

ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH

A congregation of the
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
welcomes you!

**December 24,
2023**



**Christmas
Eve**

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

SATURDAY

“SHINE” CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP: 6:00 PM (*1st Saturdays - Chapel*)

SUNDAY

THE DIVINE LITURGY: 9:00AM

in-person & streaming

EDUCATION & FELLOWSHIP HOUR: 10:30 AM

105 EAST “D” STREET BELLEVILLE, IL 62220

PHONE: 618.233.9809

EMAIL: WORSHIP@STMARKBELLEVILLE.ORG

WEBSITE: WWW.STMARKBELLEVILLE.ORG

The Reverend Brian M. Robison, Pastor

PLEASE wear a **mask/face covering** *if* you are **exhibiting any upper respiratory symptoms consistent with allergies, a cold, or COVID-19** (runny nose, cough, sore throat).

To parents with small children: We are glad your family is worshipping with us today! **“Quiet Bags”** (supplies & activities for use by small children) are available in the Welcome Area. If you or your child need a break from the service, feel free to walk to the Welcome Area/narthex (the service is still audible over the speakers).

A **Restroom** with **handicap access** is available in the Narthex/Canterbury Room next to the **accessibility lift** to the lower level is located in the Welcome Area. **Parish Hall and Restrooms** are located on the lower level of the main church building. The stairway is off the entrance foyer. An usher will be happy to assist you with the lift.

Assistive listening devices and **low vision items** are available. Please ask one of our ushers for assistance.

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

“Do You Hear What I Hear?” by Noel Regney

Soloist: Terry Tribout

“Carol of the Bells”

Pianist: Carol Kugler

“Mary, Did You Know?” Arr. Jack Schrader

Soloist: Patty Bearth

“Whisper! Whisper! (Baby Born Today)” by Jay Althouse

St. Mark Men’s Chorus

PRELUDE

“God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen”

St. Mark Bell Choir

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP *Please STAND as you are able*

Tonight on Christmas Eve we gather with families all over the earth in the presence of the Most High.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.

As we have been filled by light, let us enlighten.

As we have been found, let us seek out the lost.

As we have been liberated, let us set the captives free.

For to us a child is born, One whom God sends to bring peace and light, freedom and reconciliation. Thanks be to God!

GATHERING

The assembly turns to face the cross as it enters. You may bow as it passes, honoring the mystery of our salvation.

GATHERING HYMN “O Come All Ye Faithful” **ELW 283** *Charlie Duncan, trumpet*

1 O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!

O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;

Come and behold him, born the King of angels:

Refrain:

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,

O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

2 Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,

sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God in the highest: [Refrain]

3 See how the shepherds, summoned to his cradle,

leaving their flocks, draw nigh in awe;

we too will thither bend our joyful footsteps: [Refrain]

4 The highest, most holy, light of light eternal,

born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;

Son of the Father now in flesh appearing! [Refrain]

GREETING

Tonight Christ is born: Alleluia, alleluia! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all! **And also with you!**

HYMN OF PRAISE

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

ELW 289



1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro-long?
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;



and the moun-tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.

Refrain



Glo

ri - a



in ex - cel - sis

De - o;

glo



in ex - cel - sis

De - o;

glo



ri - a

in ex - cel - sis

De - o.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray... Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.** *The assembly is SEATED.*

WORD

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest... ⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 96 *“All People That On Earth Do Dwell”* *Tune: Puer Nobis/“On Jordan’s Bank”*

**1 All people that on earth do dwell,
sing to the Lo-rd with cheerful voice;
him serve with mirth, and praise forth tell;
come ye before him and rejoice. →**

**2 Oh, enter then his gates with praise;
approach with jo-y his courts unto;
praise, laud, and bless his name always,
for it is seemly so to do.**

**3 For why? The Lord our God is good:
his mercy i-s forever sure;
his truth at all times firmly stood,
and shall from age to age endure. →**

**4 To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
the God whom hea-v'n and earth adore,
from us and from the angel host
be praise and glory evermore.**

SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

ALLELUIA VERSE *The assembly STANDS to welcome the gospel.*

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-20

A reading from the Holy Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as recorded by the evangelist Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ. *Please SIT*

SERMON

"Just the Beginning"

The Rev. Brian M. Robison

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Refrain



Go tell it on the moun - tain, o-ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;



go tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!



