

# ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS LESSONS AND CAROLS DECEMBER 28, 2025 YEAR A

## **Prelude**

### **“Three Carol Preludes”**

**Wilbur Held (1914-2015)**

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## **Opening Hymn 102 “Once in royal David’s city” (v. 1,2,4,6)**

### **The Bidding Prayer**

*Presider* People of God: In this Christmas Season, let it be our duty and delight to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger.

Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God’s loving purpose from the time of our rebellion until the glorious redemption brought to us by God’s holy Child Jesus, and let us make this place glad with our carols of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of this whole world, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church for which he died, and especially for Christ’s Church in our country and in this city.

And because God particularly loves them, let us remember in Christ’s name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and unloved, the aged and little children, as well as all those who do not know and love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, let us remember before God his pure and lowly Mother, and that whole multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in Jesus, we are one for evermore.

The Almighty God bless us with his grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life; and to the fellowship of the citizens above, may the King of Angels bring us all. *Amen.*

## **The Collect of the Day**

*Presider* Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

## **THE LESSONS**

**First Lesson: Genesis 3:1–15** *Read by Roger Robards*

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’” The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die, for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” He said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.” Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent tricked me, and I ate.” The Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.”

*Reader* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

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

**Hymn 105 “God rest you merry, gentlemen”**      *Blue 1982 Hymnal*

**Second Lesson: Isaiah 35:1–10**      *Read by The Rev. Jerre Birdsong*

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

*Reader* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

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

**Hymn 112 “In the bleak midwinter”**

*Blue 1982 Hymnal*

**Third Lesson: Isaiah 7:10–15** *Read by Roger Robards*

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” Then Isaiah said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.

*Reader* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

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

## Hymn 101 “Away in a manger”

*Blue 1982 Hymnal*

### **Fourth Lesson: Luke 1:39–56** *Read by the Rev. Dr. Pamela Stuerke*

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.”

*Reader* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

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

## Hymn 81 “Lo, how a Rose e’er blooming”

*Blue 1982 Hymnal*

### **Fifth Lesson: John 1:1–18** *Read by The Rev. Jerre Birdsong*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’ ”) From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father’s heart, who has made him known.

*Reader* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

*People Thanks be to God.*

**Hymn 107 “Good Christian friends, rejoice”**

*Blue 1982 Hymnal*

*Presider* The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

*People And also with you.*

## THE HOLY COMMUNION

*Presider:* Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.

**Offertory Hymn 89 “It came upon the midnight clear”**

*Blue 1982 Hymnal*

### The Holy Eucharist II

**S 120**

**Lift up your hearts** *Sursum corda*

*Celebrant* *People*  
The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

*Celebrant* *People*  
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

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

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

*Presider* It is right and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father almighty, Creator of heav’n and earth; because you gave Jesus Christ your only Son to be born for us; who by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, was made perfect human of the flesh of the virgin Mary his

mother; so that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and receive the power to become your children.

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

*Presider and People*

**Holy, Holy, Holy S125 Proulx**

*Blue 1982*

*Hymnal*

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.***

***Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.***

***Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.***

***Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.***

*The Congregation stands or kneels.*

*Presider* We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. For in these last days you sent Jesus to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world.

In Christ, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In Christ, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

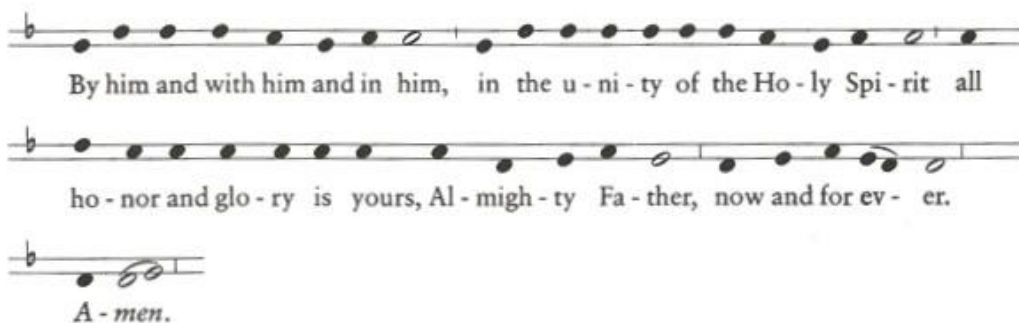
On the night before he died for us, our Savior Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, “Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

