



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



The 1st Sunday of Christmas

December 31, 2017

8:30 & 10:30 Holy Communion

Today we begin a journey through the Gospel of Mark. By Easter we will have read all of it during worship. Mark's gospel has been challenging its readers for almost 2000 years. It is unpredictable, fast paced, and leaves its readers scratching their heads many times. That appears to be Mark's intention. He wants us to realize that God's love is so radical that it cannot ever be confined to conventions. Fasten your seatbelt for a wild ride!

Welcome to worship today!

If you are visiting with us we invite you to sign the Guest Book in the back of the sanctuary.

Nursery care is available during the service. Please see one of the ushers if you need more information.

† GATHERING †

Prelude and Announcements

Gathering Hymn As with Gladness Men of Old
(For music turn to Hymn 302 in the Red Hymnal)

1. As with gladness men of old
did the guiding star behold;
as with joy they hailed its light,
leading onward, beaming bright;
so, most gracious Lord, may we
evermore be led by thee.
2. As with joyful steps they sped,
Savior, to thy lowly bed,
there to bend the knee before
thee, whom heav'n and earth adore;
so may we with willing feet
ever seek thy mercy seat.
3. As they offered gifts most rare
at thy cradle, rude and bare,
so may we with holy joy,
pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring,
Christ to thee, our heav'nly king.
4. Holy Jesus, ev'ry day
keep us in the narrow way;
and when earthly things are past,
bring our ransomed souls at last
where they need no star to guide,
where no clouds thy glory hide.
5. In the heav'nly country bright
need they no created light;
thou its light, its joy, its crown,
thou its sun which goes not down;
there forever may we sing
alleluias to our King.

Greeting (2 Corinthians 13:13)

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

C: And also with you.

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the Holy One of Israel, the Word made flesh, the Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

P: Gathered in the name of Jesus, let us confess our sin against God and our neighbor.

(A moment of silence for reflection)

P: Gracious God,

C: in Christ Jesus you come among us as light shining in the darkness. We confess our failure to welcome this light. Forgive us and renew our hope, so that we may live in the light of your grace, and welcome the truth of Christ our Lord. Amen.

P: I bring you good news of great joy for all the people: To you is born a Savior, Christ the Lord. Your sins are forgiven in Jesus' name.

C: Amen

Hymn of Praise The Bells of Christmas
(For music turn to Hymn 298 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **The bells of Christmas chime once more;
the heav'nly guest is at the door.
He comes to earthly dwellings still
with new year gifts of peace, good will.**
2. **This world, though wide and far outspread,
could scarcely find for you a bed.
Your cradle was a manger stall,
No pearls nor silk nor kingly hall.**
3. **Now let us go with quiet mind,
the swaddled babe with shepherds find,
to gaze on him who gladdens them,
the lovliest flow'r of Jesse's stem.**
4. **Oh, join with me, in gladness sing,
to keep our Christmas with our king,**

**until our song, from loving souls,
like rushing mighty water rolls!**

**5. O patriarchs' Joy, O prophets' Song,
O Dayspring bright, awaited long,
O Son of Man, incarnate Word,
great David's Son, great David's Lord:**

**6. Come, Jesus, glorious heav'nly guest,
and keep your Christmas in our breast;
Then David's harpstrings, hushed so long,
Shall swell our jubilee of song.**

Text: Nikolai F.S. Grundtvig, 1783-1872; tr. Charles Porterfield Krauth, 1823-1883, alt.
Music: Carl C. N. Balle, 1806-1855

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray...

Almighty God, you wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and yet more wonderfully restored it. In your mercy, let us share the divine life of the one who came to share our humanity, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

† WORD †

First Reading Jeremiah 31:31-34

³¹The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³²It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. ³³But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the Lord,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Scripture Poetry Psalm 98 (*read responsively*)

A: Sing to the Lord a new song,
the Lord of wonderful deeds.

**C: Right hand and holy arm
brought victory to God.**

A: God made that victory known,
revealed justice to nations,
remembered a merciful love
loyal to the house of Israel.

**C: The ends of the earth have seen
the victory of our God.**

A: Shout to the Lord, you earth,
break into song, into praise!

**C: Sing praise to God with a harp,
with a harp and sound of music.**

A: With sound of trumpet and horn,
shout to the Lord, our King.

**C: Let the sea roar with its creatures,
the world and all that live there!**

A: Let rivers clap their hands,
the hills ring out their joy!

**C: The Lord our God comes,
comes to rule the earth,
justly to rule the world,
to govern the peoples aright.**

Gospel Acclamation (Mark 1:3b)

**C: Alleluia. Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.
Alleluia.**

Gospel Reading Mark 1

The gospel is announced:

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark the 1st chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.’”

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." ⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." ¹²And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

¹⁴Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news." ¹⁶As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. ¹⁷And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." ¹⁸And immediately they left their nets and followed him. ¹⁹As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. ²⁰Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

²¹They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. ²²They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." ²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" ²⁶And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." ²⁸At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

²⁹As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. ³¹He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

³²That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. ³³And the whole city was gathered around the door. ³⁴And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him. ³⁵In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. ³⁶And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷When

they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." ³⁸He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." ³⁹And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons. ⁴⁰A leper came to him begging him, and kneeling he said to him, "If you choose, you can make me clean." ⁴¹Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, "I do choose. Be made clean!" ⁴²Immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. ⁴³After sternly warning him he sent him away at once, ⁴⁴saying to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." ⁴⁵But he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the word, so that Jesus could no longer go into a town openly, but stayed out in the country; and people came to him from every quarter.

