

St. Mark's Episcopal Church

Living Inclusively, Promoting Justice, Sharing Hope



September 29, 2024

10:00 a.m.

Welcome to St. Mark's Episcopal Church

The Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Sharing the hope and love of Jesus Christ in a radically inclusive, respectful and loving community, mobilized as His disciples to alleviate suffering, while working for equity, justice, and mercy in every aspect of life.

To become God's Beloved Community.

The Rt. Rev. Ruth Woodliff-Stanley, Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina

The Very Reverend Dr. Michael Shaffer, Interim Rector

The Reverend Dr. Jennie C. Olbrych, Clergy Associate-Retired

Loretta Haskell, Organist & Choirmaster

Alphonso Grayson, Senior Warden – Bob Waters, Junior Warden



The Season after Pentecost

The 1982 Hymnal, referred to as **Hymnal** and *Lift Every Voice and Sing II*, referred to as **LEVAS** are found in your pew. **WLP** designates the music comes from the publication *Wonder, Love and Praise*. If **BCP** appears, that is a reference to the red Book of Common Prayer, also found in your pew.

Opening Proclamation

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ saith: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

INTROIT

Gracious Spirit, Give Your Servants

Cyril Vincent Taylor

OPENING HYMN

Guide My Feet

WLP 819

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Presider: Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People: And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

COLLECT FOR PURITY

Presider: Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The following is sung, all standing.

Canticle 13, A Song of Praise: Benedictus es, Domine

Hymnal S-236

Glory to you, Lord God of our fathers;
you are worthy of praise; glory to you.
Glory to you for the radiance of your holy Name;
we will praise you and highly exalt you for ever.

Glory to you in the splendor of your temple;
on the throne of your majesty, glory to you.
Glory to you, seated between the Cherubim;
we will praise you and highly exalt you for ever.

Glory to you, beholding the depths;
in the high vault of heaven, glory to you.
Glory to you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;
we will praise you and highly exalt you for ever.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Presider: The Lord be with you.

People: *And also with you.*

Presider: Let us pray.

O God, you declare your almighty power chiefly in showing mercy and pity: Grant us the fullness of your grace, that we, running to obtain your promises, may become partakers of your heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

THE LESSONS

FIRST READING: Numbers 11:4-6, 10-16, 24-29

The rabble among them had a strong craving; and the Israelites also wept again, and said, “If only we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we used to eat in Egypt for nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; but now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at.”

Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, all at the entrances of their tents. Then the Lord became very angry, and Moses was displeased. So Moses said to the Lord, “Why have you treated your servant so badly? Why have I not found favor in your sight, that you lay the burden of all this people on me? Did I conceive all this people? Did I give birth to them, that you should say to me, ‘Carry them in your bosom, as a nurse carries a sucking child,’ to the land that you promised on oath to their ancestors? Where am I to get meat to give to all this people? For they come weeping to me and say, ‘Give us meat to eat!’ I am not able to carry all this people alone, for they are too heavy for me. If this is the way you are going to treat me, put me to death at once—if I have found favor in your sight—and do not let me see my misery.”

So the Lord said to Moses, “Gather for me seventy of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them; bring them to the tent of meeting, and have them take their place there with you.”

So Moses went out and told the people the words of the Lord; and he gathered seventy elders of the people, and placed them all around the tent. Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders; and when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did not do so again.

Two men remained in the camp, one named Eldad, and the other named Medad, and the spirit rested on them; they were among those registered, but they had not gone out to the tent, and so they prophesied in the camp. And a young man ran and told Moses, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.” And Joshua son of Nun, the assistant of Moses, one of his chosen men, said, “My lord Moses, stop them!” But Moses said to him, “Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the Lord’s people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit on them!”

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

PSALM 19:7-14

7 The law of the LORD is perfect
and revives the soul; *
the testimony of the LORD is sure
and gives wisdom to the innocent.

