

## Holy Week and Easter

Join us at St. Mark's during Holy Week to walk with Jesus and his disciples from the anticipation and tension of Palm and Passion Sunday through the joy and new life of Easter. A variety of worship experiences will help you enter into the love of Christ.

### Palm & Passion Sunday—April 14

Sermon: *Walking with Jesus*

Traditional worship at 8:15 a.m. and 9:45 a.m. and Modern worship at 11:15 a.m.; includes a procession with palm branches. The 8:15 and \*9:45 a.m. services include our Palm Sunday Cantata. The Chancel Choir, Celebration Singers, Bells of St. Mark's, Sondra Franks, soloists and a woodwind quartet combine forces to illuminate the themes and bring to life the events of Holy Week from the joyful ride into Jerusalem, to reflection on the prophecies, to the last supper and to the powerful relevance of these Scriptures to our lived-out faith today. *The Gathering* (Modern worship) at 11:15 a.m. with sermon, Praise Team and band.

### Soul Station—Wed., April 17, 5:45 p.m.

We will gather in the Fellowship Hall for dinner at 5:45 p.m. followed at 6:30 p.m. with a service focused on *Listening to God, What Have We Missed from Jesus' Teachings?* This will conclude with Holy Communion.

### \*Holy Thursday—April 18, 7:00 p.m.

A powerful drama will be performed, *The Seder That Changed Everything*. May your heart be touched by the reflections of Jesus and his disciples. You will experience being part of the play as Holy Communion is served by the disciples.

### Way of the Cross—Fri., April 19

A somber, meditative procession through the Stations of the Cross on the Memorial Garden Pathway, a remembrance of Christ's journey on the road to Calvary to prepare the body, mind and spirit for our Good Friday worship service afterwards. Meet at the Memorial Garden at 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

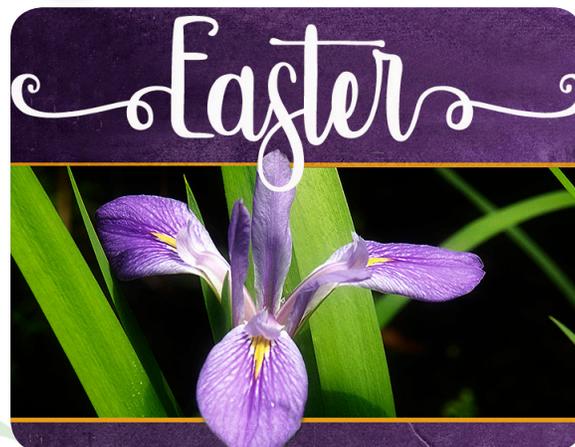
### \*Good Friday—April 19, 7:00 p.m.

*Come and Fill Our Hearts*—a Tenebrae service of increasing darkness as we remember the last days of Jesus' life as told by the Gospel of Luke.

### Holy Saturday—April 20, 10:00 a.m.

As we move from winter to spring, we often find ourselves feeling stuck in the cold and the dark longing for the warmth and the light. You are invited to this service, in the Memorial Garden Chapel, for a time of meditative readings and encouraging music designed to help us find our way out of the cold and dark of winter and enter into the light and new life of spring.

\*These services will be live streamed.



### Easter Sunday Services, April 21

Sermon: *All Is Made New!*

You are welcome to bring a fresh flower to decorate the Floral Cross located in the courtyard near the Sanctuary entrance.

#### 6:00 a.m. — Sunrise Service

An outdoor service on the church labyrinth, led by the St. Mark's youth with Holy Communion.

#### 7:00 - 10:30 a.m. — Pancake Breakfast

Breakfast served on the west patio, sponsored by the St. Mark's youth. Donations benefit the youth mission project.

#### 8:15 and \*9:45 a.m. — Traditional Worship Service

A service with traditional hymns accompanied by Chancel Choir, organ and brass.

