

# ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

March 8,  
2026



The Third  
Sunday in  
Lent

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

### SATURDAY

“SHINE” CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP: 6:00 PM (1<sup>ST</sup> SATURDAYS-CHAPEL)

### SUNDAY

THE DIVINE LITURGY: 9:00AM

EDUCATION HOUR: 10:30AM

**105 EAST “D” STREET BELLEVILLE, IL 62220**

**EMAIL: [WORSHIP@STMARKBELLEVILLE.ORG](mailto:WORSHIP@STMARKBELLEVILLE.ORG)**

***THE REV. BRIAN M. ROBISON, PASTOR***

***THE REV. RONALD C. NEUSTADT, PASTOR EMERITUS***

- 
- + **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 use the Welcome Area/narthex (the service is audible over the speakers).
  - + An **accessible Restroom** is available off the Welcome Area/Narthex next to the **accessibility lift** to the lower level. **Parish Hall and additional 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.
  - + **Land Acknowledgement:** This church is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the **Quapaw, Myaamia, Kaskaskia, and Kickapoo** peoples, and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have and still call this land home.

**PRELUDE**

*“By Streams of Everlasting Love”*

*R. Powell*

**WELCOME**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS** *Please STAND as you are able*

Blessed be the Father, +Son, and Holy Spirit –  
the one God who forgives all our sin,  
whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out all offenses.

*Please KNEEL or remain as you are*

Gracious God,  
**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you:  
**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word:  
**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For failing to recognize your coming reign,  
and for hindering the work of the Spirit:  
**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition,  
and for disdainning the living water Christ offers:  
**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For disregarding voices from the margin,  
and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world:  
**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent,  
and for disregarding Christ’s call to come forth to life:  
**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

God’s steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound.  
Through faith, the free gift of God,  
you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ.  
In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.  
The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you,  
pours God’s love into your hearts,  
and gives you life and peace. **Amen.**



1 As the deer runs to the riv - er, parched and wea - ry from the chase,  
 2 When your Is - rael crossed the des - ert where no stream or spring was seen,  
 3 “Come and drink,” I - sa - iah sum-moned, “all who for God’s mer - cy plead!  
 4 Christ, we come from des - ert plac - es, deep - est thirst un - sat - is - fied.



we have come from hurt and hur - ry, thirst - ing for your heal - ing grace.  
 Mo - ses struck the rock, and wa - ter flowed for them, re - fresh - ing, clean.  
 God’s for - give - ness, like a foun - tain, flows to sat - is - fy your need.”  
 Lead us to the wa - ters flow - ing from the cross on which you died.

*Refrain*



Je - sus, source of liv - ing wa - ter, may we drink of you and live!

**GREETING**

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.**

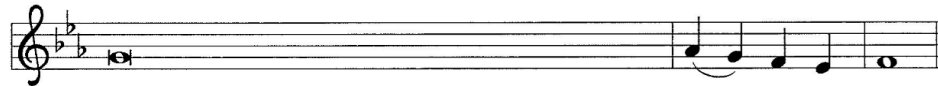
**KYRIE**



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



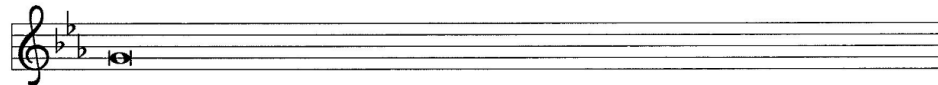
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men, a - men.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray... Merciful God, the fountain of living water, you quench our thirst and wash away our sin. Give us this water always. Bring us to drink from the well that flows with the beauty of your truth through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

*Following the prayer, please SIT.*

## WORD

### FIRST READING: Exodus 17:1-7

<sup>1</sup>From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. <sup>2</sup>The people quarreled with Moses and said, “Give us water to drink.” Moses said to them, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?” <sup>3</sup>But the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses and said, “Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?” <sup>4</sup>So Moses cried out to the LORD, “What shall I do for this people? They are almost ready to stone me.” <sup>5</sup>The LORD said to Moses, “Go on ahead of the people and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile and go. <sup>6</sup>I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink.” Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. <sup>7</sup>He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the LORD, saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