*8 The statutes of the LORD are just
and rejoice the heart; *
the commandment of the LORD is clear
and gives light to the eyes.*

9 The fear of the LORD is clean
and endures for ever; *
the judgments of the LORD are true
and righteous altogether.

*10 More to be desired are they than gold,
more than much fine gold, *
sweeter far than honey,
than honey in the comb.*

11 By them also is your servant enlightened, *
and in keeping them there is great reward.

*12 Who can tell how often he offends? *
cleanse me from my secret faults.*

13 Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins;
let them not get dominion over me; *
then shall I be whole and sound,
and innocent of a great offense.

*14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my
heart be acceptable in your sight, *
O LORD, my strength and my redeemer.*

SECOND READING: James 5:13-20

Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest.

My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and is brought back by another, you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner's soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

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

Please stand.

SEQUENCE HYMN

Lord of All Hopefulness, Lord of All Joy

Hymnal 482

GOSPEL: Mark 9:38-50

Priest The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.
People *Glory to you, Lord Christ.*

John said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." But Jesus said, "Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. Whoever is not against us is for us. For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

"If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

"For everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

Priest The Gospel of the Lord.
People *Praise to you, Lord Christ.*

TRANSITION SONG

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful

Song by Taizé

*In the Lord I'll be ever thankful,
In the Lord I'll rejoice.
Look to God, do not be afraid,
Lift up your voices, the Lord is near;
Lift up your voices the Lord is near.*

THE SERMON

The Very Reverend Dr. Michael Shaffer

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: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. 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. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic 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.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE -FORM IV – MODIFIED FOR ELECTION SEASON

Intercessor: Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

Grant, Almighty God, that all who confess your Name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy
People: Hear our prayer.

Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the common good.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy
People: Hear our prayer.

Loving God, creator of this world who is the source of our wisdom and understanding, watch over this nation during this time of election. Help us to see how our faith informs our principles and actions.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

People: Guide us in truth and love.

Help us create communities that will build your kingdom here on earth – communities that will protect the poor, stand up for the vulnerable, advocate for those who are not seen and heard, and listen to everyone’s voice.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

People: Guide us in truth and love.

We pray for this nation that is deeply divided. May we come together for the common good and do as you have called us to do – to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you through creation.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

People: Guide us in truth and love.

We give thanks for the right to vote. Help us to hold this privilege and responsibility with the care and awareness it merits, realizing that our vote matters and that it is an act of faith.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

People: Guide us in truth and love.

Help us act out of love, mercy and justice rather than out of arrogance or fear.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

People: Guide us in truth and love.

Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

People: Hear our prayer.

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation. We invite your personal intercessions at this time, either aloud or in your heart. (Pause, followed by Intercessor Prayers)

Silence

HYMN AT THE PRESENTATION

Sung to the tune of Hymnal #400

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*

HOLY EUCHARIST – Eucharistic Prayer B

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The People remain standing.

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: *And also with you.*

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

People: *We lift them to the Lord.*

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: *It is right to give him thanks and praise.*

Facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord; who on the first day of the week overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Celebrant and People

Sanctus

Hymnal S –125

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,
 heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
 san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
 san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Celebrant: We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, “Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

All:

We remember his death,

We proclaim his resurrection,

We await his coming in glory;

Celebrant: And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with our patron St. Mark and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your children; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever.

All: AMEN.

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

People and Celebrant sing

Our Father, which 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 debt, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Celebrant: Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People: Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

Fraction Anthem

Let Us Break Bread Together

LEVAS 152

Let us break bread together on our knees;
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,
Oh Lord, have mercy on me.

Let us drink wine together on our knees;
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,
Oh Lord, have mercy on me.

Let us praise God together on our knees;
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,
Oh Lord, have mercy on me.

INVITATION

Celebrant The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

At St. Mark's Episcopal Church, all desiring a deepening and reaffirming relationship with Christ are invited to come forward for Holy Communion or for a blessing. This is the table not of the Church, but of Jesus Christ. It is made ready for those who love God. Come, not because the Church invites you; it is Christ who invites you to be fed and blessed here. For He knows you by name and calls you by name.

