

*Sunday, October 18, 2020*

*Twentieth Sunday After Pentecost*

*Breast Cancer Awareness Month*



*Domestic Violence Awareness Month*



*130<sup>th</sup> Church Anniversary*

*“Striving for Excellence”*

*Order of Service*

**Gathering Song**..... **“Sweet, Sweet Spirit”** (*Hymnal, #334*)

There’s a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place, and I know that it’s the spirit of the Lord; There are sweet expressions on each face, and I know they feel the presence of the Lord. Sweet holy Spirt, sweet heavenly Dove, stay right here with us filling us with your love; and for these blessings we lift our hearts in praise; without a doubt we’ll know that we have been revived when we shall leave this place.

**Call to Worship** ..... **Cynthia**

**Leader:** Be with us Lord as we celebrate 130 years of continued ministry.

**People:** **For such a time as this, you have called us to be the church at its best.**

**Leader:** May we remember the love and wisdom of those who founded this congregation.

**People:** **For those who laid the foundation of St. Mark’s U.M.C. Church we give you thanks!**

**Leader:** May we remember those achievements that have been made in your name, O Lord.

**People:** **For the rich inheritance of the Church of Jesus Christ, we give thanks.**

Leader: May we be worthy of the faith of our ancestors.

**ALL:** God, continue to guide us in the future, as you have done in the past.

**Hymn of Praise** ..... **“Guide Me , O Thou Great Jehovah”**  
(sing along with piano instrumental)

1 Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,  
pilgrim through this barren land;  
I am weak, but thou are mighty;  
hold me with thou powerful hand.  
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,  
feed me till I want no more,  
feed me till I want no more.

2 Open now the crystal fountain,  
whence the healing stream doth flow;  
Let the fire and cloudy pillar  
lead me all my journey through.  
Strong deliverer, strong deliverer,  
be thou still my strength and shield,  
be thou still my strength and shield.

3 When I tread the verge of Jordan,  
bid my anxious fears subside.  
Death of death, and hell’s Destruction,  
land me safe on Canaan’s side.  
Songs of praises, songs of praises  
I will ever give to thee,  
I will ever give to thee.

**Prayer of Confession and Assurance** (*Unison*)

Lord, we pray that we may be worthy of the faith of the ancestors of St. Mark’s United Methodist Church and that our faith in you may be renewed on this celebrative day. Fill us with an ever-increasing knowledge of truth and with an ever-growing awareness of your presence. Forgive us today of our past failures, renew our faith and increase our strength. May we be worthy recipients of past blessings and ready helpers in the tasks that lie ahead. May your kingdom come and your will be done in splendid fellowship. **Amen.**

**The Lord’s Prayer** (*Recite in unison*)

**The Invocation**.....**Desiree Vanloo**

**Song of Meditation — “Nobody Like You Lord”** (*featuring Maranda Curtis*)

**Historical Moment** .....**Sandra Johnson**

**The Prayer of Illumination** (*Unison*)

Blessed Lord, who caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

**Scripture Reading #1** (*Sermon Text*) ..... **Charlotte Thomas**  
(*Isaiah 52:7–12, Common English Bible*)

**Your God rules**

<sup>7</sup>How beautiful upon the mountains  
are the feet of a messenger  
who proclaims peace,  
who brings good news,

who proclaims salvation,  
who says to Zion, "Your God rules!"  
<sup>8</sup> Listen! Your lookouts lift their voice;  
they sing out together!  
Right before their eyes they see the LORD returning to Zion.

<sup>9</sup> Break into song together, you ruins of Jerusalem!  
The LORD has comforted his people and has redeemed Jerusalem.

<sup>10</sup> The LORD has bared his holy arm in view of all the nations;  
all the ends of the earth have seen our God's victory.

<sup>11</sup> Depart! Depart! Go out from there!  
Unclean! Don't touch!  
Get out of that place; purify yourselves,  
carriers of the LORD's equipment!

<sup>12</sup> You won't go out in a rush,  
nor will you run away,  
because the one going before you is the LORD;  
your rear guard is the God of Israel.

