



Messenger

Changing the world through Christ, by caring for all people.

Volume 57, Number 14

July 11, 2017

Just Say Yes!

In the previous *Messenger*, Pastor Tammy provided an overview of the 2017 Annual Conference and the Bishop's Initiative for Growth and Vitality. She said that the Bishop inspired us to **Just Say Yes** to the unlimited opportunities we have before us to share the message of the love and grace possible through Jesus Christ.

As one of your lay delegates to Annual Conference, I will give additional information on how we can "Say Yes" to these opportunities. On Saturday afternoon, we heard from the current Bishop of the Rio Texas Annual Conference, Robert Schnase, who explored ways that we as a church can **Just Say Yes**.

Bishop Schnase outlined a myriad of ways that, we as a church, restrain people from doing ministry. He gave us examples of the many ways we say, "You can't do that!" In many cases, this is because we assume that valid ideas and projects have to come from the center — the Pastor or church leadership. Elaborate, bureaucratic and complex processes have been developed all with the goal of restraining ministry.

Instead, Bishop Schnase outlined how we can become a "permission giving church." He proposed criteria which should be the basis for deciding on the validity of ideas and projects. These are:

1. Everyone has gifts for ministry,
2. God calls everyone to service and ministry,
3. Ministries should foster spiritual growth and discipleship.

Additionally, at St. Mark's, we have our four Identified Priorities and our Mission Statement: "Changing the world through Christ, by caring for all people." which also serve as guides.

This is just a brief outline of Bishop Schnase's message. If you want to know more, please contact me at zephyrmark@yahoo.com. Bishop Schnase also has a just published book, *Just Say Yes*, that goes into more detail than he presented at Annual Conference.

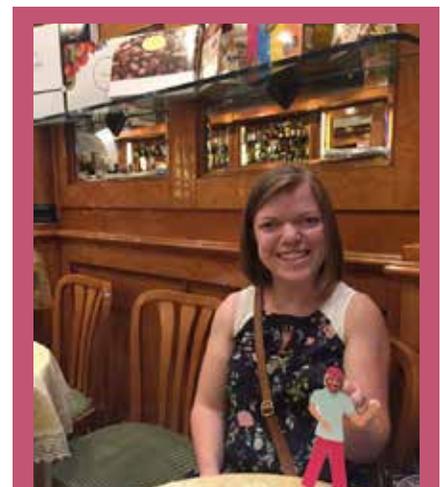
Mark Hrabe, Conference Delegate

Congratulations and Farewell!

Please plan to join the Staff Parish Relations Committee for a "send-off" party for **Carli Ogle** on Sunday, July 23rd following the 9:45 a.m. and the 11:15 a.m. services. Cake will be available in the Fellowship Hall that day and (like always during the summer months) eegee's will be served following the service at 11:15 a.m.

Carli will leave soon to begin medical school in New Mexico. She has been an active part of St Mark's since she was a child! In recent years, she has been drummer for the Praise Team, the Children's Sunday School Music Leader, and always helps with the Youth Sierra Service Projects each year.

Please stop by to wish Carli "the best" and say thank you for all she has contributed at St. Mark's.



Carli, enjoying coffee with Flat Sharon in Milan Italy.



St. Mark's Messenger

Published bi-weekly

St. Mark's United Methodist Church
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Email:

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Website:

www.umcstmarks.org

Sunday Worship:
8:15, 9:45, 11:15am

Wednesday Nights:
Community Meal
5:45pm
Music/Programs
6:15-7:15pm

Senior Pastor:
Rev. Sharon Ragland

Associate Pastor:
Rev. Tammy Hallam

Interim Christian Formation for Children & Adults:
Margaret Synhorst

Youth Ministries:
Kim Ogle

Communications & Outreach:
Sallyann Wassmuth

Messenger Editor:
Sallyann Wassmuth

Next Deadline:
Thursday,
July 20, at noon

Calendar Notes

Thurs., July 13

6:00 p.m. – Trustees, Conference Room
6:30 p.m. – Adult Spiritual Growth, Rm 23

Fri., July 14, - No Food Truck Cafe

Sun., July 16

11:00 a.m. – Common Grounds, Rm 20
4:00 p.m. – Preteens, Rm 8/9
4:00 p.m. – Youth Group, Wesley House