Communion will be offered in two kinds. The wine may be received by either sipping the chalice or allowing the Eucharistic Minister to dip your wafer in the wine, so that you may receive by intinction. If you do not wish to receive the wine, please indicate that by crossing your arms over your chest when the chalice reaches you at the altar rail. Communion in one kind (in bread only) is a perfectly valid way to receive the sacrament. Gluten free hosts are available upon request. For a blessing, cross your hands over your chest. If you would like to have communion brought to your seat, please let an usher know.

MUSIC AT COMMUNION

If I Have Wounded Any Soul Today
Sweet Hour of Prayer

LEVAS 176
LEVAS 178

After Communion, the Celebrant says.

Let us pray. (*All pray*)

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE BLESSING

PROCESSIONAL

Lord, Dismiss Us With Thy Blessing

Hymnal 344

DISMISSAL

Celebrant Alleluia, alleluia. Let us go forth in the name of the Christ.

People *Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.*

CLOSING HYMN

Thank You, Lord

Sung by all

*Thank You, Lord (x's 3) I just want to thank you Lord.
You've Been So Good (x's 3) I just want to thank you Lord.
You've Been My Friend (x's 3) I just want to thank you Lord*

The worship is over. Now the service begins.



The Flowers are given by Lisa Van Bergen in Thanksgiving for my daughter, Constance Belton, on her birthday.



SERVICE PARTICIPANTS:

The Very Rev. Dr. Michael Shaffer, *Celebrant & Preacher*
Lerone Johnson, *Eucharistic Minister*
Ellen Harden, *Lector*
Loretta Haskell, *Organist & Choirmaster*
Ruth Breland, Alphonso Grayson, Suzanne Hieserman, *Altar Guild*
Gin Waters, *Flowers*
Jen Waters and William Bugg, *Ushers*

Announcements

New Church Directory

St. Mark's is going to publish a new Membership Directory this Fall, and we want you to be in it! Erin Shaffer will be available to take your photo individually, or as a family, following our worship service today. At that time, you will also be asked to fill out a "Membership Form" so we can have all your current contact information.

Ronald McDonald House Outreach – Saturday Morning, September 28th

RMHC Charleston is a 'Home-away-from-home' for families of critically ill children undergoing extensive medical treatment. Next Saturday, September 28, 2024, volunteers from St. Mark's will prepare and provide brunch for the residents. If you are interested in participating please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex.

Annual Parish Picnic – Sunday, September 29th – 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM

We will be holding our Annual Parish Picnic on the lawn Sunday, September 29, combining it with outreach to our community, as members of St. Mark's and St. Stephen's Episcopal Churches will be offering voter registration during the picnic. So, show up, *bring a friend*, and enjoy Cheo's roasted pork, grilled dogs, all the fixins and *live music!* And please sign up to bring a side dish on the volunteer sheet in the Narthex or contact Ellen Hardin.

This is a time to share the love and joy of our community with others! So, let's do it!

Blessing of the Animals – Sunday, October 6th – St. Francis Celebration

Bring your pets to worship service on Sunday, October 6th, as we'll be offering a special blessing of our pets in honor of our celebration of St. Francis of Assisi, Patron Saint of animals and the environment.

Diocesan Learning Day hosted by St. Mark's
Saturday, October 19, 2024
Register Online Now!

The Diocese of South Carolina's Racial Justice and Reconciliation Committee, co-chaired by Gail DeCosta, will be sponsoring a special "Learning Day" on Saturday, October 19, which will be take place at St. Mark's and Calvary Episcopal Churches. The theme for October's Learning Day is *"The Largely Forgotten History of African American Episcopalians in Downtown Charleston"* and presentations will focus specifically on the histories of St. Mark's and Calvary Episcopal Church, our founders, differences and similarities, and historic clergy who have served these communities. All parishes and parishioners throughout the diocese will be invited to attend.

The morning session will take place at St. Mark's, and the afternoon session will be held at Calvary with lunch provided. The day will conclude with worship at Calvary. Attendance is limited to 90 persons and ***Registration online is required. The registration fee is \$20. Please register online now by going to the link provided in the online weekly Diocesan Newsletter of the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina.***

We will need St. Mark's parishioners to volunteer to serve and support this event, so please contact either Fr. Michael or Gail DeCosta if you are willing to do so.