After the reading:

P: The Gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you O Christ.

Children's Sermon

Sermon

Hymn of the Day Love Has Come

For music turn to Hymn 292 in the Red Hymnal

1. Love has come- a light in the darkness!

Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.

See, all heaven has come to proclaim it;

Hear how their song of joy arises:

Love! Love!

Born unto you, a Savior!

Love! Love!

Glory to God on high.

2. Love is born! Come, share in the wonder.

Love is God now asleep in the hay.

See the glow in the eyes of his mother;

What is the name her heart is saying?

Love! Love!

Love is the name she whispers;

Love! Love!

Jesus, Immanuel.

3. Love has come and never will leave us!

Love is life everlasting and free.

Love is Jesus within and among us.
Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.
Love! Love!
Love is the gift of Christmas.
Love! Love!
Praise to you, God on high!

Text: Ken Bible, b. 1950, Text Copyright 1996 Integrity's Hosanna! Music. Music: F. Sequin, *Recueil de noels composes en langue provencale*, 1856

Nicene Creed

A: Let us confirm our faith with the Nicene Creed

C: 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, was incarnate of the virgin Mary and became truly human. 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, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who 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.

Prayers of Intercession

P: With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

The pastor will begin the prayer with a petition and then invites the congregation to add additional petitions and thanksgivings. Please conclude your petition with: Lord in your mercy,

The congregation will respond: **Hear our prayer.**

The pastor concludes the prayer:

P: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: Amen.

Peace

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

C: And also with you.

P: Let us share that peace with one another.

The congregation may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

† MEAL †

Offering and Special Music

Hymn of Thanksgiving For music turn to page 35 in the Blue Hymnal

**Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord,
and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.
Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown,
that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gather the hopes and dreams of all;
unite them with the prayers we offer now.
Grace our table with your presence, Lord,
and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.**

Offering Prayer

A: Let us pray:

C: God with us: You came as a baby in a manger. You slept on straw and greeted shepherds. You come again in bread and wine. Remind us how good you are at blessing ordinary things. And then, through these gifts, help us to bless the lives of others in the strength of your holy name. Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that beholding the God-become-human we may be drawn

to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join in their unending hymn:

(spoken)

**C: Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

P: In the night in which he was handed over our Lord Jesus took bread, 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."

Lord's Prayer

P: Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C: 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, forever and ever. Amen.

Communion Distribution

Welcome to the Lord's Supper! All who are baptized are invited to receive communion. You will receive bread from the communion assistant. You may receive wine from either the common cup or in an individual glass. If you would like to receive in a glass please pick one up from the tray as you approach the altar rail. Gluten free wafers are available. Please ask the person distributing bread. White grape juice is available in the individual glasses for those who do not wish to take wine. As we commune together everyone is invited to sing the following hymns:

Lamb of God (Page 39 of the Blue Hymnal)

276 *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly (Red Hymnal)*

278 *Away in a Manger (Red Hymnal)*

Communion Blessing After all have communed the pastor will say:

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

C: Amen.

Post Communion Prayer

A: Let us pray:

On this day, O God, you gave us Christ the Son to save us. As you sent the one foretold, send us now with good news for all people. Let the gladness of this feast have no end as we share with others the joy that fills us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

✠ SENDING ✠

Blessing

P: May Christ, who by his incarnation has filled us with grace and truth, give you peace this Christmas and always. Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn Cold December Flies Away

(For music turn to Hymn 299 in the Red Hymnal)

1. Cold December flies away at the rose red splendor.

April's crowning glory breaks
while the whole world wonders
at the holy unseen pow'r
of the tree which bears the flow'r.
On the blessed tree blooms the reddest flow'r
on the tree blooms the rose
here in love's own garden,
full and strong in glory.

2. In the hopeless time of sin shadows deep had fallen.

All the world lay under death.
Eyes were closed in sleeping.
But, when all seemed lost in night,
came the sun whose golden light
brings unending joy, brings the endless joy
of our hope, highest hope,

of our hope's bright dawning,
Son beloved of heaven.

3. Now the bud has come to bloom, and the world awakens.

In the lily's purest flow'r
dwells a wondrous fragrance.
and it spreads to all the earth
from the moment of its birth;
and its beauty lives. In the flow'r it lives,
in the flow'r, and it spreads
in its heav'nly brightness
sweet perfume delightful.

Text and music: Catalonian Carol; tr. Howard Hawhee

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: **God's Work. Our Hands.**

Worship assistants TODAY:

Greeters and Ushers	Kim and Gary Boisseau
Acolyte	Scott Wilmot
Altar Care	Linda Thompson
Communion Assistants	Gary Boisseau and Rob Stroup
Nursery Care	Laura Stroup
Counters	Tom Kurilovitch and Helen Crown
Coffee Hour	

Worship assistants for next Sunday, January 7, 2018

Greeters and Ushers	John and Gay Card
Acolyte	Molly Perdan
Altar Care	Helen Crown
Communion Assistants	Bruce and Diane Boncke
Nursery Care	Kristi Bullwinkle
Counters	John and Linda Thompson
Coffee Hour	Burdie Gillern

St. John's Lutheran Church

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The Rev. Jonathan Deibler, Pastor

Heidi Griffith, Music Director