

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



For those who want to save their life
will lose it,
and those who lose their life for my sake
will find it.

Matthew 16:25, NRSV

September 6, 2026

Rev. Melissa Buono, *Officiant*

ENTRANCE HYMN: *Thou, whose almighty word (Moscow) (H 371)*

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.

Grant us, O Lord, to trust in you with all our hearts; for, as you always resist the proud who confide in their own strength, so you never forsake those who make their boast of your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 33:7-11

The people sit.

A Reading from the book of Ezekiel.

⁷So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. ⁸If I say to the wicked, "O wicked ones, you shall surely die," and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. ⁹But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

¹⁰Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: "Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?" ¹¹Say to them, "As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?"

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

Silence may follow.

PSALM: Psalm 119:33-40

Remain seated.

- ³³Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes, *
and I shall keep it to the end.
³⁴Give me understanding, and I shall keep your law; *
I shall keep it with all my heart.
³⁵Make me go in the path of your commandments, *
for that is my desire.
³⁶Incline my heart to your decrees *
and not to unjust gain.
³⁷Turn my eyes from watching what is worthless; *
give me life in your ways.
³⁸Fulfill your promise to your servant, *
which you make to those who fear you.
³⁹Turn away the reproach which I dread, *
because your judgments are good.
⁴⁰Behold, I long for your commandments; *
in your righteousness preserve my life.

SECOND READING: Romans 13:8-14

The people sit.

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

⁸Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

¹¹Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹²the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

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

Silence may follow.

SEQUENCE HYMN *At the Lamb's high feast we sing (Salzburg) (H 174)*

All stand.

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:15-20

All stand.

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

[Jesus said,] ¹⁵“If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. ¹⁶But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. ¹⁸Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

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:

Janet Andrews, 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.

We pray for those who have recently died:

William Stevenson III, Thomas Kane, Ralph Regner.

Prayer for Labor Day

Almighty God, you have so linked our lives one with another that all we do affects, for good or ill, all other lives: So guide us in the work we do, that we may do it not for self alone, but for the common good; and, as we seek a proper return for our own labor, make us mindful of the rightful aspirations of other workers, and arouse our concern for those who are out of work; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Prayer for 9-11 from the Episcopal Diocese of NY.

O Almighty God, who brings good out of evil and turns even the wrath of your children towards your promised peace: Hear our prayers this day as we remember those of many nations and differing faiths whose lives were cut short by the fierce flames of anger and hatred. Hasten the time when the menace of war shall be removed. Cleanse both us and those perceived to be our enemies of all hatred and distrust. Pour out the spirit of peace on all the rulers of our world that we may be brought through strife to the lasting peace of the kingdom of your Son; Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

God the compassionate one, whose loving care extends to all the world, we remember this day your children of many nations and many faiths whose lives were cut short by the fierce flames of anger and hatred. Console those who continue to suffer and grieve and give them comfort and hope as they look to the future. Out of what we have endured, give us the grace to examine our relationships with those who perceive us as the enemy, and show our leaders the way to use our power to serve the good of all for the healing of the nations. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord who, in reconciling love, was lifted up from the earth that he might draw all things to himself. **Amen.**

(Prayer offered at the first anniversary of 9-11, written by then Presiding Bishop (the late)Frank T Griswold.)

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

<i>The Celebrant says</i>	The Lord be with you.
<i>People</i>	<i>And also with you.</i>
Celebrant	Lift up your hearts.
<i>People</i>	<i>We lift them to the Lord.</i>
Celebrant	Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
<i>People</i>	<i>It is right to give him thanks and praise.</i>

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: *Come with us, O bless'd Jesus (Werde munter)* (H 336)

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: *Christ is made the sure foundation (Westminster Abbey) (H 518)*

DISMISSAL (BCP p. 366)

Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People Thanks to be God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

September 6th to September 13th

Sunday, September 6th

10 a.m.: 15th Sunday after Pentecost, Rev. Melissa Buono

Tuesday, September 8th

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

Thursday, September 10th

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

Sunday, September 13th

10 a.m.: 16th Sunday after Pentecost, Rev. William Bergmann

10 a.m.: Sunday School begins (All Are Welcome)

15th Sunday After Pentecost: Where two or three are gathered

Today we're reminded of a people on the threshold of liberation, told to eat in haste with sandals on their feet and staff in hand, because God is eager to deliver. Paul strips the law down to its irreducible core, love your neighbor as yourself, and then sounds the alarm: the night is far gone, the day is near, so put on the armor of light and put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus gives his church a demanding and hopeful vision of community: go directly to the one who has wronged you, pursue reconciliation with patience and witnesses, and trust that where two or three are gathered in his name, he is there in the midst of them.

Carpet Replacement Project

Our Altar carpet has been replaced. Praise be to God! Much thanks to the Property team, Altar Guild, and the volunteers that made this happen. With the completion of the lighting project, refurbishment of the rail, and the new carpet, our Sanctuary looks awesome. Please email **Michael O'Hare** at oharemichael@yahoo.com if you have questions.

Sunday School Returns September 13th!

Exciting news! Sunday School is launching this fall, starting **September 13th at 10 AM** each Sunday. Children will explore Bible stories and faith lessons through interactive activities, crafts, Legos, games, and more. Sunday School meets during the first part of worship, with children joining families for communion. All children are welcome! For more information, contact Judie Hilton at familyministry@st-mark.org. Growing in faith. Growing in love.

Save the Date for Dinner Church in September Sunday, September 20, 2026 | 5 PM | Williams Hall “Prayers for Community”

Dinner Church at St. Mark's is a time 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 Wonder of God in our lives. All are welcome! RSVP or send questions to Judie at or just come as you are.

Outreach Opportunities

Outreach committee: Are you looking for a way to serve others?

The St. Mark's Outreach Committee is looking for new members to help coordinate, develop, and work on our outreach projects. The committee is a great way to become more involved in service to the community around our key ministries of Food Insecurity, Social Justice, and Immigrant Support. If you're interested in becoming a leader in our ministry to others, please contact **Joan O'Hare or Paul Ackroyd**.

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

St. Paul's Soup Kitchen Fundraiser Dinner and Music: 80's Night!

Join us for a fun evening of food, music, and prizes as we support the soup kitchen's annual fundraiser dinner. It will be held at the Mount Pleasant Golf Club in Lowell on **Saturday, September 19, from 6:00 to 10:00 PM**. The 80's themed evening will feature dinner, dancing, silent auctions, raffles and plenty of fun to go around. We expect to fill at least one table as we did last year. Tickets are \$55 per person individually, \$50 per person if we fill a table. Please contact Paul Ackroyd or Joan O'Hare if you're interested.

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, September 8, 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.



St Mark's Episcopal Church
@stmark75



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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