**Scripture Reading #2** .....**Charles Gregg**  
(*Philippians 4:1–9, Common English Bible*)

### **Stand Firm in the Lord**

<sup>4</sup> Therefore, my brothers and sisters whom I love and miss, who are my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord.

Loved ones, <sup>2</sup> I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to come to an agreement in the Lord. <sup>3</sup> Yes, and I'm also asking you, loyal friend, to help these women who have struggled together with me in the ministry of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my coworkers whose names are in the scroll of life.

<sup>4</sup> Be glad in the Lord always! Again I say, be glad! <sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness show in your treatment of all people. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup> Don't be anxious about anything; rather, bring up all of your requests to God in your prayers and petitions, along with giving thanks. <sup>7</sup> Then the peace of God that exceeds all understanding will keep your hearts and minds safe in Christ Jesus.

<sup>8</sup> From now on, brothers and sisters, if anything is excellent and if anything is admirable, focus your thoughts on these things: all that is true, all that is holy, all that is just, all that is pure, all that is lovely, and all that is worthy of praise. <sup>9</sup> Practice these things: whatever you learned, received, heard, or saw in us. The God of peace will be with you.

**Scripture Reading #3** .....**Patricia Mundell**  
(*Matthew 22:15–22, Common English Bible*)

### **Question About Taxes**

<sup>15</sup> Then the Pharisees met together to find a way to trap Jesus in his words. <sup>16</sup> They sent their disciples, along with the supporters of Herod, to him. "Teacher," they said, "we know that you are genuine and that you teach God's way as it really is. We know that you are not swayed by people's opinions, because you don't show favoritism. <sup>17</sup> So tell us what you think: Does the Law allow people to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

<sup>18</sup> Knowing their evil motives, Jesus replied, "Why do you test me, you hypocrites? <sup>19</sup> Show me the coin used to pay the tax." And they brought him a denarius. <sup>20</sup> "Whose image and inscription is this?" he asked.

<sup>21</sup> "Caesar's," they replied.

Then he said, "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God."<sup>22</sup> When they heard this they were astonished, and they departed.

**Doxology – "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" (recite in unison)**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here be low; praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. **Amen.**

**The Affirmation of Faith — "The Apostles' Creed" (recite in unison)**

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 Ghost,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried:  
the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth on 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.

**The Gloria Patri – "Glory Be to the Father" (Recite in unison)**

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.**

**Introduction of Speaker ..... Rev. Eugene Matthews**

**Hymn of Preparation — "How Excellent" (featuring Mississippi Mass Choir) (pastor request)**

**Inspirational Message..... Rev. Dr. George F. DeFord**  
*Retired Elder of the Baltimore/Washington Conference  
United Methodist Church*

# ***"Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow"***

**Praise and Prayer Concerns**

**Invitation / Altar Call**

**Selection — "I Don't Know About Tomorrow" (featuring Brenda Lowe)**

**Presentation of Congregational Gift**

**Announcements**

**Benediction / Selection — "Amen" (Rev. Marvin Winans)**

*The Reverend Doctor George Franklin DeFord*  
*Retired Elder of the Baltimore-Washington Conference*  
*The United Methodist Church*

Rev. Dr. George F. DeFord is a native of Baltimore, Maryland. He is the son of the late George B. and Inez J. DeFord and the eldest of six siblings. He is married to Lila A. DeFord, affectionately known, “as his girlfriend and wife, who is one and the same.” Together they are the parents of Andre, Dante, and Christopher, who deceased May 28, 2018. They are also the proud grandparents of Dante, Jr. (D2) and Christopher, Jr. (CJ).

Rev. DeFord benefits from undergraduate and graduate education from Morgan State University, Coppin State University, and Howard University, with Bachelor of Arts, Master of Education, Master of Divinity, and Doctor of Ministry respectively.

