

# Messenger

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

Volume 57, Number 24

November 28, 2017

St. Mark's  
United Methodist

St. Mark's Family Ministries Presents:  
A Live Theatre Workshop Performance.



*Jingle Bell Rock, an original story by Richard Gremel, with live music by Michael Martinez.*

The Christmas Cheer Squad is back at it again, trying to raise the cheer for Christmas. Only this year, J.B. Coalson head of the coal industry, has other plans in mind. Watch as he attempts to ruin Christmas cheer and get everyone on the naughty list so they can have coal in their stockings. Sing, dance, and rock n' roll along to some of your favorite Christmas songs as you help the Cheer Squad bring down J.B. Coalson and help Santa get ready for Christmas.



**Performance Time:**

**Saturday, Dec. 2, Fellowship Hall**

Pizza and salad served (5:30- 6:00 p.m.)

Showtime 6:00-7:00 p.m. Children must be accompanied by an adult (or preregistered for Parents' Night Out)

**Ticket Price: \$3 each**

Tickets are available in the church office (297-2062).

**Make it a Parent's Night Out - 4:30 to 7:00 p.m.!**

Bring your child(ren) to the Childcare Room 15, at 4:30 p.m.

The kids get a pizza meal and enjoy the show and parents get an evening out! Childcare will be provided (4:30-7:00 p.m.) but you must preregister your child(ren) by calling the church office (297-2062) or email [rachel@umcstmark.org](mailto:rachel@umcstmark.org).

**PARENT'S  
NIGHT  
OUT**  
drop off the kids  
and enjoy an evening out!



St. Mark's United Methodist Church

## COMMUNITY CAROL SING

**Sunday, Dec. 10, at 3:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary!**

Kick off the Christmas season at this family-friendly gathering! Sing your favorite carols, including some especially for the kids! Featuring the St. Mark's Chancel Choir and Celebration Singers, soloists, brass quartet, and harp. With Dr. Elizabeth Schauer as conductor and Sondra Franks on the organ and piano.

Admission is free, but a freewill offering will be taken benefiting StandUp For Kids and St. Mark's Music Program.

## St. Mark's Job Opportunity!

**JOB  
OPENING**

St. Mark's is looking for an energetic person, who loves older elementary-age kids, to coordinate the existing preteen youth fellowship (4th and 5th graders). The program is scheduled from

4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Sundays. This is a paid position that is five hours per week and not eligible for benefits.

Interested persons should send resume and cover letter to Kim Ogle (520-297-2062 or [kim@umcstmarks.org](mailto:kim@umcstmarks.org)) no later than Dec. 17. You may view the job description at: [http://www.umcstmarks.org/pdf/jobdesc\\_preteen.pdf](http://www.umcstmarks.org/pdf/jobdesc_preteen.pdf)



## Just Breathe

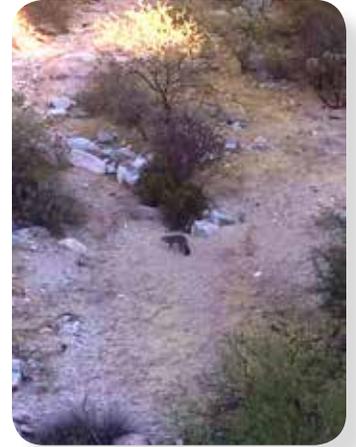
*Open my eyes to see the wonderful truths in your instructions.*  
— Psalm 119:18 (NLT)

A few days ago, I was leaning against our patio fence that looks out over the arroyo. The longer I fixed my eyes on the scrub brush and vegetation I began to see the movement of little birds moving from branch to branch and ground squirrels scurrying along the pathways between the cacti. As I scanned the trees that were closer to our fence, our eyes met. A beautiful gray and red fox was staring up at me. I whispered to Jack inside to come and see this wonder and we watched as our new friend, with a grand bushy tail, made her way across to the other side of our valley. I began to ponder this encounter with this striking creature, who had been there whether I had seen her or not. If I had not taken the time to be aware of what was going on around me, if I had not taken the time to wait and watch, I would have missed my life being enlightened by nature. I was able to see something that otherwise would have stayed hidden from me, because I took time seeking and being open to signs of life. I definitely received something I had not possessed before that moment.

