

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

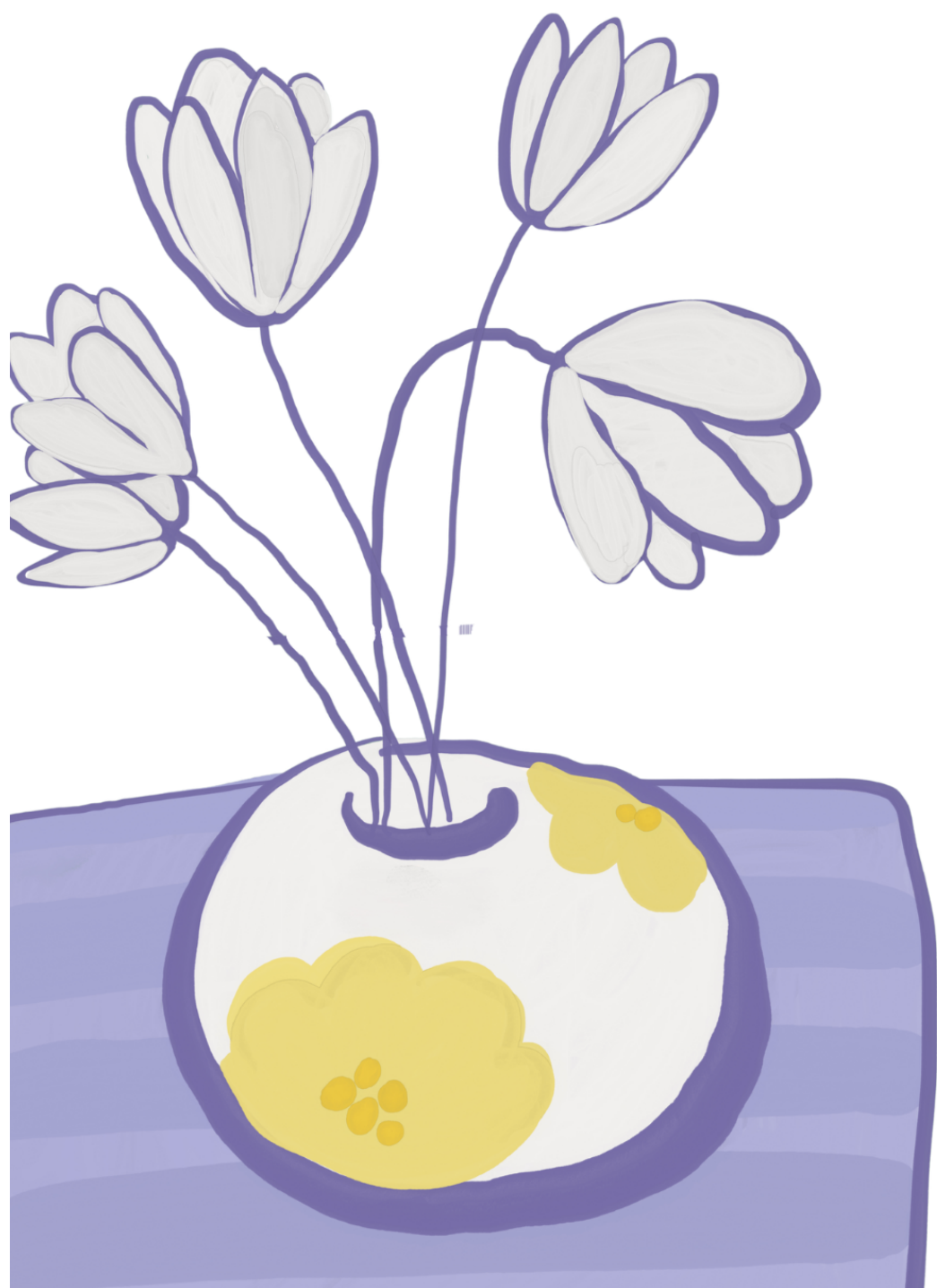
September 27,
2026

9:30 a.m.

St. Mark's &
St. John's
Episcopal
Church



Season of Stewardship



Welcome to St. Mark's and St. John's!