Rev. DeFord is in his thirty-eighth year of ordained ministry having served the following congregations and extension ministry: St. Mark’s, Laurel, MD, 11 years; Mount Zion, Baltimore, MD, 3 years; Ebenezer, Washington, DC, 4 years; Metropolitan, Indian Head, MD, 8 years; Regional Guide, Southern Region, 3 years; and Smith Chapel, Pisgah, MD, 8 years.

Rev. DeFord is the founding president of the Morgan State University, Southern Maryland Alumni Chapter, chartered May 2005. From the George DeFord Scholarship Fund, nearly \$80,000 plus have been awarded to first-time awardees and continuing scholars, matriculating at Morgan State University.

Rev. and Mrs. DeFord make their home in Pomfret, Maryland.

Rev. and Mrs. DeFord are COVID-19 survivors. They attribute their recovery to the grace and mercy of Almighty God. Their sustaining verse of Holy Scripture is: “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.” (*Isaiah 43:2 KJV*) Thanks be to God!

## Church Anniversary Reflection 2020

Our 130<sup>th</sup> Church Anniversary theme is “Striving for Excellence!” A scripture that reflect this year’s theme is **Philippians 4:8**, which reads: *“From now on, brothers and sisters, if anything is excellent and if anything is admirable, focus your thoughts on these things: all that is true, all that is holy, all that is just, all that is pure, all that is lovely, and all that is worthy of praise.”*



What a strange year 2020 has been. The 130th Church Anniversary Committee started planning for this momentous Church Anniversary last year in 2019. We were not going to wait until the last minute because there was too much work to do. Many events and activities had been anticipated in preparation of this historic milestone. Who knew that Men’s Day on March 8th would be the last Sunday we would gather in the Sanctuary to worship and fellowship together face-to-face? This Coronavirus pandemic has caused the entire world to do things differently. This includes the way we worship at St. Mark’s!

Another nationwide epidemic of the Spanish Influenza took its toll on Laurel in 1918. According to the Laurel Leader, the pandemic created a serious condition and resulted in the loss of many lives. Schools and businesses in Laurel were closed until the flu epidemic ran its course. The written history of St. Mark’s does not reflect whether St. Mark’s or other Laurel churches were closed during that pandemic.

Rev. Lewis E. S. Nash was the pastor of St. Mark’s during the Spanish flu pandemic in 1918. Rev. Nash was at St. Mark’s from 1914–1926. He was a pastor beloved by his people; they followed his advice gladly. He was a man of deep spirituality who conducted prayer meetings on a regular basis. He was also known as a great preacher. It was stated in the church history, “When Rev. Nash was here everybody was happy, worked hard – real hard – and wanted to get ahead.” His 12 years is the longest tenure at St. Mark’s. Rev. Nash was known as a builder of churches. The most notable was the building of the new St. Mark’s edifice in 1921. Our speaker today, Rev. Dr. George F. DeFord has the second longest at 11 years. In 1918, St. Mark’s had only existed 28 years, which is very young in the life of a church.

Our ancestors were believers in the power of God. They were people who always looked forward, not backward! Even after suffering a pandemic in 1918, two years later in 1920, the St. Mark’s trustees negotiated a mortgage agreement with the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Church for \$2,500 to help defray the cost of erecting the new edifice. In 1921, the cornerstone for our current building was laid on the corner of Eighth and West Streets.

St. Mark’s has been on this journey of faith since 1890. In that year Frank and Sarah Carter founded a house-front mission on West Street. From that time, St. Mark’s has been the cornerstone of this community for 130 glorious years. This great church has been a sign of hope to the total community.

Since March 2020, St. Marks has continued our journey of Striving for Excellence. Because of technological advances, we have been able to stay connected by conducting our Sunday morning Worship Services virtually through ZOOM. The COVID-19 pandemic and closure of our church has not prevented us from having The Fellowship Hall, restrooms, and kitchen renovations completed. Just like in 1920, our trustees have kept our vision for the future alive. Our Wednesday night Bible Study experience is being held through a conference call. We are doing things differently, but we are still moving forward – moving toward what God wants us to be!

