



Wednesday, April 9, 2025
St. Mark's United Church of Christ

Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz, Pastor
Ann Rodewald, Organist Kathy Jurk, Choir Director

Our Mission is to help others deepen their relationship with God, become faithful followers of Christ, and to share the message of Christ's love with others.

Meditative Music
Bells Ring
Prelude Gathering for Worship:

Were You There?

Call to Worship:

Come, and worship the Lord, who fills mouths with laughter and tongues with shouts of joy.

The Lord has done great things for us, and so we rejoice.

May those who live in tears of sorrow, pain and anger

Be blessed with shouts of joy.

Those who go out weeping, bearing the heavy burdens and sowing seeds of sorrow all around

May they come home with shouts of joy, worshipping God, who restores life and heals the broken!

God of love and grace, you call us back to you where we receive mercy and we give thanks. Accompany us, O Lord, on those journeys we take to faraway lands – lost and lonely without you. Bring us back to you and the safety you offer us. O Holy Spirit, your joy in us calls us, blesses us, and revives us. We celebrate for we who were lost are found! We who were dead are alive! We who were blind now see! *Amen.*

Hymn: (#428)

When Peace Like a River

Affirming Our Faith Together: Apostle's Creed

I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord:

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried:

He descended into hell: The third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, And sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty: From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead:

I believe in the Holy Spirit: The One Holy Universal Christian Church: the communion of saints: The forgiveness of sins: The resurrection of the body: And the life everlasting. *Amen.*

St. Mark's Choir:

I Come to the Cross

Prayer of Confession:

You, Lord God, made the eternal fabric of the world appear, and you created the earth. You are always trustworthy, you judge fairly, excellent and marvelous in your power; wise in creating and careful to make firm what you have made, blessing us with the visible creation and dependable for those who trust in you, merciful and

compassionate. Forgive us our sins and our shortcomings, our breaking of your laws and our lack of righteousness. We are your servants; do not blame us for all that we have done wrong, but make us clean with your truth, and guide our steps to walk in holiness and righteousness and singleness of heart, that we may do those good things which will please you and win the favor of our rulers. Lord, make your face to shine upon us in peace, for our good, that we may be sheltered by your mighty hand and set free from the consequences of sin by the power of your arm. Protect us against those who unjustly hate us. Give peace and harmony to us and to all who dwell on earth, while we obey your almighty and most excellent name, and while we obey our earthly rulers and governors, as you did to our ancestors, when they prayed to you in faith and truth with holiness.

A Moment of Silence:

Words of Assurance:

By the mercy of God, we are redeemed by Christ, and in him we are forgiven. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. By his death on the cross and his rising again, Christ has bought our eternal redemption. Through him we know eternal salvation. Thanks be to God!

Hymn: (#342)

Rejoice, The Lord is King!

Scripture Reading:

Psalm 126

*When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then they said among the nations,
"The LORD has done great things for them."
The LORD has done great things for us;
we are glad.
Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like streams in the Negeb!
Those who sow in tears
shall reap with shouts of joy!
He who goes out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
bringing his sheaves with him.*

Message:

I Laughed So Hard...

Dr. Patrick Schultz

Peoples' Prayer:

Gracious God, we give you thanks for the abundance of your steadfast love. As we are filled with your grace and mercy, so we are renewed in spirit. May you guide us and use us to bring about your reign of peace on earth. In the name of Jesus Christ, the holy one, we now pray:

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. *Amen.*

Offering:

Offering, tithes and gifts can be made before or after worship in the offering baskets/plates at the welcome area of the church. St. James is also set up to take on-line offerings through the website (stmstjucc.org).

Offertory Music:

Beneath the Cross of Jesus

Doxology: ~ The offering is brought to the altar ~

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Him, all creatures here below;

Praise Him above ye, heavenly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving:

God of mercy, deliver us from our fear in which we judge others. We pray for all who are oppressed, imprisoned, persecuted or rejected. To you who have delivered us from slavery we pray for the faith and courage to work for justice and the freedom of your children, and to proclaim the good news of your grace. Bless these gifts and use them to bring your hope and Word to the world. *Amen.*

Hymn: (#551)

As A Fire Is Meant For Burning

Benediction:

Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might, with feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. Go into the world with joy and hope, standing firm in your faith through the power of Almighty God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Go now to love and serve the Lord...

Postlude:

Postlude by J Blied

COME & JOIN US FOR WORSHIP ON SUNDAYS!

St. James UCC

1st & 3rd Sundays - 10:30 a.m. and 2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays - 9:00 a.m.

~Sunday School at St. James 9-10am ~

St. Mark's UCC

1st & 3rd Sundays - 9:00 a.m. and 2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays - 10:30 a.m.

Services are recorded and available on our church YouTube channel:

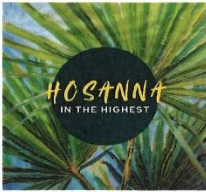
St. Mark's & St. James UCC

Like us on Facebook: St Marks & St James UCC

Check out our Website: www.stmarksstjamesucc.org

Join our prayer team; contact Karen in our Church office: stmstjoffice@gmail.com

JOIN US FOR HOLY WEEK WORSHIP!



Palm Sunday, April 13th Worship:

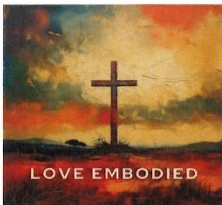
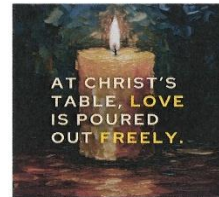
9:00 St. James; 10:30 St. Mark's

Loves Us Eternally ~ Even in the face of suffering, Jesus enters with peace and love. This Holy Week, how can we embody his eternal love?

Maundy Thursday, with Communion,

St. James 7pm, April 17th

God Meets Us in Bread, Wine, and Water ~ At Christ's table, love is poured out freely. Here, we are fed, forgiven, and reminded that we belong.



Good Friday with Communion,

St. Mark's 7pm, April 18th

The Cross and Love's Victory ~ Even at the cross, love is not absent. Jesus' sacrifice is the ultimate declaration: Love will always have the last word.

Easter Sunday, April 20th, Worship with Communion:

St. Mark's 9:00am; St. James 10:30am

The Promise of New Life ~ Death does not have the last word—life and love reign! Today, we celebrate the hope of resurrection that changes everything.

