

Reach, Teach, Rejoice!

Children of the Heavenly Father

HYMN Oh, Come, Little Children

Oh, come, little children, oh, come, one and all,
To Bethlehem haste, to the manger so small.
God's Son for a gift has been sent you this night
To be your Redeemer, your joy and delight.

He's born in a stable for you and for me;
Draw near by the bright gleaming starlight to see,
In swaddling clothes lying, so meek and so mild,
And purer than angels, the heavenly child!

See Mary and Joseph with love-beaming eyes
Are gazing upon the rude bed where he lies.
The shepherds are kneeling, with hearts full of love
While angels sing loud hallelujahs above.

THE INVOCATION

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

CONFESSION OF SINS

M: Beloved in the Lord: let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

C: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

St. Mark Lutheran Church and School
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This Week at St. Mark

- Monday - Worship w/ Lord's Supper 7:00 pm
- Wednesday - Bible Class Lexington Assisted Living Center 3:30 pm
- Thursday - Christmas Eve Worship Service 7:00 pm
- Friday - Christmas Day Worship Service w/ Lord's Supper 10:00 am
- Snow Removal—Joshua Van Egmond
- Saturday - Church Cleaning: Sec. 1 T. Hans Sec. 2 Fanning
Sec. 3 M. Hawkins

January Meal - Every year St. Mark is asked to help with one service event at Nebraska Lutheran High School. This year we will be helping four area churches furnish and serve a meal for the January 9th Nebraska Lutheran Cheer Camp and basketball games. Monetary donations will allow us to purchase the groceries needed to prepare this meal. If you are interested in helping support our area Lutheran high school in this way, please give your donations to Carol Hans or any one of our Ladies Aid members. Checks should be made payable to *St. Mark Ladies Aid*. Your help is greatly appreciated!

A Measure of Our Love for Our Lord
Worship Attendance Last Week 157; Wednesday 90
Last Week's Thank Offering to Our Lord

Home	\$3,851.68	Missions	\$147.00
Building Fund	\$355.00	NELHS General	\$75.00
Tuition	\$300.00	School Trip	\$50.00
Total Offering— \$4,778.68			

St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church - by the numbers

Church expenses	\$2,501	41%
School expenses	\$2,684	44%
WELS/NELHS support	<u>\$854</u>	14%
Total needed per week	\$6,100	

Now, when you see "A Measure of Our Love for Our Lord"
in the weekly bulletin you'll have a reference point.

St. Mark News and Notes

Nursery At St. Mark, we love children and encourage their worship, too! In the foyer, we have some children’s busy bags hanging from hooks that you are most welcome to use in church. If your child becomes restless during the service and you feel you both could just use a little break, you’re welcome to use our nursery. Ask an usher to lead you to the nursery. If you need a private place to feed your baby, there is a chair downstairs in the women’s restroom along with a changing table. Most of us have or have had young children, so you’re with caring people who understand what it’s like to have little ones.

Birthday— Kerri Johnson 12/22, Susan Rehm 12/23
Anniversary – Dwayne & Dorothy Burianek

THANK YOU FOR SERVING

Elders: Jarod Wilkinson, Jeff Schmidt
Ushers: Dwayne Burianek, Mark Schwede (E), Noel Lee, Tyson Martin (L)
Greeters: Nathan & Katie Flood (E) , Mark Nelson (L)
Organist: Eva Van Egmond

Coming Events:

December 20 – Children’s Christmas Service 10:30 am
December 24 – Christmas Eve Service 7:00 pm
December 25 – Christmas Day Worship w/Lord’s Supper 10:00 am
December 31 – New Year’s Eve Worship 7:00 pm

School Project—Please take time to check out the 3rd and 4th grade National Parks Projects in the narthex. They did a great job.

Please remember in your prayers...

- Joe Merklinger
- Oriah Uecker, Tracy & Curt Jamison’s niece
- Sarah Brauer, Margaret Booth’s daughter
- Jacob Kander, Jean & Denny Riegsecker’s nephew
- Alida Freese, Julie Nelson’s mother



WORD OF FORGIVENESS

M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C: **Amen.**

PRAYER AND PRAISE

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

After a brief introduction, the congregation sings...

**Kneel down and adore him with shepherds today.
Lift up little hands now and praise him as they
Rejoice that a Savior from sin you can boast,
And join in the song of the heavenly host.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: The Lord be with you.
C: **And also with you.**
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; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

Please be seated.

THE WORD

FIRST LESSON

Micah 5:2-5a

PSALM 103 (spoken)

- M:** The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.
- C:** **He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.**
- M:** For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him;
- C:** **as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.**
- M:** As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;
- C:** **for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.**
- M:** Our days are like grass, like a flower of the field; the wind blows over it and it is gone.
- C:** **But the LORD's love is with those who fear him from everlasting to everlasting.**

SECOND LESSON

1 John 2:28-3:3

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

As the Acolyte comes forward to light the candle, the congregation sings the following hymn verse to the tune of "Away In A Manger."

**The glory of Christmas with beauty sublime
Shines ever more brightly in fullness of time.
The promise of ages has finally come,
The hope of our fathers revealed in God's Son.**

Please be seated.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Communion Hymns:

CW 309 **Draw Near and Take the Body of the Lord**
CW 47 **Behold, a Branch Is Growing**

THANKSGIVING

- M:** O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.
- C:** **And his mercy endures forever.**
- M:** We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this Holy Supper. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C:** **Amen.**

THE BLESSING

- 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: CW 35 (vs. 1-2) **Of the Father's Love Begotten**

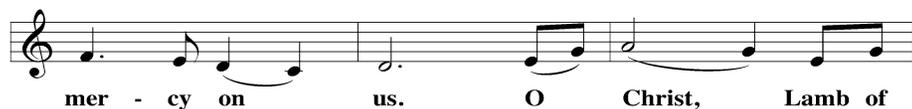
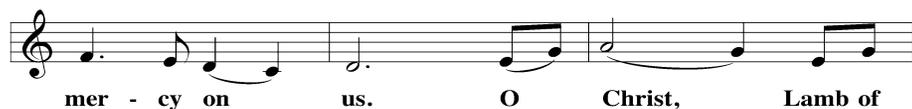
Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen.

O CHRIST, LAMB OF GOD

Agnus Dei



M: We light four Advent candles remembering Jesus, the Son of God and Son of Mary. He came to share our humanity.

C: We remember Jesus whose name means Savior. He came to save his people from their sins.

M: We hear his call to give him a place in our hearts.

C: We light four Advent candles as a sign of our joy and hope.

M: Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.

C: Through your Word and Spirit may our souls be blessed.

Please stand.

GOSPEL

Luke 1:39-55

M: The Gospel for this morning is taken from Luke, chapter one.

C: Glory be to you, O Lord!

M: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

CONFESSION OF FAITH

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one being with the Father.

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,
and became fully human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and
glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Please be seated.

HYMN: CW 449

Children of the Heavenly Father

SERMON

OFFERING

Please stand.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

THE LORD'S PRAYER

C: 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.

THE SACRAMENT

We follow the historic Christian practice of *close communion*. We ask that only members of St. Mark Lutheran or one of our sister congregations partake of the sacrament. If you are not a member, please speak to the pastor before communing.

Opening Sentences

M: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them up to the Lord.

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

M: We should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who promises to be with us when two or three gather together in his name and to give a rich supply of blessings through his Spirit. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise you for your goodness, and especially now for the supper of forgiveness you have placed before us. Lead us to take it with true repentance—sorrow over our sins, trust that you have taken those sins away through the blood your Son shed on the cross, and a willingness to turn away from our sins to live a life pleasing to you. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."