



St. Mark Lutheran Church

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A LOVING WORD TO THOSE GUESTS WHO WISH TO COMMUNE

We believe, as Scripture teaches, that the Body and Blood of our Lord are truly present in, with, and under the bread and the wine of the Sacrament and those who eat and drink unworthily, that is, not believing these truths, do so to their great harm. Also, Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is professed at this altar. Therefore, if you are not yet instructed, in doubt, or hold to a confession differing from that of this congregation and The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the Sacrament, you are requested to refrain from the table and speak to the Pastor or Elder to see how you can prepare in the future to also receive this gift of grace.

DIRECTIONS FOR HOLY COMMUNION

Pastor will deliver communion to those in the pews first. If you would prefer the pastor to bring communion to your pew, please let him know. Then the communicants will be ushered down the SIDE aisle beginning with the pulpit side of the church. If you are unable to kneel, you may stand in front of the rail. After receiving the Sacrament, please use the CENTER aisle to return to your seat. If you are a guest, please see our communion statement above.

Prayer before communing:

Dear Savior, at Your gracious invitation I come to Your table to eat and drink Your holy body and blood. Let me find favor in Your eyes to receive this holy Sacrament in faith for the salvation of my soul and to the glory of Your holy name; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Prayer after communing:

Almighty and everlasting God, I thank and praise You for feeding me the life-giving body and blood of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Send Your Holy Spirit that, having with my mouth received the holy Sacrament, I may by faith obtain and eternally enjoy Your divine grace, the forgiveness of sins, unity with Christ, and life eternal; through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.

Poinsettia Donations

Mike & Sharon Aldridge – in memory of Evelyn Huschka

Charles & Yvonne Mott

Phil Mott

Brad & Melissa Phillips

Doris Kroll

The Whitehead Family – in memory of Jeramie Whitehead and M.J. Whitehead

Stephen & Carrie Gayeske

Rich & Carol Hagan

Stan & Barbara Cook

Jim & Judy Melcher

Jeanine Casady

The Redden Family

Biff, Stacy & Cheyenne Phillips – in memory of Richard & Lillian Schimschat

The Whitehead Family – in memory of our grandparents, Mr. & Mrs. Wiley Whitehead and Mr. & Mrs. Gus Scheu

Judy Brown – in memory of Ed Brown and Pat Williams

Patsy Olson – in memory of Bob, Dale and baby Ronald Olson

Carolyn Dutschmann – in memory of Arvin Dutschmann



St. Mark Lutheran Church is a Christ-centered, Historic, Liturgical, Lutheran Congregation in the heart of Waco, Texas. We have been serving Waco and the surrounding communities since 1917.

Our Mission Statement:

Learning, Living and Sharing Christ's Love

Stewardship Notes

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” John 1:5

Through all of our hardships, all of our sorrows, all of our pains and loneliness, Jesus’ light shines in the darkness, and we are not overcome. In the face of our sin, in the midst of our pettiness, against all our pride, Jesus’ light shines and illuminates our hearts and changes us, day by day, into a greater reflection of His likeness.



Higher Things Daily Reflections and Portals of Prayer Devotional Booklets are available in the narthex by the main entrance. We have some large print available for both publications as well. Please ask the ushers if you need help locating these devotions. If you are unable to attend church and would like a Higher Things Daily Reflections or Portals of Prayer devotion mailed to you, please call (254) 754-0644 or email: office@stmarkwaco.com and let us know.

Our 2nd Annual Chili Cook Off will be held

January 25, 2026

after Bible Class. The sign up sheet is in the narthex.

Who will take home the title of ‘St. Mark Chili Champion’ next year?



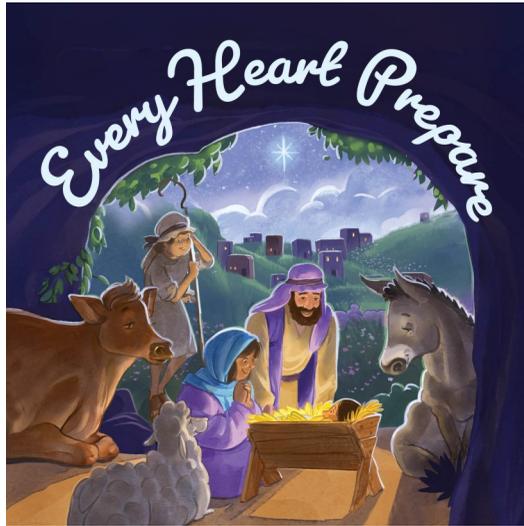
2026



**CHRISTMAS DAY
December 25, 2025**

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------|
| Opening Hymn | <i>“O Come, All Ye Faithful”</i> | p. 379 |
| Divine Service Three | | p. 184 |
| Introit | | (see page 5) |
| Kyrie | | p. 186 |
| Gloria in Excelsis | | p. 187 |
| Collect of the Day | | (see page 5) |
| Old Testament Reading | | Isaiah 52:7-10 |
| Psalm | | Psalm 98:1-6 |
| Epistle | | Titus 3:4-7 |
| Holy Gospel | | Luke 2:1-20 |
| Nicene Creed | | p. 191 |
| Hymn of the Day | <i>“O Little Town of Bethlehem”</i> | p. 361 |
| Sermon | | Wrapped Presents |
| Offering | <i>(Offering plates are near the doors as you exit)</i> | |
| Prayers of the Church | | p. 193 |
| Service of the Sacrament | | p. 194 |
| Distribution Hymns | | |
| | <i>“God Loves Me Dearly”</i> | p. 392 |
| | <i>“Let All Together Praise Our God”</i> | p. 389 |
| | <i>“O God, O Lord of Heaven and Earth”</i> | p. 834 |
| | <i>“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”</i> | p. 380 |
| Nunc Dimittis | | p. 199 |
| Salutation & Benedicamus | | p. 201 |
| Benediction | | p. 202 |
| Closing Hymn | <i>“Joy to the World”</i> | p. 387 |