- 1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
- 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when, lo, a - bove the earth
- 3 Down in a lone - ly man - ger the hum-ble Christ was born;

Refrain



be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless-ed Christ-mas morn.

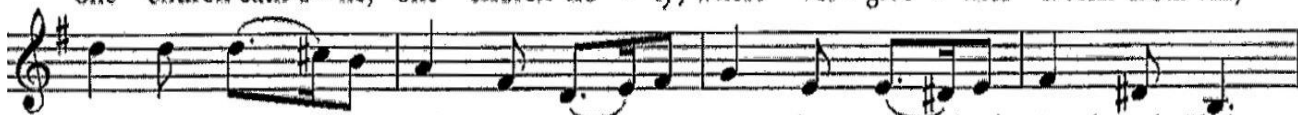
CREED *sung to the tune of Greensleeves/“What Child is This?”*



We be - lieve_ in God al - might - y, Au - thor of all things that be.
We be - lieve_ that Je - sus suf - fered, scourged and scorned and cru - ci - fied;
We be - lieve_ in God's own Spir - it, bond - ing all the saints with - in



Mak - er of_ the earth and heav - ens, Keep - er of the sky_ and sea.
tak - en from the cross, was bur - ied, True Life there had tru - ly died.
one church cath - o - lic, one church ho - ly, where for - give - ness frees_ from sin;



We be - lieve_ in God's Son, Je - sus, now for us_ both Lord and Christ,
We be - lieve_ that on the third day Christ was raised up from the grave,
in the bod - y's res - ur - rec - tion, for the break - ing of_ death's chain



of_ the Spir - it and of Mar - y born to bring a - bun - dant life_ .
then. as - cend - ed to God's righthand. He will come to judge and save_ .
gives the life_ that's ev - er - last - ing. This the faith that we have claimed_ .

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

The response to “Hear us, O God,” is “Your mercy is great.”

MEAL

PEACE *The assembly is invited to share a greeting of God’s peace with one another. Please be respectful to those who wish to do so from a distance. Following **the Peace**, you may be **seated** for a few moments*

Should you wish to leave an offering today, it may be placed in the wooden box on the table near the baptismal font at any point during or after the service.

CHOIR ANTHEM *“Hurry, Hurry Yonder” Arr. Douglas Wagner St. Mark Chancel Choir*

OFFERING PRAYER

Assistant: Let us pray together... **God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Amen.**

OFFERTORY **“O Little Town of Bethlehem”** **ELW 279 v. 1**

**O little town of Bethlehem, how still w-e see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the sile-nt 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.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING *(Tune: “O Little Town of Bethlehem”)*

The Lord be with you.

And with you.

Lift up yo-ur hearts to pray.

We lift them up unto the Lord, for we tha-nk God this day.

For at the birth of time your-Word brought light into our strife.

And now the Word breaks through the dark, takes on our human life.



**For Christ is born of Ma-ry, and, gather-ed all above
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of- wond’ring love.**

**O morning stars, toge-ther proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!**

The night before he died, our Lord had supper- with his friends.

He broke the bread and took the cup, and giv-ing thanks he said:

“This is my body bro-ken; this cup, my blood for you;

And when you eat rememb’ring me, forgiveness flows to you.”

THE LORD'S PRAYER *traditional*

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.**

**Thy kingdom come; thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Glory to God in the highest! Come to the table of peace.

LAMB OF GOD (*Tune: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"*)

O Lamb of God, you take away the sin o-f all the world;

O Lamb of God, you take away the sin o-f all the world;

Have mercy on us, Lamb of-God, and give your people peace.

