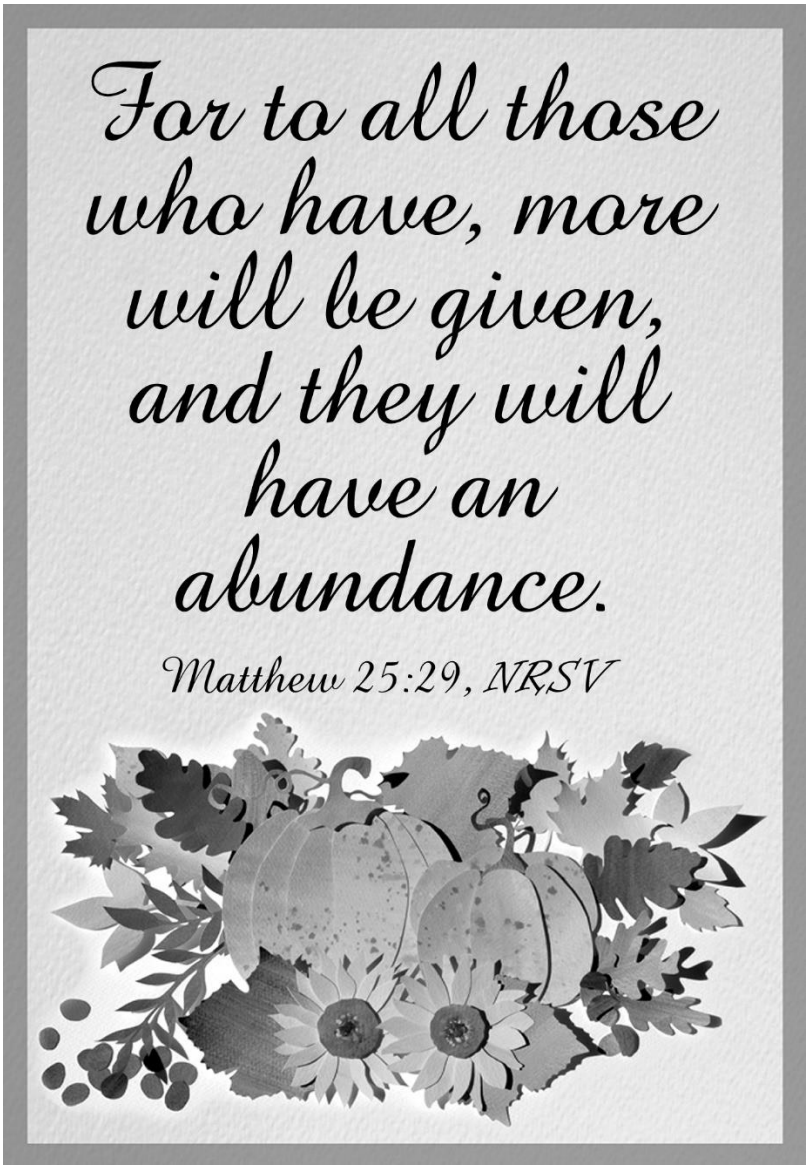
St. Mark's Episcopal Church
75 Cold Spring Road
Westford, Massachusetts, 01886



November 15, 2026
Rev. Melissa Buono**,** *Officiant*
Minister of Music – *Lee Yezek*
Usher: Scott Hilton
Reader: *Paul Ackroyd*
Chalice: *Elaina Carroll*

ENTRANCE HYMN: ***The Lord will come and not be slow (York)*** **(H 462)**

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.

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. ***Amen*****.**

The Lessons

FIRST READING: Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18
The people sit.

A Reading from the book of the prophet Zephaniah.

7 Be silent before the Lord GOD!
For the day of the LORD is at hand;
the LORD has prepared a sacrifice,
he has consecrated his guests.

12 At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,
and I will punish the people
who rest complacently on their dregs,
those who say in their hearts,
"The LORD will not do good,

nor will he do harm."
13 Their wealth shall be plundered,
and their houses laid waste.
Though they build houses,
they shall not inhabit them;
though they plant vineyards,
they shall not drink wine from them.

14 The great day of the LORD is near,
near and hastening fast;
the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter,
the warrior cries aloud there.
15 That day will be a day of wrath,
a day of distress and anguish,
a day of ruin and devastation,
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness,
16 a day of trumpet blast and battle cry
against the fortified cities
and against the lofty battlements.

17 I will bring such distress upon people
that they shall walk like the blind;
because they have sinned against the LORD,
their blood shall be poured out like dust,
and their flesh like dung.
18 Neither their silver nor their gold
will be able to save them
on the day of the LORD's wrath;
in the fire of his passion
the whole earth shall be consumed;
for a full, a terrible end
he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

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

Silence may follow.

