



**A message from our Senior Pastor,
Rev. Steven Brown.....**

In keeping with the Center for Disease Control, the South Carolina Annual Conference, and the safest practices for our church and our community, St. Mark will be suspending all church related activities, programs, and ministries at this time. For some gatherings and ministries, this will mean postponement. For other events, this will mean cancellation. Sunday morning worship services at our campuses will not be held until further notice. The church office will be closed for regular business. The church staff will be working from home or the church office as necessary. All pastors will remain available and on call. Please call the church office (229-5416) for questions related to a particular ministry or program as well as to schedule access to the church office and/or facilities as needed. Additionally, at this time, we are not rescheduling requests for facility usage.

Plans are underway for the continued care and encouragement of our congregation. We will be utilizing online platforms such as our website (www.stmarkgreenwood.com), our Facebook page, as well as [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and [vimeo.com](https://www.vimeo.com).

Preaching Schedule for next Sunday, Mar. 29th



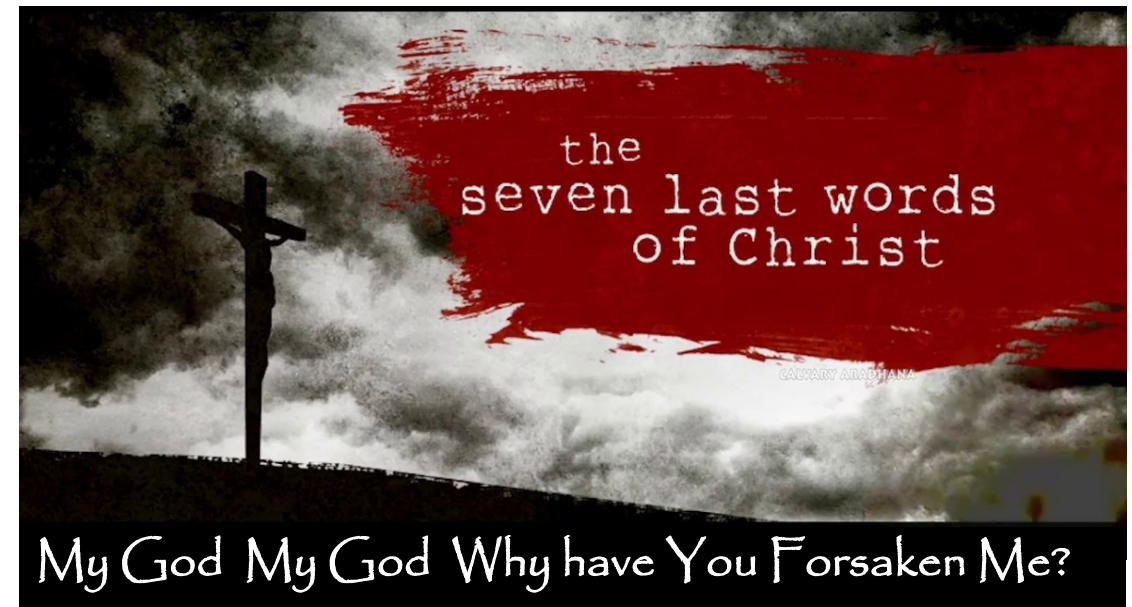
St. Mark United Methodist Church

To leave a mark of Christ by staying close, connected, hopeful
with God, one another, and our communities.

8:45 am and 11:00 am Traditional Worship at The Bypass Campus

10:00 am Blended Worship at The Coronaca Campus

11:15 am Contemporary Worship at The Rivers Street Campus



www.stmarkgreenwood.com

Church Phone: 864.229.5416

Kids' World Phone: 864.227.2776

Administrative Assistant office hours: Monday - Thursday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm,

Friday - 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

ST. MARK UMC SERVICE OF WORSHIP

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Liturgical Color: Purple

March 22, 2020

Service: 8:45 AM and 11:00 AM

WELCOME AND GREETINGS*:

Pastor Steve

PRELUDE:

Matthew Miller, Organist

SILENT PRAYERS AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

(adapted from a Lenten prayer by Debbie McDaniel, USA, 21st C, found on the internet)

Gracious Lord, rise up within us and let your Spirit shine out of every broken place we've walked through. We ask that you would trade the ashes of our lives for the beauty of your Presence. Trade our mourning and grief for the oil of joy and gladness from your Spirit. Trade our despair for hope and praise. We choose to give you thanks today and believe that this season of darkness will fade away. Thank you that you are with us in whatever we face, and that you are greater than this trial. We recognize you are Sovereign, and thank you for the victory that is ours through Christ Jesus. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: (Old Testament of the pew Bible, page 500) Psalm 22:1-13

Reader: The Word of God for the people of God. People: Thanks be to God.