#### 11:15 a.m. — The Gathering

A modern service with worship songs led by a Praise Team and accompanied by a band.

easter

COMMUNITY EVENT

Sat., April 13, 9 a.m. - Noon

It's a Community Easter Celebration for kids! Enjoy train rides, an obstacle course and jumping castle, petting zoo, and egg hunts. Plus, yummy treats like popcorn, cotton candy, cake walks and more. Admission is only \$3 a child (paid at the door).

## Youth Mission Project

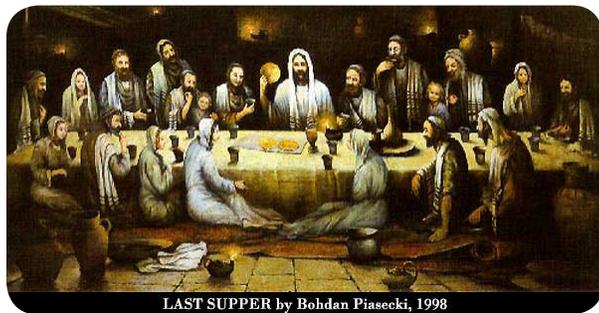
Did you know that plastic bags are among the most common sources of marine debris? Many birds and fish mistake these for food. These plastics don't biodegrade, so it will take the bags hundreds of years to decompose in a landfill.



These bags can be recycled, but not in our curbside recycling, so our Youth Council decided that in honor of Earth Day (April 22), the Youth mission project would benefit the Earth...and us all!

Every Sunday during April, the youth will collect plastic grocery bags. Since these bags cannot be recycled in your curbside recycling, we would love to help you (and the Earth!) out.

**Please bring your empty plastic grocery bags** to church during April, and leave them in the designated collection bin in the courtyard. The Youth Council will then take these to be recycled. Our youth thank you!



LAST SUPPER by Bohdan Piasecki, 1998

## The Seder that Changed Everything

**Thursday, April 18, 7:00 p.m., Sanctuary**

You are invited to attend a powerful play about Jesus' last night with his disciples—**The Seder that Changed Everything**. It is based upon the painting by Bohdan Piasecki. Be prepared to have your heart touched and to experience this Passover meal in a new way that will inspire your Holy Week journey.



This year, Vacation Bible School (VBS) is scheduled for June 3-7, 2019. Our theme is **LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR**. Online registration is open now.

Watch the newsletter for additional details.

*St. Mark's Worldwide  
Christian Support  
Task Force*



Following is a summary of an article that appeared on the Open Doors USA website on Feb. 28, 2019 about St. Mark's Worldwide Christian Support Task Force. The full article is posted on the OpenDoors website at: <https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/stories/a-vital-awakening-arizona-church-leads-a-vision-for-the-persecuted-church/>

### A Vital Awakening – Arizona Church Leads a Vision for the Persecuted Church

St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Tucson, AZ recognized the need and opportunity to support the 24-plus million global Christians who are living and sharing the gospel in countries where they are persecuted for following Jesus. Since 2014, St. Mark's UMC's Worldwide Christian Support Task Force has educated their congregation about what's happening where Christians are persecuted and more importantly focused on the role of the Body of Christ in strengthening the Church.

The Task Force leads numerous initiatives focusing on six countries on Open Doors' annuals World Watch List of most persecuting countries: Egypt, Myanmar, Syria, India, Mexico, and Nigeria. Church members have signed up to receive specific prayer alerts. Also, the Church participates in Open Doors' International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church, and in January offered Open Doors' four week study called the **Ripple Effect** during the Wednesday Soul Station service. The Missions Committee has allocated funds for persecuted Christians, and in 2017 part of the Thanksgiving offering was donated to supporting Christian women in Egypt. In March, the Task Force invited church leaders from around the Tucson area to a **Pastors/Leaders Intelligence Briefing** to hear from a Christian leader from a country where heavy persecution occurs.

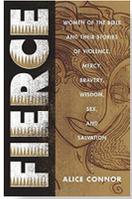
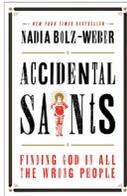
At the United Methodist's last Southwest Conf. our church presented a proposal to amend the United Methodist Church's Social Principles, stating that **"the United Methodist Church stands against persecution of Christians and stands with persecuted believers worldwide."** The Southwest Conference adopted the Amendment, and it will be presented to the international General Conference when it convenes in two years.