Mon., July 17

9:15 a.m. – Holy Yoga, Fellowship Hall
6:00 p.m. –Mark-a-ritas (Taste of Texas)

Wed., July 19

7:30 a.m. –Marksmen Breakfast, Coco's Restaurant
5:45 p.m. –SOUL STATION
"Freedom of Forgiveness" discussion

Sun., July 23

11:00 a.m. –Common Grounds, Rm 20
4:00 p.m. –Preteens, Rm 8/9
4:00 p.m. –Youth Group, Wesley House

Wed., July 26

5:45 p.m. – SOUL STATION (POT LUCK)
"Freedom of Forgiveness" discussion

Dear Church Family...



Dear friends,

If I had to summarize the feel of St. Mark's in one word, it would be kindness. It's been four weeks since my knee replacement surgery, and as I begin to think about life returning to normal, I have to thank the clergy, staff, and congregation for your prayers, your many cards, the loan of medical equipment. The list of your kindness goes on and on. I look forward to worshipping with you again soon!

Lois Britton

Being Neighbor of the Week is full of surprises. It's wonderful to connect with people who you don't know because we are all part of the St. Mark's family. People who know everything that has happened over the past six months say I remind them of the Johnny Cash song, **One Piece at a Time!** Others say, I'm falling apart. The fact is that I have been undergoing a pretty amazing restoration as long-term problems have been fixed. Prayers, calls, cards, emails and hugs of support and celebration have been appreciated. Thank you, friends!

Maryann Nuckolls

I want to thank you St. Mark's family for the cards, prayers, and good wishes during my recovery from hip surgery. I also appreciate the beautiful prayer shawl and visits from Pastors Tammy and Evy! Jim and I are thankful to be a part of the St. Mark's family.

Blessings, Ardyce Johnson

My brother, Harry, in New York and I thank those who have prayed for him over the past two-and-half months. He had tests, infections, different doctors, hospitals, etc. until he was well enough to have his hip surgery. Now on his fifth-floor condo, he goes up and down with a cane – getting used to being a senior. He often mentions how wonderful it is to know that our Prayer Group in Tucson continues to pray. Thank you, we are so fortunate to have the love from our church.

Shirley Kilborn

It is so heartwarming when a donor makes it possible for TuNidito to ensure that no child grieves alone. With your gift of \$2,500.00, you are ensuring that over 800 children in our community will have a safe place to heal when impacted by a serious illness or death of a loved one. More children and families than ever need the support services and comfort of Tu Nidito. Because of you, we will be able to provide a place of comfort at no cost to them. Thank you for your generosity.

Liz McCusker, Executive Director Tu Nidito



Just Breathe

We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and patience you need. —Colossians 1:11



A few years ago, I was at a denominational conference at the YMCA camp in Estes Park, CO. The worship and gathering was great, but what I was looking forward to most was spending some time hiking on the trails around the mountains and beside rivers of cool water. Quite a different climate than Phoenix in June. There were some issues that I had been holding in deep prayer for some time, and I was anxious for answers from God and thought this was God's opportunity to finally bring some resolve. At least it made sense to me 😊.

To say that my patience had run out was an understatement. As I was hiking and praying, it seems I just grew more agitated with God's silence. In my unrest, I was moving at a pretty good clip, and as I rounded a corner I was startled to find, standing ten feet away, one of the biggest elk that I have ever seen. She was standing under a grove of pines not looking all that interested in me, but I was mesmerized by her. At first, I wondered if I should run for higher ground, but then I felt quite at peace, staying put, just watching her for a moment.

After a few minutes, I could see that the elk was just standing there eating and chewing whatever grass appetizers were around her feet. Then, all of a sudden, this majestic animal began to go down on all fours — one leg at a time. Before long, she was a picture of rest, as she chewed some more and waited patiently for whatever elk wait for I guess.

That elk was the picture of patience. It almost felt like God was telling me that He was praying for me that I would be strengthened with all his glorious power so that I would have all the endurance and patience I needed especially for those particular issues I felt He needed to take care of for me on my time schedule. I felt like He was saying, *"let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing."* —James 1:4.