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

**PSALM 95: 1-7** *spoken responsively by half-verse*

<sup>1</sup> Come, let us sing | to the LORD;

**let us shout for joy to the rock of | our salvation.**

<sup>2</sup> Let us come before God's presence | with thanksgiving

**and raise a loud shout to the | LORD with psalms.**

<sup>3</sup> For you, LORD, | are a great God,

**and a great ruler a- | bove all gods.**

<sup>4</sup> In your hand are the caverns | of the earth;

**the heights of the hills are | also yours.**

<sup>5</sup> The sea is yours, | for you made it,

**and your hands have molded | the dry land.**

<sup>6</sup> Come, let us worship | and bow down,

**let us kneel before the | LORD our maker.**

<sup>7</sup> For the LORD is our God, and we are the people of God's pasture and the sheep | of God's hand.

**Oh, that today you would | hear God's voice!**

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

S103

Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

Save us as you prom-ised; we will trust your word.

**GOSPEL: John 4:5-30, 39-42**

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

<sup>5</sup> [Jesus] came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.<sup>6</sup> Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

<sup>7</sup> A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."<sup>8</sup> (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.)<sup>9</sup> The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.)<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."<sup>11</sup> The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?<sup>12</sup> Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?"<sup>13</sup> Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,<sup>14</sup> but those who drink of the water that

I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.”<sup>15</sup> The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.”

<sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come back.”<sup>17</sup> The woman answered him, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband,’<sup>18</sup> for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!”<sup>19</sup> The woman said to him, “Sir, I see that you are a prophet.”<sup>20</sup> Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem.”<sup>21</sup> Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.”<sup>22</sup> You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.”<sup>23</sup> But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him.”<sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”<sup>25</sup> The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.”<sup>26</sup> Jesus said to her, “I am he, the one who is speaking to you.”

<sup>27</sup> Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, “What do you want?” or, “Why are you speaking with her?”<sup>28</sup> Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people,<sup>29</sup> “Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?”<sup>30</sup> They left the city and were on their way to him.

<sup>39</sup> Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I have ever done.”<sup>40</sup> So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days.<sup>41</sup> And many more believed because of his word.<sup>42</sup> They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.** *Please SIT*

**SERMON**

*“Living Water on Thin Ice”*

**The Rev. Brian M. Robison**

*Following the sermon, the assembly STANDS to proclaim the word of God in song.*

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1 For all the faith - ful wom - en who served in days of old,

*Insert one or more of stanzas 3–11 or this general stanza 2:*

2 O God, for saints and ser - vants, those named and those un - known,

*Last* All praise to God the Fa - ther! All praise to Christ the Son!



to you shall thanks be giv - en; to all, their stor - y told.

in whom through all the a - ges your light of glo - ry shone,

All praise to God the Spir - it, who binds the church as one!



They served with strength and glad - ness in tasks your wis - dom gave.

we of - fer glad thanks-giv - ing and fer - vent prayer we raise

With saints who went be - fore us, with saints who wit - ness still,



To you their lives bore wit - ness, pro - claimed your pow'r to save.

that, faith - ful in your ser - vice, our lives may sing your praise.

we sing glad al - le - lu - ias and strive to do your will.

8. **Recall the outcast woman, with whom our Lord conversed:  
Christ gave her living water, to quench her deepest thirst.  
Like hers, our hearts are yearning; Christ offers us his word.  
Then may our lips be burning, to witness to our Lord.**

## APOSTLES CREED

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ,**

**God's 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 to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;**

**he ascended into heaven,**

**he is seated at the right hand of the Father,**

**and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

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

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION** *The names of those for whom we pray aloud (members, staff, first-time additions) are listed below. Please read only the first names. Other prayer intentions can be found in the back of this bulletin. The response to “Hear us, O God,” is “Your mercy is great.”*

