

# St. Mark's Episcopal Church

*All are welcome. All are embraced. All are loved.*



## **The First Sunday after Pentecost Trinity Sunday**

May 26, 2024  
10:00 a.m.

*Welcome to St. Mark's Episcopal Church  
A house of prayer for all people in the historic Radcliffeborough  
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

## There is nothing *ordinary* about Ordinary Time!

***“The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.”*** Frederick Buechner

The Season after Pentecost, the longest season of the Church, is often referred to as Ordinary time. This season lasts roughly six months, during which there are no big feasts, days and no Church holidays. Because of this, there’s an old joke about Episcopalians being the only Christian tradition that allows for summers off. I disagree. This season, also known by some as the “long green season”, is meant to be a time for growing and transformation, just as we experience in nature throughout the summer and fall seasons.

Our Anglican tradition is steeped in Benedictine spirituality. One of my favorite summations of Benedictine life is, “*do ordinary things extraordinarily well*”. Whatever your daily routine, whether it be caring for children, completing your tasks at work, taking care of yourself or doing for others, during this season *mindfully* enter into those activities as holy and spiritual acts, dedicated to God and the building of his Kingdom. Do them in a holy way; enter into them as prayer, a spiritual act.

Another Benedictine adage is “*always we begin again.*” Green time is growing time. In that regard, I excited that during this time we at St. Mark’s will be concluding much of the work undertaken during the first half of 2024 updating our Constitution and Bylaws, as well as updating our Mission and Vision Statements. This will foster a common sense of core values and mission, which leads to a unified and energized transformation in order to accomplish shared mission as a parish church in the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina post schism. As Paul wrote in his Epistle to the Romans, “*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God...*”. (Romans 12:2)

During this season I pray the Lord who have given us the will to do great things in His name, will give us the grace and power to accomplish them. May you be blessed as you strive to do ordinary things extraordinarily well.

## Today is Trinity Sunday

Trinity Sunday is the only principal feast of the Church that commemorates a reality and doctrine rather than a person or event. Falling on the Sunday after Pentecost, we celebrate the Holy and Undivided Trinity as the final celebration, after Christ’s resurrection and ascension and the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

Christians have held a festival to honor the Holy Trinity since the ninth century, when it was celebrated in French monastic communities. In the fourteenth century, the festival was added to the Church calendar and has been celebrated throughout the world since that time.

The word “trinity” is actually not found in the scriptures, but in the Gospel according to Matthew, Jesus sends his disciples forth to baptize in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. From the day of our baptism, we are commissioned to go out into the world and show the love God as Jesus showed his disciples.

More than a doctrine, the Trinity expresses the heart of our faith: we have experienced the God of creation made known in Jesus Christ and with us always through the Holy Spirit. We celebrate the mystery of the Holy Trinity in word and sacrament, as we profess the creed, and as we are sent into the world to bear witness to our faith. We, as the body of Christ—the Church—are called to be a sign in the world of the Holy Trinity’s unity-in-diversity.



*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**

This is the Day

Les Garrett

**OPENING HYMN**

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty

**Hymnal 362**

## A LITURGY OF THE WORD

*The Celebrant says.*

Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

*People: Glory to God for ever and ever.*

*The Celebrant says.*

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**

Celebrant: God be with you.

***People: And also with you.***

Celebrant: Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, you have given to us your servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of your divine Majesty to worship the Unity: Keep us steadfast in this faith and worship, and bring us at last to see you in your one and eternal glory, O Father; who with the Son and the Holy Spirit live and reign, one God, for ever and ever. ***Amen.***

*Please be seated.*

## **THE LESSONS**

### **FIRST READING: Isaiah 6:1-8**

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another and said:

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;  
the whole earth is full of his glory.”

The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. And I said: “Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!”

Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: “Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.” Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I; send me!”

Reader            The Word of the Lord.

***People            Thanks be to God.***

## Psalm 29

- 1 Ascribe to the Lord, you gods, \*  
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
- 2 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his Name; \*  
worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.**
- 3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters;  
the God of glory thunders; \*  
the Lord is upon the mighty waters.
- 4 The voice of the Lord is a powerful voice; \*  
the voice of the Lord is a voice of splendor.**
- 5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar trees; \*  
the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon;
- 6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, \*  
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.**
- 7 The voice of the Lord splits the flames of fire;  
the voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; \*  
the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
- 8 The voice of the Lord makes the oak trees writhe \*  
and strips the forests bare.**
- 9 And in the temple of the Lord \*  
all are crying, "Glory!"
- 10 The Lord sits enthroned above the flood; \*  
the Lord sits enthroned as King for evermore.**
- 11 The Lord shall give strength to his people; \*  
the Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.