## Open Minds Book Discussion

The Open Minds Book Discussion Group will meet next on Friday, April 26 at 9:30 a.m. in the Library.

We'll be discussing the *Accidental Saints* by Nadia Bolz-Weber and *Fierce* by Alice Connor. Both books are a bit irreverent, and both authors are clergy. Choose one and join us in April! Everyone is welcome.

*Accidental Saints* "demonstrates what happens when ordinary people share bread and wine, struggle with Scripture together and tell one another the truth about their real lives... their faltering steps toward wholeness will ring true for believer and skeptic alike."



*Fierce* tells stories of the women of the Bible, beginning with the four who are listed in Jesus' genealogy.

## Disciple Bible Study II

"Why should I take a long-term Bible study?" Here are some answers from some participants in Disciple Bible Study II—*Into the Word, Into the World*:

-  Very much enjoyed this course. The group was great with my issues.
-  I got the most out of this course through class discussion and especially through the leaders' facilitation. They challenged me to think more deeply about my faith.
-  The relationships we developed with each other will last a lifetime. I recommend this to everyone.
-  Loved the teachers and the class as a whole... I will miss it and I am glad I took it.

## Communication as a Spiritual Practice

Here are a few remarks from some of the 35 people who attended the retreat:



Many thanks for organizing and facilitating a most enjoyable retreat! Kim Pearce's excellent presentation on *Communication as a Spiritual Practice* was relevant in today's culture and personally meaningful. Her stories held our interest, the handouts were helpful, and exercises kept us engaged and gave us a chance to practice the method she presented. I look forward to reading her book. Additionally, the White Stallion Ranch was an ideal place—peaceful, removed from the city, with beautiful desert landscaping—and the lunch buffet was delicious. The retreat passed too quickly; I wished we'd had more time.



Loved the location. Very hard to find (☹️), but so loved the setting. Best learning experience St. Mark's has provided/offered. Thank you!



Very pertinent and meaningful. I'm so pleased that I participated. It will take time to digest the practices, but I'm inspired to try.



I thought it was well-organized in every respect. Content was timely, helpful and very needed. I'd like a part two of this lecture/seminar subject!



Very organized and teacherly embedded; was room for very personal response; not just an intellectual exercise. Opened up possibilities for real functional communication – productive; started lots of story digestion.

## Meal Packaging Mission Project



**Sun., April 28, 12:30 p.m.** join us for a family-friendly mission project as we team up with Rise Against Hunger to package 10,000+ meals! The process is very precise and lots of fun! We work in an assembly line to package meals, box them and prepare them for shipment. It takes about 90 minutes to complete. You will have fun working on this important service project and get to know more of your St. Mark's community.

## Easter Flowers

The Worship Committee will place spring flowers and lilies in the Sanctuary and the courtyard on Easter Sunday. **If you would like to contribute toward these flowers in honor or in memory of someone**, complete the form below and bring it to the church office with your check made payable to St. Mark's UMC with "Easter flowers" on the memo line. Or, make payment online by following the "Giving Tab" at [www.umcstmarks.org](http://www.umcstmarks.org). The suggested donation of \$17 will go toward the Easter flower purchase. The difference between the cost of the flowers and your donation will go into our Flower Fund. Please return this form by Mon., April 15, to the church office.



Flowers may be taken home after the 11:15 a.m. service on Easter Sunday or on Tuesday, April 23 (the church office will be closed Mon., April 22). The remaining flowers will be delivered to the homebound Thursday, April 25.

### EASTER FLOWER FORM

Please **PRINT** clearly.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

I am contributing \$\_\_\_\_\_ toward the purchase of Easter flowers for the Sanctuary and outside.

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

Bring form to the church office on or before Monday, April 15, 2019.

## UMW Meeting

St. Mark's United Methodist Women will meet on Tuesday, April 9, at 10:00 a.m. in the church Library. Please join us at 9:30 a.m. for refreshments and fellowship. Ginny Johnson, a St. Mark's member will be presenting the program about her experiences as a Missionary in India for forty years. Come and hear her experiences of serving as a Missionary and raising a family in India.