**Ken** Augustine, **Eleanor** Benton, **Rob** Buck, **Gary** Dozier, **Charlie** Duncan, **Evelyn** Duncan,  
**Art** Engelage, **Michael** Foppe, **Morris** Kugler, **Diane** Maes, **Bruce** Martens, **Lucy** Montgomery,  
**Ron** Neustadt, **Tina** Partelow, **Marilyn** Robinson, **Cohen** Summers, **Carol** Weshinskey, **Gary** Weshinskey,

**PEACE** *The assembly is invited to share a greeting of God’s peace with one another. Following **the Peace**, you may be **seated** for a few moments.*

**CHOIR ANTHEM** *“There is a Balm in Gilead”*

**OFFERING** *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.*

**OFFERING PRAYER** *Please **STAND** as you are able*

*Assistant:* Let us pray together...

**O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation.  
You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty.  
Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son,  
who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.**

**GREAT THANKSGIVING** *Spoken*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*It is indeed right...we praise your name, and join their unending hymn:*

**HOLY, HOLY, HOLY** *Spoken*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**



## **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

**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**

Come to the table. Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

## **LAMB OF GOD**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
grant us peace.**

## **COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION**

***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.*

**SONGS DURING THE DISTRIBUTION:**

**“I Received the Living God”**

**ELW 477**

*Refrain*

I re - ceived the liv - ing God, and my heart is full of joy.

I re - ceived the liv - ing God, and my heart is full of joy.

I re - ceived the liv - ing God, and my heart is full of joy.

- 1 Je - sus said: I am the bread, knead - ed long to give you life;
- 2 Je - sus said: I am the way, and my Fa - ther longs for you;
- 3 Je - sus said: I am the truth; come and fol - low close to me.
- 4 Je - sus said: I am the life, far from whom no thing can grow,

*Refrain*

you who will par - take of me need not ev - er fear to die.  
 so I come to bring you home to be one with us a - new.  
 You will know me in your heart, and my word shall make you free.  
 but re - ceive this liv - ing bread, and my Spir - it you shall know.

**“Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery”**

**ELW 334, vv. 1-3, and Lent 3**

- 1 Tree of Life and awe - some mys - t'ry, in your
- 2 We re - mem - ber truth once spo - ken, love passed
- 3 Christ, you lead and we shall fol - low, stum - bling

death we are re - born; though you die in all of  
 on through act and word; ev - 'ry per - son lost and  
 though our steps may be; one with you in joy and

his - t'ry, still you rise with ev - 'ry morn, still you  
 bro - ken wears the bod - y of our Lord, wears the  
 sor - row, we the riv - er, you the sea, we the

rise with ev - 'ry morn.  
 bod - y of our Lord.  
 riv - er, you the sea.

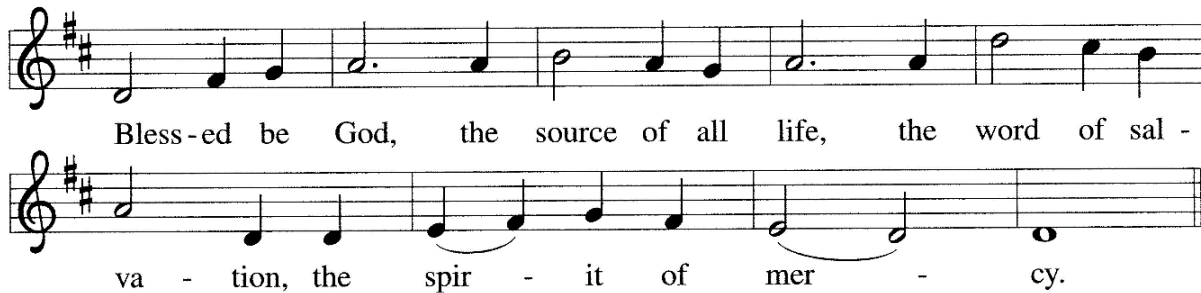
*Lent 3*  
 Living Water of salvation,  
 be the fountain of each soul;  
 springing up in new creation,  
 flow in us and make us whole.