Have mercy on us, Lamb of God, and give the- world your peace.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION *Please SIT*

Communion is open to everyone. In this sacrament, we believe that Christ is truly present in the bread and wine. At this service, communion will be served from around the altar rail. At the usher's direction, please come forward and kneel at the altar rail.

- ✘ *After receiving the bread, you may take an individual cup or drink from the chalice.*
- ✘ *You may return to your seat after communing.*
- ✘ *Those who do not wish to commune may come forward for a blessing. Please cross your arms over your chest to indicate this preference.*
- ✘ *Reception of the Eucharist under one kind (bread or wine) is valid communion for those who must avoid either for health reasons.*
- ✘ *If you are unable to go to the altar for communion, please notify an usher or the pastor, so that communion may be brought to you in your pew.*



“Away in a Manger”

ELW 277



1 A - way in a man-ger, no crib for his bed, the lit - tle Lord
 2 The cat - tle are low-ing; the ba - by a - wakes, but lit - tle Lord
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay close by me for -



Je - sus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked
 Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes. I love you, Lord Je - sus; look
 ev - er and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in



down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 down from the sky and stay by my cra - dle till morn-ing is nigh.
 your ten - der care and fit us for heav-en, to live with you there.

“It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”

ELW 282



1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo - rious song of old,
 2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come with peace-ful wings un - furled,
 3 And you, be - neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend - ing low,
 4 For lo! The days are has - t'ning on, by proph-ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
 and still their heav'n-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world.
 who toil a - long the climb-ing way with pain - ful steps and slow:
 when with the ev - er - cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,



“Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all - gra - cious king.”
 A - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov - 'ring wing,
 look now, for glad and gold-en hours come swift - ly on the wing;
 when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen-dors fling,



The world in sol - emn still-ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
 and ev - er o'er its ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.
 oh, rest be - side the wea - ry road and hear the an - gels sing!
 and all the world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.

1 Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the new-born king;
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.”
Joyful, all you nations, rise;
join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic hosts proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

2 Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the ever-lasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of the virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail, the incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel! *Refrain*

Refrain:

Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the new-born king!”

3 Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth. *Refrain*

After the distribution is complete, please STAND as you are able for the blessing.

TABLE BLESSING

The Body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

Canticle after Communion: “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice” ELW 288, v. 2



Good Christ - ian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;



now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!



He has o - pened hea - ven's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.



Christ was born for th - is! Christ was born for this!

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Assistant: Let us pray together... **God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

CANDLE LIGHTING

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

ELW 281

The choir sings verse 1 in German, then the congregation joins in with verse 1 in English.

The acolytes will come along the aisles with torches. Please light your candles from the torch, and pass the flame to others down the pew. For those with electric candles, activate them as the hymn begins. For those who have candles without an obvious switch, please tighten the bottom of the candle until it activates.

You are encouraged to raise your lighted candles during the last line of each verse.

1. Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.
2. Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!
3. Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

*At the conclusion of the song, please **carefully** extinguish your candles so as not to blow wax onto the pews.*

As you leave tonight, please place your candles in the baskets in the narthex or return them to an usher



SENDING

BLESSING

God bless you and keep you, Jesus grant you grace and truth, and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts – Father, +Son, and Holy Spirit - now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

“Joy to the World”

ELW 267

Charlie Duncan, trumpet



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, far as, far as the curse is found.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

DISMISSAL

Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

“And the Glory of the Lord” from Handel’s “Messiah”

Organist: Carol Kugler

MINISTERS OF THE LITURGY

Presider & Preacher: The Rev. Brian M. Robison + **Assisting Minister:** Greg Guenther

Chalice Bearer & Crucifer: Greg Martens + **Lector:** Charlie Duncan

Livestream Camera: Melanie Robison + **Ushers:** Danielle Tributou & Curt Gansmann

Safety Volunteer: TBD



Mark Times Christmas Eve 2023



Tomorrow 12/25: 10:00AM Christmas Eve Divine Liturgy *with St. George's*

Sunday 12/31: 10:00AM 1st Sunday of Christmas Liturgy of Lessons & Carols *w/St. George's*

Presiding Bishop Eaton's Christmas Message

In the Gospel according to Luke we hear the angels say to the shepherds, "Glory to God in the highest heaven and peace to God's people on Earth."