All are invited—you do not need to be a member of St. Mark's UMW our church to attend. Childcare can be arranged by contacting the church office before Friday, April 5, 2019. Should you have questions or need a ride, please contact Kay Hayworth (see directory).

## Membership 101 Class

Have you been considering membership at St. Mark's? Would you simply like to know a little more about this terrific church? There is a great opportunity coming soon that might be just right for you!

**Membership 101** will be offered on Sunday, May 5 in the church Library from 12:30 p.m. until 2:00 p.m. You are warmly invited to join us as Pastor Sharon provides information about UMC history and places in the world today, as well as sharing some of her personal story. We'll have a chance to get to know more about THIS church—fun facts about our beginning and a quick look back through the decades at St. Mark's.



At the conclusion of this session, those interested in joining St. Mark's will be taken into membership on Sunday, May 19. Also, some short-term classes will be planned as follow-up to Membership 101 for those interested.

You may register for the class online; by signing the class list on the Adult Spiritual Growth bulletin board in the courtyard Sunday mornings; or by calling Janie in the church office (297-2062). *Please note: checking "wish to join" on the pew pad slip is not the same as actually registering for the class.*

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## Sunday Greeter Update!

We are changing the way our Sunday morning Greeters are contacted. Starting in mid-



April, interested volunteer Greeters may sign themselves up (by date and time) on the **Volunteer Opportunities Board** located on the west wall of the Sanctuary narthex (foyer).

When signing up for your service of choice (8:15 a.m. or 9:45 a.m.), please include your contact information and you will receive a reminder from the office.

**New Greeter Volunteers** are also encouraged to sign up—just select a date and service time and fill out the designated card on the **Volunteer Opportunities Board**. Please include your contact information for reminders. New Greeters, feel free to take home the *2019 Greeter Handbook* located in the narthex credenza racks on the south wall. Thanks to all St. Mark's Greeters, for your time and volunteer spirit; keep up the great work!

Worship Committee



## Coming to Easter Worship?

If you normally attend worship at 9:45 a.m. and have the option of attending another service, plan to come at 8:15 a.m. or 11:15 a.m. Easter Sunday, April 21. That could free up some seats for newcomers in our most crowded service (9:45 a.m.). Thanks in advance for considering this.

## Spaghetti Dinner Reminder!

Don't forget the UMW Drive-Through Spaghetti Dinner Friday, April 5 from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. Even if you forgot to preorder just come to the south parking lot at church and place your order. A meal of spaghetti/meatballs (vegetarian option available) salad, roll and cookies will be delivered to your car in spill proof containers. Meals are \$8/each and proceeds are used to support missions here and abroad.



## Chronic Illness/Pain Group News

Spring has sprung, and we are hopping to it with a busy month planned. We'd love you to join us any 2nd or 4th Wednesday (10:30 a.m. to noon) in the Library. Our group is open to the whole community.

**Join us on April 10** (Fellowship Hall) for a wonderful mission project! We'll make Easter cards for our sick and homebound members. All materials are provided. We have ways to contribute, in spite of illness, pain or both. Along those lines.....

**On April 24**, we have a meeting and a special activity planned. For our meeting that morning, we will continue to delve into the first chapter of our book, **But God, Wouldn't I Be More Useful to You If I Were Healthy: Chronic Illness and the Christian Life** by Esther Smith. No need to have read the book. It is very short, but so powerful. If you can relate to the following excerpt from her book in any way, then please come and give us a try: "In a practical sense, working to the point of burnout and pain that leaves us chair, couch or bedbound is not helpful to anyone, as we lose our ability to complete tasks that may have been accessible to us before we pushed ourselves over the edge.

## Matter of Balance Class

Many older adults experience a fear of falling. When they develop this fear they often limit their activities, which can result in physical weakness, making the risk of falling even greater. A Matter of Balance is a series of classes designed to reduce the fear of falling and increase activity levels among older adults.



