

**St. Mark's Lutheran Church
The Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 30, 2025**

142 Market Street, Williamsport, PA 17701
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Office (570-323-4619) Fax (570-323-2452)
Rev. Brian D. Vasey, Pastor
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**Holy Communion (A Setting for Lent)
8 am and 10:30 am**

Please Note:

Hand sanitizer is available for your use. Offerings may be received by way of offering plates as you enter or leave.

Bold print indicates Congregation.

A GUIDE TO HYMNAL USE: Hymns are printed in the back of your bulletin and also in LBW, Green Book; WOV, Blue Book

****Please stand as you are able.***

INTRODUCTION TO TODAY'S WORSHIP

The psalm sets the tone this day: "Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!" Happy are those who have "become the righteousness of God" in the merits of Christ Jesus. Happy are those for whom the forgiveness of God has "rolled away . . . the disgrace" of former times. Happy is the father at the return of his son. Happy are we that our sins are forgiven for Jesus' sake. Rejoice!

PRELUDE

WELCOME/ANNOUNCING THE DAY/ANNOUNCEMENTS

***A BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son ✠,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Let us return to God, confessing our sin in the assurance of God's forgiveness and abiding love.

Silence is kept for reflection. Kneel/Stand.

Compassionate One,
**you are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love,
but our lives do not always reflect you
and your love for the world.**

**We do not show others the tender compassion
you have shown to us.**

**We do not welcome others with the radical hospitality
you grant to all people.**

**We oppress others,
even though you have set us free again and again.**

We squander the abundant gifts of the earth.

**Transform our lives
and guide us again in the way of the cross.**

Amen.

Beloved in Christ,
God's arms are always stretched open wide
to welcome the wandering ones home.

In † Christ your sins are forgiven.

You have a place in God's house forever.

Amen.

***HYMN Come, Thou Font of Every Blessing LBW, "Green," 499**

***THE GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the
Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

*KYRIE

Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.

Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Chri - ste e - le - i - son.

Chri - ste e - le - i - son Chri - ste e - le - i - son.

Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e -

le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.

*THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

God of compassion, you welcome the wayward, and you embrace us all with your mercy. By our baptism clothe us with garments of your grace, and feed us at the table of your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE FIRST READING.....Joshua 5:9-12

9 The LORD said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.” And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

10 While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. 11 On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. 12 The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of

the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 32

1 Happy are they whose transgressions | are forgiven,
and whose sin is | put away!

2 **Happy are they to whom the LORD im- | putes no guilt,
and in whose spirit there | is no guile!**

3 While I held my tongue, my bones with- | ered away,
because of my groaning | all day long.

4 **For your hand was heavy upon me | day and night;
my moisture was dried up as in the | heat of summer.**

5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not con- | ceal my guilt.
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD."
Then you forgave me the guilt | of my sin.

6 **Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in | time of trouble;
when the great waters overflow, they | shall not reach them.**

7 You are my hiding-place; you preserve | me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts | of deliverance.

8 **"I will instruct you and teach you in the way that | you should go;
I will guide you | with my eye.**

9 Do not be like horse or mule, which have no | understanding;
who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will | not stay near you."

10 **Great are the tribulations | of the wicked;
but mercy embraces those who trust | in the LORD.**

11 Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice | in the LORD;
shout for joy, all who are | true of heart.

THE SECOND READING.....2 Corinthians 5:16-21

16 From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. 17 So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has

passed away; see, everything has become new! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. 20 So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

***THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful.

Slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

***THE GOSPEL.....Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32**

The Holy Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ according to St. Luke, the 15th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

1 Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus.] 2 And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

3 So he told them this parable: 11b “There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. 13 A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. 14 When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. 16 He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. 17 But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! 18 I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; 19 I am no

longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.”’ 20 So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. 21 Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ 22 But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; 24 for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

25 “Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. 27 He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ 28 Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. 29 But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ 31 Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32 But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

THE SERMON

***HYMN**

Our Father, We Have Wandered

WOV, “Blue,” 733

***THE NICENE CREED**

With the whole Church, let us confess our faith:

**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 INTERCESSION:** *After each petition, “Lord, in your mercy/Receive our prayer”.*

*THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

All may greet one another with these or similar words and/or gestures of peace.