FIRST TIME HERE?

- **Coffee & Drinks:** Help yourself to a cup in the Café—yes, you can bring it to your pew!
- **Name Tags:** Fill out a temporary tag today, or leave your name with our greeter so we can make you a permanent one.

DURING WORSHIP

- **For Families:** Children are always invited to create in our kids' areas equipped with weekly activity sheets and crayons.
- **Accessibility:** Hearing assistance units are available on the table at the entrance. We are happy to assist you.
- **Giving:** We no longer pass an offering plate. If we invite you to place gifts in the plate by the sign-in binder or contribute online.

STAY CONNECTED

- **Livestream:** Catch our live service every Sunday at **9:30 AM** at stmarksandstjohns.org
- **Social Media:** Find us on Facebook and Instagram - @stmarksandstjohns

PRELUDE

Instrumental

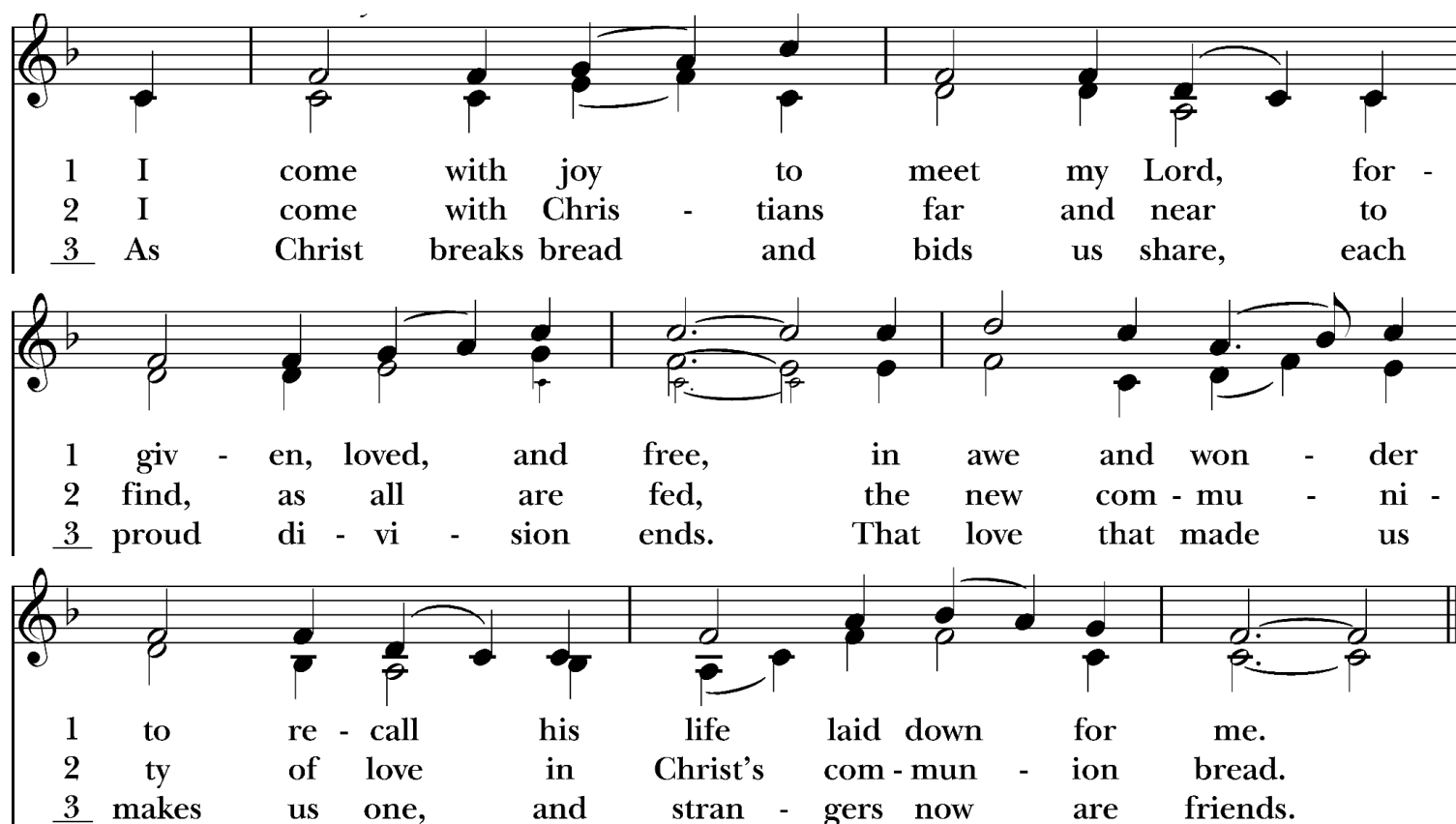
OPENING SENTENCE

Jesus invited the religious leaders to rethink their hearts, showing through the story of two sons that it's never too late to change your mind, embrace God's grace, and step into God's kingdom (based on Matthew 21:23-32).

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

"I Come with Joy"

1982 Hymnal, 304



1 I come with joy to meet my Lord, for -
2 I come with Chris - tians far and near to
3 As Christ breaks bread and bids us share, each

1 giv - en, loved, and free, in awe and won - der
2 find, as all are fed, the new com - mu - ni -
3 proud di - vi - sion ends. That love that made us

1 to re - call his life laid down for me.
2 ty of love in Christ's com - mun - ion bread.
3 makes us one, and stran - gers now are friends.

WELCOME

OPENING ACCLAMATION

Blessed be the One, Holy, and Undivided Trinity.

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

COLLECT FOR PURITY

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.**

COLLECT FOR THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

O God, you declare your almighty power chiefly in showing mercy and compassion: Grant us the fullness of your grace, that we, running to obtain your promises, may share in your heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

A reading from the book of Ezekiel, the eighteenth chapter

The word of the Lord came to me: What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? As I live, says the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is unfair." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is unfair." O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have

committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live.

Lector: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

People: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 25:1-8

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul; my God, I put my trust in you; *
let me not be humiliated, nor let my enemies triumph over me.

**Let none who look to you be put to shame; *
let the treacherous be disappointed in their schemes.**

Show me your ways, O Lord,
and teach me your paths.

