

Messenger

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

St. Mark's
United Methodist

Stewardship Campaign Update

The Finance Committee is pleased to provide the following summary on the **Our Hands, God's Work. Responding in Faith!** stewardship campaign. The table below compares current year against last year's campaign as of the same period (week of /after Commitment Sunday).

Prior to Commitment Sunday Through:	2019 \$ Pledged	2019 Cards Returned	2018 \$ Pledged	2018 Cards Returned
Commitment Sunday thru Week 2	\$836,698	309	\$873,472	317
Commitment Sunday thru Week 4 (Campaign Total)	To Be Determined	To Be Determined	\$921,378	352

Through the generosity of St. Mark's constituents the campaign is going well, but could be better. Commitments received are behind last year by \$36,774 and 8 commitment cards. Also, approximately 393 cards are still outstanding!

The table above also provides information on the total 2018 pledges for St. Mark's ministries and programs. However, it's our goal to exceed last year's pledges of \$921,378, in order to fund the additional 2019 budget requests received from St. Mark's committees. So, if you haven't yet submitted your commitment card for 2019, we encourage you to do so.

Cards are available in the Sanctuary pew racks and in the church office. Please take a moment to complete your commitment card, drop it in the mail or place it in the offering plate. You can also pledge and give online at www.umcstmarks.org and click on Giving or contact Ruth Kester for assistance (297-2062 or info@umcstmarks.org). Stay tuned for further Stewardship Campaign updates and a report on how your commitments are being used both within St. Mark's and in doing God's Work in the world!

St. Mark's Finance Committee

Longest Night Worship Service

Monday, Dec. 17- 6:00 p.m. Fellowship Hall

As many of you have no doubt noticed, there is less and less sunlight at this time of the year. Although this happens every year, it often takes a toll on many of us. For some of us, we may be leaving our homes in the morning and not returning until the sun has already set. As beings who are made to function in the light this lack of light can make life very difficult. We also celebrate many holidays during this time of year that for some, can increase the toll that this lack of light brings upon us. Luckily, we have the light of God on our side. God is always present with us and the darkness of the season can never drown out the Light of God.

To celebrate this light, you are cordially invited to our Longest Night Service on Monday the 17th of Dec. from 6:00-7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Our celebration on this evening will acknowledge the realities of darkness and hurt in our lives but will also aim to remind us of the Light of God present in our lives. This service will feature beautiful harp music, meditative readings, and a peaceful inviting atmosphere. Please join us if you are feeling a little low this season so that we can focus on the Light of God together.



COMMUNITY Carol Sing

Sunday, Dec. 9, 3:00 p.m.

The music of St. Mark's Fifth Annual Community Carol Sing will fill the Sanctuary on Sunday, Dec. 9. Under the direction of Elizabeth Schauer and accompanied by Sondra Franks, these musicians will lead us in this traditional holiday sing-along. The event will be at 3:00 p.m. with a cookie reception following afterwards providing an opportunity to fellowship. This event is free, family-friendly, and open to the community.

Christmas Eve Services—Monday, Dec. 24

11 a.m.—Lessons & Carols Worship and Holy Communion, with a soup and bread lunch following service.

4 p.m.—Blessing of the Children Worship, with words/music from *The Little Drummer Boy*

Christ Has Come! Evening services based on Isaiah 9:2b-7 & Luke 2:1-20

6 p.m.—Modern worship with our Praise Band, candlelighting

8 p.m.—Traditional Worship, with choir, Holy Communion, candlelighting

10 p.m.—Traditional Worship, with choir, Holy Communion, candlelighting outside

Christmas Eve Soup Luncheon!

Our annual soup and bread luncheon follows the 11:00 a.m. Christmas Eve worship service in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone is welcome to come and enjoy a warm bowl of soup and some joyful fellowship!



We hope you will consider contributing homemade crockpots of soup or homemade breads (muffins, rolls or biscuits) for this Christmas celebration. Your donations would be greatly appreciated and we ask that you contact Anita Winslow (see directory) in advance to confirm the type of soup or bread items you wish to donate for the luncheon.

Cookies!

