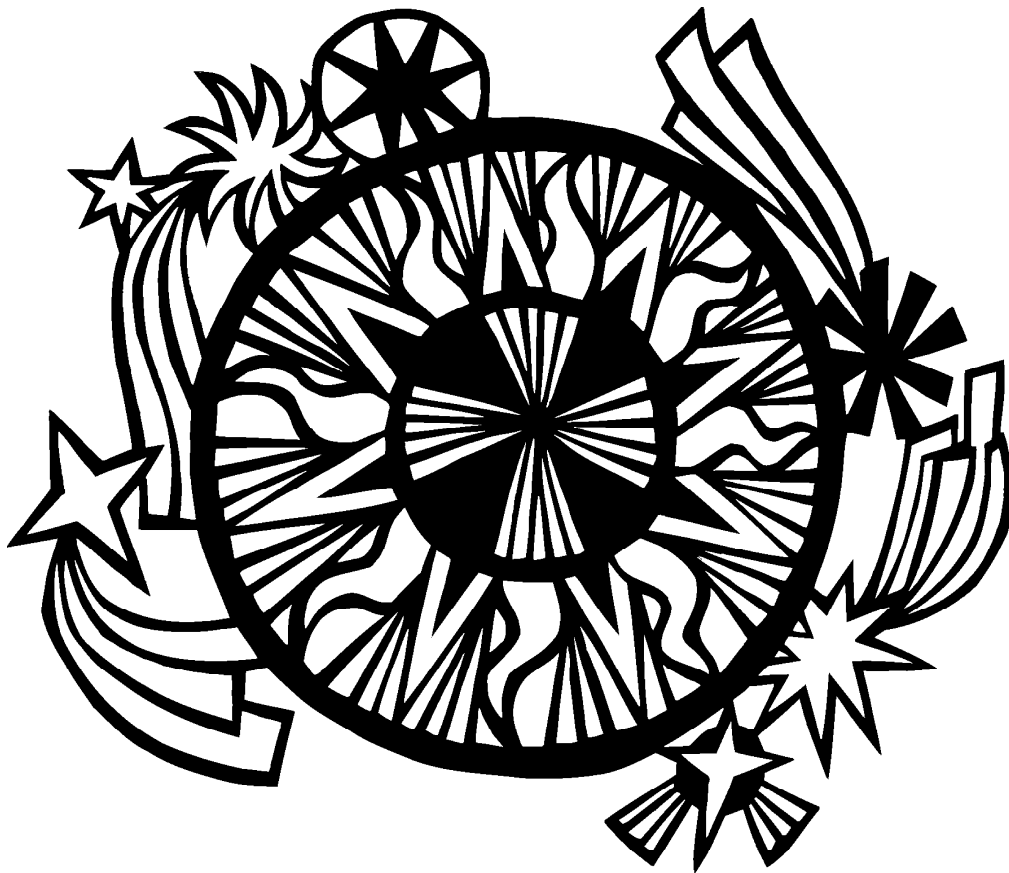




# **CREATION IN CHRIST SUNDAY**

**SEPTEMBER 6, 2026**

**ST. MARK EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**HAMILTON, NJ**

*A family of faith, rooted in Word and Sacrament,  
proclaiming the redeeming love of Jesus Christ  
through worship, nurture, and service.*

## INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

*Creation in Christ, the first new feast day on our calendar in several decades, celebrates the ongoing creation of the world in and through Christ, who sustains, unites, and holds all created things. We hear today of the triune God who creates all things: sun and moon, shining stars, sea monsters, creeping things and flying birds—and, yes, even human beings. God-in-Christ still takes care of all things and invites us to join in as caretakers of God's good creation.*

## GATHERING

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God*

## WELCOME

## PRELUDE

*Please stand as you are comfortable.*

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, our hope, our heart, our home.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Everlasting God, the Alpha and the Omega,  
the beginning and the end,

**We confess that we are often numb to the pain of the world around us,  
resistant to change that costs us something,  
and reluctant to love our neighbors as ourselves.**

**We sin against your good creation,  
failing to be faithful stewards  
of the land, the sea, and all their creatures.**

**Make your home among us once more, O God,  
naming us beloved and opening our hearts to do your will.**

**Amen.**

All you saints and sinners, this good news is for you:

God knows you, forgives you by the self-giving love of ☩ Jesus Christ,  
and frees you to love the world as you have been loved.

Creation's story will not end until mourning, crying, and pain are no more.