Special Liturgy of Lament and Repentance – Sunday, November 10th
In conjunction with the Charleston Literary Festival – Event Registration Required

Ilyon Woo, the 2024 Pulitzer Prize winning author for her book, *Master Slave, Husband Wife*, will be a featured speaker at this year's Charleston Literary Festival, on Sunday, November 10. She will share her experience in writing this book, the beautiful true story of the Craft family flight from enslavement to freedom over the course of 4 to 5 days sheds light on issues of race, power, and love in the 19th century America. Her presentation will be at 4:00 PM at the Dock Street Theater on Sunday, November 10, and while attendance is free, tickets and preregistration are required. Please go to www.charlestonliteraryfestival.com to register.

The Crafts, the subject of the book, are the great, great grandparents of our parishioners Gail DeCosta and Vicki Davis Williams. Because of the close bond developed between Ms. Woo, Gail and Vicki during the writing of this book, we expect Ms. Woo will be worshipping with us at St. Mark's the morning of November 10th, and in celebration of that we intend to hold a special Liturgy of Lament and Repentance for the Episcopal Church's complicity in Slavery and Slave Trade, focusing on what we can do presently to combat the ongoing systemic racism which still plagues our country. We're still putting this together, but other parishes and congregations may well join us for this liturgy, and I'm certain it will draw some publicity, so **please, please, please arrange your schedules to be present on November 10 and register for free tickets to attend the Charleston Literary Festival presentation by Ilyon Woo.**

Also, beginning on November 2 until Thanksgiving, there will be an art exhibit of Bernice Craft DeCosta Davis, a Craft descendant and mother of Vicki and Julia-Ellen, in the Art Gallery at the Charleston Public Library. In the 1970's, The Post and Courier called Ms. Bernice a Renaissance woman personified, a woman of many talents and considerable expertise in weaving, ceramics, calligraphy, and painting using watercolors and oils.



2025 Stewardship Campaign

September 29 – November 3, 2024

We will be starting our campaign for your pledge of financial support of St. Mark's for calendar year 2025 from September 29 to November 3, 2024. You will be receiving letters in the mail from Fr. Michael, Chair Marj Kenney-Williams and Sr. Warden Alphonso Grayson in the coming weeks. *Please give generously.*

St. Mark's Giving Online

St. Mark's has in place two means by which you can pledge or give financially to the church, **Zelle** and **Tithe.ly**. Zelle payments are initiated by the sender in their individual banking platform or website. The St. Mark's Zelle payment address is office@saintmarkschurch.com. To give via tithe.ly scan this QR Code:



Quarters for Patriot's Villa Residents

Please place quarters in the green bucket in our Narthex which will be contributed to Patriot Villa residents to help them pay for laundry and transportation.

Panorama Newspaper

The Panorama Newspaper which is published in Columbia but covers news throughout South Carolina is available every week in the narthex. Please remember to pick up your copy either on your way in or out of the church.

Altar Flower Donations – Altar Flowers may be donated by signing up for any given Sunday in the Altar Flower Notebook in the church Narthex. Suggested donation is a minimum of \$40.00.

Free parking is available during Sunday Worship Services at Ashley Hall School parking lot, located at the corner of Warren and Smith Streets, only one block from St. Mark's Church.

Parish Office Hours are every Friday, 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Other times, contact Fr. Michael at 843-830-1220.

