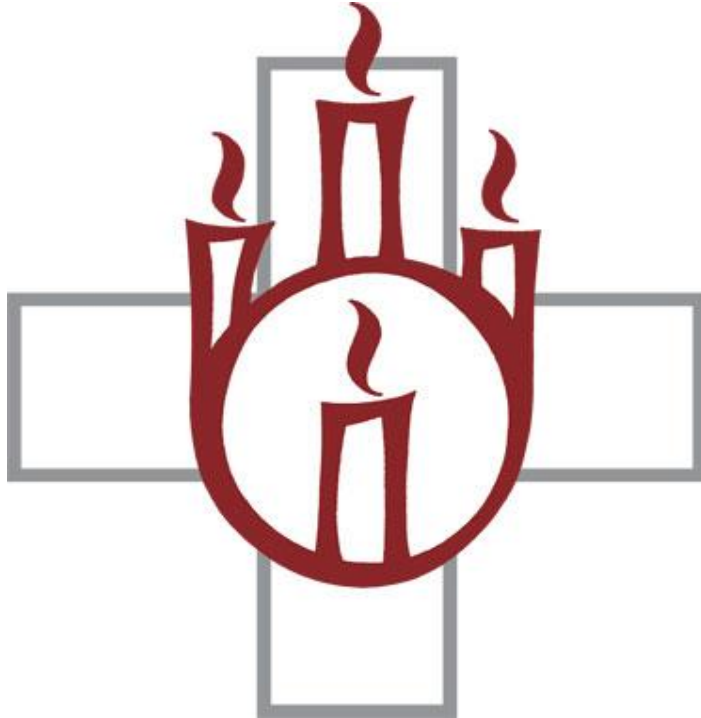


CELEBRATING THE GOODNESS OF GOD

Worship Bulletin for December 22, 2024



**GLORIFY HIM ...
GROW IN HIM ...
GO WITH HIS GOSPEL**

We are St. Mark's Church & School

A WELST[†]NorCal **Ministry** ... Other Area Locations
Foundation – Folsom, Hope – Penryn, Christ – Lodi, St. John – Vacaville

WELS (Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod) is a National Church Body with locations throughout the United States and with partnerships in over 40 Countries

4th Sunday in Advent

December 22, 2024

A place to call home: St. Mark's Lutheran Church & School

In the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, welcome home. We especially welcome to our house of worship our guests who have joined us today. We pray you will be strengthened by the good news about God's grace, love, and forgiveness to us through Jesus.

We say with the Psalmist, whether here on campus or viewing online, *"I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD'"* (Psalm 122:1).

May the Lord continue to help us grow in His grace and knowledge as we hear, speak, and sing His holy Word.

Some items to keep in mind as we gather for worship in this place:

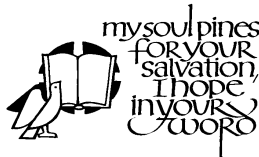
Members & our Guests ... Please pick up and fill out a **Connection Card** which can be found in the Entryway; before you leave place it in the box on the wall or in the basket labeled "Filled out Connection Cards." Thank you!

LARGE PRINT copies of the Service can be found at the entrance to the Sanctuary.

*Hymns from 'Christian Worship' Red (1993) / 'Christian Worship' Dark Blue (2021) /
'Christian Worship Supplement' (blue soft cover)*

Personal **hearing assistance** devices are available on the entryway wall near the west entrance. The Sanctuary is also 'looped' for those who have hearing aids that can pick up the signal.

Holy Communion is offered on the 1st, 3rd, & 5th Sundays. Since Holy Communion is a confession of faith, we ask that at this time only members partake of the Sacrament. If you are not a member and would like to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion, please reach out to our Pastor.



Explore our website. You will find information on Worship, Bible Study, Devotions, Children's Sunday School, and More.

Follow us to stay connected: Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/stmarksch; Follow us on Instagram: Instagram.com/stmarkslutheran; Subscribe to our videos on Vimeo: vimeo.com/channels/stmarksch.