Nothing can ever separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Amen.**

1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the beau - ty of the skies,  
 2 For the won - der of each hour of the day and of the night,  
 3 For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de - light,  
 4 For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,  
 5 For each per - fect gift of thine, peace on earth and joy in heav'n;

for the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies:  
 hill and vale and tree and flow'r, sun and moon and stars of light:  
 for the mys - tic har - mo - ny link - ing sense to sound and sight:  
 friends on earth and friends a - bove; for all gen - tle thoughts and mild:  
 for thy - self, best gift di - vine, to our world so free - ly giv'n:

*Refrain*  
 Christ, our God, to thee we raise this our sac - ri - fice of praise.

## GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**



1 "Ab - ba, Ab - ba, hear us," we cry; God's Spir - it  
 2 With the whole cre - a - tion we cry, groan as in  
 3 As we pray, the Spir - it breathes sighs, sighs far too



cries in us, names us a - dopt - ed and be - lov - ed  
 child - birth. Soon all sin, all death's de - cay will be no  
 deep for words; God, who search - es hearts and knows the Spir - it's



heirs, the heirs of God. All cre - a - tion  
 more; we shall be free. All cre - a - tion  
 mind, hears all our prayer. All cre - a - tion



waits, ea - ger and long - ing, for the glo - rious  
 waits, ea - ger and long - ing; for the prom - ised  
 waits, ea - ger and long - ing. As we live in



free - dom of God's chil - dren soon will be re - vealed.  
 glo - ry that we soon shall see we wait and pray.  
 hope, we know that in all things God works for good.



1 Hal - le - lu - jah! Sing praise to your Cre - a - tor, sun, moon, and  
2 Praise the Lord, all moun - tains and o - ceans, roll - ing thun - der and  
3 Give to God all glo - ry and hon - or. From the depths to the



stars and an - gels a - bove. Praise the Lord, whose word es -  
wind and storm clouds on high. Praise the Lord, your Mak - er,  
heights let prais - es re - sound to the Lord, the source of



tab - lished the heav - ens, who up - holds all the earth in pow - er and  
all liv - ing crea - tures, all the beasts in the fields and birds in the  
strength and sal - va - tion for all peo - ple on whom God's fa - vor is



love. God reigns on high, let the heav - ens re - jice! (Oh,)  
sky. Both young and old, come and join in the song! (Oh,)  
found. Praise God, you saints who are claimed as God's own! (Oh,)



God reigns on high, let the heav - ens re - jice!  
Both young and old, come and join in the song!  
Praise God, you saints who are claimed as God's own!

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

**O God, in whom we live and move and have our being, in Christ you created the worlds, and your Spirit breathes life into the universe. We praise you for your wondrous creation. Bless us and all your handiwork with your infinite light, and direct our lives to the care of this good earth, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

## **WORD**

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

### **FIRST READING: Genesis 1:1-2:3**

<sup>1</sup> When God began to create the heavens and the earth, <sup>2</sup> the earth was complete chaos, and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. <sup>3</sup> Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. <sup>4</sup> And God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light Day, and the darkness God called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

<sup>6</sup> And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” <sup>7</sup> So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. <sup>8</sup> God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

<sup>9</sup> And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. <sup>10</sup> God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together God called Seas. And God saw that it was good. <sup>11</sup> Then God said, “Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.” And it was so. <sup>12</sup> The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

<sup>14</sup> And God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, <sup>15</sup> and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. <sup>16</sup> God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. <sup>17</sup> God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, <sup>18</sup> to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup> And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” <sup>21</sup> So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup> God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” <sup>23</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup> And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. <sup>25</sup> God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind and the cattle of every kind and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let us make humans in our image, according to our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over the cattle and over all the wild animals of the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps

upon the earth.”

<sup>27</sup> So God created humans in God’s image,  
in the image of God they were created;  
male and female God created them.

<sup>28</sup> God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” <sup>29</sup> God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. <sup>30</sup> And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the air and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. <sup>31</sup> God saw everything that God had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

<sup>2:1</sup> Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all their multitude. <sup>2</sup> On the sixth day God finished the work that God had done, and God rested on the seventh day from all the work that God had done. <sup>3</sup> So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that God had done in creation.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **SECOND READING: Acts 17:22a, 24-28**

<sup>22a</sup> Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, <sup>24</sup> “The God who made the world and everything in it, the One who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, <sup>25</sup> nor is God served by human hands, as though God needed anything, since God gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. <sup>26</sup> From one ancestor God made all peoples to inhabit the whole earth, and God allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, <sup>27</sup> so that they would search for God and perhaps fumble about for God and find God—though indeed God is not far from each one of us. <sup>28</sup> For ‘In God we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said,

‘For we, too, are God’s offspring.’”