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

Therefore, according to his command, God of grace,  
We remember Christ's death, We proclaim Christ's resurrection, We await  
Christ's coming in glory;

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Savior of all;  
presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine. We pray you,  
gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the  
Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant.

Unite us in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, through whom we are acceptable to  
you, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things  
in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where,  
with all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your children;  
through Jesus Christ our Savior, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the  
Church, and the author of our salvation.



### The Lord's Prayer

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

*People and Celebrant*

***Our Father, who 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 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, for ever and ever. Amen.***

**Fraction Anthem S 155**      *Near*      *Blue 1982 Hymnal*  
*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.*  
*Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;*  
*Therefore let us keep the feast.*  
*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.*

### **The Ministration of Communion**

*All who hunger and thirst for God are welcome to receive the Holy Communion at this altar. Gluten free hosts are available. At the altar rail, please let the priest know that you require gluten free.*

### **Communion Hymn 115 "What child is this?"**

*Blue 1982 Hymnal*

### **Prayer after Communion**

*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 Christmas Blessing**

May Christ our infant savior give you the joy of the Bethlehem shepherds, the awe of the worshipping sages and the humility and love of the holy family. May you become as little children. And the blessing of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be with you and remain with you for ever.  
*People    Amen.*

### **Closing Hymn 99 "Go tell it on the mountain"**

*Blue 1982 Hymnal*

### **The Dismissal**

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

### **Postlude "In dulci jubilo"**

**Wilbur Held (1914-2015)**

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## ASSISTING IN OUR WORSHIP

*Lector:* Roger Robards

*Usher:* Matthew Cashen

*Greeter:* Marti Robards

*Altar Guild:* Tom Bradley

*Chalice:* Marilyn Wiethop/Scott Thompson

*Crucifer:* Scott Thompson

*Livestream:* Vicki Stegmann

*Godly Play:* Schoenberg

*Coffee Hour:* Ellen Jeffery

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### THANK YOU

Thank you to Amanda Cashen, the Cashen family and Jeanette Schoenberg and everyone else who made the Christmas Party a success. It was a big turnout this year, so it required a lot of hard work and organization. As always a fun time to be had.

### Godly Play Class Can Use Your

#### Leftover Candy Canes, Christmas Cards and Stickers

New Christmas cards will be signed by the kids and given to residents of Casey Page next year. The class could use any type of stickers throughout the year. Put any donations inside the red door entrance to church, on the box at the top of the steps to the basement at any time.

### Annual New Year's Eve Taize Service



Join us for prayers, scripture readings, and chants in the style of Taizé in Christ Church Cathedral, 1210 Locust Street, St. Louis at 5PM. It is a deeply spiritual way to close 2025 and open our hearts to 2026.

Stay for refreshments and a toast to the New Year afterward.

- This Taize service is offered by Confluence Spirituality St. Louis.
- We hope you can join us and bring friends and family.
- Secure parking is available at the Cathedral.

### Annual Meeting

This year's Annual Meeting will be on January 25<sup>th</sup>. We welcome all to attend. Those who submit reports for the Annual meeting the cut-off date for submissions is January 20<sup>th</sup>. I will be sending a reminder email to all of you. Childcare will be available.