The program is designed to benefit older adults who:

- Are concerned about falls
- Sustained falls in the past
- Restrict activities due to falling concerns
- Interested in improving your flexibility/balance/strength
- Are age 60 or older, community-dwelling and able to problem-solve.

Where: Rm 20 – St. Mark's UMC

When: Mondays 9a.m. to 11a.m.(April 29 thru May 20)

Cost: \$20 per person or \$30 per couple

Please call PCOA to register (520-305-3410). This class is sponsored by Pima County On Aging.

This is an issue that requires attentive wisdom as we follow Gods commands and accept His grace in our lives of work or service. And I am convinced that for those of us who are physically limited, there are ways and manners of serving that honor God's calling on our lives, but also protect from relapse and burnout. It is possible to use what God has given us, and then stop, free from guilt."

Our special activity on April 24 is a field trip to the Pima County Fair to see **Newsboys**, a Christian music concert. We welcome anyone from the church to join us.



We will have accompaniment people to help anyone with a walker or wheelchair, so you can get out without worry and enjoy a fun activity together. We will meet at the church at 2:30 p.m. and caravan to the Fairgrounds. Anyone in church that would like to attend, please RSVP. If you would like to be a support person for us, or have a truck so we can transport wheelchairs and walkers, please contact April DuBoce (see directory). We hope to see you soon!

# WASS UP?

April 3, 2019

Volume 20, Issue 5



## UPCOMING MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL EVENTS

**April 7, 2019—**

**12:30-**

Meet at Wesley House  
U of A Baseball vs.  
Washington  
Tickets= \$5  
(scholarships available)



**April 14, 2019—**

**3:30 to 5:30**

High School  
Discussion and Study  
Middle School  
Ostrich Farm

**April 21, 2019—**



No Sunday School,  
Confirmation, or  
Youth Group  
**Eat pancakes, and  
attend worship.**

Greetings PreTeen's,  
What a wonderful time of year  
this is! The days are getting long-  
er, the weather is amazing and  
there is so much to look forward  
to. We only get to meet 3 times  
this month so lets make the most  
out of each group. Remember  
that PreTeen is a safe place to  
have fun and learn about our  
faith. We need to practice being  
patient and respectful of each  
other. The next 2 weeks we will  
continue on Jesus' journey as we  
prepare for Easter Morning.  
Blessings, Julie

**April 7th-**

Pretzel Prayer Activity  
Board games  
Bring your favorite game  
from home to share.

**April 14th-**

Palm Sunday  
Coloring eggs and  
making an Easter  
Story snack mix.



**April 21st-**

**EASTER SUNDAY-**  
**NO PRETEEN ( Hope to see  
you at the Sunrise service )**

Find us on Social Media!



St. Mark's Youth Group



stmarksumyf

a note from the

# YOUTH DIRECTOR

Sometimes we have to step out of our comfort zone, and try something new. Recently, I had to repair part of our sprinkler system. Definitely not in my comfort zone, but I convinced myself to try it.

Many of you have decided to go on SSP or Youth 2019, or to participate in the Middle School Mission. Any one, or all of those things could be new and out of your comfort zone. No matter how many times Rachel and I tell you that you'll have a great time, you may be a little apprehensive.

Now I'm going to ask you to do something that can be a little awkward, if you're not used to it—invite someone to church this Easter. You could influence a person's faith life with one simple invitation.

Blessings,  
Kim

## Middle School Moments

There is a Chinese proverb that says "the man who moves a mountain must start by moving small stones." This week, I felt like I should hang that up on my wall, right over my computer!

When I look at my to-do list, it sure feels like a mountain. But as I start to check things off, it becomes much less intimidating, for sure. Those little stones are much easier to move than the whole mountain.

It's easy to get overwhelmed. Especially this last quarter of school. You have the big AzMERIT tests coming up, plus all of your regular work. That's a pretty big mountain! But if you take it all, stone by stone, you will get there!