In that moment, I felt God divert my attention from the things I thought I so desperately needed from Him to just Him. Yes, He still had my issues in hand, but He wanted me to learn how patience is actually a very active part of my spiritual growth. The issues were solved in time but the biggest lesson I learned was from my friend, the elk, who taught me how to stop and chew for a while on what God has already given me and be patient for the rest.

What is it in your life where you need more patience? Take some Sabbath time to journal about those needs, and ask God to show you where you need to actively wait for his work to make you perfect and complete. And look out, He might use a giant elk to show you 😊.

Peace, Pastor T



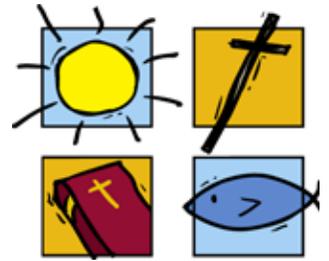
Meet Our NEW ECC Kinder Teacher!

We would like to introduce our new Kindergarten teacher, Ms. Jamie Graham! Jamie has a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education and a Masters in Educational Leadership. She has taught preschool, 2nd and 5th grades and has worked closely with grades K-6 as an Academic Achievement Specialist.

There are still two openings available in our Kindergarten class with this awesome teacher! Call the Early Childhood Center office (797-2925) and enroll your child today!

GIVE AN HOUR, Make a Difference!

I marvel at all of the volunteers we have at St. Mark's. Each Sunday, we have greeters, ushers, liturgists, choir members, altar preparers, sound team, and other volunteers who help create meaningful worship at our church. We have many people involved on committees who give their time to keep all aspects of the church vital and growing.



As a church, one of our Identified Priorities is to, "Reach out to new people...with an emphasis on reaching younger people." One way we support this initiative is through our ministry with families, and to do that, we need volunteers willing to nurture the children. To be a Sunday School teacher or Faith Coach, all you need is a heart for God and the children. You do not have to have children or grandchildren yourself, you do not have to have teaching experience or be creative. You simply have to be willing to give an hour or so a week to make a difference in a child's life.

Do you remember any of your Sunday School teachers? I do. Especially the two men who taught my 3rd grade Sunday School class. We played the Bible drill game all the time to see who could find a Bible verse the fastest. They loved games in general and seemed to have fun teaching together. But what I remember most about that year was how much I felt loved. For the first time in church, they showed me what God's love meant. Each week that I went to Sunday School, I understood better what it meant to be a part of God's family. They were the first people to help me know God, even though they probably never knew what an impact they had on my faith journey. I am so grateful to them.

Are you someone who can make a difference in our children's lives and show them God's love? Do you have an hour or so a week to give? Contact Margaret (297-2062 or margaret@umcstmarks.org).

Margaret Synhorst

Interim Christian Formation Coordinator: Children and Adults

If You Build It They Will Come!

This phrase was made popular by the 1989 movie *Field of Dreams*. This is particularly true for St. Mark's which is living into its Identified Priorities, one of which is "St. Mark's will reach out to new people in all ages and stages of life, with an emphasis on reaching younger people." Often churches have an attitude of if someone shows up with a disability then we will work on making accommodations and accessibility for that disability. "When they come we will build it."

For several years now, the Board of Trustees have conducted an annual accessibility audit, to determine where the church can make improvements in infrastructure to accommodate people with disabilities. Then, as time and budget allows, improvements are made. For example, when the sound booth was last moved, the resulting change in pew layout allowed adding pew cuts for those in wheelchairs.

The coordination of annual accessibility projects conference-wide is one of the roles of the Desert Southwest Conference Disability Ministries Committee. This committee has also prepared several workshops that participants from local churches can attend. There is a workshop for Sunday school teachers, another for training ushers and greeters, and a final two-day workshop which provides an overview of all aspects of accommodations for people with disabilities.

One of the points that come from all three of these workshops is that accommodations for people with disabilities extends beyond the physical realm. It also includes attitudes and procedures for those who have disabilities. This is an area where we all, as members of St. Mark's can participate. For example, when greeting someone who has a disability, do we make them feel welcome and talk to them as a person? Do our committees and fellowship groups accommodate those who have disabilities? If we build it they will come.

