



## Welcome to St. Marks's Episcopal Church

*All are welcome, all are honored, all are embraced, all are loved.*

**The Fifth Sunday in Lent**  
**March 17, 2024**  
**10:00 a.m.**

*A house of prayer for all people in the historic Radcliffeboro  
neighborhood of Charleston, South Carolina*

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

The Very Reverend Dr. Michael Shaffer, Interim Rector

Loretta Haskell, Organist & Choirmaster

Alphonso Grayson, Senior Warden – Bob Waters, Junior Warden



*Dear Bishop Ruth...*

When you were ordained and consecrated the 15<sup>th</sup> bishop of our diocese, you told us that it was your deep heart's desire that we begin a new season of resurrection, hope, justice, and love in the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina and that you would give us your best each day, walking humbly with us. You have kept your promise and thanks to your guidance, support and love, we are striving to live into your vision for us at St. Mark's, *Becoming Beloved Community for All*.

Since your last visitation, much has changed at St. Mark's. Walking with Fr. Michael the latter half of 2023, we focused our attention on being "Rooted in Abundance." In October, we held four congregational meetings using many of the observations, principles and recommendations offered by Canon Stephanie Spellers in her book titled, **The Church Cracked Open: Disruption, Decline and New Hope for Beloved Community**.

In four different sessions we discussed from *whence we've come, where we've come and where we're going*. We openly and honestly reckoned with the notion, real or perceived, that St. Mark's has a racist or elitist history. We collectively agreed that our black historic heritage and legacy, will always be an honored and cherished part of this place, yet acknowledged that we are not called to be a church primarily for blacks or whites, any more than be a church primarily for men or women, gay, straight, or transgender, those who know who they are or those who are still in the process of discerning who they are. We are called to be a church for everyone.

We also acknowledged that while St. Mark's has traditionally been a generational church, with successive generations in the same families supporting the church and continuing in its traditions, that this is no longer the case. We learned that in 2023, in the Radcliffeborough neighborhood where we are located, there are 2751 residents, 75% of which are under the age of 30. Further, 73% of the neighborhood is white, mostly students or young professionals employed at the Medical University and 81% of Radcliffeborough residents are undergraduate students. Only 18% of the residents are married.

As these sessions resulted in a new sense of forgiveness and mutual respect being shared among parishioners and revitalized energy, the vestry began pursuing and implementing changes to set the foundation for the hard work which need be done in 2024 to accomplish the tasks necessary for a sound future.

Cheryl Caruthers was employed as a part time Parish Administrator, to assist Fr. Michael and start the process of reorganizing office matters, at considerable cost savings to the church. New larger worship service bulletins were developed that are more inclusive, to allow visitors and parishioners alike to follow and participate in worship more easily. The office copier and computer were upgraded allowing for faster and more efficient communication. We entered into a renewed effort with our media consultant to enhance our social media outreach and established a dedicated YouTube Channel, on which to broadcast and archive our Sunday Worship services.

We assessed and upgraded our internet service, recently installing a device on the outside of the parish house providing a considerable boost in our ability to broadcast more effectively our worship service and other activities from the church. With financial assistance generously provided by you and the diocese, Bennett Preservation Engineers was engaged to undertake a structural evaluation of our buildings and their written evaluation with recommendations should be received in April 2024. The vestry and Men's Club worked together to replace the old stove with new venting in the Parish House. New efforts are underway to establish events hosted by St. Mark's quarterly, reaching out to the neighborhood and beyond in an effort to make St. Mark's more visible to the community and hopefully increase attendance and membership. Our first such effort was an Oyster Roast held on the lawn with live music on February 4, 2024, attend by approximately 150 people. We hosted this event free of charge.

In November 2023, we conducted our Annual Stewardship Campaign for 2024, under the leadership of Marj Kenney-Williams. The theme of "*Rooted in Abundance*" was embraced by everyone, with excellent results. Approximately 37 families or individuals have pledged slightly in excess of \$125,000.00 in financial support for St. Mark's in 2024. This is a significant increase in from the \$115,904.00 pledged in 2023 and astronomical increase from the \$96,920.00 pledged in 2022.