We need them! Lots of them! This Christmas season, we are hosting *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* and the Community Carol Sing. We would like to have receptions after each event with homemade cookies.



Please bring your cookies on Friday, December 7 for the play, and during church on Sunday, December 9 for the Community Carol Sing. Thank you so much for your support. Questions? Contact Margaret Synhorst (margaret@umcstmarks.org) or the church office.



Christmas Eve Children's Music

Any child who would like to participate in the 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service is invited to attend rehearsals on Sundays prior to the service. We will gather for fifteen minutes in Rm 8/9 at 9:30 a.m. (Dec. 9, 16, 23). After rehearsals children may go directly to Sunday School or worship. Every child is welcome to participate. Hopefully you will consider having your child participate in this special music opportunity!



FACES OF FAITH

Soul Station Wednesdays January 9, 16, 23, 30

Come with an open heart. Leave with tools for faith!

Juan Manuel was only ten years old when he and 49 other Colombian children were recruited by an armed group. He was often hungry and often punished, abused and humiliated through the training. There seemed no escape.

One day, he and his friends pretended to be sick. Miraculously, they were freed because of their “disease.” He made his way back to his family but they were too poor to be able to help him much. His family found a safe house for him with Open Doors where he and other Christian children are educated in a place of safety and love. He grew in faith and learned to play the guitar. After six years, he was able to return home to his family. He was sad to see how poor they were and how hard they worked. He also saw how steadfast they were in their faith and shared his own faith with them. He helped them to have a better life and played his music in worship.

FACES OF FAITH explores the extraordinary faith of people under persecution throughout the world. We share stories of real people and their lives. We know it’s happening but what can we do about it? Each session is Scripture driven and prayer based. Interactive discussions and hands-on activities give you tools which you can immediately use during the week.

Sponsored by St. Mark’s Worldwide Christian Support Task Force

Multi-site Memorandum



Several years ago, I was stopped at a red light with my hand at the top of the steering wheel, when I was hit by this crazy question, “Oh my gosh! When did I get my mother’s hands?” Answer: DNA. Wouldn’t it be cool if we could choose the best parts of our parents?

The concept of multi-site is to take the best of our DNA and let it grow in another location. One definition of DNA is “the fundamental and distinctive characteristics or qualities of someone or something.” In the case of St. Mark’s, we do get to choose the best parts of our DNA. When you think of the best parts, the list is really, really long!

If you were in worship on Nov. 18, you’ll remember that Pastor Sharon’s message was, **Building for This and Future Generations**. It struck me, during the sermon, that we have a really strong foundation at St. Mark’s. Strong enough, in fact, that we need to build upon it and generously share it. Being

a missional church, we’ve done a very good job of sharing our gifts and talents in the Nash Elementary neighborhood. That will continue to happen, but there is an equally important mission field north of us.

I’m talking about taking the good news of Jesus Christ to the unchurched and under-churched. If you’ve driven the three mile radius between the Thornydale-Tangerine and Dove Mountain-Tangerine area, you’re aware of all of the new, family oriented neighborhoods north of St. Mark’s. They’re young, busy, over-programed families, who are unwilling to spend an extra forty minutes driving to and from a church whose members appear to be so established that it may be hard to fit in. (We don’t see ourselves that way, but it’s hard to refute people’s perceptions.)

The Multi-site Team spent countless hours in discussion and prayer, trying to discern God’s plan for the new site. Please pray for St. Mark’s, as we continue **Building for This and Future Generations**.

Kim Ogle, Multi-site Team

Volunteers Needed!

We've had great participation from the St. Mark's community with our monthly food packing at the Community Food Bank each month this year. Thank you! We have one more date for 2018 and that is Saturday, Dec. 8. We need at least ten volunteers. We meet in the north parking lot at the church at 8:00 a.m. and car-pool/take the church van to the Food Bank to work from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Volunteers need to be at least 16 years old and need to wear close-toed shoes. If you can help, please email Nancy Jackson (see directory).