It can be the same way when God is attempting to illuminate our hearts with what He wants us to see. We are invited to take time to be aware of what is going on in the issues in our lives, to seek to be open so that we can possess His thoughts, His paths, His wisdom. This is the enlightenment that we all need because of our blindness. Whether you need wisdom to make an important decision in your life, or need to seek

God in prayer for others, we are invited to begin our prayer time each day with, “Open my eyes to see, the wonderful truths in your instructions.”

We especially need sight in how we see and interact with others. It is easy to put up walls, label or demean others who are different than us, or who see things differently. Before we discount a person, take time to be aware, seeking and being open to signs of the goodness of God in that person. Though distorted by sin, every person is made in the image of God. Instead of focusing your eyes on what you perceive as negative, spend time identifying at least five positive things and see how your perceptions change. Like the fox, those things are there even if we do not take the time to see them. But if we ask God to “open” our eyes to how He sees this person, most likely we will receive something from that person that we had not possessed before, and we will be enlightened because of the encounter.



Advent is about a journey of enlightenment, as we wait and watch for things we have yet to understand or to know. Ask Christ to open your eyes and then journal about what He shows you throughout this hope filled season.

*Peace, Pastor T*

## Adopt-A-Family for Christmas

Nash Neighbors will be coordinating the adopt-a-family program with Nash Elementary this Christmas Season. Many families at Nash request help during the holiday season by filling out a short questionnaire about their family and their needs. These forms will be available at the Nash Neighbors table in the courtyard on Dec. 3 and Dec. 10.

Members of St. Mark’s can select a family, purchase and wrap gifts, and deliver to their home (you can deliver to the school if you need to). Family sizes and needs vary, so you can choose a small family, or groups can select one of the larger families. Please stop by the table in December to select a family to sponsor or to find out more information about this wonderful holiday program.



## Ten Volunteers Needed!

We’ve had great participation from the St. Mark’s community with our monthly food packing at the Community Food Bank for the last three months. Thank you!

We have one more date for 2017 and that is Saturday, Dec. 9. We need ten volunteers and would love to have you! We meet in the north parking lot at the church at 8:00 a.m. and carpool to the Food Bank to work from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Volunteers need to be at least 16 years old and need to wear closed-toe shoes. If you can help, please contact Nancy Jackson (see directory) or sign up on the Adult Spiritual Growth bulletin board in the courtyard.



## Soup & Bread Luncheon Volunteers Needed!



The Soup & Bread Luncheon, at noon on Dec. 24, needs volunteers. Will you be in town on Christmas Eve? Are you new to St. Mark's and looking for a fun one to three hour service project? Are you a seasoned member seeking the same? Why not offer your assistance for the Soup and Bread Luncheon.

You may come mid-morning to help prepare the tables and receive the meal items, or come late morning and help with serving and clean up - you will be finished by 2:00 or 3:00 p.m. If you would like to help please contact Renee Carrasco (see directory) to sign up. Thanks!

---

## Fair-Trade Coffee Sale

St. Mark's Agua Prieta Task Force will sell one pound bags of 100% Arabica, fair-trade, organic coffee on Sunday, Dec. 3. All proceeds go to Cafe la Colonia, who produces this wonderful coffee. Café la Colonia is a small business run by members of the Fuente de Vida church in Agua Prieta, Mexico (across the border from Douglas, AZ). Fuente de Vida (Methodist) church has been a long-standing mission project of St. Mark's United Methodist Church, and several other churches in the Desert Southwest Conference.