While in 2023 we focused on being "Rooted in Abundance", in 2024 we are turning our attention to "Living in Abundance." 38 of our 43 communicants in good standing have agreed to serve on some liturgical group or committee in 2024, all of which have been reconstituted. Under the leadership of Jim Hieserman, in consultation with the Reverend Dr. Jennie Olbrych, a group is working on new Mission and Vision statements. Shawan Gillians is heading a committee to revise and update the St. Mark's Constitution and Bylaws, to bring them into conformity with national church and diocesan guidelines. We've joined the Radcliffeborough Neighborhood Association to learn of the interests of our neighbors and how we might be of assistance to them in the matters about which they are most concerned. Chris West is heading up a newly envisioned Marketing Committee, with the assistance of Walter Boags and others, who are working on new marketing opportunities, especially as it relates to promoting St. Mark's as a possible wedding venue for those seeking to be married in Charleston. While we continue to embrace our African American history, we are working to become a truly diverse and cross cultural community. And perhaps most telling, we've welcomed two new younger families into our community since September 2023, baptizing one infant on All Saint's Day, as we will be baptizing another on Easter Day 2024.

All this is being done by a group of committed Episcopalians who are looking forward, not back. Further action will be taken before the end of 2024 which hopefully will allow us to publish a parish profile early next year, with an eye on calling a new rector in 2025. We hope to work closely with you and diocesan leadership in this process, including exploring possibilities with St. Stephen's in expanding an Episcopal Campus Ministry in a shared capacity, with St. Mark's new rector perhaps working in a dual capacity.

Bishop, none of this would have happened without your encouragement, guidance and support. We know we have a lot of work to do, but we are energized and committed to do the work given us. As our bishop you have inspired and nourished us from the riches of God's grace, and as our chief pastor, you have loved us. Pray for us as we strive to become a *Beloved Community for All*, as we pray for you, that our Lord give us the strength to carry out his mission of love, justice and peace, in our church and the world.

Thank you. *We love you.*



*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.*

**CHORAL INTROIT**

The Summons

John Bell

**OPENING HYMN**

Ah, Holy Jesus, How Hast Thou Offended

**Hymnal 158**

## THE HOLY EUCHARIST – RITE ONE

Celebrant: Bless the Lord who forgiveth all our sins.

***People: His mercy endureth for ever.***

Celebrant: There is one Body and one Spirit;

***People: There is one hope in God's call to us;***

Celebrant: One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;

***People: One God and Father of all.***

Celebrant: Seeing that we have a great high priest, that passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Celebrant: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; but if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Celebrant: Let us humbly confess our sins unto Almighty God.

***Silence may be kept.***

## ***Bishop and People***

***Almighty and most merciful father, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep, we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts, we have offended against thy holy laws, we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, spare thou those who confess their faults, restore thou those who are penitent, according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord; and grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.***

Celebrant: The Almighty and merciful Lord grant you absolution and remission of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit. ***Amen.***

Celebrant: Lord, have mercy on us.

***People: Christ, have mercy on us.***

Celebrant: Lord, have mercy on us.

## **COLLECT OF THE DAY**

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

***People: And with thy spirit.***

Celebrant: Let us pray.

Celebrant: Almighty God, you alone can bring into order the unruly wills and affections of sinners: Grant your people grace to love what you command and desire what you promise; that, among the swift and varied changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. ***Amen.***

## **OLD TESTAMENT READING: Jeremiah 31:31-34**

(Reader: *A reading from the Book of Jeremiah*)

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the Lord,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

(Reader: *Here ends the reading.*)

## PSALM 51:1-13

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; \*  
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.
- 2 *Wash me through and through from my wickedness \*  
and cleanse me from my sin.***
- 3 For I know my transgressions, \*  
and my sin is ever before me.
- 4 *Against you only have I sinned \*  
and done what is evil in your sight.***
- 5 And so you are justified when you speak \*  
and upright in your judgment.
- 6 *Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, \*  
a sinner from my mother's womb.***
- 7 For behold, you look for truth deep within me, \*  
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.
- 8 *Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; \*  
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.***
- 9 Make me hear of joy and gladness, \*  
that the body you have broken may rejoice.
- 10 *Hide your face from my sins \*  
and blot out all my iniquities.***
- 11 Create in me a clean heart, O God, \*  
and renew a right spirit within me.
- 12 *Cast me not away from your presence \*  
and take not your holy Spirit from me.***
- 13 Give me the joy of your saving help again \*  
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

## NEW TESTAMENT READING: Hebrews 5:5-10

(Reader: *A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews*)

Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him,

“You are my Son,  
today I have begotten you”;  
as he says also in another place,  
“You are a priest forever,  
according to the order of Melchizedek.”

