

*St. Mark's Episcopal Church
75 Cold Spring Road
Westford, Massachusetts, 01886*



**"GIVE...
TO GOD**

**THE THINGS
THAT ARE
GOD'S."**

MATTHEW 22:21, NRSV

October 18, 2026

*Rev. Melissa Buono, Officiant
Minister of Music - Jenny Meanwell
Usher and Reader: Mark and Ellen Tremblay
Chalise: Sue Duran*

ENTRANCE HYMN: *Before the Lord's eternal throne (Winchester New)* (H 391)

OPENING ACCLAMATION (BCP p. 355)

The people standing, the Celebrant says

Celebrant Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever.
Amen.

COLLECT FOR PURITY (BCP 355)

GLORIA: S-277

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY (BCP p. 299)

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Celebrant Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, in Christ you have revealed your glory among the nations: Preserve the works of your mercy, that your Church throughout the world may persevere with steadfast faith in the confession of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The Lessons

FIRST READING: Isaiah 45:1-7

The people sit.

A Reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

¹Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus,
whose right hand I have grasped
to subdue nations before him
and strip kings of their robes,
to open doors before him—
and the gates shall not be closed:
²“I will go before you
and level the mountains,
I will break in pieces the doors of bronze
and cut through the bars of iron,
³I will give you the treasures of darkness

and riches hidden in secret places,
 so that you may know that it is I, the LORD,
 the God of Israel, who call you by your name.
⁴For the sake of my servant Jacob,
 and Israel my chosen,
 I call you by your name,
 I surname you, though you do not know me.
⁵I am the LORD, and there is no other;
 besides me there is no god.
 I arm you, though you do not know me,
⁶so that they may know, from the rising of the sun
 and from the west, that there is no one besides me;
 I am the LORD, and there is no other.
⁷I form light and create darkness,
 I make weal and create woe;
 I the LORD do all these things.”

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

Silence may follow.

PSALM: Psalm 96:1-9 [10-13]

Remain seated.

¹Sing to the LORD a new song; *
 sing to the LORD, all the whole earth.
²Sing to the LORD and bless his Name; *
 proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.
³Declare his glory among the nations *
 and his wonders among all peoples.
⁴For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised; *
 he is more to be feared than all gods.
⁵As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; *
 but it is the LORD who made the heavens.
⁶Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his presence! *
 Oh, the power and the splendor of his sanctuary!
⁷Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples; *
 ascribe to the LORD honor and power.
⁸Ascribe to the LORD the honor due his Name; *
 bring offerings and come into his courts.
⁹Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; *
 let the whole earth tremble before him.
¹⁰Tell it out among the nations: “The LORD is King! *
 he has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved;
 he will judge the peoples with equity.”

¹¹Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it; *
let the field be joyful and all that is therein.
¹²Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy
before the LORD when he comes, *
when he comes to judge the earth.
¹³He will judge the world with righteousness *
and the peoples with his truth.

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

The people sit.

A Reading from Paul's First letter to the Church in Thessalonika.

¹Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,
To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
Grace to you and peace.

²We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly
³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness
of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has
chosen you, ⁵because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power
and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved
to be among you for your sake. ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of
persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an
example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For the word of the Lord has sounded
forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has
become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. ⁹For the people of those regions report
about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to
serve a living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the
dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

<i>Reader</i>	The Word of the Lord.
<i>People</i>	Thanks be to God.

Silence may follow.

SEQUENCE HYMN Praise to the living God (Leoni) (H 372)

All stand.

GOSPEL: Matthew 22:15-22

All stand.

Celebrant The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.
People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

¹⁵Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. ¹⁶So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” ¹⁸But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and whose title?” ²¹They answered, “The emperor’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” ²²When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

Celebrant The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

THE SERMON

THE CREED (BCP p. 358)

All stand.

**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:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
 he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
 and was made man.
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.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He 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.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (BCP p. 359)

All remain standing.

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;
That we all may be one.

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and
humbly serve you;
That your Name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe, Bishop Julia Whitworth, Rev. Will Bergmann, Rev.
Melissa Buono, and for all bishops, priests, and deacons;
That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations
of the world;
That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;
That our works may find favor in your sight.

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;
That they may be delivered from their distress.