**Lead me in your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
in you have I trusted all the day long.**

Remember, O Lord, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.

**Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;
remember me according to your love and
for the sake of your goodness, O Lord.**

Gracious and upright is the Lord;
therefore he teaches sinners in his way.

**He guides the humble in doing right
and teaches his way to the lowly.**

SECOND LESSON

Philippians 2:1-13

The second lesson is from Paul's letter to the Philippians, the second chapter

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death-- even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Lector: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

People: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

"Celtic Alleluia"

Sing three times

The musical notation is written on two staves in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. The melody is simple and folk-like, with a mix of eighth and quarter notes, some beamed together. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables across measures. The first staff contains two measures of the melody. The second staff contains two measures, followed by a double bar line, then two more measures, and finally a double bar line with a long horizontal line indicating a continuation or end of the phrase.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! ____

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

When Jesus entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

"What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes

are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him."

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, Lord Christ

SERMON

Pastor Cindy

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

SMSJ Food Shelf Mission

We Believe in God the Provider,

who fills the hungry with good things and calls us to love our neighbors as ourselves. In every meal shared, every bag packed, and every table set, we see the reflection of God's boundless grace, sustaining love, and promise that no one is forgotten.

We Believe in the Dignity of Every Person,

that access to food is a gift of grace, and every person who walks through our doors is a child of God. We commit to offering a sacred space of safety, warmth, and mutual respect, where all are received without judgment, honoring the sacred worth and unique story of every neighbor.

We Believe in the Spirit of Abundance and Community,

that as we give freely and receive gratefully, our shared resources nourish both body and soul. We commit to walking together in solidarity and joy—sharing our food, our time, and our hearts to cultivate a community where all are fed, valued, and restored.

PRAYER INTENTIONS AND MEDITATION

Please be seated

We invite you to share prayer intentions that are close to your heart by lighting a candle and writing your intention on one of our prayer boards.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

In peace, we pray to you, Holy One.