**Sandra Johnson, Church Historian**

# Announcements

“DANKE” “MERCI” “MAHALO” “GRACIAS” “KITO” “THANK YOU”.

These expressions represent my gratitude for last week’s Pastor’s Appreciation Sunday, led by Sister Jaime Coffen and many others who joined in the Worship Experience. Additional acts of kindness have also been extended to me during this month. I want to acknowledge how humble and grateful I am to have the opportunity to serve as your pastor and how much I appreciate each of you and the love you have extended to me and my family. I give all the praise to God who is the head of my life. May God Bless continued presence be with each of you.

*Rev. Matthews*

## Pray Daily at Noon

Please remember to pray daily at NOON. Some areas to include in your prayer, can include the pandemic, racial healing, government leaders, educational challenges, and most importantly for our sick and shut-ins and each other.



**Wednesdays (7:15 p.m.) — Wednesday Night Experience.** Call-in Information: **712-770-4010 (Access code: 331960)**

**Requesting a Mail-in Ballot — you will need your driver’s licence —**  
**<https://www.elections.maryland.gov/voting/absentee.html>**



**Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup> — Laity Sunday.** This service will be an interactive service where you, the members, can participate by sharing testimonies, prayers, scriptures, readings, singing, etc. If you have any special selections that you would like to share, feel free to send me the information by **Wednesday, October 21<sup>st</sup>** so that I can include them in the service.

**Tuesday, October 27<sup>th</sup> (date change) (6:30–7:30 p.m.) — Church Conference Cluster.** Zoom information: <https://bwcumc.zoom.us/j/96863786799>; Meeting ID: 96863786799; or dial in: +1.301.715.8592, 96863786799#

**Saturday, October 31<sup>st</sup> (11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.) —** Communion packets will be distributed on the church parking lot, please observe all protocols (i.e. wear masks and remain in your vehicle). Prayers of concern for the world, nation and upcoming General election will be offered at noon.

**Sunday, November 1<sup>st</sup> — All Saints Sunday**

**Sunday, November 15<sup>th</sup> — Annual Women’s Day.** Information forthcoming. If you can assist Erica, Chair, in the plans for this day please reach out.

**Note from Finance:** First, let us give a big thank you to all that have been giving. This is a reminder that there are several ways to get your offering to the church:

1. You can drop it off at the church, place in the mailbox (Cynthia and David Burley check it regularly) **(This will save you postage)**
2. You can mail it to the church (**601 Eighth Street, Laurel, MD 20707**)
3. You can use on-line giving (Give–St. Marks — <https://www.shelbygiving.com/app/giving/stmarksmd>)
4. Reach out to member of finance, they will try to accommodate you.

Again, thank you. Just remember, even during the pandemic, the church building still has obligations that need to be met.



*"Proclaiming Christ to the generations...  
Equipping disciples to transform the world"*

**Special Prayers / Sick and Shut-In List:** If you hear of anyone that is in need of special prayer or is taken to the hospital, please contact: Rev. Eugene Matthews (443.257.2730 (cell), 410.379.0600 (home), [reveugene@comcast.net](mailto:reveugene@comcast.net))

*Condolence to the families of the late,  
Louis Carter  
Ronald Smith  
Barbara Matthews*

Marva Thomas, Nena Hughes, Deysha Gibson, Gloria Thomas, Sharon Thomas, Rev. George F. DeFord, Wanda Dumas, Sherman / Erica Roy, Janeen Thomas, Eunice Harding (Gemma's Mother), Tyrone / Pat Mundell, Samuel / James Briggs (Cynthia Burley's brothers), , Charles Burley, Richard Cager, Jr., Joan Moore, Larry Powell, Veronica Miller, Jeanette Reeves, Ernestine Gibson, Mildred Awkward, Grace Elaine Catchings, James Matthews, Birdie Walker, Paul Browder, Laura Dotson, Phillip Reese, Lamar Payne, Kevin Miller, Nancy Daniels, Eunice Parker, Hannah Polk, Delores Tyler

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