Look for our table in the courtyard, or contact Jay Suchland (see directory) if you have questions. The following selection of coffee will be available for \$10 per bag:

- Medium Roast - regular or decaf (ground & whole beans)
- Dark Roast - regular or decaf (ground & whole beans)



Thank you to everyone who has submitted pledge cards for the 2018 **Called to Action** Stewardship Campaign. If you haven't already turned in a pledge card, it is not too late. Cards are available in the Sanctuary and can be put in the offering plate on Sunday, mailed to the church office, or submitted online at <http://www.umcstmarks.org>. Contact Ruth Kester in the office if you have questions

## Counselor-in-Residence

*Don't keep the Quiet Ministry a secret!*

This wraps up Lane Harmon's and Martha Lundgren's conversation about St. Mark's Counselor-in-Residence program. We hope you'll share what you've learned with a friend or neighbor who can use the encouragement and healing possible through our Quiet Ministry.

**Martha:** What is the purpose of the Counselor-in-Residence committee?

**Lane:** The Counselor-in-Residence committee helps to implement the vision of the program. The members of the committee are very invested in the health and wellbeing of both the program and the St. Mark's community.

Pastor Tammy is a member of the CIR committee. I work closely with her and Pastor Sharon to provide care for the congregation. I partner with Pastor Tammy to bring special services that minister to people through the challenging times of Christmas and Easter as they journey through loss. I am extremely grateful to the members of the committee because they not only help support me in administering the program but more importantly they are a powerful conduit between the needs of the congregation and myself. For example, it was recognized that we needed to offer a caregiver class. I facilitated several rounds of classes but when I couldn't fit another in my schedule, Mary Lu Kiracofe (a member of the committee) volunteered to facilitate the class. She started a second group of classes in October.

**Martha:** What is the best way for someone to go about making an appointment?

**Lane:** The best way to contact me is to call my office (520-297-6228) and leave a message and I will call you back. Please offer some good times to reach you and I will do my best to call you then. I can answer any questions you have and then we can decide how best to proceed.

**Martha:** If our readers take away just one thing from this article, what would you want that be?

**Lane:** The Counselor-in-Residence program as an innovative ministry and reflects the caring and compassionate community of St. Mark's.

# United Methodist Women News!



## Christmas Luncheon

St. Mark's United Methodist Women will meet Tuesday, Dec. 12, at 10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Join us for a potluck luncheon and holiday fellowship. Please bring a meat, vegetable, salad, or dessert dish to serve about ten people. If you have a favorite dish your family made to celebrate the holidays or your family heritage, consider bringing that dish to share. If you are a guest or it is difficult for you bring a dish to share, don't worry about it, just come anyway. Children from the Early Childhood Center will provide the program. Lillian Porter and Priscilla McInnis will lead us singing Christmas carols.

Officers for United Methodist Women for 2018 will be installed at this meeting. All women of the church are invited. You do not have to be a member of St. Mark's United Methodist Women or St. Mark's United Methodist Church

or any church to attend. Childcare can be requested by contacting the church office before Friday, Dec. 8. Should you have questions or need a ride, please contact Virginia Tupper ([ginr3636@gmail.com](mailto:ginr3636@gmail.com) or 820-4119).

## Crafts & Bake Sale, Sunday, Dec. 3

St. Mark's United Methodist Women will hold their annual Crafts and Bake Sale on Sunday, Dec. 3, between services and after *The Gathering* in the church Library. There will be lots of handmade Christmas and other crafts perfect for that special gift. The bake sale will include holiday goodies and some **gluten-free** and **sugar-free** treats as well.



The proceeds go to support missions in the United States and abroad. If you have questions, contact Priscilla McInnis (see directory) or Anita Winslow (see directory).

---

## Fear of the Other: No Fear in Love Study

Join the Sharing and Family Life Adult Sunday School classes (Sundays 9:45–10:45, Room 17) from Jan. 14 through Feb. 11 for William Willimon's *Fear of the Other: No Fear in Love*, DVD-based study.