PRAYERS FOR THOSE ON THE ST. MARK'S PRAYER LIST:

Marnie Sheeran, Bev Olson, Bob, Tina, Anna Oliverson, Susan and Kate,
Jim Derik, Evie and family: Beth, Brendan and Corinne, Charlotte and Bob,
Doug and the Pecora family, Karen, Kathy, Marcia, Sue Sweeney, Michael, Carol,
Kate and family, Judy, Barbara, Karen, Marlene, Andrew Ward, John Gallacher, Lisa,
Pamela, Elizabeth, Jane, Brooke, David Andrew, Marty Cassidy, Brian, Pope Leo.

We pray for those who have recently died:

Ralph Regner, Janet Andrews.

CONFESSION OF SIN (BCP p. 359)

The Celebrant says

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor

Silence may be kept.

Minister and People

**Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

The Priest stands and says

**Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ,
strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.
Amen.**

THE PEACE (BCP p. 360)

All stand.

<i>Celebrant</i>	The peace of the Lord be always with you.
<i>People</i>	And also with you.

Then the Ministers and the People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

The Celebrant says

Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving and make good your vows to the Most High.

Psalm 50:14

OFFERTORY ANTHEM (BCP p. 361)

THE DOXOLOGY V.3 *From all that dwell below the skies (Old 100th) (H 380)*

The Great Thanksgiving

The Celebrant says The Lord be with you.

People ***And also with you.***

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People ***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.***

SANCTUS: S-129 Holy, Holy, Holy

Celebrant and People

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.

The People stand or kneel

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 the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, 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 Lord 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 he 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, O Father,

Celebrant and People

**We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;**

The Celebrant continues

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you,
O Lord 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 to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, 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 St. Mark and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER (BCP p. 363)

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

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.**

The Breaking of the Bread

FRACTION ANTHEM: *Alleluia S-154*

INVITATION (BCP p. 364)

The Celebrant says

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

DISTRIBUTION (BCP p. 365)

The ministers receive the Sacrament in both kinds, and then immediately deliver it to the people.

The Bread and the Cup are given to the communicants with these words

The Body (Blood) of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life. [*Amen.*]

COMMUNION HYMN: *Bread of heaven, on thee we feed (Jesu, Jesu, du mein Hirt)* (H 323)

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER (BCP p. 365)

After Communion, the Celebrant says

Let us pray.

Celebrant and People

**Eternal God, heavenly Father,
you have graciously accepted us as living members
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
and you have fed us with spiritual food
in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.
Send us now into the world in peace,
and grant us strength and courage
to love and serve you
with gladness and singleness of heart;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

BLESSING (BCP p. 366)

The Priest blesses the people, saying

The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. *Amen.*

CLOSING HYMN: *In your mercy, Lord, you called me (Halton Holgate) (H 706)*

DISMISSAL (BCP p. 366)

Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People Thanks to be God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

October 18th to October 25th

Sunday, October 18th

10 a.m.: 21st Sunday after Pentecost, Rev. Melissa Buono

5 p.m.: Dinner Church. Contact Judie Hilton for information

Tuesday, October 19th

7 p.m.: Monthly Vestry meeting on Google Meets. Contact Jean Ellis if interested in joining.

Thursday, October 21st

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.: St. Mark's Office is Open

Sunday, October 25th

10 a.m.: 22nd Sunday after Pentecost, Rev. Will Bergmann

21st Sunday After Pentecost: Whose image is on you?

Moses presses God with breathtaking boldness (Show me your glory!), and God tucks him in the cleft of a rock and lets all his goodness pass by, because this is a God who is known not by naked power but by mercy and grace declared by name. Isaiah goes further still, revealing a God who calls even Cyrus by name and arms him for a purpose, so that from the rising of the sun to the west all the earth may know there is no other. The Thessalonians received the gospel not in word only but in power, and the Holy Spirit, and their faith sounded forth across Macedonia and Achaia without Paul needing to say a word. Jesus silences his interrogators with a single question - Whose image is on the coin? - leaving the deeper question ringing in the air: Whose image is on you?

Celebrating Our Sunday Service Ministries - October 25th

Join us during our worship service on **Sunday, October 25th**, as we take a moment to honor and celebrate the dedicated groups whose time, talent, and care support our weekly Sunday worship.

- **Altar Guild:** Reverently prepares the sanctuary, vessels, and linens for the sacraments, ensuring every detail of the altar is set with care and grace.
- **Lectors & Ushers:** Welcomes our congregation with warmth, guides our worshipers, and brings scripture to life by proclaiming the Word from the lectern.
- **Choir:** Lifts our spirits in song, leading our congregational hymns and offering anthems that deepen our praise and reflection.

Interested in Serving?