Mark Hrabe, Open Doors Committee

Long-Term Bible Study Lineup.

This fall, we are offering all four Disciple Bible Studies, as well as the wonderful long-term class Christian Believer. These classes are offered at a variety of times, and in a variety of formats, so that you can find one to fit your schedule. Remember that if you have taken Disciple I, you may take any of the other courses. You do not have to take them in order. Please prayerfully consider whether you are ready for a long-term class this year. Registration is open online (<http://www.umcstmarks.org/adult-classes.php>). If this is not your year for a long-term class, the next *Messenger* will have many other opportunities for you.

Disciple Bible Study I—*Becoming Disciples through Bible Study*

The study gives the Old and New Testaments equal time, emphasizing the wholeness of the Bible as a revelation of God. DISCIPLE draws upon the work of scholars, the personal Bible reading and study of the participant, and dynamic group discussion to aid understanding of the Bible. Facilitated by Rev. Tammy Hallam for 34 weeks on Mondays from 4:00—6:00 p.m. Class begins September 18th.



Disciple Bible Study II—*Into the Word, Into the World* (“fast-track”)

This study helps readers deepen their understanding of Scripture and make connections between what they already know and what they are reading. *Into the World* identifies some needs in the world for which ministry is needed and suggests possible responses. The study covers Genesis-Exodus; Luke-Acts. Facilitated by Paul Simpson & Vicky Minger for 24 weeks on Sundays from 4:30—6:00 p.m. Class begins September 24th.

Disciple Bible Study III—*Remember Who You Are* (two years)

This study uses the Prophets and the writings of Paul to examine the connection between memory and identity as the people of God. Explore how God's people are called to remember, to repent, to renewal, and to community. Facilitated by Rev. Sharon Ragland and Charlotte Bowers for 32 lessons, (two-year time frame) on Tuesdays from 6:00—8:30 p.m. Class begins September 5th.

Disciple Bible Study IV — *Under the Tree of Life*

The study concentrates on Old Testament Writings, the Gospel of John, the Epistles of John, James, Jude, and finally, Revelation. The Psalm of the week will lead people into a deeper life of prayer using Psalms as a guide. Whether praying or taking steps toward radical discipleship, participants know they are not alone — the community is there. Times and dates will be announced soon.

Christian Believer—*Knowing God with Heart and Mind*

Spend time reading a variety of texts to deepen your faith and learn more about Christian teachings. Discuss significant teachings with other participants. Facilitated by Gena McGill and Margaret Synhorst for 30 weeks on Sundays from 4:00—6:00 p.m. Class beginning September 17th.

Pack Your Bags!

We are taking a trip! Actually, we are already on this journey together, and this fall, we will offer many new and exciting itineraries for you to choose from in your personal faith journey.



Want more information? Read the next *Messenger* carefully to learn about a variety of travel options that await!

BLOOD DRIVE-August 13th

STILL A FEW OPENINGS to give Blood!

St. Mark's will sponsor a Red Cross Blood Drive on Sunday, August 13, 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Please call, text, or email to make an appointment with Martha Lundgren (see directory).

St. Mark's NEW Mobile App!

We are excited to share a new way to give to St. Mark's – GivePlus Church is a mobile giving app, through our current online provider Vanco Payment Solutions, that enables you to make one-time or recurring gifts from your smartphone.



To get started, download GivePlus Church for free from the App Store or Google Play. Simply search for "GivePlus Church" to quickly find and download the app today. Then enter St. Mark's United Methodist Church and select our church (hint: make sure you choose the St. Mark's UMC in Tucson, AZ). Next

tap "Donate Now." Then you can easily make donations directly from your smartphone using your debit/credit card or checking/savings account. You can choose to donate as a guest or set up an account that allows you to securely and conveniently schedule recurring donations and manage and review your giving history.

If you have any questions, please contact our bookkeeper, Ruth Kester (ruthk@umcstmarks.org). We hope you enjoy this new way to contribute to our ministry, and thank you for your support!

St. Mark's Finance Committee

Mission Trip Meeting - July 25th

Please join us on Tuesday, July 25th at 6:00 p.m. in Room 20 for a brief meeting to make plans for the 2017 Adult Spiritual Growth mission trip for St. Mark's.