In this five-week study, Willimon invites readers to consider the Gospel command to love (and not merely tolerate) those considered to be "Other" or outside mainstream Christian culture. Rooted in the New Testament understanding of Gentile outsiders grafted into the covenant community, this study invites participants to an on-the-ground faith that hearkens to a soliciting and revealing God – the God who comes to us again and again through those we least suspect.

A book accompanies the DVD study. Some books will be available in class beginning during Advent or can be ordered through Cokesbury. An e-book is also available through Cokesbury, Amazon, etc. If you have questions, please contact Terry Majewski (see directory) or Rick Farnsworth (see directory).

---

## Early Childhood Center Needs Cookies!

St. Mark's Early Childhood Center (ECC) needs donated, homemade cookies to support our **cookie walk** on Dec. 12 and 14. Proceeds will go towards a new playground structure. Please bring your donations to the school office by Dec. 8. Thanks so much!



---

## Ladies Bible Study

The Ladies Bible Study begins Jan. 5, 2018, for six Fridays (Jan. 5 - Feb. 9.) We will be studying Liz Curtis Higgs's book, *Unveiling Mary Magdalene*. You do not need the book unless you want one. On Jan. 5, we will watch her one-hour video presentation, recorded live, that captures her passion for Mary Magdalene's life-changing message for women today. Watch for more information in the next *Messenger*.



Karen Allison

## Sidewalk Sunday School

Sidewalk Sunday School (SSS) is a conference-wide ministry to teach children the Christmas story. It is often the only time these young people hear of Jesus and His overarching love for them. Each child leaves with a gift bag from the pastor to celebrate their participation in SSS. All bags collected in the South District are given to Pastor Augustine Jimenez of New Hope, UMC, located at I-19 and Valencia, Tucson. He is expecting about 200 children at the their program the afternoon of Dec. 17, and you are all welcome to attend. The distribution of empty bags for you to fill is progressing, but there are still many left. With each bag there are ideas to fill with small toys and directions to choose a boy or girl and the age group you are buying for. Stop by the 4' Christmas tree and pick up one or more. For teens, we are collecting \$20 gift cards from Target or Walmart.



On Dec. 15, from 9:00 a.m to noon in Fellowship Hall, we will be checking each bag for appropriate contents. It is a morning of fellowship, fun and sweets. (I bring lots of doughnuts of all sorts.)

Please join us in this important ministry. Please call Ellen Beene (see directory) to sign up. Otherwise, just show up and consider bringing a friend, because many hands make light work. On behalf of Pastor Augustine and myself, we cannot thank our generous congregation enough for your participation and support.

## POZ Cafe - Huge Success!



We helped prepare and serve 156 people a fabulous turkey dinner along with two other Tucson faith communities. Poz Cafe is a way to enhance good health through friendship, fellowship, and nutrition for women and men living with HIV/AIDS. HIV is found in every segment of our community, and it affects every faith community. For each person infected there are countless friends, families, and co-workers affected. A BIG thank you to the volunteers who helped provide a compassionate response on Nov. 16!

A special thanks to our St. Mark's Poz Cafe volunteer team! Back Row: Barney Snyder, Vickie Dee Front Row: Betty Pickart, Diane James, Ruth Kester, Linda Girard, Pat Small and Pastor Sharon (not photographed).

## Advent Workshop Fun!



We had a wonderful time at the Advent Workshop. With our missions projects, we made 107 hygiene kits for Primavera, six blankets for children, and 44 Christmas cards for female missionaries. In addition, there were many crafts, Bible dramas, and a Christmas photo booth.

A huge thank you to all the volunteers who made this event happen—Children's Education Committee Members: Kathy Hale, Barb Sargent, Julia Younggren, Pam Howard, Phyllis Dirksen, Cindy Flannery, Marian Shultis, Jim Hanna, and Caroline Hanna. Also, the Adult Spiritual Growth Committee Members: Alberta Farnsworth, Harold Putt, Art Ragland, Linda Sterling, Terry Majewski. Vicky Minger, and Judy Boroto. Other Volunteers: Sharon Hunter, Sue Pierce, Brenda Hunter, Carol Fouch, Maryann Nuckolls, and Lillian Lovaglio.

