCain, Pastor,** Hopkins/Mt. Gregory Charge UMC. **If possible, a sacrificial offering is \$1 for each year is requested.**

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.) — **Laity Sunday. Speaker: Sister Darlene Washington, Lay Leader,** Franklin United Methodist Church, Churchton, Maryland.

Attention Women: Roundtable Recharge Retreat, April 25th–April 27th at the Maritime Conference Center in Linthicum. For information and reservations, please see Nena Hughes. \$100 deposit (by October 22nd) will hold your reservation.

“The Wiz” is coming to the National Theater (Washington, DC). Need a group of at least 10 persons for a matinee on **Saturday, October 28th** (if I can obtain the tickets). If interested, please let Cynthia know (301.776.2420 or Cynthia.Whitfield@icf.com). Need to know by Monday morning.

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.

Robert (Bobby) Marshall, Oscar Johnson, Harold (Bubby) Awkward, Jr., Tyrone Awkward, William (Jimmy) Scott, 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., Chantel Ashley, Beverly Wright, Jannette Shuford-Reeves, 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

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