

St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS)

3930 S. 19th Street, Lincoln, NE. 68502

Office phone: 402-423-1497 Vacancy Pastor's Cell 402-440-8145

Website: www.stmarklincoln.org

ministers: every member

President: Larry Hans

Vacancy Pastor: Tim Kemnitz

In an ever-changing world, St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church exists to build Christ's kingdom in people's hearts with the un-changing Gospel of Jesus Christ.

++++
Welcome to worship this New Year's Eve. We extend a special welcome to those with us as guests tonight. We're reminded as another calendar year slips by that most things in this world change and fade away. However, we take comfort tonight that our God is always with us. This evening he gives us his solemn promise to love us and give us genuine and lasting life through Jesus Christ. His promises never change or fade away.

The Lord's Supper will be celebrated this evening. In Holy Communion we receive the true body and blood of Jesus Christ. In this Sacrament God gives us forgiveness of our sins and also the strength to follow Him in the new year. In his Supper, our Lord assures repentant believers of his never-changing mercy. We kindly ask those who are not members of our congregation to speak with Pastor Kemnitz or one of the Elders of the church before coming to the altar to receive the Lord's Supper. They'd be happy to discuss what joining our Communion fellowship entails.

Prayer before worship: Lord, we are coming to you again at the end of a year, looking back on what was and looking forward to what may be. Some among our family of believers have endured heart-rending grief and trials in the past year. Some have silently borne hurts known only to you and them. Others have experienced unexpected joys. We ask you to come to us all tonight and do what only you can: assure us that you will never leave us, no matter what. Promise us yet again that you will never abandon us. Teach us to rely on the promises you have made. Lead us to believe that these words from you will never change, even if all else does. Establish our faith on the solid foundation of your grace. We pray in the name of Christ Jesus, who is the same yesterday and today and forever. Amen.



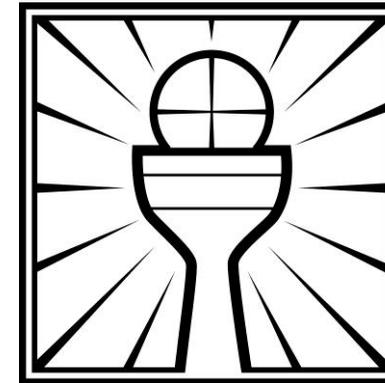
GATHERING

INVOCATION

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

C: Amen. -1-

THE SACRAMENT



The Service continues with the Lord's Prayer on p. 20 and the Service of the Sacrament on p. 21

Distribution Hymns

CW 71 "The Old Year Now Has Passed Away"

CW 75 "Father, Let Me Dedicate"

After the Sacrament, please stand for the closing prayer and blessing

Luther's Evening Prayer

In the name of the Father and of the Son (+) and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have graciously kept me this day. Forgive me all my sins, and graciously keep me this night. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Blessing

This blessing is one that has been spoken over God's people for about 3400 years, since the time of Moses. The blessing is not merely a wish; it is a powerful promise of God's love, peace and protection. The blessing energizes us as we head into 2015 to serve God in the many ways he has called us to serve—as parents, friends, spouses, employees, students, citizens, and more.

M: 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: (Sings) Amen. Amen. Amen.

Closing Hymn CW 507 "Lord of our Growing Years"

Holy Gospel Matthew 7:24-27

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. **25** The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. **26** But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. **27** The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

M: The Gospel of the Lord

C: **God be praised for His Good News!**

Hymn of the Day CW 70 "Help Us, O Lord, for Now We Enter"

Sermon Exodus 33:14-15

The LORD replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." **15** Then Moses said to him, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here."

THEME: The Promise of God's Presence Helps Us Persevere

OFFERING

PRAYER AT THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR

M: I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever.

C: **Every day I will praise you and extol your name.**

M: It is fitting, O Lord, in the final hours of this year, to express our gratitude for the countless gifts of grace we have received from you.

C: **You have been faithful to your promises and loving toward all you have made.**

M: You clothe your creation with beauty; you feed even the birds and tell us that we are much more valuable than they.

C: **You know what we need, and you give us all good things.**

M: Clothing and food, safety and health, possessions and money, even life itself—all these come to us from your generous hand.

C: **We thank you for these blessings, and ask you to continue to grant them to us.**

M: We thank you especially for your Word and Holy Supper, which strengthen our faith, shield us from temptation, and equip us for service.

C: **Increase our commitment to these precious gifts, so that we may continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

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

Silent prayer

M: Almighty and eternal God, you have been gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and rich in love. As you led your people Israel with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, so lead us by the light of your Word that we may live our lives to your glory and be prepared to die in your peace.

C: **We ask these things in the name of Jesus. In his name we began this year; in his name we bring it to a close. Amen.**

RESPONSIVE LITANY FOR THE NEW YEAR

M: Lord Jesus Christ, as the old year comes to a close, we are reminded of how swiftly life passes. We are strangers and pilgrims in this world; our real home is with you in heaven. Help us to keep our eyes on that heavenly goal and not to become distracted by the temporary joys of this life which soon pass away. Everything may change and decay, but You, O Lord, remain the same.