Hope we see you at our Advent Workshop 2018!

# WASS UP?

# CHRISTMAS IN HAWAII

November 28, 2017

Volume 18, Issue 24



## UPCOMING MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL EVENTS

**December 3, 2017—**  
4:00 to 6:00  
"Christmas in  
Hawaii"  
(not literally)



**December 10, 2017—**  
3:00 to 4:00  
Youth Council—  
**YOU'RE INVITED!**  
4:00 to 6:00  
Middle School:  
Supplies for "Stand Up for Kids"  
High School: Off Campus

**December 17, 2017—**  
4:00 to 6:00  
Planned by Youth Council

# YOUTH DECIDE

The phrase "Mele Kalikimaka" can be translated from Hawaiian to mean "Merry Christmas". That's pretty much the coolest thing that Rachel and Kim know about Christmas in Hawaii, since they're both from the desert. But, hey, it's going to be super fun to try to have a Hawaiian Christmas party. If you have Hawaiian prints or other stuff, bring it/wear it. There will be snacks and games. Aloha!

# SERVICE AGAIN?

Does it seem like we've had a lot of short service projects this semester? Why, yes, we have. Thanks for noticing.

Most of us are very blessed. We have the bare necessities, (like clothes, food, shelter) and a whole lot more.

The Youth Council has requested that we care for those who are not as fortunate. Yep. That's how we

a note from the  
**YOUTH DIRECTOR**

Dear Santa,  
I need ... actually nothing. But if my family is reading this, I do have a wish list.

At the risk of being super sappy, have you ever wondered what Mary and Joseph's "wish list" might look like? Wish for a place to stay. Wish for acceptance. Wish for guidance. I don't think they actually wished for gold, frankincense and myrrh, but we wouldn't mind having at least one of those.

Advent, the season of waiting, begins December 3rd. As you wait for Christmas morning, take time to be a little sappy and experience, with empathy, Advent. It will make your Christmas.

Blessings,  
Kim

P.S. "Empathy" Look it up.



## Birthdays This Month

## Middle School Moments

I found another meme that speaks to me! You may notice a theme here....oops! Like the last article about being proud of yourself all along the way to your goals, this one tells us to be proud of ourselves for even attempting a difficult task. Be proud of yourself each hard step!

I know a lot of you have semester exams coming up this month, (maybe for the first time) and what a stressful time that can be! But just take a deep breath, look around at everyone getting ready for Christmas, and be proud of how far you have already come!

You know Kim and I are proud of you!

See You Sunday!  
Rachel

12-3  
12-5  
12-11  
12-14

**Chase Laos**  
**Addison DaDeppo**  
**Lisa DaDeppo \***  
**Alex Carsten**

\* amazing Sunday School teacher

Be proud of yourself  
for how hard  
**you're trying.**



# HOLD THESE PEOPLE IN PRAYER!

## *Hospital:*

Jim Ward

## *Rehab or Care Facilities:*

Patricia Keele  
Harold Mull  
Howard Russell  
Earlene Schock

## *Hospice Care:*

Judy Mitzenburg  
Yvonne Yare

## *Undergoing Treatment at Home:*

Jude Anderson  
Gail Blevins  
Jared Bowman  
Clara Campbell

Judy Drescher  
Breanne Hallam  
Megan Krzmarzick  
Karen Linebarier  
Dell Long  
Ray Loughney  
Ruth Machley  
Lona Stauffacher  
Don Watt  
Connie White  
Lindsey Williams

## *Recovering at Home:*

Donald Chester  
Harmon Harrison  
Hazel Roberts  
Sharon Thomas

## *Prayers and Condolences:*

Sympathy and prayers to Sarah Glenn, former ECC director, and her family on the sudden death (11/19/17) of her husband, Edward Glenn.



## PRAYER CORNER

We are a praying community at St. Mark's.