## SECOND READING: Romans 8:12-17

So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh-- for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ-- if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

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

*Please stand.*

SEQUENCE HYMN

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Hymnal 324

**GOSPEL: John 3:1-17**

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

*People            Glory to you, Lord Christ.*

There was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.” Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

“Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

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 Reverend Dr. Jennie C. Olbrych**

## 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.*

## INTERCESSION AND THANKSGIVING *(adapted from the New Zealand Book of Common Prayer, p. 413)*

Intercessor: Heavenly Father, you have promised to hear when we pray in the name of your Son. Therefore, in confidence and trust we pray for the Church: Father, enliven the Church for its mission.

*People: that we may be the salt of the earth and light to the world.*

Intercessor: Breathe fresh life into your people.

*People: Give us the power to reveal Christ in word and action.*

Intercessor: We pray for the world: Creator of all, lead us and every people into ways of justice and peace.

*People: That we may respect one another in freedom and truth.*

Intercessor: Awaken in us a sense of wonder for the earth and all that is in it.

*People: Teach us to care creatively for its resources.*

Intercessor: We pray for the community: God of truth, inspire with your wisdom those whose decisions affect the lives of others.

*People: That all act with integrity and courage.*

Intercessor: Give grace to all whose lives are linked with ours. We invite your personal intercessions at this time, either aloud or in your heart. (Pause, followed by Intercessor Prayers) Lord, hear our prayer.

*People: May we serve Christ in another, and love as he loves us.*

Intercessor: Almighty God, whose blessed Son came not to be served but to serve, bless all who following in his steps live a life of service to others. Those who dedicate themselves in every season of life, in youth and advancing age, to service of nation and every human being, striving for justice, peace and equality for all people in their daily lives. By the power of your Holy Spirit, grant all who serve, wisdom, patience and courage, that they may minister in the name of Christ to the suffering, the friendless, and the needy; for the love of him who laid down his life for us.

*People: For it is in giving that we receive.*

Intercessor: We pray for those in need: God of hope, comfort and restore of all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit.

***People: May they know the power of your healing love.***

Intercessor: Make us willing agents of your compassion.

***People: Strengthen us as we share in making people whole.***

Intercessor: We remember those who have died and those who mourn: We remember with thanksgiving those who have died in the faith of Christ, and those whose faith is known to you alone. Give comfort to those who mourn.

***People: Father, into your hands we commend them.***

Intercessor: Lord, you have called us to serve you.

***People: Grant that we may walk in your presence:***

***your love in our hearts,***

***your truth in our minds, your***

***strength in our wills;***

***until, at the end of our journey,***

***we know the joy of our homecoming and the***

***welcome of your embrace,***

***through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.***

*The Priest offers a concluding Memorial Day Collect.*

## **Confession and Absolution**

Celebrant: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

***All: Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.***

Celebrant: Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.

***All: Amen.***

## **THE PEACE**

Celebrant           The peace of the Lord be always with you.

***People               And also with you.***

*Then the Ministers and the People may greet one another in the name of the Lord saying, "Peace be with you."*



**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.*

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**THE OFFERTORY**

*The Priest offers an Offertory Sentence.*

**OFFERTORY**

The Prayer of St. Patrick

William M. Schoenfeld

**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.*

**THE GREAT THANKSGIVING: Enriching Our Worship Eucharist Prayer 2**

*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 God thanks and praise.*

*Facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds*

Celebrant: We praise you and we bless you, holy and gracious God, source of life abundant. From before time you made ready the creation. Your Spirit moved over the deep and brought all things into being: sun, moon, and stars; earth, winds, and waters; and every living thing.

You made us in your image and taught us to walk in your ways. But we rebelled against you, and wandered far away; and yet, as a mother cares for her children, you would not forget us. Time and again you called us to live in the fullness of your love.

And so this day we join with Saints and Angels in the chorus of praise that rings through eternity, lifting our voices to magnify you as we sing:

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.

*The Celebrant continues.*

Glory and honor and praise to you, holy and living God. To deliver us from the power of sin and death and to reveal the riches of your grace, you looked with favor upon Mary, your willing servant, that she might conceive and bear a son, Jesus the holy child of God. Living among us, Jesus loved us. He broke bread with outcasts and sinners, healed the sick, and proclaimed good news to the poor. He yearned to draw all the world to himself yet we were heedless of his call to walk in love. Then, the time came for him to complete upon the cross the sacrifice of his life, and to be glorified by you.

*At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing the wine to be consecrated.*

On the night before he died for us, Jesus was at table with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to them, and said: “Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine. Again, he gave thanks to you, gave it to them, and said: “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Now gathered at your table, O God of all creation, and remembering Christ, crucified and risen, who was and is and is to come, we offer to you our gifts of bread and wine, and ourselves, a living sacrifice.

Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Body and Blood of Christ. Breathe your Spirit over the whole earth and make us your new creation, the Body of Christ given for the world you have made.