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

(Reader: *Here ends the reading.*)

**SEQUENCE HYMN**

What Wondrous Love is This

**Hymnal 439**

**THE GOSPEL: John 12:20-33**

Priest: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

***All: Glory be to thee, O Lord.***

Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

“Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

***All: Praise be to thee, O Christ.***

**TRANSITION SONG**

**In the Lord I’ll be ever thankful**

**Song by Taizé**

**In the Lord I’ll be every thankful.**

**In the Lord I will 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 Right Reverend Ruth Woodliff-Stanley

**PRESENTATION AND EXAMINATION OF THE CANDIDATES**

Bishop: The Candidates for Confirmation and Reception will now be presented.

Presenters: We present Eusebio “Cheo” for Confirmation.

We present William Clinton to be received into this Communion.

Bishop: Do you reaffirm your renunciation of evil?

**Candidates:** *I do.*

Bishop: Do you renew your commitment to Jesus Christ?

**Candidates:** *I do, and with God's grace I will follow him as my Savior and Lord.*

*After the candidates has been presented, the Bishop addresses the congregation, saying*

Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support *these persons* in their life in Christ?

**People:** *We will.*

Bishop: Let us join with those who are committing themselves to Christ and renew our own baptismal covenant.

## THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT

Bishop Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Bishop Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**People** *I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.  
He 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,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.*

Bishop Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**People** *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.*

Bishop Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

**People** **I will, with God's help.**



Bishop Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

**People** *I will, with God's help.*

Bishop Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

**People** *I will, with God's help.*

Bishop Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

**People** *I will, with God's help.*

Bishop Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

**People** *I will, with God's help.*

## **PRAYERS FOR THE CANDIDATES**

Bishop: Let us now pray for these persons who have renewed their commitment to Christ.

Fr. Michael: Deliver them, O Lord, from the way of sin and death.

**People:** *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Fr. Michael: Open their hearts to your grace and truth.

**People:** *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Fr. Michael: Fill them with your holy and life-giving Spirit.

**People:** *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Fr. Michael: Keep them in the faith and communion of your holy Church.

**People:** *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Fr. Michael: Teach them to love others in the power of the Spirit.

**People:** *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Fr. Michael: Send them into the world in witness to your love.

**People:** *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Fr. Michael: Bring them to the fullness of your peace and glory.

**People:** *Lord, hear our prayer.*

*The Bishop then says*

Grant, O Lord, that all who are baptized into the death of Jesus Christ your Son may live in the power of his resurrection and look for him to come again in glory; who lives and reigns now and forever. *Amen.*

*The Bishop lays hands upon Cheo and says*

Strengthen, O Lord, your servant Cheo with your Holy Spirit; empower him for your service; and sustain him all the days of his life. *Amen.*

*The Bishop lays hands upon William and says*

William, we recognize you as a member of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church, and we receive you into the fellowship of this Communion. God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you. *Amen.*

*The Bishop concludes with this prayer*

Almighty and everlasting God, let your fatherly hand ever be over these your servants; let your Holy Spirit ever be with them; and so lead them in the knowledge and obedience of your Word, that they may serve you in this life, and dwell with you in the life to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## THE PEACE

Bishop: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

*People: And with thy Spirit.*

## SONG

Surely the Presence of the Lord is In This Place

*Sung by all.*

*Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.  
I can feel God's mighty power and God's grace.  
I can hear the brush of angel's wings,  
I see glory on each face.  
Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### OFFERTORY

Christ Has Broken Down the Wall

Mark Miller

### HYMN AT THE PRESENTATION

Hymnal # 380, verse 3

#### The Doxology

*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.*

## THE HOLY COMMUNION – RITE I - EUCHARISTIC PRAYER I

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

**People:** *And with thy spirit.*

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

**People:** *We lift them up unto the Lord.*

Celebrant: Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

**People:** *It is meet and right so to do.*

Celebrant: It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God. Who dost bid thy faithful people cleanse their hearts, and prepare with joy for the Paschal feast; that, fervent in prayer and in works of mercy, and renewed by thy Word and Sacraments, they may come to the fullness of grace which thou hast prepared for those who love thee.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying,

***Celebrant and People***

***Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts:  
Heaven and earth are full of thy Glory.  
Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High.***

Celebrant: All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of this; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son our Savior Jesus Christ, we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us; and, of thy almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we, and all thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.