PSALM: Psalm 90:1-8 [9-11] 12
Remain seated.

1 Lord, you have been our refuge *
from one generation to another.
2 Before the mountains were brought forth,
or the land and the earth were born, *

from age to age you are God.
3 You turn us back to the dust and say, *
"Go back, O child of earth."
4 For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past *
and like a watch in the night.
5 You sweep us away like a dream; *
we fade away suddenly like the grass.
6 In the morning it is green and flourishes; *
in the evening it is dried up and withered.
7 For we consume away in your displeasure; *
we are afraid because of your wrathful indignation.
8 Our iniquities you have set before you, *
and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.
[9 When you are angry, all our days are gone; *
we bring our years to an end like a sigh.
10 The span of our life is seventy years,
perhaps in strength even eighty; *
yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow,
for they pass away quickly and we are gone.
11 Who regards the power of your wrath? *
who rightly fears your indignation?
] 12 So teach us to number our days, *
that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

The people sit.

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

1 Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have
anything written to you. 2 For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come
like a thief in the night. 3 When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction
will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape!
4 But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; 5 for you are all
children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. 6 So then let us
not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; 7 for those who sleep sleep at
night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. 8 But since we belong to the day, let us be
sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. 9 For
God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,
10 who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. 11 Therefore
encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

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

Silence may follow.

SEQUENCE HYMN *Before thy throne, O God, we kneel (St. Petersburg)* (H 574)

All stand.

GOSPEL: Matthew 25:14-30

All stand.

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

14[Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven will be as when] a man, going on a journey, summoned
his slaves and entrusted his property to them;15to one he gave five talents, to another two, to
another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. 16The one who had received the
five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. 17In the same
way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. 18But the one who had received the
one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. 19After a long time
the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. 20Then the one who had received
the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me
five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' 21His master said to him, 'Well done, good and
trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many
things; enter into the joy of your master.' 22And the one with the two talents also came forward,
saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' 23His
master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few
things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' 24Then the one
who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a
harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; 25so I
was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' 26But his
master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow,
and gather where I did not scatter? 27Then you ought to have invested my money with the
bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. 28So take the
talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. 29For to all those who have, more will
be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they
have will be taken away. 30As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where
there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' "

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.

***Celebrant**: Jesus said, "In my Father's house there are many dwelling places." Trusting in God's abundance and welcome, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all creation.*

***Leader**: Gracious God, you have made plenty good room for us in your household. Inspire your church to be a place of welcome, generosity, and love. We thank you for the resources you have entrusted to us, and we pray for wisdom to use them in service of your mission.*

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

***Leader:** God of community, you bind us together in relationships of care and compassion. Strengthen the bonds within this congregation, and guide us to extend hospitality to our neighbors*

near and far.

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

***Leader**: God of abundance, you invite us to respond with gratitude for all your gifts. Bless this stewardship campaign, that our pledges of time, talent, and treasure may be faithful signs of our trust in you.*

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

***Leader**: God of creation, you have made a world with plenty good room for all living things. Teach us to care for the earth and to share its resources with justice and joy.*

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

***Leader**: God of mercy, your dwelling place has room for all who suffer. Be present with those who are sick, lonely, grieving, or in any kind of need [especially N.]. Surround them with your healing and your peace.*

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

***Leader**: God of hope, you prepare a place for us in your eternal home. We remember before you those who have died, confident that they now rest in your embrace [especially N.].*
***People**: Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Celebrant**: Loving God, you call us into your abundant life and promise that there is plenty good room for all your children. Hear our prayers and accept the offerings of our hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.

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

Marnie Sheeran, Bob, Anna Oliverson, Susan and Kate, Jim Derik, Evie and family: Beth, Brendan and Corinne, Charlotte, 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, Steve Winter, Chris Bowser, Jeff, Jean Duran, Carol Sullivan.

WE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO RECENTLY DIED:

Ralph Regner, Janet Andrews, Pamela Hilton, Robert Parsons.

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.

