

**January 5, 2025**  
**The Second Sunday after Christmas Day**

***The altar flowers are given to the Glory of God***  
***by Linda Kearns,***  
*in memory of her son-in-law, Dwayne Rowe;*  
*and in celebration of her birthday today.*

**The Collect of the Day – Rite I**

The Lord be with you. **And with thy spirit.** Let us pray.

O God, who didst wonderfully create, and yet more wonderfully restore, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, thy Son Jesus Christ; who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**THE FIRST LESSON**

**A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah [31:7-14]**

Thus says the Lord: “Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, ‘Save, O Lord, your people, the remnant of Israel. See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here. With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, ‘He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd a flock.’ For the Lord has ransomed Jacob, and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again. Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them, and give

them gladness for sorrow. I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,” says the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **THE PSALM**

### **Psalm 84:1-8**

1 How dear to me is your dwelling, O Lord of hosts! \*  
My soul has a desire and longing for the courts of the Lord;  
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

**2 The sparrow has found her a house  
and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young; \*  
by the side of your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.**

3 Happy are they who dwell in your house! \*  
they will always be praising you.

**4 Happy are the people whose strength is in you! \*  
whose hearts are set on the pilgrims' way.**

5 Those who go through the desolate valley will find it a place of springs, \*  
for the early rains have covered it with pools of water.

**6 They will climb from height to height, \*  
and the God of gods will reveal himself in Zion.**

7 Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; \*  
hearken, O God of Jacob.

**8 Behold our defender, O God; \*  
and look upon the face of your Anointed.**

## **THE SECOND LESSON**

### **A Reading from Paul's Letter to the Church in Ephesus [1:3-6, 15-19a]**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may

give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **THE HOLY GOSPEL**

**The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ According to Matthew [2:1-12]**

**Glory be to thee, O Lord.**

**I**n the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’” Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to thee, O Christ.**

## **A Prayer for the Renewal of St. Mark's**

We turn back to you, Lord, for we know you will guide us in all areas of our parish life, so that we will experience full renewal as the Corporate Body of Christ in St. Mark's. We are nothing without you, and we ask that you gently remind us of your love, forgiveness, and your willingness to grant us a new life in You. Give us your wisdom and strength in all we say and do in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

## **A Prayer for Spiritual Communion**

I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament, and, since I cannot at this time receive communion, I pray you to come into my heart, my soul, and my mind. Let nothing separate me from you; let me serve you in this life until, by your grace, I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace. **Amen.**

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## **ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR SUNDAY, January 5, 2025** *(continued)*

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### **THIS WEEK**

- **Choir rehearsal is Monday, January 6** at 6:30 in the Historic Church.
- **Deacon Sue+ will hold Bible study via Zoom on Tuesdays** at 7 PM. Here is the link and sign on information:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82734567853?pwd=XKqGGXmMCzANeABkPjYsbBWDhkaNFA.1> **Meeting ID: 827 3456 7853 Passcode: 175639** (Please note this is a new link.)  
**Deacon Sue's+ contact information is 443-838-1671.**
- **The Wednesday midweek service on January 8** will be Holy Eucharist, Rite II with prayers for healing at 4:30 PM in Boyd Cook Conference Room.
- **The Growing Tree at St. Mark's preschool will have an Art Show and Open House on Friday, January 10, 2025** at 12:30 PM in the Parish Hall for the students and their families.

### **NEXT SUNDAY, January 12, First Sunday after Epiphany, Baptism of Our Lord**

- **The service next Sunday will be Rite II.**
- **The monthly Nursing Home Ministry is next Sunday** at Somerford after the service. All are welcome to participate.

### **COMING UP**

- **The monthly Vestry Meeting is Tuesday, January 14** at 6:30 PM in Boyd Cook Conference Room.
- **St. Mark's 176<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting is Sunday, February 9** after the service in the Parish Hall. **Annual reports are needed** from those who produce yearly reports. **A short biography is also needed from upcoming new Vestry members** as they should be available to the parish four (4) weeks prior to the meeting in February. **Please electronically submit your reports promptly** to [administrator@stmarkslappans.org](mailto:administrator@stmarkslappans.org).

### **FOR PASTORAL NEEDS**

- **Father Montgomery+ can be reached at 205-451-8946** for pastoral needs.