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

Worship Focus: Christmas is more than celebrating the birth of Jesus, it is also contemplating and celebrating what Christmas represents. We have fulfilled promises to count on. We have Jesus making His way to a cross with you / us in mind. We have the real possibility of reconciliation for every individual who exists, which can carry over into relationships with one another. Give thanks once again that the manger and the cross come together for you.

PRELUDE

Four Studies in English Folk Songs

Ralph Vaughn Williams

Greeting & Invocation

Minister: The grace of our Lord ☩ Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

M: Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.

(Ps 100)

C: Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.

M: Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his;

C: we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

M: Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise;

C: give thanks to him and praise his name.

M: For the LORD is good and his love endures forever;

C: his faithfulness continues through all generations.

M: Teach me, O LORD, to follow your decrees; then I will keep them to the end.

C: Give me understanding, and I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart.

M: Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.

C: Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.

HYMN

Musical Introduction ... Song continues on page 4

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Christian Worship Dark Blue # 333

**O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

**For Christ is born of Mary, and, gathered all above
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King and peace to all the earth.**

**How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.**

**O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel!**

M: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. Jesus has said, as recorded in Matthew 22:

C: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

M: This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it:

C: Love your neighbor as yourself."

M: But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

All: Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.

M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

C: Amen. Thanks be to God.

M: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

(musical introduction, see page 5)



C: Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. Bless - ed are they who take ref - uge in him. Your Word, O Lord, is eter - nal; it stands firm in the heav - ens. Your faith - ful - ness con - tin - ues for - ev - er. Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. Bless - ed are they who take ref - uge in him.

M: Let us pray. Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Take away the burden of our sins and make us ready for the celebration of your birth, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always;

C: for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Nathan Jordan Young-Estevez

HYMN

Musical Introduction ... Song continues on page 6

See This Wonder in the Making

Christian Worship Dark Blue # 646

**See this wonder in the making: God himself this child is taking
as a lamb safe in his keeping, his to be, awake or sleeping.**

**Miracle each time it happens as the door of heaven opens
and the Father beams, "Belovèd, heir of gifts a king would covet!"**

**Far more tender than a mother, far more caring than a father,
God, into your arms we place them, with your love and peace embrace him/her/them.**

**Here we bring a child of nature; home we take a newborn creature,
now God's precious son or daughter, born again by Word and water.**

A READING FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE

Micah 5:2-5a

Humble earthly beginnings for the Savior, yet do not let such deceive you.

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”³ Therefore Israel will be abandoned until the time when she who is in labor bears a son, and the rest of his brothers return to join the Israelites.⁴ He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth.⁵ And he will be our peace.

M: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

HYMN

Musical Introduction

Jesus Came, the Heavens Adoring

Christian Worship Dark Blue # 319

**Jesus came, the heav'ns adoring, came with peace from realms on high;
Jesus came to win redemption, lowly came on earth to die;
Alleluia! Alleluia! came in deep humility.**

**Jesus comes again in mercy when our hearts are worn with care;
Jesus comes again in answer to an earnest, heartfelt prayer,
Alleluia! Alleluia! comes to save us from despair.**

**Jesus comes to hearts rejoicing, bringing news of sins forgiv'n;
Jesus comes with words of gladness, leading souls redeemed to heav'n.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Hope to all the world is giv'n.**

**Jesus comes on clouds triumphant when the heav'ns shall pass away.
Jesus comes again in glory; let us, then, our homage pay,
Alleluia! ever singing till the dawn of endless day.**

A READING FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE

Hebrews 10:5-10

As promised, Jesus came and died a death which is described as 'once for all.'

Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me;⁶ with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased.

⁷ Then I said, ‘Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll—I have come to do your will, my God.’”⁸ First he said, “Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them”—though they were offered in accordance with the law. ⁹ Then he said, “Here I am, I have come to do your will.” He sets aside the first to establish the second. ¹⁰ And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

M: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God!**

SONG *by our Vocalists*

“I Belong To The Lord”

Lyrics © So Essential Tunes

*The One who made the heavens, made my heart and soul Before I drew a breath, I was loved and known
I am His creation, the Maker's masterpiece And all that He designs will be done in me*

*My body is a temple of the living God I'll worship in this house that His blood has bought
As I bear His image, oh, may I not profane The holiness I hold in this earthly frame*