And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him.

And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offenses, through Jesus Christ our Lord; By whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **AMEN.**

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

*People and Celebrant sing.*

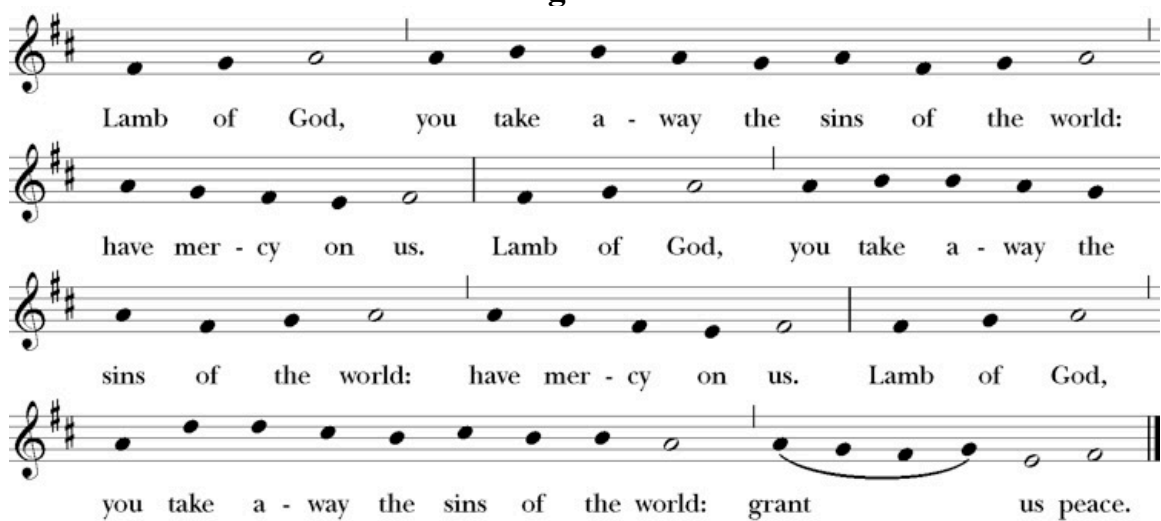
***Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debt, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.***

## **THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

Celebrant: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

***People: Therefore, let us keep the feast.***

## Agnus Dei



## THE INVITATION

*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 dipping the wafer in the wine by the Eucharistic Minister. If you do not wish to receive the wine, please indicate that by crossing your arms over your chest when the chalice is presented. 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

It is Well with My Soul  
Great is Thy Faithfulness

LEVAS 188  
LEVAS 189

## POST COMMUNION PRAYER

*After Communion, the Celebrant says.*

Let us pray.

*Celebrant and People Pray*

*Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.*

## THE BLESSING

Look with compassion, O Lord, upon this your people; that, rightly observing this holy season, they may learn to know you more fully, and serve you with more perfect will; through Christ our Lord.

**PROCESSIONAL HYMN**  
**441**

In the Cross of Christ I Glory

**Hymnal**

## THE DISMISSAL

Celebrant: Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

*People: Thanks be to God.*

**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.*



## **SERVICE PARTICIPANTS:**

*The Right Reverend Ruth Woodliff-Stanley, Celebrant & Preacher  
The Very Reverend Dr. Michael Shaffer, Assisting  
B. Shawan Gillians, Chaplain to the Bishop  
Lerone Johnson, Sr., Alphonso Grayson & Sharon Crossley, Eucharistic Ministers  
Taylor Chase, Grayson Sanyal, Sarah Grayson, Acolytes  
Walter Boags & Ellen Hardin, Lectors  
Ginny Grayson & Patricia Gates, Altar Guild  
Angela Hare & William Bugg, Ushers*

*The Altar adornments are given by Michele English Watson in Memory of*

*Charles R. “Dickie” English, Jr.*

## **Announcements**



***Welcome Bishop Ruth***

### ***Loose offering to Bishop’s Discretionary Fund***

The Right Reverend Ruth Woodliff-Stanley was ordained 15<sup>th</sup> bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina on October 2, 2021. She is the first woman to serve in that role and the first full-time diocesan bishop of the diocese since 2012.