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: The Apostles' Creed No. 881

*I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth;
And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried;
the third day he rose 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 holy catholic church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.*

*GLORIA PATRI: "Glory Be to the Father" No. 71

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.*

*Please stand as you are able.

ANTHEM:

"Forsaken"

Dan Forrest

Sarah Dean, cellist

PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER

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. Amen.

WORSHIP THROUGH GIVING OF OUR GIFTS TO GOD:

Offertory

*THANKSGIVING WITH THE PRESENTATION OF OUR GIFTS: No. 95

*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.*

SCRIPTURE LESSON: (New Testament of the pew Bible, page 54) Mark 15:25-36

Reader: The Word of God for the people of God. People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON: "The Seven Last Sayings: My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?" Pastor Steve

*BENEDICTION:

*CHORAL RESPONSE: "Lead Me, Lord" No. 473

POSTLUDE: Matthew Miller, Organist

*Please stand as you are able.

The Lenten display is to the Glory of God by The Worship Committee.

We welcome Sarah Dean as our guest musician today in worship.

The Inside Story . . .

³⁴ *At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"* (Mark 15:34)

My God, why have you forsaken me? The pathos and angst in that cry send chills up the spine. To be God-forsaken is to be in the place of desolation, emptiness, barrenness, anguish, and hopelessness. The question of "why . . . why God . . . why have you forsaken me?" is the expression of a heart torn by loss. It is the cry of a mother as she holds her lifeless child. It is there behind the choked back tears of a husband at night after they've buried his wife. It is seen in the eyes of one who looks in the mirror after hearing the word CANCER at the doctor's office. It is the only words in the silence that can be formed in the mind when the unthinkable happens and the evils of life — death, disease, tragedy, agony, and loss — have drained the life and love of God from our lives and we are left kneeling in the void and emptiness that remains.

The people of God often ask God "why" in the midst of faith. The psalmists in Scripture question God's goodness and doubt God's sovereignty, but yet they still contain a shard of trust, a glimmer of hope. But when God leaves the building, when the Lord abandons, then there is no flicker of light and no foothold to trust. All is darkness where there is no faith to see by and when hope has been trampled by desolation and lies dead in the dust.

I speak of the abandonment of God from a human perspective because it is real and profound and some have been there who have not yet found a way out of the blankness. Yet more significant still must be depth and suffering of Jesus' soul when He cried, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" It sounds like a question but it is really a statement. It is the definition of the cross of Christ. It is what He prayed would not happen when He begged for the cup to pass. It is the culmination of Son of God's walk upon this earth. One of the earliest hymns of the church says

Though He was in the form of God, He did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross. (Philippians 2:6-8)

Even as we marvel at the "emptying" that took place at the incarnation when God became flesh and blood and laid helpless in a manger, we stand speechless in the incomprehensiveness of that abandonment Jesus experienced on the cross. Yet as surely as He was called "Jesus" to save the people at His birth, He would hang on the cross to be forsaken by God. And Paul tells us why. For our sake, God made Jesus to become sin [*to take on the rebellion and hatred and all that is bad and wrong that we have done and do*] Who knew no sin [*this good and obedient and faithful Jesus*] that we could be made the righteousness of God [*in a right relationship — forgiven by and restored to and belonging with God*] in Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:21). He was abandoned by God for us.

"My God, why have you forsaken me" is still a prayer, a broken prayer of a broken heart. But it is a prayer God hears. From the depth of the cross, Jesus feels that prayer. From the darkness of the tomb, Jesus hears that prayer. And in His resurrection, He answers that prayer by declaring that we are never abandoned. He is with us . . . Always and ever. He can fill our hearts and heal us.

With Joy, Steve

SCRIPTURES

Psalms 22:1-13

¹ My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?

² O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest.

³ Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

⁴ In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them.

⁵ To you they cried, and were saved; in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.

⁶ But I am a worm, and not human; scorned by others, and despised by the people.

⁷ All who see me mock at me; they make mouths at me, they shake their heads;

⁸ "Commit your cause to the LORD; let him deliver—

let him rescue the one in whom he delights!"

⁹ Yet it was you who took me from the womb; you kept me safe on my mother's breast.

¹⁰ On you I was cast from my birth, and since my mother bore me you have been my God.

¹¹ Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.

¹² Many bulls encircle me, strong bulls of Bashan surround me;

¹³ they open wide their mouths at me, like a ravening and roaring lion.

Mark 15:25-36

²⁵ It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. ²⁶ The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." ²⁷ And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left. ²⁹ Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ save yourself, and come down from the cross!" ³¹ In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. ³² Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also taunted him.

³³ When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. ³⁴ At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" ³⁵ When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah." ³⁶ And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down."