For faith communities around the world, that we may all be living signs of your generous and welcoming Kingdom.

God of grace,

Hear our prayer.

For our church community, as we journey through this Stewardship Season. Open our eyes to see the abundance of your blessings, and free us from the fear that there is not enough.

God of grace,

Hear our prayer.

For all who labor in the shadows of our communities—especially undocumented workers and their families, who bear the quiet, heavy weight of fear, instability, and daily strain while seeking fair wages, safety, and daily bread. Help us to build a society of refuge and justice where their dignity is honored, their burdens are lifted, and the last are made first.

God of grace,

Hear our prayer.

For those who are sick, lonely, or carrying heavy burdens (*especially...*), that they may feel the comforting presence of your grace.

God of grace,

Hear our prayer.

For all who have died, that they may rest in the fullness of your eternal feast. Today we especially pray for Pat Mitchell Redman (LaVonne Nelson's sister).

God of grace,

Hear our prayer.

Celebrant: Loving God, you call us into service not out of obligation, but out of love. Receive the prayers of your people, and grant that our lives may overflow with the grace you so freely give; through Jesus Christ, our redeemer. **Amen.**

PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

AN OFFERTORY MEDITATION

In the beginning, God spoke creation into being—land, sky, sea, and living creatures—establishing community. Among them, God called forth St. Mark's & St. John's Episcopal Church to be a community of compassion, justice, and love.

God declared it a refuge of rest, a beacon of hope, and a house of prayer—a place for our own healing and a catalyst to help heal the world. May this vibrant community move with confidence into an unknown future.

OFFERTORY

"Lord, Whose Love"

1982 Hymnal, 610

1 Lord, whose love through hum - ble ser - vice bore the weight of hu - man
2 Still your chil - dren wan - der home - less; still the hun - gry cry for

need, who up - on the cross, for - sak - en, of - fered mer - cy's
bread; still the cap - tives long for free - dom; still in grief we

per - fect deed, we, your ser - vants, bring the wor - ship
mourn our dead. As, O Lord, your deep com - pas - sion

not of voice a - lone, but heart, con - se - crat - ing
healed the sick and freed the soul, use the love your

to your pur - pose ev - ery gift that you im - part.
Spi - rit kin - dles still to save and make us whole.

"Crowded Table"

*by Brandi Carlile, Natalie Hemby,
and Lori McKenna - Text adapted for worship*

Refrain: I want a church with a crowded table

And a place at the altar for everyone

Let us take on the world while we're fed and able

And bring us back together when the day is done

Verse: If we want a garden we're gonna have to sow the seed

Plant a little happiness - let the roots run deep

If it's love that we give - then it's love that we reap

If we want a garden we're gonna have to sow the seed

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

God be with you

and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

From dust you shaped us in your image, filling creation with abundance. Your grace overflowed through Sarah and Abraham, Miriam and Moses, Deborah and David, and Mary, whose Yes brought forth your Word. In every age, you invite every soul to labor in your fields of love, promising your full measure of goodness to all without partiality.

Yet we consistently turn your generosity into our scarcity, comparing our labor with our neighbor's, choosing envy over gratitude, and replacing your grace with our own measures of merit and reward.

In your mercy, you came to us in your Son, Jesus—the one who transformed death into unending life. And so we give you thanks, rejoicing that in this community there is room and grace for everyone. We join all of Creation, saints, and angels, in their unending hymn:

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

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

On the night before his death, Jesus sat at table with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to them, saying:

“Take and eat: This is my Body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

After supper, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks to you, Creator, and gave it to them, saying:

“Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new covenant, shed for you and for all creation for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Send your life-giving Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be for us the Body and Blood of Christ, our spiritual food and drink.

Fill every heart with the sure and certain hope that we shall enter into the fullness of your joy, when your whole Creation is redeemed by love, and you are all in all.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is yours, everlasting God, now and forever.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray,

Our Father in Heaven,

hallowed be your Name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those

who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial,

and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ.

**We who are many are one body,
for we share in this one bread.**

FRACTION ANTHEM

“From the Dawning”

Verses 1 and 3 only - WLP 748



1. From the dawn - ing of cre - a - tion, God was pres - ent in the Word.
3. Hu - man eyes have seen God's glo - ry; hu - man hands have touched God's own.



