

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 10, 2024

Women's History Month

Fourth Sunday in Lent

UMCOR Sunday

Ushers:

Francis DeSouza and Deborah Harper

Erica Roy Worship Leader

Prelude Mr. Reginald McClurkin

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 Erica Roy

Leader: O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good: his steadfast love endures forever.

People: God satisfies the thirsty, and the hungry he fills with good things.

Leader: God shatters the doors of prisons, and cuts in two the bars of iron.

People: We give thanks to the Lord, for his steadfast love and woks to humankind.

Leader: God sent forth God's word to heal and deliver us.

ALL: Let us offer thanksgiving sacrifices and tell of God's deeds with songs of joy.

Hymn of Praise **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 has 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 Yes, 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 The earth shall soon dissolve like snow, the sun forbear to shine; but God, who called me here below, will be forever mine.

Prayer of Confession and Assurance (*Unison*)

God forgive us for the times we have not trusted you. Forgive us for the times, rather than take responsibility for our actions or inactions, we instead blame anyone else, including you, for the mess we have made. Remind us Lord that no matter how rough life becomes or how bad we have made things, you are still there for us. Let us remember that God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world would be saved through him. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer (*Sing*) **Choir and Congregation**

The Invocation **Erica Roy**

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

The Prayer of Illumination (*In Unison*)

Lord, God, may the hearing of your WORD today inspire us to see you high and lifted up so that our lights may shine brightly into the world around us. **Amen.**

Scripture Reading #1 **Erica Roy** (*Isaiah 49: 8-16a, Common English Bible*)

⁸The LORD said: At the right time, I answered you; on a day of salvation, I helped you. I have guarded you, and given you as a covenant to the people, to restore the land, and to reassign deserted properties, ⁹saying to the prisoners, “Come out,” and to those in darkness, “Show yourselves.” Along the roads animals^[a] will graze; their pasture will be on every treeless hilltop.¹⁰ They won’t hunger or thirst; the burning heat and sun won’t strike them, because one who has compassion for them will lead them and will guide them by springs of water. ¹¹I will turn all my mountains into roads; my highways will be built up. ¹²Look! These will come from far away. Look! These from the north and west, and these from the southland. ¹³Sing, heavens! Rejoice, earth! Break out, mountains, with a song. The LORD has comforted his people, and taken pity on those who suffer. ¹⁴But Zion says, “The LORD has abandoned me; my Lord has forgotten me.” ¹⁵Can a woman forget her nursing child, fail to pity the child of her womb? Even these may forget, but I won’t forget you. ¹⁶Look, on my palms I’ve inscribed you; your walls are before me continually.

Scripture Reading #2 **Erica Roy** (*Ephesians 2: 1-10, Common English Bible*)

2 At one time you were like a dead person because of the things you did wrong and your offenses against God. ²You used to live like people of this world. You followed the rule of a destructive spiritual power. This is the spirit of disobedience to God’s will that is now at work in persons whose lives are characterized by disobedience. ³At one time you were like those persons. All of you used to do whatever felt good and whatever you thought you wanted so that you were children headed for punishment just like everyone else. ⁴⁻⁵However, God is rich in mercy. He brought us to life with Christ while we were dead as a result of those things that we did wrong. He did this because of the great love that he has for us. You are saved by God’s grace! ⁶And God raised us up and seated us in the heavens with Christ Jesus. ⁷God did this to show

future generations the greatness of his grace by the goodness that God has shown us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ You are saved by God’s grace because of your faith. This salvation is God’s gift. It’s not something you possessed. ⁹ It’s not something you did that you can be proud of. ¹⁰ Instead, we are God’s accomplishment, created in Christ Jesus to do good things. God planned for these good things to be the way that we live our lives.

Selection St. Mark’s Choir

Acknowledgement of Visitors /

Announcements Erica Roy

Blessing of the Offering Erica Roy

Offertory

Scripture Reading #3 (Gospel)..... Erica Roy

(John 3:14-21, Common English Bible)

¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so must the Human One be lifted up ¹⁵ so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life. ¹⁶ God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him won’t perish but will have eternal life. ¹⁷ God didn’t send his Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him isn’t judged; whoever doesn’t believe in him is already judged, because they don’t believe in the name of God’s only Son. ¹⁹ “This is the basis for judgment: The light came into the world, and people loved darkness more than the light, for their actions are evil. ²⁰ All who do wicked things hate the light and don’t come to the light for fear that their actions will be exposed to the light. ²¹ Whoever does the truth comes to the light so that it can be seen that their actions were done in God.”

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 Matthews

“An Amazing Gift”

“For by grace, you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing: it is the gift of God and not the result of works, so that one may boast. For we are what he made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we may walk in them.”

Ephesians 2: 8 - 10, Common English Bible

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 — 02/18/2024	
In-Person	55
YouTube	17
Total	72

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.) — Join Zoom:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84500345294?pwd=TUR4ZGpySU5ub0E1blhUQVNmQW9YQT09>, Meeting ID: 885 7118 4455;
Passcode: 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.

*This is not goodbye,
This is not farenwell...*

Pastor's Goodbye/Farewell — If you have an interest in working on the committee to plan Rev. Matthews Goodbye/Farewell celebration, please let Cynthia know.

Someone from Finance and Culinary is a must. Thank you.

Thursday, March 14th (6:30 p.m.) — **Choir rehearsal.** Tina will update the choir through text.

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), reveugene@comcast.net.

Delores Stratford, Keith Davis, Elba Hernandez, Nathaniel Watkins, Judith James, Isabella Dustin, Joseph Ballard, Robert (Bobby) Marshall, Oscar Johnson, Harold (Bubby) Awkward, Jr., Tyrone Awkward, William (Jimmy) Scott, Charles Gregg, 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, Phillip Reese, Naomi Williams (Ms. Cynthia’s Mom), Leah Henry, Sonja Smith, Marvin Hebron, Eric Smith, 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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