See you Sunday!  
Rachel



## Sierra Service Project

**SAN DIEGO**  
**June 28- July 5**

We still have a few spots left! If you want to go email Kim at [kime@mcstmarks.org](mailto:kime@mcstmarks.org). The cost is \$175, divided in monthly payments. Scholarships are available.



**B**  
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**S**

4/5—Brenna Eblen  
4/6— Jonathan Niemiec  
4/14— Gabby Morrison  
4/22— Grace Carsten

# Making Missions Matter!

Here's a brief update about some of Interfaith Community Services' (ICS) recent accomplishments this year along with volunteer opportunities available.

ICS is just one of the designated agencies which St. Mark's supports through our Missions Committee.

## RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ♥ Over 4,100 families received food boxes.
- ♥ 327 households received assistance with rent, utilities, prescriptions and back to work items.
- ♥ 4,352 mobile meals delivered to 72 home bound individuals

## ICS VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

Van drivers are needed! Drive the ICS van to take recipients to morning or afternoon appointments. OR Mobile Meals drivers are desperately needed to join the summer team! Call Tori Carlson ICS Volunteer Resources Manager (520-526-9308 or [Tcarlson@icstucson.org](mailto:Tcarlson@icstucson.org)).



## UPCOMING EVENTS:

**If Music Be The Food**—A chamber music concert to benefit the hungry of our community on Sunday April 28, 3:00 p.m., Grace St. Paul's Episcopal Church 2331 E. Adams. No admission—bring food or monetary donations to support the ICS Food Bank!

**Living Fully, Preparing for Death**—a symposium for faith leaders on Thursday, May 2, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Anshei Israel 5550 E. 5th St. The event is **free**, open to the public and facilitated by David Fife, Casa De La Luz Hospice.

Are you missing your favorite drink container? Earring? Glasses? Jacket? Car keys? Book? Umbrella? Check the **Lost and Found box** at the church office, any Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to look for items you may be missing!



## 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](mailto:prayerchain@umcstmarks.org). You may also, visit our Prayer Room on campus and leave a prayer on our prayer wall.

Jared Bowman & family  
Clara Campbell  
Donald Chester  
Shelley Shelton Coltrin  
Judy Drescher

Keith and Mary Ann Glazier  
Jim Hanna  
Floretta Harrington  
Patricia Keele  
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](mailto:messenger@umcstmarks.org).

**Hank Bautzmann**, son of Nancy Bautzmann  
**Alex Boettcher**, grandson of Carla and Paul Boettcher  
**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  
**Christopher Lewis**, grandson of Donald Lewis

**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., April 5**

4:00-7:00 p.m. Spaghetti Dinner Drive-Thru

## **Sat., April 6**

8:00-10:00 a.m. Market On The Move

## **Sun., April 7**

9:45 a.m. Confirmation Class, Rm 20  
2:00 p.m. Hardage Reception, Fellowship Hall  
3:00 p.m. Sonoran Bells Concert, Sanctuary  
4:00 p.m. Holy Yoga, Rm 17/18  
4:00 p.m. Youth Group, Wesley House  
4:00 p.m. PreTeens, Rm 8/9

## **Mon., April 8**

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

## **Tues., April 9**

4:30 p.m. Meditation Garden Board, Conf. Rm.  
5:30 p.m. Advisory Board  
6:30 p.m. SPRC, Conf. Rm  
6:45 p.m. Missions Committee, Rm 8/9

## **Wed., April 10**

10:30 a.m. Chronic Pain/Illness, Fellowship Hall  
Noon BULLETIN DEADLINE  
5:45 p.m. Soul Station Dinner, Fellowship Hall  
6:20 p.m. Soul Station Worship, Fellowship Hall  
6:15 p.m. Common Grounds, Library

## **Thurs., March 28**

Noon MESSENGER DEADLINE  
6:00 p.m. Trustees Board, Conf. Rm



## **St. Mark's Messenger**

Published bi-weekly

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

### **Email:**

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

### **Website:**

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

\*Live-streamed at

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

### **Soul Station**

Wednesday Night:

Dinner - 5:45 p.m.

Music/Programs

6:15-7:15 p.m.