*After the distribution is complete, the assembly STANDS 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 “Blessed Be God, the Source of All Life” ELW 210



Bless-ed be God, the source of all life, the word of sal -  
va - tion, the spir - it of mer - cy.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

*Assistant:* Let us pray together... **God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ’s body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

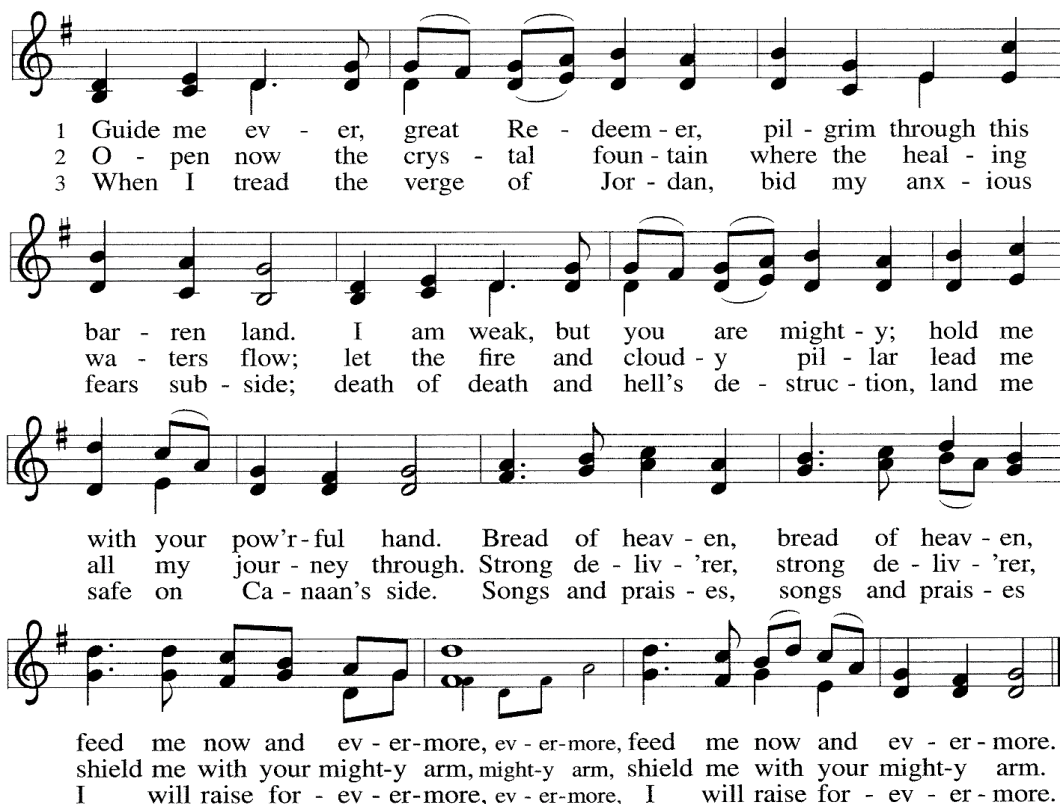
## BENEDICTION

Receive the blessing of the most Holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, ✠ bless you now and always. **Amen.**

## SENDING HYMN

### “Guide Me, Ever Great Redeemer”

ELW 618



1 Guide me ev - er, great Re - deem - er, pil - grim through this  
2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain where the heal - ing  
3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious  
bar - ren land. I am weak, but you are might - y; hold me  
wa - ters flow; let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar lead me  
fears sub - side; death of death and hell’s de - struc - tion, land me  
with your pow’r - ful hand. Bread of heav - en, bread of heav - en,  
all my jour - ney through. Strong de - liv - ’rer, strong de - liv - ’rer,  
safe on Ca - naan’s side. Songs and prais - es, songs and prais - es  
feed me now and ev - er - more, ev - er - more, feed me now and ev - er - more.  
shield me with your might - y arm, might - y arm, shield me with your might - y arm.  
I will raise for - ev - er - more, ev - er - more, I will raise for - ev - er - more.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy. **Thanks be to God.**