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ or Lord. You bid your people cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast. Renew our zeal with faith and life, and bring us to the fullness of grace that belongs to the children of God. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

6 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, Lord God of Hosts: Heaven and
10 earth are full of thy glo - ry. Glo-ry be to thee, O Lord Most High.
15 Bless - ed is he that com - eth in the name of the Lord, Ho -
san - - na in the high - - - - est.

Holy are you and blessed is your Son, Jesus Christ.
When you gave him to save us from sin,
your Spirit led him into the wilderness,
where he fasted for forty days and nights to prepare for his ministry.

When he suffered and died on a cross for our sin, you raised him to life,
presented him alive to the apostles during forty days,
and exalted him at your right hand.
By the baptism of his suffering, death and resurrection
you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death,
and made a new covenant by water and the Spirit.
Now, as your people prepare for the holy feast of Easter,
you lead us to repentance for sin and the cleansing of our hearts,
that during these forty days of Lent we may be gifted and graced
to affirm the covenant you made with us through Christ.

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

Again, after supper, he took the cup,
gave thanks and gave it for all to drink,
saying: This cup
is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people
for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

In remembrance of these mighty acts in Jesus Christ we proclaim the mystery of
faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.
By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.
Through your Son, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your Church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever. **Amen.**

*OUR LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Father, who are in heaven,

hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come,

thy will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those

who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power and the glory,

forever and ever. Amen.

*LAMB OF GOD

(organ) O Lamb of God, that
ta - kest a - way the sins of the world,
have mer-cy up - on us. O Lamb of God, that ta-kest a-way the
sins of the world have mer-cy up - on us. O Lamb of God, that
ta - kest a-way the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.

*INVITATION

All who are hungry come! The feast of grace is spread!

Thanks be to God!

All are welcome at the Lord's Table. Use the center aisle, pick up a small glass on the way and kneel (stand) at the rail. After communing return to your pew using a side aisle. Those not communing may come forward for a blessing.

Know that the crucified and risen Christ gives himself to you in his supper. If you cannot eat bread, drink only the wine. If you cannot drink wine, eat only the bread.

***AFTER COMMUNION**

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Generous Host,
you have shared your feast with us and made us new.
Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities,
that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom,
in the name of the crucified One, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

***BLESSING**

The blessing of God,
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.

Amen.

***HYMN Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound LBW, "Green," 448**

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.

Thanks be to God.

THE POSTLUDE

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OUR PRAYER LIST

Liz Ruesskamp, Grace Arner, Vanessa Morgan, Gary Clark, Charles Miller, Jerry Miller, Richard Ritter, Ashton Ott, Lucille Sider, Gary Cable, Elsie Sechler, Virginia Pulaskie, Bunny Ditchfield, Judy Fortin, Ezra Buckman, Sheila Brassard, Kevin Rosini, Kathy Eshelman, Micah, Deb Buckman, Linda Rosini, Walt

Hausmann, Kristin Rehm, Yvonne and Gerry Myers, Ariel, John Bower, John Tartline, Carl Hieber, Donna Baker, George Poliska, April Clark, Dave and Pam Osbaugh, Connie Shaible, Helen Schramm.

OUR STEWARDSHIP for March 23, 2025

Regular Offering	\$1,543.00
Lent	85.00
Heat Envelope Fund	55.00
Food Pantry	30.00
Operation Christmas Child	100.00
Roof Replacement Fund	5.00
Easter Flowers	210.00
Grand Total	\$2,028.00

ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the Glory of God; and

In celebration of our St. Mark's family.