Celebrant	The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People	**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*: Thou, who at thy first Eucharist didst pray (Song 1)* (H 315)

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:

DISMISSAL (BCP p. 366)

Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People ***Thanks to be God.***

ANNOUNCEMENTS

November 15th to November 22nd

Sunday, November 15th
10 a.m.: 25th Sunday after Pentecost, Rev. Melissa Buono

Thursday, November 19th
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.: St. Mark's Office is Open

Sunday, November 22nd
10 a.m.: Final Sunday after Pentecost, Rev. Will Bergmann
5 p.m.: Dinner Church

25th Sunday after Pentecost: Hear, learn, and digest God's promise.
In this week's readings, the day of the Lord presses close. Zephaniah thunders its approach, Paul urges the church to stay awake and sober as children of light, and Jesus tells of a master who returns to settle accounts. The question running through all of it is whether we have lived as people who believed something was at stake. Deborah sits under her palm tree dispensing judgment, called by God to lead Israel out of twenty years of cruel oppression, a reminder that God raises up unexpected people to do the work that needs doing. The servant who buried his talent in the ground did so out of fear, and fear is precisely what the Scriptures were given to dispel; hear them, read them, mark them, learn them, inwardly digest them, and embrace the blessed hope of everlasting life they proclaim.

NEW DATE: Dinner Church Sunday, November 22, 2026 | 5 PM | Williams Hall
Prayers for Thanksgiving.

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.

Plenty Good Room: 2026 Stewardship Campaign Kick-Off
As of Monday, November 9, we are at 57% of our goal! Thanks to everyone who has pledged. There's still time and "plenty good room" to join.
November has been designated as Stewardship month, a time for reflection on our blessings and how we might joyfully share what we have in support of St. Mark's. This year's theme, Plenty Good Room, invites us to recognize the abundance that God has entrusted to us. There is plenty good room in God's household for each of us, and good and plenty to share. Even in uncertain

times we are called to trust that there is enough: enough for our families, enough for our church, enough for our neighbors.

Our financial goal for 2027 as targeted but the Vestry is $105,000. Your gift of financial support allows us to plan a budget to fund staff salaries, operate and maintain our church building, and support the many ministries in which we participate. Unfortunately, as we are all facing, costs for everything have gone up, and running our parish is no exception. If you have not pledged in the past, please consider doing so for 2027. If you have, please prayerfully consider expanding your gift if you can to help us meet these growing financial headwinds.

There are two ways in which you can submit your pledge:

1. Fill out the pledge form located at the back of the church or received by mail and place in the offering plate, or mail to St. Mark's at 75 Cold Spring Road Westford MA 01886 (attn: Stewardship)
2. Email our confidential email address at st.markspledges@gmail.com

Gifts may be submitted throughout the month of November. Thank you and together let us rejoice that there is always plenty good room in God's house, and plenty good work for us to do.
Faithfully,
Ellen and Mark Tremblay
2027 Campaign Chairs

Vestry Position Open for 2027
At the annual meeting each year, several positions on the Vestry are renewed. This year, Michael O'Hare (Junior Warden), Ellen Tremblay (Clerk) and Jenny Meanwell (At-Large member) each have expiring terms, but have already agreed to be nominated for additional terms. Mahiro Jilensen is completing an At-Large (3-year term) position which will be open in 2027.

The Vestry is a strong, vibrant team of eleven individuals who meet monthly (via Google Meets) to discuss and provide leadership for the church's operations and ministry programs.

Please consider joining the Vestry yourself or recommend someone else for the open position! St. Mark's, as are many small churches, faces challenges ahead but is in a good financial position with strong leadership from Rev. Will and the Vestry. You would be joining a strong team that will guide St. Mark's in its mission and ministry. Please contact Jean Ellis (seniorwarden@st-mark.org) by mid-December if you are interested in learning more about this opportunity! Thank you!

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.

MICAH Awards Dinner & Annual Meeting, Sunday November 15th
This year's MICAH Awards Dinner & Annual Meeting is on Sunday, November 15th at the Lawrence Elks Lodge, 652 Andover St, Lawrence, MA. The MVP annual meeting is at 5PM, followed by the MICAH Awards dinner at 6PM. At this annual gathering, we honor local leaders who embody the call of the Micah 6:8, "to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly". The event is also the major fundraiser for MVP each year. We have purchased a table at the dinner which we hope to fill. All are welcome! For additional information or to let us know you plan to attend, please contact **Joan O'Hare** (johare7@comcast.net) or **Paul Ackroyd** (phackroyd@verizon.net).

Outreach Opportunities

November and December Outreach Box: For the Love of Erika Toy Drive
For the month of November and December our Outreach Box donations will go to support Westford Preschool's ***For the Love of Erika*** toy drive. Your contributions will be used to purchase toys for children in local hospitals, shelters, and the Department of Children and Families. Let's make this holiday season brighter together!
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 wcbrgm2n@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 7:00 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 wcbrgm2n@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.



PRIEST - IN – CHARGE
The Rev. Dr. Will Bergmann, wcbrgm2n@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.

St. Mark's Website: www.st-mark.org
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