Besides Sunday worship, you may submit a prayer request by email [prayerchain@umcstmarks.org](mailto:prayerchain@umcstmarks.org) or from our website at [www.umcstmarks.org/contact-us-prayer-request.php](http://www.umcstmarks.org/contact-us-prayer-request.php).

Also, visit our Prayer Room on campus and leave a prayer on our prayer wall.



## St. Mark's Messenger

Published bi-weekly

St. Mark's UMC  
1431 W. Magee Road  
Tucson, AZ 85704  
(520) 297-2062  
Fax: (520) 297-1058

### Email:

[info@umcstmarks.org](mailto:info@umcstmarks.org)

### Website:

[www.umcstmarks.org](http://www.umcstmarks.org)

### Senior Pastor:

Rev. Sharon Ragland  
Associate Pastor:  
Rev. Tammy Hallam

### Sunday Worship:

8:15, 9:45, 11:15 a.m.

### Soul Station

Wednesday Nights:  
Community Meal  
5:45 p.m.  
Music/Programs  
6:15-7:15 p.m.

## LOVED ONES IN THE MILITARY ...

Please keep these people in your prayers.

Email additions or updates to [messenger@umcstmarks.org](mailto:messenger@umcstmarks.org).

**Hank Bautzmann**, son of Nancy Bautzmann  
**Jon Chytka**, nephew of Roger & Donna Severson  
**Jayce Cunha**, son of Rich and Blanca Cunha  
**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  
**Garrett Geer**, grandson of Ellen Wise  
**Patrick Harris**, grandson of Marilyn Vaughn  
**Matthew Hughey**, son of Juliee & Billy Morrison and grandson of Joyce Flick  
**Rachel Kester**, daughter of Don & Ruth Kester  
**Chad Long**, grandson of Pat Long  
**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 Joan Fradenburgh



Third Thursday each month  
6:30 - 8:30 p.m., St. Mark's Library  
Coordinator:  
Nancy Bautzmann (248-5814)

# Calendar Notes

## Sat., Dec. 2

4:30 Parents Night Out  
5:30 -6 p.m. Pizza Dinner  
6:00 - Showtime - Jingle Bell Rock Live Theatre

## Sun., Dec. 3

### First Sunday of Advent & UMW Bake Sale

7:00 a.m. Blood Drive  
4:00 p.m. Preteens and Youth Group

## Mon., Dec. 4

9:15 a.m. Holy Yoga, Fellowship Hall  
6:00 p.m. Mark-a-ritas

## Wed., Dec. 6

5:45 p.m. Community Meal, Fellowship Hall  
6:15 p.m. Soul Station  
6:15 p.m. Common Grounds

## Thurs., Dec 7

12:00 p.m. **Messenger** Deadline

## Sun. Dec. 10

### Second Sunday of Advent

3:00 p.m. Community Carol Sing, Sanctuary  
4:00 p.m. Preteens and Youth Group

## Mon. Dec. 11

9:15 a.m. Holy Yoga, Fellowship Hall

## Tues. Dec. 12

5:30 p.m. Advisory Board, Library  
6:30 p.m. SPRC, conference room  
6:30 p.m. Missions Committee, Fellowship Hall

## Wed., Dec. 13

10:30 a.m. ChronicPain/Chronic Illness, Library

## Dear Church Family...



Thank you for your gift of \$4,570 received on Oct. 10, through The Advance, the designated giving channel of the United Methodist Church. One hundred percent of your gift goes towards the project or ministry that you support. We are grateful you are partnering with us through the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR).

*Rev. Russell Pierce, Interim Executive Director – General Board of Global Ministries*

## Join Our Christmas Luncheon

The St. Mark's **Over 50s** and the **Lunch Bunch** will gather for a special Christmas Luncheon at Bottega Michelangelo, 420 W. Magee Rd., on Tuesday, Dec. 5, at 11:30 a.m. This restaurant has been recently renovated with a beautiful interior and an expanded menu. Please join us for a delicious meal and some Christmas fellowship. Contact Sandra Rush (see directory) to reserve your spot.