*I belong to the Lord, oh, I am not my own I belong to the Lord, I am not my own
I will honor Him for this I know I belong to the Lord, I am not my own*

*And if He has redeemed me, I am not my own The measure of my worth is His love alone
He declares my standing, and He declares my state So I will know myself by the name He gave*

*I belong to the Lord, oh, I am not my own I belong to the Lord, I am not my own
I will honor Him for this I know I belong to the Lord, I am not my own*

*I am not my own and now my heart is free O Maker, come and make what You will of me
There is nothing broken that You cannot repair So Lord, I leave my life in Your loving care (I know that-)*

*I belong to the Lord, oh, I am not my own I belong to the Lord, I am not my own
I will honor Him for this I know I belong to the Lord, I am not my own (oh, I am not my own)*

I will honor Him for this I know I belong to the Lord, I am not my own

Our Worship centers on the Gospel Reading for the day.

A READING FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE

Luke 1:39-55

God is gracious, He chose this young woman for a role she herself recognized she was not worthy to receive.

At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, ⁴⁰ where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² In a loud voice she exclaimed: “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! ⁴³ But why am

I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!” ⁴⁶ And Mary said: “My soul glorifies the Lord ⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸ for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, ⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name. ⁵⁰ His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. ⁵¹ He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. ⁵² He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. ⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful ⁵⁵ to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors.”

M: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Musical Introduction

God's Own Son Most Holy

Christian Worship Dark Blue # 321



1 God's own Son most ho - ly came a ser - vant
 2 Still he comes in preach - ing, truth e - ter - nal
 3 Still he comes pro - vid - ing proof of love a -
 4 Come, then, O Lord Je - sus, from our sins re -



low - ly, came to live a - mong us,
 teach - ing: “Turn a - way from e - vil;
 bid - ing: he whose death has freed us
 lease us. Keep our hearts be - liev - ing



came to suf - fer for us; bore the cross to
 turn to me, my peo - ple. I pro-nounce you
 gives him - self to feed us, thus to us ex -
 that, your grace re - ceiv - ing, we may here con -



save us, hope and free - dom gave us.
 sin - less; trust in my for - give - ness.”
 tend - ing peace and joy un - end - ing.
 fess you till in heav'n we bless you.

“See The Manger And The Cross For You”

A CONFESSION OF FAITH – THE APOSTLES’ CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

OUR THANK OFFERING

Thank you for continuing to support our ministry. Your thank offering can be received in the following ways: placed in the box on the wall as you enter the Sanctuary, mail your thank offering to the church, give online through our website under the “Resources” tab, or give by texting 916.915.9552. The QR Code to the web giving link is at the end of the bulletin.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

M: Lord, our maker and preserver, we praise and thank you for all that you give us each day.

C: We are not worthy of all the mercies you show us.

M: You have given us your precious Word to nourish our souls and to protect us from the temptations of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature.

C: We thank you for those who teach and preach your saving truth at this place and everywhere. Grant them a rich measure of patience, wisdom, and love.

M: Heavenly Father, we pray that you shield us from every kind of danger: sudden catastrophe, terrors of crime, and the pain of disease. Watch over those who travel by land, sea, and air. Keep our loved ones from whatever perils may threaten them.

C: Heal those who are sick, cheer those who are sad, calm those who are distressed, and comfort all who are old and infirm.

M: Bless our land, our people, and those who hold offices of high trust. Keep our government and schools upright and strong for the advancement of good citizenship and useful vocations, that we may enjoy your gifts of peace, security, and well-being.

C: Grant your blessing to every nation on earth. Where there are wars, may there be peace. Where there is hatred, let it be healed. Where there is poverty, danger, or disaster, come with your almighty power to help and restore.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

M: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayer.

M: We bring these requests before you in the name of Jesus our Lord, and ask you to hear us. Take all that we have, our bodies and minds, our time and skills, our ministries and offerings, and use them to your glory.

C: We give ourselves to you that we may serve you in whatever way is pleasing in your sight. Amen.

And we also pray ...