In the fullness of time bring us, with our patron St. Mark and all your saints, from every tribe and language and people and nation, to feast at the banquet prepared from the foundation of the world.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. *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.*

**Fraction Anthem: Taste and see**

WLAP # 764

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Taste and see. Taste and see the good - ness

of the Lord. O taste and see. Taste and

see the good - ness of the Lord, of the Lord. **Fine**

## 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, allowing the Eucharistic Minister to dip your wafer in the wine, or dipping your wafer in the intinction chalice. If you do not wish to receive the wine, please indicate that by crossing your arms over your chest when the chalice reaches you. 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

Baptized in Water, Healed by the Spirit  
Children of the Heavenly Father

LEVAS 121  
LEVAS 213

*After Communion, the Celebrant says.*

Let us pray. *(All pray)*

*God of abundance, you have fed us with the bread of life and cup of salvation; you have united us with Christ and one another; and you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue for ever in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.*

## THE BLESSING

### PROCESSIONAL

I, the Lord of Sea and Sky

WLP 812

I, the Lord of sea and sky,  
I have heard my people cry.  
All who dwell in deepest sin  
My hand will save.  
I who made the stars of night,  
I will make their darkness bright.  
Who will bear my light to them?  
Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?  
I have heard you calling in the night.  
I will go, Lord, if you lead me,  
I will hold your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of snow and rain,  
I have borne my people's pain.  
I have wept for love of them,  
They turn away.  
I will break their hearts of stone,  
Give them hearts for love alone.  
I will speak my word to them.  
Whom shall I send?

I, the Lord of wind and flame,  
I will tend the poor and lame.  
I will set a feast for them,  
My hand will save.  
Finest bread I will provide  
Till their hearts be satisfied.  
I will give my life to them.  
Whom shall I send?

### **DISMISSAL**

Celebrant        Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
*People*         *Thanks be to God.*

### **CLOSING HYMN**

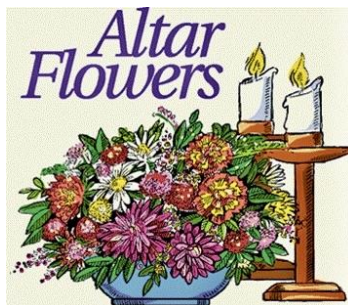
Thank You, Lord

*Sung by all.*

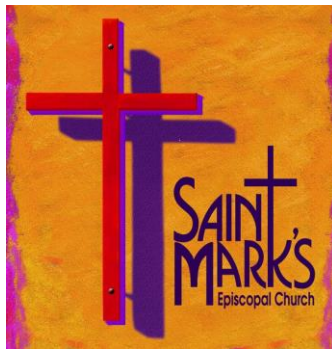
*Thank You, Lord (x's 3) I just want to thank you Lord.  
You've Been So Good (x's 3) I just want to thank you Lord.  
You've Been My Friend (x's 3) I just want to thank you Lord.*

### **POSTLUDE**

***The worship is over. Now the service begins.***



*The Flowers are given by the Grayson, Nell, Sanyal and Boags Family  
In Memory of  
Mrs. Dorothy Boags Robinson and Ms. Emily Nell*



### SERVICE PARTICIPANTS:

The Very Reverend Dr. Michael Shaffer, *Celebrant*  
The Reverend Dr. Jennie C. Olbrych *Preacher*  
Suzanne Hieserman, *Eucharistic Minister*  
Ellen Hardin, *Lector*  
Loretta Haskell, *Organist & Choirmaster*  
Ruth Breland, Suzanne Hieserman, Alphonso Grayson *Altar Guild*  
Gin Waters, *Flowers*  
Ellen Hardin & Marj Kenney-Williams, *Ushers*

### *Announcements*



### **March in the Pride Parade with St. Mark's – *Love is the Way!***

St. Mark's will participate in the annual Charleston Pride Parade on Saturday, June 1, 2024, marching with other parishes in the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina. We will gather Saturday morning June 1 at 8:00 AM Wragg Mall Park downtown to take our place in the parade line-up. It is not a long route, easily walked, on King Street starting on Ann Street and finishing at the intersection of King and Market.

***If you plan to participate please email Fr. Michael no later than Monday, May 27, 2024,*** so we might register St. Mark's participation with the Pride Parade organizers timely. Email [frmichael@saintmarkschurch.com](mailto:frmichael@saintmarkschurch.com).

# Social Media Boost

## Make a Special Offering of Financial Support this month!

Earlier this year the Vestry authorized spending an additional \$200 a month, for five months, to “boost” our outreach and St. Mark’s exposure on Social Media Platforms, which has evidenced amazing results. *Please help us* by making a special financial offering to help us raise \$1000 to pay for these efforts by placing a check into the offering plate, writing “media boost” on the memo line, or let Fr. Michael know if you would like to contribute to this effort electronically.



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.



**Congratulations Minerva King – CAJM Celebration Honoree**

## *Welcome to St. Mark's*



*We're 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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