



***Sunday, June 13, 2021***

**The Third Sunday After Pentecost**

**St. Mark Lutheran Church**

**1515 S. Harris Rd.**

**Ypsilanti, MI 48198**

**[stmarkypsi.com](http://stmarkypsi.com)**

*The mustard seed becomes a great shrub that shelters the birds, recalling ancient images of the tree of life. We'd expect a cedar or a sequoia, but Jesus finds the power of God better imaged in a tiny, no-account seed. It's not the way we expect divine activity to look. Yet the tree of life is here, in the cross around which we gather, the tree into which we are grafted through baptism, the true vine that nourishes us with its fruit in the cup we share. It may not appear all that impressive, but while nobody's looking it grows with a power beyond our understanding.*

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PRELUDE: It is Good to Praise the Lord (CWB 29)

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## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✙ one God,  
the God of manna,  
the God of miracles,  
the God of mercy.

**Amen.**

Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance,  
let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

God, our provider,

**help us.**

**It is hard to believe there is enough to share.**

**We question your ways when they differ from the ways  
of the world in which we live.**

**We turn to our own understanding  
rather than trusting in you.**

**We take offense at your teachings and your ways.**

**Turn us again to you.**

**Where else can we turn?**

**Share with us the words of eternal life  
and feed us for life in the world.**

**Amen.**

Beloved people of God:

in Jesus, the manna from heaven,  
you are fed and nourished.

By Jesus, the worker of miracles,  
there is always more than enough.

Through Jesus, ✙ the bread of life,  
you are shown God's mercy:

you are forgiven and loved into abundant life.

**Amen.**

## 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**

OPENING SONG: Rock of My Salvation (CWB 128)

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## PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, you are the tree of life, offering shelter to all the world. Graft us into yourself and nurture our growth, that we may bear your truth and love to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 17:22-24

*Tree imagery is used in a messianic prophecy to tell how the LORD will choose someone from Judah's royal family (the cedar tree) to reign over all creation. This tree will be planted on Mount Zion, the location of the holy temple.*

<sup>22</sup>Thus says the Lord GOD:

I myself will take a sprig  
from the lofty top of a cedar;  
I will set it out.

I will break off a tender one  
from the topmost of its young twigs;  
I myself will plant it  
on a high and lofty mountain.

<sup>23</sup>On the mountain height of Israel  
I will plant it,  
in order that it may produce boughs and bear fruit,  
and become a noble cedar.

Under it every kind of bird will live;  
in the shade of its branches will nest  
winged creatures of every kind.

<sup>24</sup>All the trees of the field shall know  
that I am the LORD.

I bring low the high tree,  
I make high the low tree;  
I dry up the green tree  
and make the dry tree flourish.

I the LORD have spoken;  
I will accomplish it.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 92:1-4, 12-15

*The righteous shall spread abroad like a cedar of Lebanon. (Ps. 92:12)*

<sup>1</sup>It is a good thing to give thanks to the LORD,  
to sing praise to your name, O Most High;

<sup>2</sup>**to herald your love in the morning  
and your faithfulness at night;**

<sup>3</sup>on the psaltery, and on the lyre,  
and to the melody of the harp.

<sup>4</sup>**For you have made me glad by your acts, O LORD;  
and I shout for joy because of the works of your hands.**

<sup>12</sup>The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree,  
and shall spread abroad like a cedar of Lebanon.

<sup>13</sup>**Those who are planted in the house of the LORD  
shall flourish in the courts of our God;**

<sup>14</sup>they shall still bear fruit in old age;  
they shall be green and succulent;

<sup>15</sup>**that they may show how upright the LORD is,  
my rock, in whom there is no injustice.**

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:6-10 [11-13] 14-17

*Paul encourages believers to live by faith and not by sight. We do not consider Jesus from a human perspective but through the eyes of faith, believing he died for all and was raised. All who are in Christ are now in God's new creation.*

<sup>6</sup>So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord—<sup>7</sup>for we walk by faith, not by sight. <sup>8</sup>Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. <sup>9</sup>So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. <sup>10</sup>For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

[<sup>11</sup>Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade others; but we ourselves are well known to God, and I hope that we are also well known to your consciences. <sup>12</sup>We are not commending ourselves to you again, but giving you an opportunity to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast in outward appearance and not in the heart. <sup>13</sup>For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. ] <sup>14</sup>For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. <sup>15</sup>And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them.

<sup>16</sup>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. <sup>17</sup>So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL: Mark 4:26-34

*Jesus frequently uses parables to teach ordinary people as they are able to hear and understand. Images of sowing and growing show the vitality of God's kingdom.*

<sup>26</sup>[Jesus] said, "The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground,<sup>27</sup> and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. <sup>28</sup>The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. <sup>29</sup>But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come."

<sup>30</sup>He also said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? <sup>31</sup>It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; <sup>32</sup>yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

<sup>33</sup>With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; <sup>34</sup>he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you O Christ.**

## SERMON

Pastor Vera McEwan

SERMON HYMN: You Are the Seed (WOV 753)

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## APOSTLES' CREED

*Let us confess our faith using the words of the Apostles' Creed.*

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. **Amen**

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us come before the triune God in prayer.