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

HYMN

Musical Introduction

Peace Came to Earth

Christian Worship Dark Blue # 330



1 Peace came to earth at last that cho-sen night when an-gels
2 And who could be the same for hav-ing held the in-fant
3 You show the Fa-ther none has ev-er seen, in flesh and
4 How else could I have known you, O my God! How else could



clove the sky with song and light and God em-bod-ied
in their arms and lat-er felt the wound-ed hands and
blood you bore our griefs and pain, in bread and wine you
I have loved you, O my God! How else could I em-



love and sheathed his might— Who could but gasp: Im-man-u-el!
side, all doubts dis-pelled— Who could but sigh: Im-man-u-el!
vis-it us a-gain— Who could but see: Im-man-u-el!
brace you, O my God! Who could but pray: Im-man-u-el!



Who could but sing: Im-man-u-el!
Who could but shout: Im-man-u-el!
Who could but thrill: Im-man-u-el!
Who could but praise: Im-man-u-el!

M: O Lord God, our heavenly Father, pour out the Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep us strong in your grace and truth, protect and comfort us in all temptation, and bestow on us your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C: Amen.**

M: Brothers and sisters go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look on you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **C: Amen.**

HYMN

How Deep the Father's Love for Us

Musical Introduction

Christian Worship Dark Blue # 523



1 How deep the Fa - ther's love for us, how vast be - yond all
 2 Be - hold the Man up - on a cross, my sin up - on his
 3 I will not boast in an - y - thing: no gifts, no pow'r, no



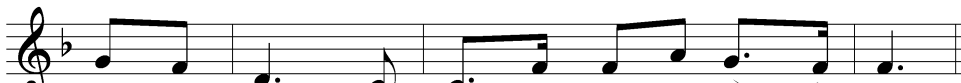
mea - sure, that he should give his on - ly Son to
 shoul - ders. A - shamed, I hear my mock - ing voice call
 wis - dom. But I will boast in Je - sus Christ: his



make a wretch his trea - sure. How great the pain of sear - ing loss.
 out a - mong the scof - fers. It was my sin that held him there
 death and res - ur - rec - tion. Why should I gain from his re - ward?



The Fa - ther turns his face a - way as wounds which mar the
 un - til it was ac - com - plished; his dy - ing breath has
 I can - not give an an - swer. But this I know with



Cho - sen One bring man - y sons to glo - ry.
 brought me life. I know that it is fin - ished.
 all my heart: his wounds have paid my ran - som.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & POSTLUDE

Carol of the Bells

M. Leontovich

TODAY AT ST. MARK'S

Serving at Worship

Presiding Minister: Pastor Jonathan Kolander

Musical Accompanists: Marty Puckett, Rosemarie Boushek

Vocalists: Zoey Malone, Jenny Kolander

Violin: Vince Beiderbecke Percussion: Don Black

Flowers: The flowers at the altar have been provided by the Worship Arts Committee (WAC).

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Scripture Quotations: From the *Holy Bible, New International Version* (NIV 2011), copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.

For Reflection based on Today's Scripture Readings ...

1st: What important truths are revealed in this section? What is the 'peace' noted here? What keeps you from living 'in peace'? Read Psalm 103.

2nd: Why would the Lord not be pleased with 'burnt offerings and sin offerings'? Recount the ways Jesus showed His willingness for this role as the Messiah. Why the emphasis on the words 'once for all'? Read Hebrews 2.

3rd: This section has also been used to defend what aspect of life, and why does this discussion matter still today? (41) What attitude of these women is good for us to imitate, and why is this the case? Review 'Mary's Song:' What resonates with you? Read Luke 2 (contemplate the words).

To connect to our website and the auto giving option:



THIS WEEK AT ST. MARK'S

Today	8:30 a.m.	Bible Study
	9:30 a.m.	Worship Service
Tuesday	5:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Worship Service
	8:00 p.m.	Carols around the Fire (on the Patio)
Wednesday	9:30 a.m.	Christmas Day Service with Holy Communion
Next Sunday	8:00 & 10:45	Worship Service with Holy Communion
	9:30 a.m.	Bible Study

Birthdays ... Dec 22: Eric Vestrup

Birthdays ... Dec 27: Susan Kroner, Holly Rettig, Hal Tritch