### POSTLUDE

*“Rhosymedre”*

*D. Jansen*

### MINISTERS OF TODAY’ LITURGY

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

**Lector:** Aaron Fuchs + **Crucifer:** Frank Dressel + **Tech Minister:** Melanie Robison

**Chalice Bearer:** Tom Partelow + **Safety Volunteer:** Mark Bearth

**Ushers:** Rex Rothgangel & Rick Crosby + **Organist:** Evelyn Duncan

## Prayer Intentions

### St. Mark Members

Ken Augustine, Eleanor Benton, Rob Buck, Gary Dozier, Charlie Duncan, Evelyn Duncan, Art Engelage, Michael Foppe, Morris Kugler, Diane Maes, Bruce Martens, Lucy Montgomery, Tina Partelow, Marilyn Robinson, Cohen Summers, Carol and Gary Weshinsky

### St. Mark Family and Friends

Dennis Althardt, Bert Alvarez, Stellamarie Bearth, John Belz, Jim Boeving, Thomas Boxdorfer, Jim Braeutigam, Patty Brennecke, Susan Carson, Christine, Arianna Curnes, Catherine Davis, Mike Ellison, Katrina Fenner, Josh Gansmann, Christine Gass, Viv Gillespie, Joni Giordano, David Graber, Stephanie Groennert, TC Groennert, Glenna Hamilton, Andrea Hendrix, Jamie House, Jimmy Jurgens, Austin Lickenbrock, Dusty Little, Donna Loesche, Becky Loeschner, Wyatt Madison, Christopher Martiszus, Bobby & Joyce McCall, Don McCoy, Allen Martens, Janet Middendorf, Linda Munn, Pr. Ron & Debbie Neustadt, Dean Norrenberns, Hilda Parnell, Tim & Missy Partelow, Lana Perry, Larry Powers, Goldie Rideout, Jerry Robbins, Darrell Robinson, Sarah and Family, Jill Schlueter, Stefanie Schroeder, Denise Sebastian, David & Donna Sims, Margie Snep, Tom Stookey, Ingrid Thompson, David Vaught, Toni Walston, Louise Wilson, Margie Wilson, Molly Witherell, Karen Woolf, Wilma Woolf, Ken Zika, Chloe Zipperer

### Members and Friends Serving in Our Nation’s Military

Ethan Collins, Taiylar Foppe Merrel, Josh Merrel, Ryan McKenzie, Amy Morgan

### Members celebrating birthdays this week

Gayle Hinkle (3/8), Sue Patrick (3/14), and Aria Hayes (3/14)

### St. Mark Staff

**Pastor:** The Rev. Brian M. Robison + **Pastor Emeritus:** The Rev. Ronald C. Neustadt

**Administrative Assistant:** Randi Cardoza + **Music Director:** Carol Kugler

**Organist:** Evelyn Duncan + **Parish Nurse:** Becky Schnitzius

# MARK TIMES

## NEWS & NOTES FOR MARCH 8, 2026

### THE WEEK AHEAD

<b>Monday, March 9:</b>	6:30PM	Yoga – Parish Hall
<b>Wednesday, March 11:</b>	9:30AM	Evangelism/Social Ministry committee - CR
	12:00PM	Ladies Lunch Bunch – Fazzi’s
	6:00PM	Soup supper – Parish Hall
	7:00PM	Lent Evening Prayer - church
<b>Thursday, March 12:</b>	4:00PM	Chancel choir
	5:45PM	Bell Choir

### Today’s Adult Forum: *Pregnancy Care Center*

We welcome Doug and Jill Luge from Belleville’s Pregnancy Care Center this morning to tell us about their organization, which we have been supporting for many years.

### Noisy/Not so Noisy Change Collection Today!

Lent is a perfect time to dig through your couch, car seats, purse and all the other places coins tend to hide! Many Franklin School students still owe past book fees totaling ~\$1600, and we can help!

**Collection will be this Sunday, March 8** during worship. The Change bucket will also be available on March 15 before and after service. Electronic donation may be made to [https://secure.myvanco.com/L-YT91/campaign/C-14EWR?access=tile\\_direct](https://secure.myvanco.com/L-YT91/campaign/C-14EWR?access=tile_direct).