There are many wonderful possibilities for us to go into the world and be God's hands and feet. Many of these mission opportunities are short, weekend trips, and do not require any type of skill. All you need is your desire to bring God's light to those who are struggling. Come and learn how we can make a real difference.

Christian Persecution Task Force Update on Mexico

In the San Juan Ozolotepec Community in Mexico, Pastor Alonso began preaching about seventeen years ago to friends and neighbors. During the next ten years the number of Evangelical Christians grew, their land prospered, and their barns overflowed. So, in 2011 this group of Christians started to build a temple with their own hands. However, the local authorities began to oppose them because they would not participate in the local indigenous tradition. These Christians began to experience discrimination— they were not allowed to buy food, their children were bullied at school, and they were regularly insulted in public.

Pastor Alonso was taken from his house, beaten and imprisoned for three days. A group of people beat him nearly to death. They also took all his material goods, including his land and cattle. They also destroyed the temple. Then, they forced him to leave the community. The group of Christians that Pastor Alonso pastored remain in San Juan, and they try to continue their faith, but they continue to face difficulties.



Prayer: Dear Lord, Please give the Christians of San Juan Ozolotepec Community in Mexico the courage and strength to persevere through persecution others in the community have visited upon them. Also, please touch the hearts and minds of the authorities in Mexico so that they begin to protect the rights of these Christians.

If you would like more information about persecuted Christians or to join St. Marks Christian Persecution Task Force, email us at christianpersecutiontaskforce@gmail.com or drop us a note at the church.

WASS UP?

July 11, 2017

Volume 18, Issue 13

High Schoolers on SSP Trip

UPCOMING MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL EVENTS

July 7-15, 2017—
SSP
Tsaile, AZ

July 16, 2017—
Breaker's
Water Park



July 23, 2017 —
Tucson Saguaros
Baseball
Leave right after the last service



July 30, 2017—
Musical Instrument Museum
in Phoenix
Meet at the Wesley House
at 1:30

Fifteen of our High School students left on Friday, July 7 to serve on the Navajo reservation near Tsaile, AZ. Their mission is to repair homes for people who are ill-equipped or unable to do the repairs themselves.

The congregation of St. Mark's has been very generous over the years in supporting youth missions. Our youth are blessed to be part of a loving, mission-minded congregation.

Please pray for our youth and their chaperons as they complete their trip.



July Birthdays

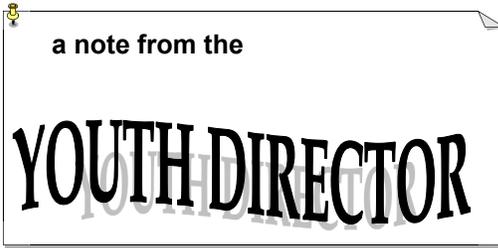
The last issue of "Wass Up" was missing several birthdays, due to a systems glitch. Happy birthday to:

07-12 James Carston

07-17 Abigail Lee

07-22 Freder Morrison

07-26 Adriana Morales



The high school people who are on the SSP trip only have a few days left on the Navajo Reservation. We've met lots of cool people and learned to appreciate a culture different from that of northwest Tucson. We've laughed, sang songs, worked hard and sweat quit a bit. Some of us have learned new skills. Others of us have had a chance to practice skills learned at previous service trips.

As always, our SSP trip has been the highlight of my summer. I hope that all of you will get the chance to join us some time.

Thanks to Bill Fritz and Carli Ogle for chaperoning and making the experience so wonderful.

Blessings,
Kim

P.S. We'll start planning the 2018 mission in October!

Middle School Moments

I hope everyone had a great 4th of July! I learned this week that the tradition of setting off fireworks to celebrate our countries independence started right away, in 1777! Pretty cool to be a part of such a longstanding tradition, isn't it? My family and I had a fun time celebrating our freedom, and I hope you all did too.

In Galatians 5:13, we are told that we are called to live in freedom to serve one another. I really like this! I'm thinking about all of our friends that are at SSP right now, serving others. I know that they are having a blast! I can't wait to hear all about it!