## **2026 ST.MARK'S PHOTO DIRECTORY**

This year we will be working on a photo directory. Ed Rich will be snapping photos for us for the new directory to come out in 2026. If you would like to be included in the photo directory, there are two more dates that Ed will be available for picture taking. The remaining days for photos are: January 11 and February 8. If there are any changes to your address, or if you would like to include birthday/anniversary information, please contact Melissa in the office at [parishoffice@saintmarks-stl.org](mailto:parishoffice@saintmarks-stl.org) or call 314-832-3588

### **Calling all 2025 Pledges**

As the year draws to a close, please be mindful of fulfilling your 2025 pledge. If you are able to do so, please send the remainder of your pledge as soon as possible. We will be closing the books for the year on Wednesday, Dec. 31st at noon. Melissa will be in the office that day, so if you would like to drop something off, contact her. Also if you have not already filled out a pledge card for 2026, please do so as soon as possible. There are extras available at the back of church, or call the office and one can be mailed to you.

### **Thank You**



Many thanks to St. Mark's for your generous Christmas gift.  
Happy New Year to all! Barbara Raedeke

Thank you to all for the most generous gift from St. Mark's. I'm lucky to be a part of the St. Mark's family.-Melissa Engle

Thank you for your generous gift! It is a pleasure to teach and grow in faith every week with your children. This past year has brought some exciting new changes to the church and I look forward to many more in the coming year-Celeste



**GIFTS FOR CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS AND THE  
ST. CECELIA MUSIC FUND  
are given to the Glory of God and**



***Flowers and Greens by:***

**Greg and Rita Diekemper in Memory of Mike Diekemper and Robin  
Mendica**

**LaBeaume Family in Memory of Graham LaBeaume**

**Margaret Hvatum in Memory of Andrew Hvatum**

**John and Diane Nienkemper in Memory of David Witeka**

**Marilyn Wiethop in Memory of David Wiethop**

***The St. Cecelia Music Fund by***

**Michael and Kimberly Garbs in Memory of Robin Mendica**

***Both Flowers and Greens And The St. Cecelia Music Fund by:***

**Roger and Marti Robards In Memory of Carrie Elizabeth Robards,**

**Janet Robards, Gene Snider, and Warren Snider**

**Jeanette Swallow in Memory of Art and Arline DeMay**



**THANK YOU** to Rita Diekemper and Gardens of Grace, and for everyone who stayed after last Sunday's service to help "Green" the Church, for making the church so beautiful and festive!

## Online Giving at St. Mark's

Thank you so much for your desire to support the ministry here at St. Mark's! If you would like to give online, simply scan the QR code below using the camera on your smart phone to visit our online giving platform.

Your generosity is a blessing!



**We pray for those who are ill, in trouble or distress of any kind**, especially the Anderson family, Anne Benson, Yulia Borjte, Steve Chamberlin, Alicia Crowe, Tom Gard, Sue Garrett, Mark Godfrey, Yaz Hernández and their extended family, Denise Huber, Margaret and Tor Hvatum, Doug Jeffery, Jane Kozielec and Allen, Debbie Kramer, Richard Liermann, Stephanie Maass, Penny McCullough, Beverly (Kocot) Meyers, Donna Musgrave, Betty Orlando, Kristen Patterson, Barbara Raedeke, Jennifer Salci and her parents, Scott Schmidt, Cheryl Schulz, Lois Schubert, Rick Schubert, Logan Smith, Mitchell and Tracy Shelton, Jeanette Swallow, Lou Swallow, Scott Thomas, Bill Trafka, Casey Tyler, Dominic Walker, Roy Watts, David and Doris Westfall, The White Family, Gene Wilberg, Susan Winfrey, The Workman Family, Walter Zimmerman, Eric, Elizabeth, Marian, Ted, Karen, Larry, Doug and Fritz.

**We pray for** those serving in the armed forces, especially Jesse Foy, Robert McCarthy, Brandon George, Jon Moore, Paul Malabar, Logan Smith.

### SAINT MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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The Rt. Rev. Deon K. Johnson	Bishop of MO	Barbara Raedeke	Organist and Choir Director
The Rev. Delaney Schlake-Kruse	Rector	Celeste Kocot	Youth Christian Formation
The Rev. Jerre Birdsong	Deacon	Melissa Engle	Parish Administrator
The Rev. Dr. Teresa K.M. Daniele	Priest Associate		