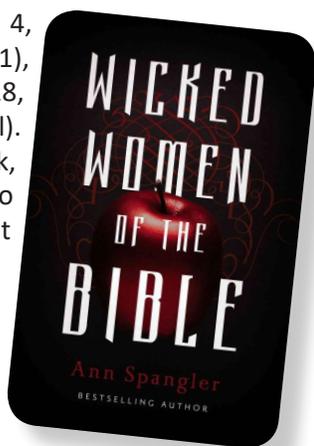
WICKED WOMEN of the Bible!

The Ladies Bible Study begins Jan. 4, 2019, for five Fridays (Jan. 4 - Feb. 1), at 9:30 a.m. We'll meet in Rm 17/18, except on Jan. 11 (Fellowship Hall). We'll study Ann Spangler's book, *Wicked Women of the Bible*. You do not need the book unless you want one. I will have handouts for you.

Bestselling author Ann Spangler tells the compelling and entertaining stories of twenty of the Bible's most fascinating and outrageous female characters. This book offers fresh understanding to anyone looking for deeper insight into the Scriptures. As you delve into the unvarnished stories of the Bible's wicked—and *wicked good*—women, you will begin to understand not only why their stories appear in the Bible, but also how they can yield fruited insights into your own life.

We will study ten women from her book, beginning week one with *Wicked Lies: The Story of Eve* and *Wicked Old: The Story of Sarah*. Wrapping up the study on week five with *Wickedly Wayward: The Story of Gomer* and *Wicked Funny: The Story of Esther*.

The sign-up sheet will be on the Adult Spiritual Growth bulletin board in the courtyard on Sunday, Dec. 9. This is a great way to meet new friends and have wonderful fellowship together. We hope you will join us for this study. If you have any questions, please contact Karen Allison (see directory).



Common Grounds Christmas Cookie Party!

There's still time to sign up for the Common Grounds Cookie Party on December 15!

If you are in your 20's, 30's, or 40's, you are invited to join us at the Mosher's house for a fun Christmas cookie exchange party at 6:00 p.m. Dinner will be provided, all you need to bring is your favorite cookies (no peanuts please)! Please let Rachel know if you have any food allergies so we can make sure there is something for everyone. Children are welcome for this family-friendly party! Contact Rachel for directions or questions.



UMW Holiday Luncheon

Join St. Mark's United Methodist Women on Tuesday, Dec. 11, at 10:00 a.m., Fellowship Hall 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 your family made to celebrate the holiday or your family heritage, consider bringing that side to share. If you are a guest, or it is difficult for you to bring a dish, just come and enjoy the fellowship.



The Southern Arizona Flute Orchestra will provide the program and officers will be installed for 2019 at the meeting. All women of the church are invited, you do not need to be a member of our organization or the church to attend—all are welcome! Childcare is available if requested from the church office (297-2062) before Friday, Dec. 7.

If you have questions or need transportation, please contact Virginia Tupper (see directory).



St. Mark's now livestreams 9:45 a.m. traditional worship service! In January 2019 a second service —*The Gathering* our modern worship service, at 11:15 a.m.—will be livestreamed. If you are out of town or unable to attend worship and have access to the internet, simply go to our website at www.umcstmarks.org and select "Live Worship" from the main menu on the home page.

Adult Spiritual Growth

Faith is a journey!

Advent Study

Advent studies are underway! Hopefully you have been able to participate in one of the 12 groups that have formed. Several people have obtained the book and are studying it on their own. Books are still available at the bulletin board in the courtyard if your schedule did not fit with any of the groups. The book **Prepare the Way: Cultivating a Heart for God in Advent**, by Pamela C. Hawkins, is \$10 and scholarships are available.

Ongoing Small Groups

Family Life/Sharing

Family Life/Sharing meets at 9:45 a.m. on Sundays in Rm 17/18 led by Terry Majewski & Rick Farnsworth and currently involved with the Advent Study.

Their schedule after Christmas is:

Dec. 30 Fifth Sunday – NO CLASS

Jan. 6–March 3 Fruit of the Spirit

May 10 Lenten study (book to be announced)

Seekers

Seekers meet at 11:15 a.m. on Sunday in Rm 17/18. Facilitators Brenda Hunter, Kelly Deyoe and the group are studying the book of **Deuteronomy**. They will meet Dec. 9, and 16 then resume with Deuteronomy starting on Jan. 6 thru April 14. Anyone is welcome to join this group that studies and discusses the books of the Bible.