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand as you are comfortable.*



Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.



Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.



When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,



warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.



Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

### GOSPEL: John 1:1-5

A reading from the holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup> in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

This is the good news of the gospel.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Please be seated.*

### SERMON

*Please stand as you are comfortable.*

## HYMN OF THE DAY

## CHRIST IS THE LIFE



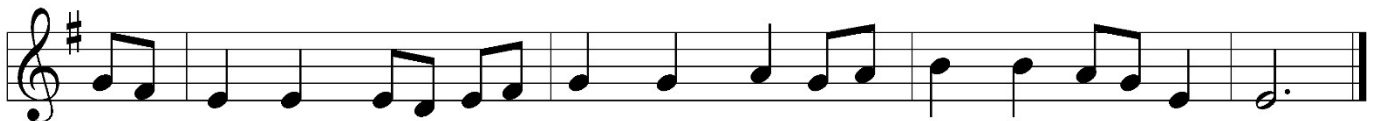
1 Christ is the life of all that is, God's pure cre - a - tive Word,  
 2 Christ is the death of all that is, a broad and beck - 'ning tomb,  
 3 Christ is the death of all that is, a bright, con - sum - ing fire,  
 4 Christ is the life of all that is, Be - gin - ning and the End;



whose pow'r be - yond and through all space the worlds to Be - ing stirred.  
 who wel - comes us from well - worn ways to dark - ness of the womb.  
 whose flames re - quire our pri - or self as kin - dling for the pyre.  
 cre - a - tive force, most peace - ful death, trans - form - ing burn - ing brand.



Christ is the life be - yond all time, cre - a - tion's birth and breath,  
 Christ is the death, the sink - ing down past all de - sire and fear,  
 Christ is the death of dust - y days of un - cre - a - tive strife,  
 Christ is the life, in whose wise love cre - a - tion lives and dies



whose la - bor brings all things to be and brings all things to death.  
 whose prom - ise in the gen - tle dark bids new - ness to ap - pear.  
 for out from fire we tread up - on the thresh - old of new life.  
 and thus for - ev - er - more shall bless the Source, the liv - ing Christ.

## APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
 creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
 born of the virgin Mary,  
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
 was crucified, died, and was buried;  
 he descended to the dead.  
 On the third day he rose again;  
 he ascended into heaven,  
 he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
 and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

#### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

We join with Christians far and near to worship God the Creator, praying for the earth and for all in need, responding to each petition with the words "Your mercy is great."

*A brief silence.*

O God of mystery, mercy, and might, for the church we pray: that churches around the globe collaborate in care for the earth, and that all the baptized nurture a zeal for the wellbeing of creation. Hear us, O God, source of life and ground of our being:

**Your mercy is great.**

For the earth we pray: that this bounteous creation receive continued divine blessing, that the air be wholesome, that the waters be plenteous and clean, that the land be treasured, and that animals be protected. Grant that what on earth has been despoiled will be healed. Hear us, O God, our creator and fruitful garden:

**Your mercy is great.**

For the nations we pray: that farmers, herders, foragers, fishers, and grocers provide the food humans need, that legislators strive in all things for the common good, and that science and technology lead us toward more responsible ways to live. Hear us, O God, our stronghold and sun of justice:

**Your mercy is great.**

For those in need we pray: that humankind be sheltered from pandemic and from extreme weather, and that all who are sick or suffering receive medical attention and communal support. Give heed to those whose names we call out to you (*especially*). Hear us, O God, our healer and heart of the universe:

**Your mercy is great.**

Into your hands, O God, our maker and keeper, we commend ourselves and your whole creation, trusting in your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

## OFFERING

*An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. Offering plates are located by the entrances to the sanctuary. Your gifts support St. Mark, its mission, and its partnerships with local, statewide, and national partners.*

*Please stand as you are comfortable.*

## OFFERING HYMN

## FOR THE WHOLENESS OF THE EARTH

ACS 1067



1 We lift this prayer for the whole-ness of the earth. We lift this  
2 We turn our lives to the whole-ness of the earth. We turn our  
3 Give thanks to God for the whole-ness of the earth. Give thanks to



prayer for the whole-ness of the earth. We lift this prayer for the  
lives to the whole-ness of the earth. We turn our lives to the  
God for the whole-ness of the earth. Give thanks to God for the



whole-ness of the earth. Can you feel it ris - ing in you?  
whole-ness of the earth. Can you feel it spin - ning in you?  
whole-ness of the earth. Can you feel it ris - ing in you?

