

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

We are glad you are here! May this be a holy time for you to offer your praise to God as well as receive God's grace through word, sacrament, song, and prayer.

You may contact Françoise, our church Office Administrator, at fdutil@stmarks.ws or email Pastor Mericle directly, pastorjim@stmarkshh.com.

If you have questions, about the service or St. Mark's, please do not hesitate to ask one of the ushers.

Holy Communion

Today we are also celebrating the sacrament of Holy Communion. Please know that all who wish to receive Christ and his offer of forgiveness and new life are welcome to receive this meal. For those online, please have your bread/crackers and wine/juice ready for that point in the service. For those attending in person, if you want to receive Christ in communion, you can do so in two ways: come up front and receive the bread and wine/juice or take a Communion Kit in the Narthex and receive the bread and juice at your seat. If you prefer not to receive communion, and are in person, please know you are welcome to come forward for a blessing - just let the Pastor know. If you remain in your seat, please help make room for others to pass you, if they choose to go forward to receive communion.

SERVING TODAY

PASTOR: the Rev. James Mericle

MUSIC DIRECTOR: Graham Jackson

LECTOR: (B) Marian Locke, **(A)** Terry Van Riper

COMMUNION ASSISTANT: TDA

ALTAR GUILD: Kim Winn, Janna Barnhart

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+ indicates to stand as you are able. If it is difficult for you to stand, please feel free to stay seated or sit back down at any time.



Gathering + Word + Meal + Sending

WELCOME

Everyone who answered Jesus' call to follow him found their lives upended. Leaving their livelihoods behind, they leaned into an upside-down way of thinking, one that centers impoverished and oppressed people in place of the rich and powerful

SHARING THE MEAL

Pastor: Tonight, I want you to come forward as you desire, filling in the kneelers and take time to pray, receiving the bread and wine (juice), and, when ready, return to your seat. There is no rush. I also invite you to join in the music as you are able and reflect on the words.

COMMUNION SONGS

**Lamb of God
Come, Let Us Eat**

**ELW pg. 154
ELW 491**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

As Jesus nourishes us with his very body, we become the Body of Christ.
May this feast fuel us for the work of joining others in their in-betweens.
Amen.

CONTINUING THE FEAST

Reader B: In the next reading, Jesus and his friends talk as they eat—and argue, too. Jesus interrupts their debate to offer one last lesson to guide them for when they take on his ministry. After this story is read, we will invite you into a discussion.

SECOND GOSPEL READING

Luke 22:24-27 (Reader A)

The Gospel according to Luke the 22nd chapter.

Glorify you, O Lord.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Pastor: When you hear the ringing of a bell, please bring your conversations to a close and we will continue our worship, leaving the upper room to follow Jesus toward the cross.

Group conversation

1. How do you think Jesus would define power?
2. What does it mean for the greatest to become the least, and for the leader to be like a servant?
3. How can our faith community, or the whole Church, lean into Jesus' servant model of leadership?
4. Have there been times when you felt you had to be the greatest, the holiest, the most pious— or that you were not holy enough or good enough? How do you work through those feelings?

PEACE

OFFERING

OFFERTORY RESPONSE

**Christ, the Life of All the Living
Stanza 1**

ELW 339

JOURNEYING TO THE GARDEN AND CROSS

Pastor: After their meal, Jesus and his friends leave the haven of the upper room and make their way to the Mount of Olives. Once they arrive, Jesus will pray in deep anguish over what is about to happen, so much so that the scripture describes him as “sweating blood.” As we leave the Last Supper behind and follow Jesus ever closer to the cross, we will sing Psalms with him. We might imagine Jesus singing to his disciples, asking them to stay

Reader B: With those who fight to be believed by doctors, who wait for diagnosis, treatment, or results, and with those who have cancer, Long COVID or other serious conditions, Jesus the Suffering Savior, abide.

Reader A: With those in the closet, and those who’ve just come out, with those waiting for simple acceptance, Embracing God, abide.

Reader B: With those who are sick of waiting: Indigenous people whose loved ones disappear in silence, Black communities urged to wait for justice in an onslaught of brutality, and all those who find themselves burning out in the endless efforts to resist injustice, Christ of All Peoples, abide.

Reader A: With all who scramble between life and death, survival and thriving: immigrants and refugees, asylum seekers and detainees, Jesus the refugee, abide.

Reader B: With those enduring the worst of climate change, and all whose homes or whole communities have been ravaged by natural disasters, including here in Southern California, Creator God, abide.

Reader A: With all whom our society fails to protect: those who are unhoused, and those whose homes are fractured by violence, those experiencing mental illness or addiction, and all who are shoved to the margins, Persecuted Christ, abide.

Reader B: And when the in-between becomes permanent with no going back to how things were, in our moments of despair at the world’s pain, we cry out, “HOW LONG, O LORD?!” Abide with us, everlasting God. Abide with us.

Pastor: Co-creating and co-suffering God, we can count on your steadfast presence even when we doubt and demand answers. Teach us to share in one another’s pain, becoming your hands and feet on earth. And now, as we break this bread and drink from this cup, may this meal nourish us. Pour out your Spirit upon this holy feast, the one you shared with friends and betrayers, not long before you took your last breath. May it give us courage, just as it surely gave you courage on that night many years ago. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Pastor: On this very night nearly two thousand years ago, Jesus reclined at a table with his closest friends. He said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.” After taking a cup and giving thanks, he said, “Take this and share it among yourselves. I tell you that from now on I won’t drink from the fruit of the vine until God’s kingdom has come.”

After taking the bread and giving thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

In the same way, he took the cup after the meal and said, “This cup is the new covenant by my blood, which is poured out for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

On the fateful night when Jesus gathered his closest friends for one last meal, the disciples’ lives were upended once again. Jesus invited them into a liminal space, a threshold between his life of teaching with them at his side, and the approaching reality of his arrest and death. In this space, they were called to reimagine supposed opposites: power and weakness, fear and hope, innocence and guilt, life and death.

We too will linger in the in-between spaces and challenge dualistic thinking. Just as the disciples did, we will share a meal, talk together, and sing. Come, let us join Jesus in his final days.

CALL TO WORSHIP

We have come to worship the Trinity,
One God, three persons, beyond our understanding yet constantly revealing themselves to us.
We have come to worship an infinite being
who took on finite flesh: fully human and fully divine—
a being who is love itself,
yet loathes injustice;
who is almighty,
yet let go of power to be in solidarity with outcasts and criminals.
We gather to worship the living God
who died.

GATHERING SONG	Here I Am to Worship	Projection Screen
CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS		ELW pg. 116
HYMN OF FORGIVENESS	Lamb of God	ELW 336

Gathering + **Word** + **Meal** + **Sending**

FIRST READING *1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (Reader A)*

FIRST GOSPEL READING *Luke 22:7-13 (Pastor Jim)*

The Gospel according to Luke the 22nd chapter.
Glory to you, O Lord.
The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING / A LITANY OF IN BETWEEN

Pastor: Here in this place, we join Jesus in the sacred space between his last supper and his last breath. We’ll stick with him through his suffering just as God is present in our own liminal moments, sharing our pain, feeling all we feel with us.

Reader A: Trusting in God’s eternal solidarity, let us pray:
In the limbo of uncertainty, when all we can do is wait - with those between paychecks, between jobs, between meals, with those in hospital rooms or prison cells Ever-present Jesus, abide.