WORSHIP LEADERS

March 30, 2025

Lector	8 am	Candy Dewar
	10:30 am	Brenda Gair
Communion Assistants	8 am	Brian Jackson
	10:30 am	Deb Buckman & Mindy Wentzel
Ushers	8 am	Herb Poff and Dick Miller
	10:30 am	Tim and Deb Maggs; Dick Reitz
Organist		Sam Robinson
Altar Guild (MARCH)		Bev Heiber and Audrey Albright

THIS WEEK AT ST. MARK'S:

Sunday, March 30	Holy Communion 8 and 10:30 am Sunday School, 9:15 am
Monday, March 31	Office Hours, 9 am- 1 pm

Tuesday, April 1	Office Hours, 9 am-1 pm Evangelism & Fellowship, 5:30 pm
Wednesday, April 2,	Office Hours, 9 am-1 pm Mid-week Bible Study, “Atonement Theories”, 12:10 pm
Thursday, April 3	Office Hours, 9 am-1 pm
Friday, April 4	Office Hours, 9 am-1 pm
Saturday, April 5	Church Office Closed
Sunday, April 6	Holy Communion 8 and 10:30 am Sunday School, 9:15 am

BIRTHDAYS

Carl Heiber 3/29

ANNIVERSARIES

Matt and Wanda Fortin 4/03

PLEASE NOTE:

+When you or a family member are ill, have a crisis of faith, or have a personal concern of which you wish to make the pastor aware, please contact him directly by church office telephone (570-323-4619) email (bvasey@stmarkswilliamsport.org) or his cell phone (272-788-0161). Do not assume the pastor will know of your need any other way.

+ When you or a loved one has a change of address, email, or telephone number, please contact the church office at stmarks@stmarkswilliamsport.org or 570-323-4619. Please direct your intentions whether or not to share this information with our church family, so that in may be included in the weekly bulletin and/or the “Lion”. Thank You!

BIBLE STUDY

A study of the Book of Revelation during the Sunday School hour. We will continue this study through May 25. Please join us.



Lenten Bible study continues on Wednesdays at 12:10 pm in Fellowship Hall.

Our study this year is discovering what the Bible teaches about our reconciliation with God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Atonement). All are welcome! Light snacks will be served.



Lutheran World Relief LWR is in desperate need of items for North Carolina and California to respond to the natural disasters in those areas. If you would like to contribute items for personal care kits, please place them in the bin in the Narthex. The kits include cotton towels (20" x 40" up to 27" x 52"), bars of soap, toothbrushes, combs and nail clippers. Kits will be assembled beginning in April. Thank you for your generosity in helping people who have lost everything.

Ongoing Community Needs



United Churches Food Pantry: Most needed are cans of SPAM, 64 oz. bottles of non-refrigerated Juice (any flavor but grape,) Pancake Syrup, Peanut Butter, Jelly, Boxed Potatoes (any kind but mashed) and Chunky Style Soups.

Shepherd of the Streets: Most needed are Deodorant, Tampons, Laundry Pods, Kid's toothbrushes and paste and Paper Towels.

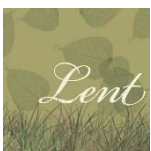
Sojourner Truth Ministries: Most needed are Dixie-type Soup Bowls (9 oz.,) Boxes of Tissues and Bottles of Ketchup (16-20 oz. size) for their dining tables. Any help you can give will be greatly appreciated by these ministries. Thank you.



Please consider donating to our shoebox collections this month. The items are small, and yet so meaningful to the child who receives them.

In March, we are collecting: **Combs/Brushes/Hair Accessories, Toothbrushes, Toothbrush Holders, Mini Flashlights**

The age ranges for both boy and girl boxes we fill are 2-4, 5-9, and 10-14. These items (or any others) can be placed in our red, OCC bin located in the narthex. We thank you for your generosity!



Lenten Season

We encourage you to please find several devotional booklets in the Narthex that may aid you in your daily study throughout this Lenten

season. We pray these seasonal meditations will help prepare your heart and mind as we move through this season of Lent heading toward our celebration of Easter.