See you Sunday!
Rachel

Stay Tuned
FOR something
AWESOME



Before



After



BEN'S BELLS FIELD TRIP

Last Sunday, July 9, St. Mark's youth took a field trip to Ben's Bells. They had a great afternoon working on painting flowers for a Ben's Bells mural and learning about the "**Be Kind**" program.

The next outing for St. Mark's PRETEENS is Sunday, July 16. We are going to the movies!

PLEASE KEEP THESE PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS!

In the Hospital: Cynthia Rayner

Rehab or Care Facilities:

Than Brademas, Donald Chester, Gary Dean, Patricia Keele, Marla Mutschler, Bob Ross, Howard Russell, Judith Smith, Mel Speck



Breanne Hallam, Megan Krzmarzick, Karen Linebarier, Jerry Langemeier, Dell Long, Judy Mitzimberg, Don Watt, Connie White

Recovering at Home:

Ardyce Johnson, Janet Krug, Ann Martin, Jim Ward, Dave Webster, Yvonne Yare, Susan Zimmerman

Undergoing Treatment at Home:

Jude Anderson, Gail Blevins, Audrey Dawson, Judy Drescher, April DuBoce, Bill Duryee, Tiffany Guerette,

Prayers and Condolences:

To the family and friends of Judith Richards.

LOVED ONES IN THE MILITARY...

Please keep these people in your prayers. Email additions or updates to messenger@umcstmarks.org.

Hank Bautzmann, son of Nancy Bautzmann

Jon Chytka, nephew of Roger & Donna Severson

Zachary Dojaquez, grandson of Roger & Donna Severson

Brandonn Eto, friend of Zirnheld/Compernelle family

Rob Eubank, son of David & Johanna Eubank

Mike Freeman, son of Ken & Ann Freeman

Patrick Harris, grandson of Marilyn Vaughn

Greg Haynes, son of Bob & Melinda Haynes

Matthew Hughey, son of Juliee & Billy Morrison and grandson of Joyce Flick

Rachel Kester, daughter of Don & Ruth Kester

Travis Kroll, son-in-law of Becky Strain

Adam Laurie, son of Ingrid Christensen

Chad Long, grandson of Pat Long

Mark Joseph Maver, son of Seymour & Marcia Maver

Joshua Miller, grandson of Ginny Johnson

Jake Newton, son of Robert & Cheri Newton

John O'Regan, husband of Ashley O'Regan and grandson-in-law of Janet Krug

Brian Osborn, pastor in the DSW Conference

William Putt, son of Harold & Susan Putt

Joshua Ruth, son-in-law of Marjie Walp

Adam Seia, son of David & Vonda Seia

Jason Smith, grandson of Jerry & Judy Smith

Alex Snow, brother of Shelley Shelton

Clint Staschke, son-in-law of Cliff & June Young

Michael and Karisa Szczygiel, daughter and son-in-law of Joyce Flick

Timothy Trexler, great-nephew of Gail Blevins

Brianna Walker, granddaughter of Barbara Fradenburgh; niece of John Fradenburgh



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Reflections



Because I've never missed a meeting of the Annual Conference since before I was ordained in 1991, I couldn't help but stream small portions of the Desert Southwest Conference meeting from June 15-18, 2017. I'd been excused from being there while on my spiritual growth and renewal leave, but wanted to hear the reading of the South District appointments by Bishop Robert Hoshibata, so I listened and watched. When Bishop Bob began to read the St. Mark's appointments, at first he didn't read my name! My heart rose into my throat for just a moment, until he realized he'd skipped a line, chuckled a bit, and read my name and then Pastor Tammy's as appointed to St. Mark's for another year. Whew!

I'm delighted to be beginning my eighth year as your Senior Pastor. I'm also very happy to be sharing ministry with Pastor Tammy for another year. As you may know, our appointments go from July 1 to June 30th of the next year, so even though I'm on renewal leave right now, I wanted to write these words of celebration, and gratitude for another year of serving with you. I'm spending time reconnecting with God, family and friends, resting, reading, and traveling some. I look forward, with great anticipation, to being back with you in early August.

Blessings, Sharon

Messenger

SPECIAL EDITION

Our next issue of the *Messenger* will be a special edition including the upcoming FALL ACTIVITIES for children and families, class opportunities for adults, Disciple Studies, and more!