At this time of the year, perhaps our longing for peace is even more acute. We know the world isn't right. Nevertheless, we wait for and trust in Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

The angels proclaimed, "Peace on Earth. Good tidings we bring." We pray for peace in our world and in our communities. Every week we take time during worship to greet one another with the message of peace. We reach out, grasping hands across pews, across the aisle. Some may walk to other areas of the sanctuary to give a message of peace to a neighbor or a visitor. "The peace of Christ be with you." "And also with you." We share the peace - the love of God - and as we do, we know that God has reached from heaven to earth and, in the Prince of Peace, is sharing God's peace with us.

In this season and all year round, may the peace of Christ be with you.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, Presiding Bishop



St. Mark T-Shirts

Inspired by imagery from the popular *Indiana Jones* film series, the winning design from our t-shirt contest is ready to order!

Adult shirts sizes S-XL are \$19.50 including tax 2XL, 3XL, 4XL & 5XL are \$22.75 including tax. *Payment is required when the order is placed.*



Orders **must** be placed through **Rich's Stiches**

<http://www.richsstichesemb.com>. When the webpage opens, scroll down to **Online Stores**, then scroll down and click on St. Mark Lutheran Church. **The ordering window will remain open until January 31, 2024.**

For those who are not computer oriented, you may contact Sherri Foppe at 618 791-6148 with your order and payment information.



Living Lutheran Magazine

If you haven't done so, please pick up the latest Living Lutheran (formerly *The Lutheran*) magazine from the St. Mark table in the Narthex. The current November/December issue is the last printed magazine that they will produce, so please take advantage of it. The magazine will continue, but in an online-only format.

SHARE THE WARMTH Project

Inspired by Phillip's Wish in the movie *5000 Blankets*, our collection of **GENTLY USED or new blankets, hats, mittens, gloves, scarfs** for the homeless in our community will run thru January 31.

We are so excited to already be close to our 125-blanket goal!

Donations have been distributed to: St. George/St. Mark Food Pantry; Union United Methodist Church homeless program; Belleville Christian Center; Moms on a Mission in Dupo; Violence Prevention Center of Southwestern Illinois

Check your closets to see how many blankets you have that will help keep our homeless a little warmer this winter! A collection can is in the Narthex. Donations can also be dropped off at the church office during operating hours (9a-3p, Monday-Friday)



<i>Given By</i>	<i>In Memory of or In Thanksgiving For</i>	<i>Given By</i>	<i>In Memory Of or In Thanksgiving For</i>
Mike & Randi Cardoza	Nora Cardoza, Miguel Cardoza, Sr., Andre Davis	Jim and June Isselhardt	David R. Wilkey, Jim Wilkey, and Paul & Millie Witbart
Lorraine Crannage	Dan Crannage	Ann & Greg Martens	Wil & Jean Martens
Jan & Frank Dressel	Larry & Pat Likness, Erwin & Frieda Dressel	Dwight & Linda Ness	Richard & Verona Ness, Les & Eunice Wassberg, Brenda Wassberg
Will and Karen Eggemeyer	John and Clara Eggemeyer, and Edwin and Myrle Welta	Patricia Robison & Pr. Brian Robison	Casimir & Dolly Orzel
Kathy Evans	Wil and Jean Martens	Mark Sidney	
Greg & Nancy Guenther	Charles & Gerry Guenther, Wilma & Floyd Kniepkamp, Earl Kniepkamp	Mary Skifton	Frank, Lucille, & Al Nork, Lenny Mueller
Mary Hill	Larry Hill	Barb Wurdinger	Darrell & Darlene Wurdinger