Wednesday Study Group

Wednesday Study Group, facilitated by Marcia Rostad, meets at 10:00 a.m. in Rm 17/18 and is currently involved with the Advent Study.

Their schedule resumes after the New Year:

Jan. 9—Last week of **Short Stories by Jesus**

Jan. 16—**Simon Peter** by Adam Hamilton
A six-week class led by Linda Walker

Mar. 13—Lenten study begins
(book to be announced).

SOMETHING LIKE HOME – Film

Sunday, Jan 27– Loft Cinema

On Sunday afternoon, Jan. 27, from 3:00-5:00 p.m. at the Loft Cinema (Speedway in Tucson) hear Noor Alsabahi share her story in film and in person. Noor is part of a documentary film **Something Like Home**, produced by Duolingo, a free foreign language education company based in Pittsburgh, PA. The short 36 minute film highlights not only Noor's journey as a refugee, but also the journey of three others who were forced to flee their native country to find a new home in another land. Noor's story of life as an Iraqi born woman, a Syrian resident and then refugee into Turkey, is one that is inspiring and guaranteed to pull at your heartstrings!



Noor is being hosted by St. Mark's Church and Society and Adult Spiritual Growth committees. As a border town in the United States, the groups felt the story should be made available to the public and remind the community that the United Methodist Church is truly a place of Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors and Tucson that we are all God's children!

The ticket cost is \$5/each. We are hoping for a SELLOUT of this 370 seat theater. All proceeds go to The INN Project. First United Methodist Church has become a haven for refugees in transition and they can use the dollars for updating a space that is currently getting much use!

For now, save the date on your calendar, and watch for information about when tickets go on sale! Please contact Donna Reed (see directory) if you have questions.

Calling All Bakers!

The Early Childhood Center needs homemade cookie donations for our holiday cookie fundraiser. Donations should be brought to the ECC by the morning of Friday, December 14. Thank you in advance for your support!



WASS UP?

December 5, 2018

Volume 19, Issue 24



UPCOMING MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL EVENTS

December 9, 2018—

4:00 to 6:00

Mission Night

Reading to

cats & Dogs

Pima Animal Control



December 16, 2018—

3:00 to 5:30

Lazar Light Show



UA SCIENCE
FLANDRAU
Science Center & Planetarium

December 23, 2018—

No Youth Group

December 24, 2018—

Christmas Eve

4:00 set up Luminarias

Clean up candles after

last service

Greetings PreTeen's,
Wow , December is here!
This is such a joyous season. We will have lots of Fun Filled Fellowship this month. Can't wait to see you on Sunday afternoons.
Blessings,
Julie

December 9th - We will be making more blankets for the children at The Inn .

December 16th- Holiday Party!!! We will have a gift exchange (\$5-\$10 limit) and you can all bring in more yummy treats to share.

December 23rd-No PreTeen



Find us on Social Media!



St. Mark's Youth Group



stmarksumyf

a note from the

YOUTH DIRECTOR

Happy Advent!

You know that Advent is a season of waiting. Waiting for the celebration of the arrival of the Christ child. Waiting for Christmas.

When you were much younger, you waited anxiously for Santa Clause. (I'm not silly enough to say that we're not already waiting for Christmas gifts.) Now that you're older, you have a better understanding of Christmas.

In Sunday School, Confirmation, and worship, we lit the first candle of Advent last Sunday. For the next three Sundays, as well as Christmas Eve, I encourage you to give special attention to the liturgy that's being read as each candle is lit.

Blessings,
Kim

Middle School Moments

I put up my Christmas tree today! We haven't decorated yet. But because we have an artificial tree, we already pulled it out and set it up. I say we haven't decorated it...but I DID find one ornament we apparently forgot to take off last year! Oops!

I think Christmas lights, especially on a tree, are so beautiful. Take time this Advent to look around and really enjoy something. Maybe it's a little something like a pretty Christmas lights. Maybe it's a bigger deal like working through a problem with your friends. Whatever it is, take a minute, and enjoy it! This is a happy season, so we might as well be happy!