**Ladies Lunch Bunch** meets **THIS Wednesday, March 11** at **12 noon** at **Fazzi’s** (1813 Vandalia Dr./Route 159, Collinsville). **Call Carol Kugler at 618-571-3079 with questions or to reserve a spot.**



### Midweek Lenten Soup Suppers

Come enjoy an evening of fellowship over a meal of soup and salad at **6:00PM** in the Parish Hall on the **Wednesdays of Lent**, before joining us in the church for **evening prayer** at **7:00PM** (see below).

### Lenten Evening Prayer: *Ad Astra per Aspera*

This Lent, journey with us on **Wednesdays** at **7:00PM** in the church for a special evening prayer series: “*Ad Astra Per Aspera: A Trek Through Lent.*” Using a space exploration theme inspired by events like Sputnik, the Space Shuttle Challenger, Apollo 13, and more, we’ll explore how faith carries us “*through hardships to the stars.*” Each service includes Scripture, prayer, and reflection in the style of Evening Prayer from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. Come be grounded in God’s grace as we trek together toward Easter hope.



## Financial Update from the Treasurer

The St. Mark congregation is truly blessed! Many will recall the concerns expressed at the congregational meetings in December regarding a projected financial shortfall for the year. This was based on year-to-date results reported through October of 2025 which showed a deficit condition. We have been conducting a much-needed financial audit which delayed our fiscal year reporting. However, member donations received in November and December were **\$55,563** (\$14,215 and \$48,332 respectively). The December donations were particularly significant and brought us into a net positive result for the year of \$1,218. And then, just at year's end, we received a bequest of \$31,960 from the estate of a member who had passed. This pushed our fiscal year surplus to \$33,178. Our congregation should be proud of this response and fiscal year completion.

## Epiphany Diaper Collection January 2026

THANK YOU to those who contributed diapers/pull-ups, training pants, diaper wipes, diaper cream and monetary donations. A Thrivent Action Team Grant for \$250 was also received. Target's special offers provided an additional \$120 in gift cards which were used to purchase more of the needed items.

Diapers were delivered to St. Mark/St. George Food Pantry, Violence Prevention Center (x2) and Pregnancy Care Center (x2). Additional pictures are on the Parish Hall bulletin board.



## Christ Community Trivia Night Fundraiser!



Visit the sweetness of "Jesus Land" at **Christ Community Lutheran Church** (Columbia) for their annual TRIVIA NIGHT youth fundraiser on **Saturday, March 21** from **6-8:00PM** (doors open at 5:30p)! \*This event will raise funds for this summer's youth mission trip to Duluth, MN, **which our youth from St. Mark will be participating in!**

+ Cost is **\$15 per person**, or **\$110 for a table of 8**

+ Bring your own food and snacks. Drinks will be available for purchase including mocktails, soda, and water.

+ Costume and Table Decorating Contests - dress up as your favorite Board Game and/or create cool matching table decor. Time to GET CREATIVE!!

+ Generic trivia categories - there will be something for everyone!

+ Childcare available

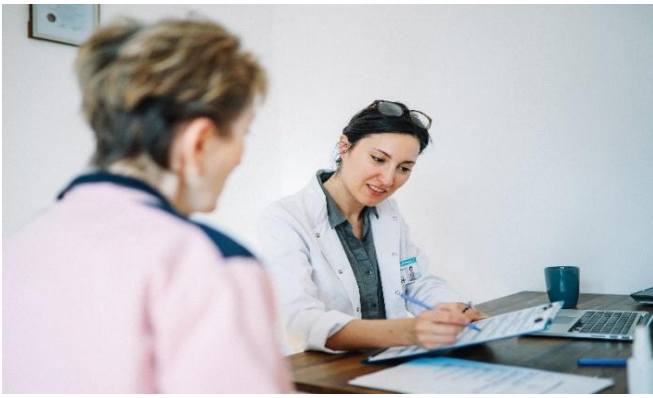
\*\*Let **Melanie** know if you are planning to join, and she will sign up all the tables at once. Checks can be written to **St. Mark Youth**.