Wrapped Presents

This Advent, we prepared for our Christmas celebration by considering various ways our seasonal decorations amplify the real meaning of Christmas. Though many of the reasons behind holiday decorations go unappreciated and even unnoticed, they still point us to Christ. Some of the decorations do this in a more obvious way. Even the most secular of souls sees baby Jesus in the crèche. But even seemingly nonreligious signs of the season like evergreens and lights originated in Christendom. Now, as we have come to the Twelve Days of Christmas, we consider another Christian tradition: the exchange of Christmas presents. The giving of gifts, beautifully wrapped, reflects the gracious love of our heavenly Father, the “Father of lights,” from whom “every good gift and every perfect gift” comes (James 1:17). Certainly, the greatest gift of all is none other than what we have come to celebrate: God’s self-offering to us through His Son for the forgiveness of our sin. It is a gift that produces abundant blessings for us and in us. These blessings know no end. They regenerate and renew us as we walk into the bright eternity God has in store for us. The gift is all wrapped up in the babe, who lies in a manger. Come, let us adore Him!

SERVING US TODAY

Rev. Peter C. Kolb, Pastor

Phil Mott, Organist

Craig Bottenfield, Trombone



Sunday, December 28

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|--------------------------------|----------|
| Worship Service with Communion | 9:00 AM |
| Sunday School & Bible Class | 10:30 AM |

Wednesday, December 31

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| New Year’s Eve Worship Service w/Holy Communion | 6:30 PM |
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Snacks following Worship

Sunday, January 4, 2026

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|---|----------|
| Order of Matins Service | 8:00 AM |
| <i>(Matins Service held the first Sunday of each month at 8 a.m.)</i> | |
| Worship Service with Communion | 9:00 AM |
| Sunday School & Bible Class | 10:30 AM |

Wednesday, February 18, 2026

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|---|---------|
| Ash Wednesday Worship Service w/Holy Communion | 6:30 PM |
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(Lent Services held each Wednesday evening at 6:30 p.m. through March 25th.)

Holy Gospel

Luke 2:1–20 (KJV)

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.



G Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. ²(And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) ³And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) ⁵To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. ⁶And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. ⁷And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

⁸And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

¹⁰And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

¹⁵And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. ¹⁶And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. ¹⁹But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



G Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

Introit

Psalm 98:1–4; antiphon: Isaiah 9:6



For to us a child is born, to us a son is | given;*
and the government shall be upon his | shoulder,
and his name shall be called Wonderful | Counselor,*
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, | Prince of Peace.

Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done | marvelous things!*

His right hand and his holy arm have worked salva- | tion for him.

The LORD has made known his sal- | vation;*

he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the | nations.

He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of | Israel.*

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation | of our God.

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, | all the earth;*

break forth into joyous song and sing | praises!

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*

and to the Holy | Spirit;

as it was in the be- | ginning,*

is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is | given;*

and the government shall be upon his | shoulder,

and his name shall be called Wonderful | Counselor,*

Mighty God, Everlasting Father, | Prince of Peace.

Collect of the Day

P Let us pray.

Everlasting Father, You brought us peace even as we rebelled against You. Thank You for being faithful to Your promise to give us a Messiah to save us from our sins and give us an eternal inheritance of reconciliation with You. Grant that, as Your children, we may hold fast to Your merciful love, that we may cling to our inheritance and enjoy the blessings of life in Your holy family; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord and Brother, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

G Amen.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 52:7–10

⁷How beautiful upon the mountains
 are the feet of him who brings good news,
 who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness,
 who publishes salvation,
 who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.”
⁸The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice;
 together they sing for joy;
 for eye to eye they see
 the return of the LORD to Zion.
⁹Break forth together into singing,
 you waste places of Jerusalem,
 for the LORD has comforted his people;
 he has redeemed Jerusalem.
¹⁰The LORD has bared his holy arm
 before the eyes of all the nations,
 and all the ends of the earth shall see
 the salvation of our God.

- A** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** Thanks be to God.

Gradual

Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 98:1a



To us a child is born, to us a son is | given; *
 and the government shall be upon his | shoulder.
And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, | Mighty God, *
Everlasting Father, | Prince of Peace.
 Sing to the Lord a | new song, *
 for he has done | marvelous things!

Psalm (read responsively)

Psalm 98:1–6; antiphon: v. 3

¹Oh sing to the LORD a new song,
 for he has done marvelous things!
His right hand and his holy arm
have worked salvation for him.

²The LORD has made known his salvation;
 he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.
³**He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness**
to the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.

⁴**Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;**
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

⁵Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,
with the lyre and the sound of melody!

⁶**With trumpets and the sound of the horn**
make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD!

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.

³He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness
 to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.

Epistle

Titus 3:4–7

⁴When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

- A** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** Thanks be to God.

Alleluia

LSB 190



Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.