## Revised Messenger Deadlines!

Please note that the **Messenger** newsletter schedule has been revised. The submittal deadline for the Dec. 13 issue is Thursday, Dec. 7, at noon. The deadline for the Dec. 27 issue will be Wed., Dec. 20, by noon (due to Christmas holiday). We will not publish a newsletter on January 3. The first issue of the 2018 Messenger will be published on Jan. 17, and the deadline for that issue is Thursday, Jan. 11, at noon. The 2018 **Messenger** newsletter schedule is available at <http://www.umcstmarks.org/pdf/MessengerDates.pdf>. We encourage you to print a copy of the schedule so you are familiar with the deadlines.

## The Chronic Pain/Illness Support Group

The Chronic Pain/Chronic Illness Support Group will meet THREE times in December. Meeting dates are on Wednesdays - Dec. 6; Dec. 13; and Dec. 27. It is especially important with the busyness of the season, to take special care of our bodies. Come respite for 90 minutes on those weeks in the Library. Rejuvenate with prayer, meditation, discussion and connection. If you have any questions, or know someone that is interested, contact April DuBoce (**336-2614 or [pnkcl13@gmail.com](mailto:pnkcl13@gmail.com)**).



1431 W. Magee Road, Tucson AZ 85704-2116

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
TUCSON, ARIZONA  
NO. 454

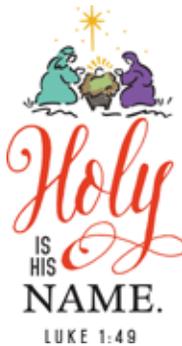
Address Service Requested

If you would like to receive the **Messenger** electronically, and discontinue your paper copy, please submit a request to [messenger@umcstmarks.org](mailto:messenger@umcstmarks.org).

## Reflections

525,600 minutes. That's how many minutes there are in a year. It's also one of the lines from the famous song, *Seasons of Love* from the musical Rent. How about 480,960 minutes? That's how many minutes there were in the first eleven months of 2017, when our focus in worship has been **Good News for Today's World**. In those eleven months, we spent a lot of time with Jesus, because he's our good news, and drawing closer to him fills and strengthens us with his love, compassion, hope, and joy. In 2017, we spent many minutes in Jesus' healing stories, parables, teachings, miracles, and in the midst of his resurrection life. Then in October and November we spent our time on **Act-ion Figures**, looking at good news in the Book of Acts. We've covered a lot of territory in those 480,960 eleven months of minutes.

Advent is arriving. That means that we get our hearts and lives ready to receive Jesus' miraculous coming again at Christmas. As the days grow shorter, we look within ourselves to see what needs to move or change in us to be ready for Jesus. This year our theme is **Questions of Christmas ... Unlocking the Mystery**. We're going to meet some of the characters in Luke who change as they are confronted with the coming of Jesus – Zechariah, Elizabeth, Mary, and the



shepherds. I invite you to join in this Advent journey. This year, the first Sunday of Advent is Dec. 3, and the fourth Sunday of Advent is also Christmas Eve, Dec. 24. On Christmas Eve, we'll have worship at 9:00 a.m. and 11 a.m., then 4:00 p.m., 8:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. Watch for more info.

One way we enter into Advent in our house is by gradually decorating for Christmas. On Sunday, Nov. 26 we put up our Christmas tree, and began to put the ornaments on it on Monday, Nov. 27. A few memorable items at a time, our house – and our hearts – get ready. Thanks to our Worship Committee, that happens in our Sanctuary, too. Come and see, as we unlock the mysteries of Christmas.

**A prayer:** *O God, as we put ourselves into your hands, we discover that you are already with us. We humbly pray, God that you would enter fully into our world in a gentle and powerful way and bring hope and healing. We need you, Holy One, to soothe our hurts and move us from mistrust, doubt and fear, to having hearts of peace and joy. We thank you for every minute of every day, and say, "Come, Lord Jesus, come." Amen.*

Blessings, Sharon