And the Word was God e - ter - nal, source of all that came to be.
In our like - ness here a - mong us, dwells the Word of God made flesh.



Je - sus is that Word e - ter - nal. Je - sus is the Word of life.
Je - sus is that Word in - car - nate. Je - sus is the Word of life.

The gifts of God for the people of God take them in remembrance of Christ's life, death, and resurrection and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

All are invited to come to the table.

Gluten-free wafers and grape juice are available.

If you would like to receive a blessing just let us know.

All who thirst, all who hunger, come and be filled with the goodness of God.

COMMUNION MUSIC

"One Bread, One Body"

LEVAS 151

One bread, one bod - y,

one Lord of all, one cup of

bless - ing which we bless. And we, though

man - y, through - out the earth, We are one

bod - y in this one Lord.

1. Gen - tile or Jew, ser - vant or
2. Man - y the gifts, man - y the
3. Grain for the fields, scat - tered and

1. free, wom - an or man,
2. works, one in the Lord
3. grown, gath - ered to one

1. no more. One
2. of all. One
3. for all. One

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

God of Abundance, we thank you for renewing us at your table. You have filled us with good things and blessed us beyond measure. May the grace we have received fuel our living, so that our lives, our resources, and our ministry may reflect your boundless generosity to all people; through Christ our Light. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RECESSIONAL - "A BLESSING"

adapted for SMSJ liturgy

**The Lord bless you and keep you,
make Her face shine upon you and be gracious to you.
The Lord turn Her face toward you and give you peace. (2x)**

Amen, amen, amen.

Amen, amen, amen.

**May Her favor be upon you and a thousand generations
And your family and your children and their children,
and their children. (2x)**

Amen, amen, amen.

Amen, amen, amen.

DISMISSAL

Alleluia. Alleluia. Go in peace to love and serve God.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Worship Leader Schedule - Lectors

Date	Crucifer (Processional & Recessional)	First Lesson & Psalm	Second Lesson	Greeter & Prayers of the People
9/27	Dave	Helena	Bob C.	Sharon
10/4	Sharon	Joe	Heather	Tom
10/11	Kevin	Cath	Ella	Walt
10/18	Dave	Mary Ellen	Dave	Bonnie

Eucharistic Ministers

Date	Common Cup	Single Cup Tray	Collect Cups	Commune Choir
9/27	Dave	Terri	Michele	<i>TBD</i>
10/4	Nancy W.	Tom F.	Paul	<i>TBD</i>
10/11	Bobby C.	Deb	Sharon	<i>TBD</i>
10/18	Kevin	Heather	Steve F.	TBD



Let justice roll down like waters, and
righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.
+ Amos 5:24

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Season of Stewardship (September 20th - October 25th)

October 4th	Stewarding Community
October 11th	Stewarding Compassion
October 18th	Stewarding Justice & Love
October 25th	What have we learned? Who is God calling us to be?

Sunday, September 27 | Vestry Meetings Resume

Following Worship: Paul and Anna's Marriage Service

11:15 am - Vestry meeting - Board Room

Our next **Foodlink Delivery** will be Tuesday, September 29. Each month, **3,000 lbs of food is delivered to SMSJ** for distribution at our Food Shelf. We need your help getting this food in the door! Pastor Maria will add you to a text chain to get an alert when our delivery is coming that morning.

Blessing of the Animals will be held in the Church Garden on **Monday, October 5 at 6 pm**. Bring your furry friend, stuffed animal, or their photo to receive a special blessing celebrating the feast of St. Francis of Assisi.