See you Sunday,
Rachel

2 Thessalonians 1:3-4 The Message

You need to know, friends, that thanking God over and over for you is not only a pleasure; it's a must. We have to do it. Your faith is growing phenomenally; your love for each other is developing wonderfully. Why, it's only right that we give thanks. We're so proud of you...



Soul Station Advent Study

During December, Soul Station, our mid-week gathering, is having a unique and wonderful Advent study. Dinner is at 5:45 p.m. and around 6:30 p.m. We begin our December program exploring **The Songs of Advent**. This is not about Christmas carols but about the songs found in the Bible about our Christmas Story. On Nov. 28 we learned about **A Song in Faith**, a story about Zechariah and God being at work even in the silence.



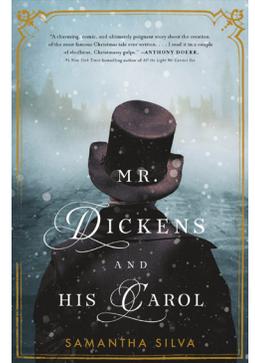
The next three weeks, we will look at the **Angels: A Song of Peace; Mary: A Song of Trust**, and **Simeon: A Song of Hope**. Then, on Wednesday, Dec. 26, we will

have a special evening to conclude this series. Please consider joining us for this very special Advent program.

Pastor Evy

Open Minds Book Discussion

Our Open Minds book discussion meets Friday, Dec. 14 (not Dec. 21), in the Library from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. There are two books to choose from in December: **Mr. Dickens and His Carol** (Silva)—fiction—or **A Christmas Memory** (Capote)—memoir. Choose ONE book, and join our group. This book study varies in attendance, and everyone is welcome to pop by when a book looks intriguing. Questions? Jane or Jerry Bartow (see directory).



PRAYER CORNER

We are a praying community at St. Mark's. Besides Sunday worship, you may submit prayer requests by email to prayerchain@umcstmarks.org or from our website www.umcstmarks.org. Also, visit our Prayer Room on campus and leave a prayer on our prayer wall.

Jared Bowman & family
Michael Campbell
Donald Chester
Tom DeShong
Judy Drescher

Keith & Mary Ann Glazier
Carolyn Hanna
David & Floretta Harrington
Patricia Keele
Brent Linebarier

Wanda & Ray Loughney
Jean Ogle
Hazel Roberts
Gina Russell
Jim & Mary Sanders

Marian Shultis
Carol Underwood
Jackie Vickers
Connie White
Lindsay Williams

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 Donna Severson
Zachary Dojaquez, grandson of Donna Severson
Patrick Emmett, son of Julie Wiens
Mike Freeman, son of Ken & Ann Freeman
Garrett Geer, grandson of Ellen Wise
Matthew Hughey, son of Juliee & Billy Morrison and grandson of Joyce Flick
Patrick Harris, grandson of Marilyn Vaughn
Rachel Kester, daughter of Don & Ruth Kester
Chad Long, grandson of Pat Long

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
Geoffrey Shafe, grandson of Mary Langemeier
Jason Smith, grandson of Jerry & Judy Smith
Clint Staschke, son-in-law of Cliff & June Young
Michael and Karisa Szczygiel, daughter and son-in-law of Joyce Flick
Brianna Walker, granddaughter of Barbara Fradenburgh; niece of Joan Fradenburgh



Calendar Notes

Fri., Dec. 7

7:00 p.m. Best Christmas Ever Pageant, Sanctuary
8:00 p.m. Pageant reception, Fellowship Hall

Sun., Dec. 9

Blood Mobile Drive, Fellowship Hall
Greeter Appreciation, Library-between services
3:00 p.m. Community Carol Sing, Sanctuary
4:00 p.m. Preteens and Youth Programs

Mon., Dec. 10

9:15 a.m. Holy Yoga, Fellowship Hall
4:00 p.m. Grief Support

Wed., Dec. 12

10:30 a.m. Chronic Illness/Pain Support, Library
5:45 p.m. Soul Station Dinner, Fellowship Hall
6:20 p.m. Soul Station Worship, Fellowship Hall