## **Dear Church Family ...**



Thank you so very much for the love, calls, cards and most of all prayers for me and my family as the Lord took my beloved sister Suze. I am so blessed to be a part of this caring church community. You are always there for me and I give thanks to God for all of you.  
*Lois Boydston*

Thank you to everyone for your notes of congratulations as I celebrated twenty years of youth ministry at St. Mark's. Your kind words have been very humbling. Additionally, your support and encouragement, as I embark on the journey toward becoming a Licensed Local Pastor is invaluable.

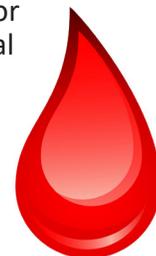
Finally, Mike and I and our family sincerely appreciate the outpouring of sympathy that we've received after the loss of Mike's mom, Jean. We are truly blessed to be a part of such a wonderful church community.

*Blessings, Kim Ogle*

## **Coordinator Needed for Blood Drives**

The Red Cross needs a volunteer from St. Mark's to setup dates for blood drives that are convenient for Red Cross and St. Mark's. The ideal volunteer would recruit and schedule donors for the day of the drive. Then, monitor registered donors during the drive to ensure donors come as scheduled. Typically there are four blood drives scheduled at St. Mark's during the year. The next drive is planned for July.

This is a very important outreach project that can literally save lives. Please contact Karen Fontes from the Red Cross ([karenfontes@redcross.org](mailto:karenfontes@redcross.org)) or at 520-419-8815) if you are interested, and be sure to inform Shelley Gault that you will be the St. Mark's Blood Drive coordinator.



## Address Service Requested

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

## Reflections

### Welcome?

Rita, Allen and their ten year old son, Cody, had recently moved to Tucson. Cody had been baptized in a United Methodist Church long ago, but the family hadn't been part of a church since then. When they moved to Tucson they decided to visit some churches because Cody had been asking about God and church. One spring Sunday they arrived at the United Methodist Church near them just as the service was starting. They had seen the "open hearts, minds and doors" on the side of the building. The sanctuary was crowded so an usher graciously led them to a pew about half-way from the front. A person was sitting on the aisle but there were a few seats next to that person. Rita, Allen and Cody watched as the usher asked the person to move in further on the pew. The person said, "no," so the usher asked if they would stand up so the newcomers could go in the pew. The person frowned and turned a bit and the newcomers climbed over them into the pew. Fortunately some people on the other side of the newcomers turned and spoke to them, welcoming them and taking a particular interest in Cody.

That same Sunday some newcomers, Jane and Tom, arrived early and sat in a pew near the front. Two people who normally sat in that pew arrived a bit later. They loved sitting in "their" seats where they could see and hear well. They saw that someone else was there that day. They had a choice to make, they told the pastor later. Just as worship was about to begin, they went up to the newcomers and introduced themselves.

"Are these your seats?" the newcomers asked. The people looked at each other and one then said, "Heavens, no! No one has their own seats. Welcome to our church. We love it here and are just glad to be here today." They went to the back and an usher graciously helped them find seats.

As we approach Palm Sunday (4/14) and Easter (4/21) we know that people will take the risk to come to our church with the hope of meeting the love of Jesus. They may not know that's what they are seeking, but somehow God has led them to our doors on that day. Perhaps they're new in town, or just suffered a loss, or are simply longing for a place to belong. The upcoming Sundays are a God-given opportunity for us to extend our most gracious hospitality, in Jesus' name. Especially with the uncertainty in the UMC and some news messages portraying the UMC as unwelcoming, we need to go the extra mile to help people experience God's love at St. Mark's. Thank you for helping Rita, Allen, Cody, Jane, Tom and many more people know God better for having entered our doors.

Blessings, Sharon

P.S. I invite you to draw near to Jesus through the events of Holy Week, which begins with Palm and Passion Sunday on April 14. A special musical offering from our choirs (including our Bell Choir) will take place that day at 8:15 & 9:45 a.m. The *Gathering* worship will take place at 11:15 a.m. with our Praise Team and guests playing brass instruments. See all the events of Holy Week on the front page of this *Messenger*.