## Bunny Bazaar Coming March 22!

On **Sunday, March 22**, in the tradition of November's "Pumpkin Palooza," we will host an Easter/Spring-themed **bake sale and craft sale** between and after all three services, with proceeds to **benefit our combined Food Pantry**. Bake an Easter/spring treat and bring before services on March 22!

**St. Mark Offerings for 3/1:** General Fund: **\$4,861.66**; Coffee Fund: \$16;  
Franklin Fees Noisy Offering: \$200.91



## **St Mark Lutheran Church**

**Parish Nurse Corner**

***Rebecca Schnitzius, RN***

**March 2026**

### **March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month**

March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness, encouraging screenings (starting at age 45), and promoting prevention for colorectal cancer. Colorectal cancer is the second deadliest cancer in the U.S., but it is highly preventable with early detection. Routine colorectal cancer screenings make a significant difference in early detection to improve cancer outcomes.

Colorectal cancer starts in the colon or rectum. It often develops slowly over many years, usually beginning as small growths called polyps. It is highly treatable if detected early via screenings. Finding and removing polyps early can prevent cancer from forming. Colon cancer screenings can find polyps (pre-cancerous growths) and early-stage cancer when treatment is most effective. People who are 45-75 should get screened, but get screened earlier if you have any symptoms of colorectal cancer.

Risk factors for colon-rectal cancer:

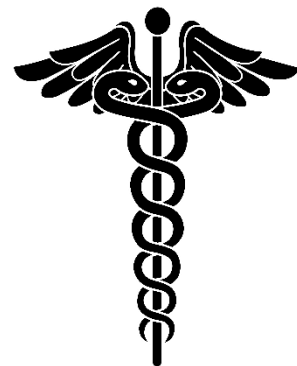
- Increased age (Over 50)
- A family history of colorectal polyps or cancer, inflammatory bowel disease (Crohn's or ulcerative colitis)
- Smoking
- High alcohol consumption
- A sedentary lifestyle

Colon cancer is staged 1-4 based on the following:

- How far the tumor has grown through the intestinal wall
- If it has spread to the lymph nodes
- If it has spread to distant organs

Common symptoms of colorectal cancer to watch for:

- Blood in the stool – Bright red blood or tarry stools
- Changes in stool/bowel habits – Frequent diarrhea, constipation, or narrower, ribbon-like stools
- Stomach pain - Persistent discomfort, cramping, bloating, or fullness in the abdomen
- Unexplained weight loss – Losing weight without really trying
- Feeling tired or weak – Constant tiredness or low red blood cell count



Other things to think about:

- Early stages – Colorectal cancer often causes no symptoms in its early stages
- Other causes – The previously listed symptoms can be caused by conditions other than cancer, such as infections, hemorrhoids, or inflammatory bowel disease

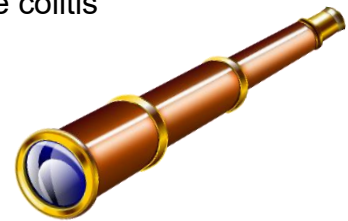
Colorectal cancer is highly treatable when found early. Since many people have no symptoms at all, screenings can find polyps before they turn into cancer.

Who should get screened?

- Adults starting at age 45-50
- Anyone with a family history of colorectal cancer
- People with certain conditions like Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative colitis
- Anyone with symptoms of colorectal cancer

Screening options:

- Colonoscopy – Every 10 years or as ordered by doctor
- Stool-based tests:
  - Done at home
  - Looks for hidden blood or DNA changes
- CT Colonography (every 5 years) – A non-invasive imaging test which requires bowel prep but no sedation



How can you reduce your risk of getting colon cancer?

- Eat more fruits and vegetables
- Stay active
- Limit red and processed meats
- Avoid smoking
- Keep alcohol intake low
- Maintain a healthy weight



Remember, colorectal cancer is very preventable. Get your screenings for colorectal cancer on a regular basis. Everyone should get screened, especially if you are 45-70 years old. Ways to prevent colon cancer are eating a healthy diet, getting regular exercise, quitting smoking, and maintaining a healthy weight. These reduce the risk of polyp formation and cancer development.