Thurs., Dec. 13

9:00 a.m. Quilters
6:30 p.m. Holy Yoga, Fellowship Hall

Fri., Dec. 14

9:00 a.m. Sidewalk Sunday School, Fellowship Hall
9:30 a.m. Open Minds Book Discussion, Library

Sat., Dec. 15

6:00 p.m. Common Grounds Cookie Party-Mosher's

Sun., Dec. 16

3:30 p.m. MOMS of Military, Library
4:00 p.m. Preteens and Youth Programs

Mon., Dec. 17

6:00 p.m. Longest Night Worship, Fellowship Hall



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

Website:

www.umcstmarks.org

Lead Pastor:

Rev. Sharon Ragland

Associate Pastors:

Stuart Salvatierra

Rev. Dr. Evy McDonald

Sunday Worship:

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

Soul Station

Wednesday Night:

Dinner - 5:45 p.m.

Music/Programs

6:15-7:15 p.m.

Dear Church Family ...



Thank you for your generous gift to Our Family Services of \$2,500. Your financial support helps us provide life-changing support for youth. Our Reunion House offered a safe home for 250 runaways and homeless teens in need this year. These positive impacts on individuals, families and our community would not be possible without you. THANK YOU for your commitment and your support to our community's most vulnerable. With deepest gratitude,

Beth Morrison – Chief Executive Officer

I want to thank our St. Mark's family for their outpouring of support and encouragement on the death of my beloved parents, Jay and Vergie Ferguson. The service for them was Dec. 1 in the little tiny Episcopal Church in Safford, AZ where my mother was a charter member, I was baptized and confirmed and where my children were baptized. Although this is a difficult time for me and my family—we are so grateful for the many wonderful years we had with them (they were married 71 years) and the cherished memories we carry in our hearts. Thank you all for your prayers and expressions of sympathy.

Pam Johnson

Thank you to the UMC St. Mark's congregation and committee members for my beautiful and meaningful prayer quilt. Also thank you for all the prayers you have sent my way. This quilt will be very comforting to me during my time of need. Blessings to all.

Kay Hobbs (Judy Poffenberger's sister)



LOGO SHOP shirts are in!

If you ordered shirts in October, please be sure to stop by the table in the courtyard on Sunday, Dec. 9 and pick up your items. Or, you may come to the church office – Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. to get your order.

Address Service Requested

If you would like to receive the Messenger electronically, and discontinue your paper copy, submit a request to messenger@umcstmarks.org

Reflections

Although Thanksgiving Day is past, gratitude is not over.

Thanks to all of you who have turned in your 2019 stewardship commitment cards for ***Our Hands, God's Work. Responding in Faith!*** We're doing well and now simply need those of you who haven't yet responded to complete and return your commitments so we can plan for our 2019 mission and ministries.

Thanks to all those who are already joining their hands and hearts with God's heart to enrich our Advent season—Worship Committee, Choirs, Praise Team and other musicians, those leading and participating in our Advent studies, those serving on mission projects and so many others.

Thanks to our Technology Team, working hard to bring us live streaming, which began at 9:45 a.m. on December 2. That day 44 people joined us via livestream! We're still working on some technical issues, especially some sound issues, but we're getting there.

Thanks for your questions and comments about our Multi-site Project. We're continuing to explore adding a second site for St. Mark's in the area north of us, where lots of development

is taking place along Tangerine, between Dove Mountain and Thornydale Roads. Some people have asked if we're planning to buy property or a building. The answer is "no." We're looking for a place to rent or use for a while. Once a congregation is well formed we can begin to explore property options, but that is well down the road. Thanks for your prayers as we look for ways to share the good news of God's love with others.

"I am grateful"

This year's Christmas mission offering will be divided equally between our Nash Neighbors ministries and our efforts to relieve hunger through meal packaging. You will be receiving a letter about this in the next few days. Our next meal packaging day with ***Rise Against Hunger*** is Sunday, January 6 at 12:30 p.m.

Thank you for your love and faithfulness in coming to worship, giving of your time and resources and seeking to know and share God's love. This Advent season, our theme is ***Prepare the Way*** for Christ to enter our hearts and lives again this Christmas.

I enjoy seeing you every time I get to do so.

Blessings, Sharon