Empty Bowls

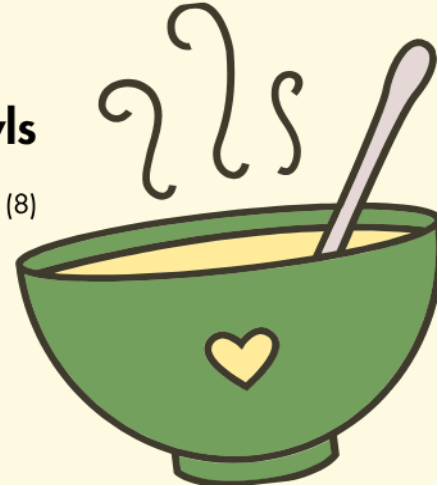
A benefit for the Food Shelf at **St. Mark's & St. John's**

Friday, Nov. 6 | Doors Open 6 pm
1245 Culver Road, Rochester, NY

Purchase Tickets at:
stmarksandstjohns.org/emptybowls

\$40/individual ticket, \$150/half table (4), \$300/full table (8)

Guests will enjoy homemade soups, along with bread, desserts, and exciting basket raffle. Each guest will also take home a handmade ceramic bowl created by local artists, a one-of-a-kind keepsake and a reminder of the difference you can make for a neighbor whose bowl is empty tonight.



It's time for **Empty Bowls!** This annual event is a fundraiser to support our mission-based initiatives and programs to feed those experiencing hunger in our neighborhood.

The concept for this event is simple—a simple soup dinner, served in a handcrafted bowl the guest has chosen and kept as an unspoken reminder that somewhere someone's bowl is empty. By charging a donation fee for entrance to this event, we are able to fill the bowl of someone in need in our community.

Here's how YOU and those you know can get involved:

 Grab your tickets to join us at
stmarksandstjohns.org/emptybowls

 Volunteer as a soup maker: talk to Terri Censak

 Serve on the event team for prep and/or day-of-event help

 Sponsor a raffle item or source donations: talk to Pastor Maria

 Spread the word: Share this event and invite friends!

SEPTEMBER CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays	Anniversaries
Ginnie S. - Sept 2 Sharon K. - Sept 9 Raffaele G. - Sept 13 Susan L. - Sept 14 Bob C. - Sept 16 Ella W. - Sept 19	Bob & Dennis - Sept 10

*Do you have a birthday or anniversary coming up in September?
Please let us know admin@stmarksandstjohns.org*

SMSJ WEEKLY CALENDAR

September 28 - October 4, 2026

Tuesday, 9/29	Morning - Foodlink Delivery 1:00 pm - Food Shelf Bagging 4:00 pm - Gardening at EDEN 1199 5:00 pm - Gardening at EDEN Merchants
Wednesday, 9/30	9:00 am - Gardening at EDEN Church 10:30 am-Noon - Food Shelf 10:30 am - Staff Meeting
Saturday, 10/3	10 am-Noon - Community Volunteer Day @ EDEN 1199
Sunday, 10/4	9:30 am - Holy Eucharist 10:30 am - Stewarding Community Discussion

Save the Date! Coming this Fall

Sat., 10/3 @ 10 am - Community Volunteer Day (RIT & SUNY Geneseo)

Sat., 10/10 @ 10 am - Community Volunteer Day

Sat., 10/10- Sun., 10/11 - Titan Service Scholars Retreat

Fri., 11/6 @ 6 pm - Empty Bowls



St. Mark's & St. John's Leadership

The Rev'd Cindy Rasmussen, Ph.D., **Rector**
crasmussen@stmarksandstjohns.org

The Rev'd Maria Hartz-Clineburg, **Associate Priest**
mhartz@stmarksandstjohns.org

The Rev'd Patti Blaine, M.A., BCC, **Deacon**
pblaine@stmarksandstjohns.org

Musician

AV Producer
Rob Thornton

Amelia Yousey

Deacon Emeritus
The Rev'd Mike Finn

Vestry Members

Co-Wardens
Nancy Ramsay ('27)
Sharon Kowalski ('28)

Bob Caruso (Clerk)

Terri Censak ('29)

Dave Everson ('28)

Heather Gilfoy ('27)

Michele Holmes ('28)

Deb Snyder ('29)

Nancy Willer ('27)

Diocesan Delegates
Bonnie Hallman-Dye
('28)

Nancy Ramsay ('26)

Ella Webster ('26)

Treasurer
Michele Holmes

Beechwood Neighborhood Coalition Representative
Terri Censak