A native of Mississippi, the bishop earned a Bachelor of Arts in Religion and Psychology from Swarthmore College before continuing her education at Yale Divinity School and Berkeley (Master of Divinity) and Columbia University School of Social Work (Master of Science in Social Work).

She was ordained to the priesthood in the Diocese of Mississippi in June 1991. Her ministry has led her to serve as canon on the staffs of two bishops in the Episcopal Church—serving as canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of Colorado and canon for strategic change in the Dioceses of Northwestern Pennsylvania and Western New York. She has also served at a church-wide level as Interim President and Vice President of The Episcopal Church Building Fund. She has served parishes over the years as rector, priest-in-charge, and assistant rector. In addition, she has served as consultant to several dioceses, including dioceses dealing with schism or serious division, addressing needs including conflict transformation, stewardship of finances and property, and strategic planning. She has a history of activism with a focus on anti-racism work and LGBTQ advocacy.

The bishop is married to the Rev. Nathan Woodliff-Stanley and they have two adult sons, George and John.

Canon law requires every diocesan bishop to visit every congregation in his or her diocese at least once every three years. The canonical purposes of a visitation are for the bishop to examine the condition of the congregation, oversee the clergy, preach, confirm, preside at the eucharist, and examine parochial records. Each year since her election, Bishop Ruth has made an official visitation to St. Mark’s Episcopal Church. As one of our diocese historic African American parishes, Bishop Ruth is committed to our wellbeing and supports efforts underway to grow our parish and strengthen its financial foundation in 2024.

***As is customary, today’s loose offering will be designated for the bishop’s discretionary fund. Please give generously.***





## *St. Mark's Episcopal Church*

It is often said that we can't get to Easter without Good Friday. My friends, there is no resurrection without the brutality of the cross.

For many of us, it is a challenge to sit in that discomfort. It is more pleasant to jump from Jesus' triumphal entry on Palm Sunday to his resurrection on Easter morning. We'd often rather avoid the challenge of Holy Week. We prefer to ignore Good Friday because it is just so hard, and it reminds us too much of the world's ugliness. It reminds us too much, perhaps, of our own role in the world's ugliness, whether intentional or by passive complicities. But that pain is a necessary part of the journey. Let's be honest: the story makes no sense when we leave out that part. More fundamentally, that week is essential to our faith.

***So, I invite you now to dedicate yourself to travel the full journey of Holy Week with us at St. Mark's Episcopal Church.***

From early times Christians have observed the week before Easter as a time of special devotion. From this beginning evolved the rites we observe on Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. These services provide a liturgical experience of the last days of Jesus' earthly life, as well as the time and events leading up to his resurrection.

The Book of Common Prayer provides special liturgies for each of these days. The eucharistic lectionary also provides proper readings for Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday in Holy Week. In many dioceses, the diocesan clergy will make a reaffirmation of ordination vows in the context of a eucharist during Holy Week, usually before Maundy Thursday. *The three holy days, or Triduum, of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday are at the heart of the Holy Week observance.* In many Episcopal parishes, the liturgical color for Holy Week from Palm Sunday through Maundy Thursday is red. Holy Week ends at sundown on the Saturday before Easter.

Please plan to be with us on the following days, and walk with Jesus, to and through the cross, and be *resurrected*.

### **March 28: Maundy Thursday**

#### **6 p.m. • Maundy Thursday Liturgy**

We remember the Last Supper and Jesus' final teachings to his friends. Liturgy of The Word; Washing of Feet; Holy Eucharist. The service concludes with the Stripping of the Altar. Bread and wine consecrated at the Maundy Thursday liturgy are left on the altar in the side chapel until our Good Friday service, and all are invited to spend an hour or more in prayer, inspired by Jesus' words in the Garden of Gethsemane, "*could you not stay awake with me one hour?*"



### **March 29: Good Friday**

#### **Noon: Stations of the Cross Liturgy**

#### **1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. • Reconciliation of a Penitent - *All may, none must, some should.***

Reconciliation of the Penitents is a Sacramental rite in which those who repent may confess their sins to God in the presence of a priest and receive the assurance of pardon and the grace of absolution (BCP, p. 861). It is also called penance and confession. Confessions may be heard by Fr. Michael in the Sanctuary between 1:00 and 3:00 PM. The secrecy of the confession is morally absolute for the confessor and must not be broken (BCP, p. 446).