Lenten Collection

This Lenten season we are collecting items to create Birthday Bags for the United Churches Food Pantry. (We did this last year as well so it may seem somewhat familiar.) The Food Pantry has been serving an increasing number of neighbors each month, and Birthday Bags are a nice way to help celebrate these special family occasions. We have a great start on filling our bags thanks to your support during the Advent season – thank you! The most helpful items for our bags during the Lenten season are: **cake pans with lids, gift bags, and candles.** Examples of the cake pans and gift bags (for sizing purposes) are in the Narthex, and all of these items can be found at the Dollar Tree. We look forward to working on this project together, sharing Christ’s love with those in need.



Summer Camp brochures are available in the church office or contact Camp Mount Luther at 570-922-1587 or at cml@campmountluther.org.

COMMEMORATIONS

John Donne, poet, died 1631

Monday, March 31, 2025

After finishing his education at Oxford University, Donne seemed headed for a career in the English public service. But a series of circumstances led him into the ordained ministry. He is well known as a writer of both secular and sacred poetry.



Benedict the African, confessor, died 1589

Friday, April 4, 2025

Born into slavery on the island of Sicily, Benedict lived as a hermit until it was ordered that all hermits must attach themselves to a monastery, at which time Benedict joined the Franciscans. Though illiterate, he was highly respected as a confessor and later superior of his community.

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing



1 Come, thou Fount of ev - 'ry bless-ing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;
2 Here I raise my Eb - en - e - zer: "Hith-er by thy help I've come";
3 Oh, to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con-strained to be;



streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud - est praise.
and I hope, by thy good plea - sure, safe - ly to ar - rive at home.
let that grace now like a fet - ter bind my wan-d'ring heart to thee.



While the hope of end - less glo - ry fills my heart with joy and love,
Je - sus sought me when a strang - er, wan - d'ring from the fold of God;
Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love.



teach me ev - er to a - dore thee; may I still thy good - ness prove.
he, to res - cue me from dan - ger, in - ter - posed his pre - cious blood.
Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

Text: Robert Robinson, 1735–1790, alt.

Music: NETTLETON, J. Wyeth, *Repository of Sacred Music*, Part II, 1813

Our Father, We Have Wandered



1 Our Fa - ther, we have wan - dered and hid - den from your face;
2 And now at length dis - cern - ing the e - vil that we do,
3 O Lord of all the liv - ing, both ban - ished and re - stored,



in fool-ish-ness have squan - dered your leg - a - cy of grace.
be - hold us, Lord, re - turn - ing with hope and trust to you.
com - pas-sion-ate, for - giv - ing, and ev - er - car - ing Lord,



But now, in ex - ile dwell - ing, we rise with fear and shame,
In haste you come to meet us and home re - joic - ing bring,
grant now that our trans - gress - ing, our faith - less - ness may cease.



as, dis - tant but com - pel - ling, we hear you call our name.
in glad-ness there to greet us with calf and robe and ring.
Stretch out your hand in bless - ing, in par - don, and in peace.

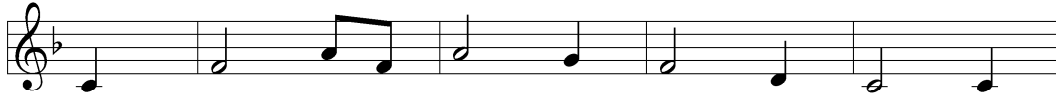
Text: Kevin Nichols, 1929–2006

Music: HERZLICH TUT MICH VERLANGEN, Hans Leo Hassler, 1564–1612

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Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound



1 A - maz - ing grace, how sweet the sound, that
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I
 4 The Lord has prom - ised good to me; his



saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
 grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
 have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me
 word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and



now am found; was blind, but now I see.
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.

Text: John Newton, 1725-1807
 Music: NEW BRITAIN, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

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