## OFFERING PRAYER

O God, maker of heaven and earth,

**Your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and cup, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.**

## **THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

## **PREFACE**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places  
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,  
through our Savior Jesus Christ,  
who entered the heart of the Earth,  
opening the way for humanity to be restored with all creation  
to your divine goodness.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,  
with the church on Earth and the hosts of heaven,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



1 Heav-en o - pened to I - sa - iah, show-ing him God's glo-rious  
 2 Ser - a - phim con - tin - ue sing - ing; cher - u - bim still lift their  
 3 One day heav - en will be o - pened and be - fore the Sav - ior's



throne: Lord of might, high and ex - alt - ed, tem - ple flow-ing  
 praise. Earth and all its crea-tures wor - ship; moon and stars are  
 throne, saints from ev - 'ry time and na - tion will be - gin their



with his robe. Ser - a - phim flew all a - round him,  
 still a - mazed. Now a - bove cre - a - tion's cho - rus  
 end - less song: "To our God of all sal - va - tion,



hum - bled at the ho - ly sight. As they cir - cled they were  
 comes an - oth - er fer - vent cry: all of earth's re - deemed are  
 to the high and ho - ly Lamb, to the bless - ed Ho - ly



sing - ing, call - ing out with all their might.  
 sing - ing, "Glo - ry to the Lord on high!"  
 Spir - it be for - ev - er praise. A - men!"



*Refrain*  
 "Ho - ly, ho - ly, you are ho - ly," ev - 'ry



an - gel voice pro - claims; "All the earth re - flects your



glo - ry; ev - 'ry tongue sings out your praise!"

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Sculptor of the Earth, we praise you  
for the way your fingers traced the rivers across the land  
and lifted up the mountains.

Painter of the landscapes, we praise you  
for how your brushstrokes bring color to our forests  
and vitality to our wilderness spaces.

Breath of life, we praise you  
for the gift of your wind that sustains our very living  
and which brings all flora and fauna dancing into being.  
In great joy you sent to the canvas of the cosmos  
your Son, Jesus Christ,  
to bring restoration and healing to all that is broken.

On the night before he died,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
*Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.*  
*Do this for the remembrance of me.*

Again, after supper, he took the cup,  
gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
*This cup is the new covenant in my blood,*  
*shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.*  
*Do this for the remembrance of me.*

With this bread and cup, we proclaim the mystery of faith:  
**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

O Holy God, reveal the Word made flesh  
through the mending of the woodlands and prairies,  
of the rocky peaks and valley streams.  
Renew our awareness of our place in the web of creation.  
Send us with a yearning hunger  
to advocate for a healthier planet.  
All glory is yours, blessed Trinity,  
Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier,  
now and forever.  
**Amen.**

## LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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, forever and ever. Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good. These are the gifts of God for the people of God, holy things for holy people, and they are for you.

*We share communion with wheat and gluten-free wafers, red wine, and red grape juice. Everyone is welcome to receive communion, regardless of religious background or age.*

*Please be seated.*

## COMMUNION SONG

### O LAMB OF GOD, YOU BEAR THE SIN



- 1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
- 2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
- 3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf - fered death our lives to save: have mer - cy now, we pray.  
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer - cy now, we pray.  
e - ter - nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

Wa - kan - tan - ka ta - ku ni - ta - wa tan - ka - ya  
 1 Man - y and great, O God, are your works, mak - er of  
 2 Grant un - to us com - mu - nion with you, O Star - a -

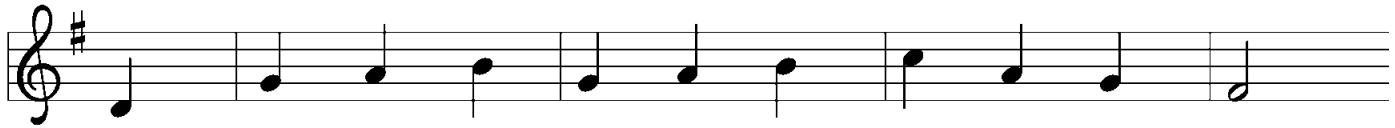
qa o - ta. Ma - hpi - ya kin e - ya - hna - ke ca,  
 earth and sky. Your hands have set the heav'ns with stars;  
 bid - ing One. Come un - to us and dwell with us;

ma - ka kin he du - o - wan - ca. Mni - o - wan  
 your fin - gers spread the moun - tains and plains. Lo, at your  
 with you are found the gifts of . . . life. Bless us with

ca - šbe - ya - wan - ke cin, he - na o - ya - ki - hi.  
 word the wa - ters were formed; deep seas o - bey your voice.  
 life that has no . . . end, e - ter - nal life with you.