#### **6:00 p.m. • Good Friday Liturgy**

Recalling the suffering and death of Jesus Christ, the Good Friday liturgy is out-of-joint. The Passion Gospel; Solemn Collects; Contemplation of the Cross, with communion distributed.

### **March 30: Holy Saturday**

#### **12 p.m. • Holy Saturday Liturgy**

A very short service, lasting only 15 minutes, listening to and contemplating a homily some scholars believe was composed by Melito, bishop of Sardis, who died circa 180.

### **March 31: Easter Sunday**

#### **10:00 a.m. - The Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ with Baptism.**

**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.

## **A Lenten Prayer by Henri Nouwen**

*The Lenten season begins. It is a time to be with you, Lord, in a special way, a time to pray, to fast, and thus to follow you on your way to Jerusalem, to Golgotha, and to the final victory over death.*

*I am still so divided. I truly want to follow you, but I also want to follow my own desires and lend an ear to the voices that speak about prestige, success, pleasure, power, and influence. Help me to become deaf to these voices and more attentive to your voice, which calls me to choose the narrow road to life.*

*I know that Lent is going to be a very hard time for me. The choice for your way has to be made every moment of my life. I have to choose thoughts that are your thoughts, words that are your words, and actions that are your actions. There are not times or places without choices. And I know how deeply I resist choosing you.*

*Please, Lord, be with me at every moment and in every place. Give me the strength and the courage to live this season faithfully, so that, when Easter comes, I will be able to taste with joy the new life that you have prepared for me. Amen.*

# The Rites of Confirmation and Reception

Confirmation and Reception, sacramental rites marked by a public affirmation of faith, will be conferred by our bishop during her visitation today.

*Confirmation* has a complicated history. In the early Church, adults converting to Christianity were baptized by a bishop. Baptism was characterized by immersion in water, anointing with oil, and the laying on of hands. Over time, as more children were born to Christian parents, infant baptism became the norm. Since the local bishop was unable to be present as often as needed, baptism was delegated to parish priests. However, the laying on of hands remained a ritual action reserved to bishops alone, so those baptized by a priest had to present themselves to a bishop at a later time. The sacramental rite of Confirmation emerged out of this development. In the 1979 Prayer Book, we find this introduction to the rite: “...*Those baptized at an early age are expected, when they are ready and have been duly prepared, to make a mature public affirmation of their faith and commitment to the responsibilities of their Baptism and to receive the laying on of hands by the bishop.*” (p. 412) Those baptized as children are usually confirmed during adolescence to publicly affirm for themselves the baptismal vows made for them by parents and godparents, however confirmation can take place anytime in a baptized person’s life.

*Reception* refers to the rite by which a baptized Christian, confirmed by a bishop, is welcomed into the fellowship of the Episcopal Church. It too, is a public affirmation; like those being confirmed, candidates for reception also make a profession of faith and renew the Baptismal Covenant. Since they are already confirmed, the bishop does not lay hands on them. Candidates who have previously been confirmed, but not by a bishop, receive the laying on of hands along with others being confirmed.

Please join in congratulating Cheo and William for stepping up and out by choosing to affirm their faith and discipleship in our community today, each acknowledging that they are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ's own for ever. **AMEN!**



*Living into Abundance in 2024*





## *Welcome to St. Mark's*



## *I'm so glad you are here.*

Whether you are visiting Charleston for the first time, have recently moved here, have visited our church before or are doing so for the first time, we hope you will consider making St. Mark's Episcopal Church your spiritual home. Whoever you are and wherever you are in your life journey, we invite you to join our community effort in making the world a better place to live. There are no litmus tests. We don't want to change you. We want to support you as you grow into the person you were born to be.

In the Episcopal Church, we dream and work to foster God's vision of *Beloved Community* where all people may experience dignity and abundant life and see themselves and others as beloved children of God. *Beloved Community* stands on the foundation of recognizing that any person's fundamental identity is God's beloved child. Such innate belovedness compels us to treat every single person on this planet with respect and dignity and to work for justice and peace and end our participation, knowingly or unknowingly, in assumptions or systems which trample on the beloved identity of our neighbors.

We humans cannot exist in isolation. We depend on connection, community, and caring. Simply put, we cannot be without each other. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu explained, "*My humanity is bound up in yours, for we can only be human together.*" Tutu understood that the potential of human beings working collectively to achieve goals is infinitely greater than the potential of any individual.

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, I invite you to 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*.

Gratefully,  
Michael Shaffer +  
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