*A brief silence.*

Holy God, you plant the seeds of faith in every nation. Enliven your church, so that the good news of your grace may root and grow throughout the world. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Creator, even the trees, shrubs, and flowers delight in your goodness. From the depths of the soil to the highest mountain, bring forth new plants. Restore growth to places suffering drought. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Judge of nations, we pray for our leaders and those in power. Grant them the ability to regard those under their charge with humility, dedicating their lives in service to others. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Divine comforter, you show compassion to those in need and provide relief to those who call on you. Bless all who suffer, especially people trapped in cycles of poverty and homelessness.

*(A time of silence as we lift up those on our prayer list.)*

- † We lift up especially Beth Hall, Sissy Howard, Louise Conklin, Christina Wallman, Linda Campbell, Pastor Lauren Kirsh-Carr, Mick Boone, Nickole Calmeyn, Maurice Stovall, Chloe Bray and her parents, Tina Karns, Dawn Stovall, Justin Stovall, Jim Wallman, Jacob Wallman, Alex Calmeyn, Zack Calmeyn, Misty Calmeyn, Jim Ohl, and Stephanie Pooley.
- † We continue to pray for Richard, Terry, Charlene, Melissa, Sandy, Pam, Kevin, Chuck, Ted, Dr. Jim, Denny, Mary, Ben, and Dusty.
- † God of great compassion and love, grant comfort and peace to those grieving the loss of their loved ones:
  - † Be with the family and friends grieving for Raye Kline, friend of Bunny Arbaugh.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Sovereign God, this house of worship belongs to you. We give thanks and pray for our church musician. We dedicate to you the joyful noise that comes from this place; the cries of children, the melody of voice and instruments, and the songs from our hearts. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Eternal God, we give thanks for our ancestors in the faith who are now at home with you. We look forward to that day when we are reunited in your new creation. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace.

**Amen.**

### SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*Share the peace. You are invited to call or text someone and simply say "peace!"*

### 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.**

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.

Your mercy is everlasting

and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.

Praise to you for your faithfulness in all generations.

Praise to you for claiming us as your children and gathering us in this worship through sacred story and the presence of Jesus.

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 bread 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 to them, saying:  
Drink this all of you.  
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.

And now, I invite you to lift a hand of blessing toward those  
communion elements that you have brought to this table as we pray:  
O God of resurrection and new life:  
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us  
and on these gifts of bread and wine  
which we bring to this worship that they may hold  
the presence of the risen Lord Jesus Christ,  
and so that, through these gifts,  
we might be empowered to live  
with courage and compassion in this world.

All praise and glory to you, O God,  
blessed and holy Trinity,  
now and forever.

**Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER: Our Father in Heaven

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### COMMUNION

Take and eat; take and drink;  
and as you do, know that you are indeed receiving  
the body of Christ and the blood of Christ,  
transcending time and space,  
with divine love poured out for you.

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray:  
Wellspring of joy,  
through this meal you put gladness in our hearts.  
Satisfy the hunger still around us.  
Send us as joyful witnesses,  
that your love may bring joy, safety, and peace  
to the hearts of all people,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## INVITATION TO OFFERING

OFFERING SONG: Let There Be Glory and Honor and Praises (CWB 184)

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## OFFERING PRAYER

Jesus, Bread of life,  
you have set this table with your very self,  
and called us to the feast of plenty.  
Gather what has been sown among us,  
and strengthen us in this meal.  
Make us to be what we receive here,  
your body for the life of the world.  
**Amen.**

*Thank you for continuing to give to the work God is doing through St. Mark Lutheran Church. You can give by mailing your gift directly to the church. You can also give your gift by going online to [www.stmarkypsi.com](http://www.stmarkypsi.com). Your gifts continue to sustain and nourish our ministries here at St. Mark, so thank you.*

## BLESSING

The blessing of God,  
who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us,  
✝ be upon you now and forever.  
**Amen.**

SENDING SONG: Trees of the Field (CWB 129)

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## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.  
**Thanks be to God.**

ENCIRCLED WITH PRAYER

- † Recognizing the power of prayer, please join us in praying at home throughout this week for those whose needs are known to us and those whose cares we do not know.
- † We lift up especially Beth Hall, Sissy Howard, Louise Conklin, Christina Wallman, Linda Campbell, Pastor Lauren Kirsh-Carr, Mick Boone, Nickole Calmeyn, Maurice Stovall, Chloe Bray and her parents, Tina Karns, Dawn Stovall, Justin Stovall, Jim Wallman, Jacob Wallman, Alex Calmeyn, Zack Calmeyn, Misty Calmeyn, Jim Ohl, and Stephanie Pooley.
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*Please contact us at [office@stmarkypsi.com](mailto:office@stmarkypsi.com) if you need prayer for yourself or those dear to you.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today, for the first time since the beginning days of the pandemic shutdowns, we are worshiping both online and in our sanctuary, using our online service.

Preaching today will be Pastor Vera McEwan who interned here at St. Mark.

**Holy Communion:** In today's worship, we will be celebrating Holy Communion. If you are worshiping with us virtually and have not done so already, please take a moment to gather communion elements you have on hand: bread or crackers, wine or juice, for use later in the service.

**Coffee Hour:** Coffee Hour will follow worship in the sanctuary. Joani Laginess will be hosting.