1 When long be - fore time and the worlds were be - gun,  
 2 The si - lence was bro - ken when God sang the Song,  
 3 The sounds of the crea - tures were one with their Lord's,  
 4 Though down through the a - ges the Song dis - ap - peared,



when there was no earth and no sky and no sun,  
 and light pierced the dark - ness and rhy - thm be - gan,  
 their har - mo - nies sweet and be - fit - ting the Word;  
 its har - mo - nies bro - ken and al - most un - heard,



and all was deep si - lence and night reigned su - preme,  
 and with its first birth - cries cre - a - tion was born,  
 the Sing - er was pleased as the earth sang the Song,  
 the Sing - er comes to us to sing it a - gain,



and e - ven our Mak - er had on - ly a dream—  
 and crea - ture - ly voic - es sang praise to the morn.  
 the choir of the crea - tures re - ech - oed it long.  
 our God - is - with - us in the world now as then.

*Please stand as you are comfortable.*

### TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace.  
**Amen.**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

God of our salvation,

**We give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

**Amen.**

**SENDING**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

**BLESSING**

God our Mother root you deep in grace.

God our Neighbor stand with you in strength.

God our Nourishment sustain you in hope  
and bless you unto evergreen life.

**Amen.**

1 Let all things now liv - ing a song of thanks - giv - ing to  
2 God rules all the forc - es: the stars in their cours - es and

God the cre - a - tor tri - um - phant - ly raise,  
sun in its or - bit o - be - dient - ly shine;

who fash - ioned and made us, pro - tect - ed and stayed us, who  
the hills and the moun - tains, the riv - ers and foun - tains, the

still guides us on to the pro - end of our days.  
deeps of the o - cean pro - claim God di - vine.

God's ban - ners are o'er us, God's light goes be -  
We too should be voic - ing our love and re -

fore us, a pil - lar of fire shin - ing forth in the night,  
joic - ing; with glad ad - o - ra - tion a song let us raise

till shad - ows have van - ished and dark - ness is ban - ished, as  
till all things now liv - ing u - nite in thanks - giv - ing: "To

for - ward we trav - el from light in - to light.  
God in the high - est, ho - san - na and praise!"

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Flourish with creation.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## **POSTLUDE**

***Thank you to today's worship leaders!***

**Lector:** John Kroschwitz  
**Communion Assistant:** Wayne Herpel  
**Ushers:** Haig Kasabach and Leon Boyer  
**Livestream Operator:** Michaela Arzt  
**Altar Guild:** Linda Scalzo  
**Pastor:** Rev. Linnéa Clark  
**Seminarian:** Erin Brody  
**Minister of Music:** John Kling  
**Office Administrator:** Robin Harris  
**Ministers:** People of St. Mark

### **Worship with Us**

*We gather for worship on Sundays at 9:30 am (a full-length, more formal service)  
and on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm (a shorter, more informal service). You are always welcome.*

*We host Peace of Mindfulness, a mindfulness meditation class, on Tuesdays at 6:30 pm in the sanctuary.  
Beginners and advanced practitioners alike are welcome.*

### **Serve with Us**

*We welcome volunteers every Sunday after worship to help with Lunches with Love, which prepares lunches  
for clients of HomeFront. Recently, we shared our **20,000<sup>th</sup> lunch!** Contact Karen Breninghouse  
([kbreninghouse@gmail.com](mailto:kbreninghouse@gmail.com)) for more information.*

### **Contact Us**

*You can reach our office at [admin@stmarkhamilton.org](mailto:admin@stmarkhamilton.org) and at (609) 585-7087.*

*You can reach Pastor Linnéa Clark directly at [pastor@stmarkhamilton.org](mailto:pastor@stmarkhamilton.org)  
or at (215) 620-4977 in case of emergency.*

*You can also find us online at [stmarkhamilton.org](http://stmarkhamilton.org)  
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