Welcome to St. Mark's Episcopal Church



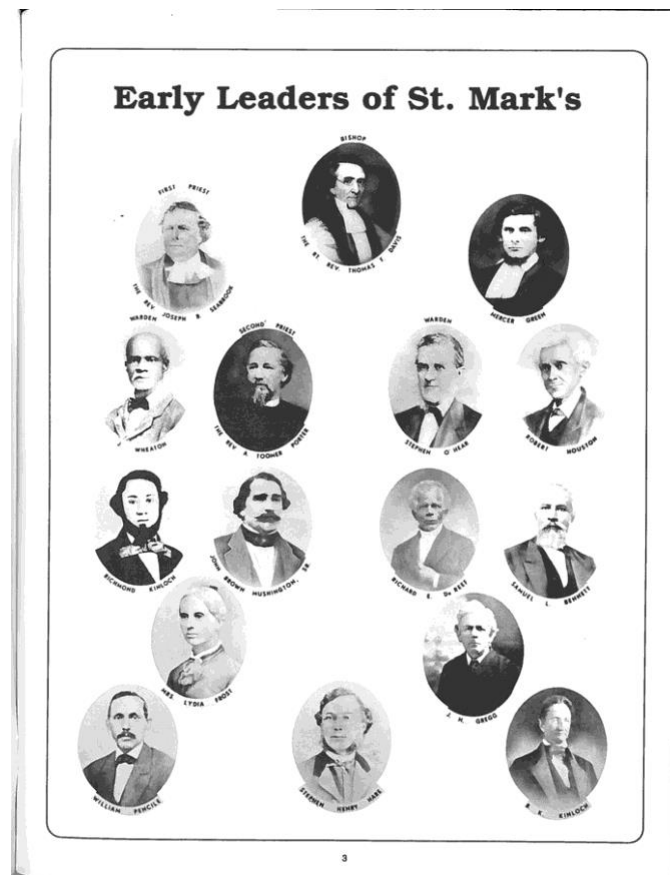
We're so glad you are here.

We are a community of believers who come to worship, to pray, to love and to be loved, as we work to ease the burdens we share, living in the twenty-first century. We not only welcome but *embrace* a diverse community of people with different ethnic, racial, sexual orientation and social backgrounds, who may have different ways of being their authentic selves in the world. Our focus is to live into right relationship with each other and all creation as followers of Jesus. We are strengthened by our diversity, as we strive for unity, not uniformity.

So, *please join us*. Bring your gifts and passions, along with your doubts and your curiosity, but most of all, your hearts and minds. There is a place for everyone in God's church, and we may be the place where you can flourish, just as you are, *God's beloved child*.

If I can answer any of your questions, or just be of help to you in any way along your journey, I'd welcome the chance to speak with you personally. Feel free to call me anytime on my cell phone or email me. *And thanks for being with us today!*

Gratefully,
Michael Shaffer +
Interim Rector – St. Mark's Episcopal
frmichael@saintmarkschurch.com
Cell: 843-830-1220
St. Mark's Parish Office: 843-722-0267



Our Honored Heritage

St Mark's Episcopal Church is an historic African American church established in 1865 by free people of color. St. Mark's was home to the Reverend Thaddeus Saltus, the first African American to be ordained a priest in the Episcopal Church in South Carolina in 1882. Although he hoped to become rector, Reverend Saltus's life and ministry were cut short by tuberculosis, dying in 1884. In the spring of 1887 another African American priest, the Reverend John Henry Mingo Pollard, began an active ministry in the Diocese of South Carolina. Reverend Pollard was called to be St. Mark's first African American rector in 1888.

From 1875 to 1885 St. Mark's sought unsuccessfully to become a participant in the Annual Convention of the Diocese of South Carolina but was not admitted due to the racial prejudice of the time. Again, from 1912 to 1915, the place of Black Episcopalians in the diocese was hotly debated, but still, St. Mark's and other Black congregations were denied participation in the Diocesan Convention. It was not until 1965, one hundred years after its founding and ninety years after its first petition to enter into the full life of the Episcopal Church, that St. Mark's was granted participation in the Annual Convention of the Diocese of South Carolina. The history of St. Mark's stands as a strong example of the legacy of slavery, illustrated by the congregation's long struggle to achieve equal representation in the Episcopal Church.

Throughout its history, St. Mark's continued to be a community of faithful Episcopalians striving to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ. While continuing to honor and embrace its African American heritage, today St. Mark's is a blend of ethnicities, geographies, socioeconomic backgrounds, abilities and sexual orientations, where everyone is treated with dignity, respect and love.