C: **♪ Abide with me; fast falls the eventide.
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me!**

M: Lord, the struggles of this life are constant. The devil, the world, and our own sinful flesh are no friends to your people. These enemies never stop trying to rob us of our faith and Christian joy. Because the danger is real and the fight of faith is critical, be at our side every moment of the year that lies ahead. Be a permanent and honored member of our families. Cleanse us from our sins, and we shall be white as snow.

C: **♪ Thou on my head in early youth didst smile,
And though rebellious and perverse meanwhile,
Thou hast not left me oft as I left thee.
On to the close, O Lord, abide with me.**

M: Lord Jesus, You know us better than we know ourselves. You know the sins and rebellious patterns of our lives. We have gone our own way. We have forsaken you to follow our own desires. Though we have often left you, you have not left us. You have reclaimed us from the way of death and restored us to your kingdom of life. In the temptations that yet lie in the future, even in this coming year, abide with your grace, and equip us to overcome them all.

C: **♪ I need thy presence ev'ry passing hour.
What but thy grace can foil the tempter's pow'r?
Who like thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, oh, abide with me!**

M: Lord Jesus, you have destroyed the terror of death and robbed it of its victory. Abide with us then, to the very end of life. Let your cross shine through the gloom of that last hour as we eagerly wait for our eternal home. And there—free from all the troubles and dangers of this earthly life—we shall abide with you, and you with us, forever.

C: ♪ **Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.
Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me!**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: Let us pray: Eternal Father, before whom all generations rise and fall, teach us to think earnestly on the shortness of our lives and on the immensity of your goodness. Help us to enter the new year trusting in the name of your Son and walking in the way of peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

RESPONSORY, Psalm 90

M: Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations.

C: **Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.**

M: You turn men back to dust, saying, "Return to dust, O sons of men."

C: **For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a
watch in the night.**

M: You sweep men away in the sleep of death; they are like the new grass of the morning – though in the morning it springs up new, by evening it is dry and withered.

C: ♪ **O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter in the stormy blast, And our eternal home,**

**Under the shadow of your throne Your saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is your arm alone, And our defense is sure.**

**Before the hills in order stood Or earth received its frame,
From everlasting you are God, To endless years the same.**

**A thousand ages in your sight Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night Before the rising sun.**

M: We are consumed by your anger and terrified by your indignation.

C: **You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence.**

M: All our days pass away under your wrath; we finish our years with a moan.

C: **The length of our days is seventy years—or eighty, if we have the strength; yet
their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away.**

M: Who knows the power of your anger? For your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you.

C: ♪ **Time, like an ever-rolling stream, Soon bears us all away;
We fly, forgotten, as a dream Dies at the opening day.**

M: Teach us to number our days aright,

C: **that we may gain a heart of wisdom.**

M: Relent, O LORD! How long will it be? Have compassion on your servants.

C: **Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be
glad all our days.**

M: Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us, for as many years as we have seen trouble.

C: **May your deeds be shown to your servants, your splendor to their children.**

M: May the favor of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us – yes, establish the work of our hands.

C: ♪ **O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,
Still be our guard while troubles last And our eternal home!**

THE WORD

M: As we hear the Word of the Lord on the eve of the New Year, we are reminded of this truth from the prophet Isaiah:

C: **The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of
our God stands forever.” (Isaiah 40)**

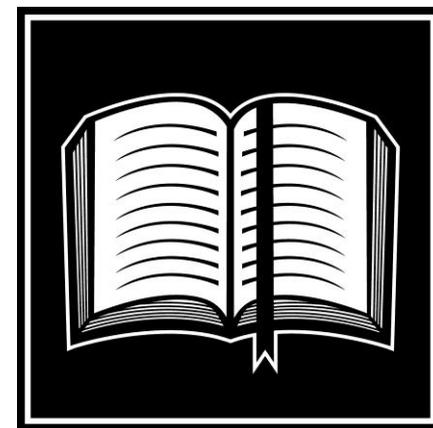
Lesson Romans 8:31-39

What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? **32** He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? **33** Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. **34** Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. **35** Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? **36** As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." **37** No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. **38** For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, **39** neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

M: The Word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God!**

C: ♪ **O Lord, our Father, thanks and praise In this new year we'll render,
For ev'ry evil had to flee Before you, our defender.
Our life was nourished, we were fed With rich supplies of daily bread,
And peace reigned in our borders.**



Lord Of Our Growing Years

Lord of our growing years, With us from infancy,
Laughter and quick-dried tears, Freshness and energy:
Your grace surrounds us all our days --
For all your gifts we bring our praise.

Lord of our strongest years, Stretching our youthful pow'rs,
Dreamers and pioneers, When all the world seems ours:
Your grace surrounds us all our days --
For all your gifts we bring our praise.

Lord of our middle years, Giver of steadfastness,
Courage that perseveres When there is small success:
Your grace surrounds us all our days --
For all your gifts we bring our praise.

Lord of our older years, Steep though the road may be,
Rid us of foolish fears; Bring us serenity:
Your grace surrounds us all our days --
For all your gifts we bring our praise.

Lord of our closing years, Always your promise stands;
Hold us when death appears, Safely within your hands:
Your grace surrounds us all our days --
For all your gifts we bring our praise.



St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
3930 S. 19th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68502

Office Phone: 402-423-1497, Vacancy Pastor Timothy Kemnitz's Cell: 402-440-8145
Website: www.stmarklincoln.org

Our Mission Statement: St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church exists to make disciples of Christ Jesus, the only Savior from sin and eternal death.