We are always blessed to welcome new hands to these ministries. Whether your gifts are musical, organizational, or welcoming, there is a place for you. If you are interested in volunteering or learning more about how you can participate, please reach out to us at seniorwarden@st-mark.org.

Dinner Church Sunday, October 18, 2026 | 5 PM | Williams Hall

Prayers of God's Creation.

Come Join us for Dinner Church at St. Mark's. Dinner Church is an intimate setting to share prayers, conversation, and a meal around the table. Inspired by the early church, Dinner Church is a lay-led service that blends familiar prayers with new reflections and community connection. This month, we'll draw inspiration from the beauty of God's creation. All are welcome! RSVP or send questions to Judie at familyministry@st-mark.org, or just come as you are.

Sunday School Returns!

Exciting news! Sunday School has launched for the fall. Every Sunday at 10 AM, Children will explore Bible stories and faith lessons through interactive activities, crafts, Legos, games, and more. If you know families looking for an inclusive, fun experience for children, please invite them! For more information, contact Judie Hilton at familyministry@st-mark.org. Growing in faith. Growing in love.

Outreach Opportunities

October Outreach Box: Supporting Merrimack Valley Project

For the month of October our Outreach Box donations will go to the Merrimack Valley Project. MVP is a grassroots, multi-faith, multi-racial community organizing network that develops grassroots leaders, strengthens civic engagement, and builds collective power to advance systemic change for social, racial, and economic justice across the Merrimack Valley.

Help Support Our Neighbors Facing Food Insecurity

Many in our community are struggling with food insecurity due to the high cost of groceries and recent reductions in SNAP (food assistance) benefits. St. Mark's Church invites parishioners to help support our local food pantries during this challenging time. Please consider bringing non-perishable food items, such as canned goods, pasta, rice, or peanut butter, and placing them in the collection basket located in the narthex. Your generosity helps ensure that no one in our community goes hungry. Thank you for your continued compassion and support.

Community Partnership

Make your voice heard. Weekly ICE Protests on Wednesdays

The grassroots organization Bearing Witness @ ICE (multiple links on Google) is continuing protests in front of the ICE detention center in Burlington (immediately behind the Mall) every Wednesday, 11 AM-1 PM. Attendance is now typically 500 and growing. Several St. Mark's parishioners attend every week. If you're interested in carpooling, please contact **Eric Kintner**. Another worthwhile resource for resisting ICE in many different ways is LUCE:

<https://www.lucemass.org>.

Ongoing News

Office Hours: Irina and/or Rev. Bergmann will be in the office on Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. To schedule an office appointment, please email secretary@st-mark.org or **Rev. Bergmann** at wcbgrm2n@gmail.com or call (978) 692-7849 and leave a voice message. Thank you.

The next Vestry Meeting is on Tuesday, November 10, 2026, at 7:30 p.m. on Google Meet. Contact **Jean Ellis** at seniorwarden@st-mark.org if you would like to join.

Pastoral Care: Would you like to receive communion? Need prayers for healing? Need support or assistance? Would you like to speak with a priest? Please email **Rev. Will Bergmann** at wcbgrm2n@gmail.com and **Herb Elliott**, our Pastoral Care team leader at herb.elliott@cheza.com. Alternatively, you can call 978-501-8479. You can also use the "Request Pastoral Visit" button on St. Mark's website.

Want to learn about the symbols of the sacred elements used in the Eucharist?

The Altar Guild is looking for volunteers to join them in this critical ministry. The Altar Guild prepares the altar for weekly services, attends to all the linens, sets up & breaks down for a Baptism, Funeral, Wedding, Bishop's visits, etc. They polish the brass & silver. They change out altar linens at each liturgical season, together with decorating the church. Each member has a different reason for joining the Altar Guild, but most of all, we are dedicated to supporting each other and the parish in our spiritual journeys. Please contact Brenda Martin or Elaina Carroll if you are interested. You can also email secretary@st-mark.org.



PRIEST - IN - CHARGE

The Rev. Dr. Will Bergmann, wcbgrm2n@gmail.com, 978-501-3393

SENIOR WARDEN

Jean Ellis, seniorwarden@st-mark.org, Cell #: 978-758-6299

MINISTER OF MUSIC

Lee Yezek: lyezek@gmail.com

VESTRY MEMBERS

Michael O'Hare (Jr. Warden), Scott Hilton (Treasurer), Ellen Tremblay (Clerk), Paul Ackroyd (At-Large), Jenny Meanwell, Chrissy Hemingway (Rental program), Melissa Dewing, Brennan Burks, Brenda Martin (Pre - School Representative), Mahiro Jilesen.

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