

Messenger

Changing the world through Christ by caring for all people.

Volume 60, Number 6

May 6, 2020



Administrative Changes Underway

We have both sad and happy news to share from the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC). We are sad to announce that Sallyann Wassmuth is retiring and leaving her position as of May 29, 2020. With that sadness comes the joy of introducing Shelley Coltrin into that position.

Thank You Sallyann Wassmuth!

Sallyann Wassmuth will retire from her position as St. Mark's Communications and Outreach Coordinator at the end of May. We have appreciated her teamwork, optimistic "can do" attitude, and her many creative accomplishments these past few years.

Sallyann has enjoyed the day-to-day challenges of her job and working with various committees. Working on Vacation Bible School has been especially satisfying, designing the theme logo as well as creating videos of the children...fun! Some of her major projects included the development of the St. Mark's website design, St. Mark's logo design, and the **Messenger** newsletter layout and colorful, seasonal special editions.



The best thing of all is that we won't be saying goodbye. We will still see

Sallyann and her husband, Paul, in worship on Sundays at St. Mark's!

Welcome Shelley Coltrin!

We are pleased to announce that Shelley Coltrin will start in her new position as St. Mark's Communications and Outreach Coordinator on May 18. She will provide leadership for the church's communication and outreach ministries. Some of her many responsibilities will include: design and edit the Messenger newsletter, create Facebook posts, update St. Mark's website, produce publications and marketing materials, produce press releases and coordinate church advertising, participate in community organizations and coordinate community outreach events, such as the First Responders event.



Shelley earned a Bachelor of Arts (Magna Cum Laude) in Journalism from the University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ. Her professional experience is extensive and includes working several years for local news media organizations. We are very excited to tap into Shelley's intelligence, innovation, humor and optimistic attitude. Shelley, her husband Marcus and daughter Courtney are long time members of our St. Mark's UMC family.

Staff Parish Relations Committee

Input Project Update

I would like to thank everyone for their patience while waiting for the results from the Input Project. Our intent had been to share them first with the members of Covenant Council, and then with the rest of you. Like many other plans the last few weeks, this one also went awry when we decided to cancel the Covenant Council scheduled for March. However, like all of you, we have been adapting to the new normal. Our next Covenant Council is scheduled for May 19, and we will be holding it via the Zoom platform. We will be sharing the results then. After the members have a chance to review the report, we will next share information with you.

I cannot say too often how grateful the organizing committee is to the people who facilitated and participated in the discussions.

*Brenda Hunter
Input Project Committee Member*



Holy Yoga Returns Via Zoom!

The Gospels tell us to “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, and with all your strength.”

Just Breathe Holy Yoga provides an opportunity to fellowship with others while stretching, practicing controlled breathing techniques, reflecting on Scriptures, while building flexibility and strength.



Class will be on Monday mornings. The Zoom “room” will open at 9:00 a.m., class will start at 9:15 a.m. If you are interested in trying a gentle, scripture-based yoga practice, email Tricia Chester (Tricia@umcstmarks.org) for the zoom link and more information.

TELECARE

With the current climate because of COVID-19 there has been a great need to come together in new ways at church. Since we are not able to be in the same physical space we have had to find ways to connect that do not have the risk of meeting physically. One of the responses of our church to this is Telecare. This ministry is meeting with great success!

As a part of Telecare, every group in the church has been staying in contact with everyone in their groups (choirs, committees, classes, etc.). Beyond this, there are the members of our community who are not connected through one of these groups.



Telecare is bridging the gap with phone calls from volunteers these people. We are happy to say that we have worked through the entirety of our membership and have set up over 340 phone calls to happen every week by over 30 volunteers. We are so thankful for each of the volunteers for helping to keep our community together and growing stronger through this difficult time.

We have been learned much through these phone calls. Many of our volunteers have been calling numbers that are no longer in service. So if you are not receiving phone calls from a volunteer and you are not a part of a group at St. Mark's the most likely reason is that the church has an out-of-date phone number.

There is no time like the present to update your phone number with the church. You can do this by emailing Sherry Walker (sherry@umcstmarks.org) or complete the **Personal Contact Information Form** located on the website under RESOURCES, FORMS.

Adult Spiritual Growth

Faith is a journey!

Summer Planning

The Adult Spiritual Growth Committee is working to offer you spiritual and educational opportunities for this summer. Because the church is still closed to gatherings of any kind until further notice, we are planning on “distanced gathering” via Zoom or email until clearance from the Conference. Some are just in the “idea” stage, and others are already underway.

Specific information on how to be a part of these will be forthcoming via Pastor Sharon's Weekly Messages and through a monthly **Messenger**.

- 1 Monthly book discussion - same as we've had other summers, but via Zoom. The first one will be in June (date and time to be determined).
- 2 Weekly Bible study via Zoom. Rev. Dr. Roger Pierce will lead this. Ideas include
a.) continuance of the Monday morning **Start the Week the Right Way**,
b.) discussion of a specific passage of Scripture,
c.) study of a particular book of the Bible. More specifics will follow sometime in May.
- 3 Continue **Thoughts to Ponder** via email. Linda Walker has been leading us weekly with quotes from various sources that deal with some spiritual aspect. People reflect on them and then respond via email so that everyone can share their thoughts. This has been very uplifting. If you are interested in joining this group, email Margaret Synhorst (margaret@umcstmarks.org).
- 4 Prayer Group via Zoom. We are working with Kay Hayworth, UMW president and member of the Prayer Chain to determine the exact format of this: perhaps small groups of people who want to focus on personal prayers in the company of others. Once this is developed, we will get information out to you.

If you have any other ideas for “socially distanced” fellowship, please do not hesitate to contact Margaret Synhorst or Judy Boroto to discuss them.

Blessings to all. Prayers for everyone's continued safety and health.

Judy Boroto, Chair

Next Membership 101—May 31!

Have you been wanting to know more about this terrific church? Are you considering membership at St. Mark's?

If so, you are warmly invited to our next Membership 101. This class will take place via Zoom invitation on Sunday afternoon, May 31, 12:30 p.m.—2:00 p.m.



You may register from the church website under CLASSES, then MEMBERSHIP 101, or email Tricia at the church office (Tricia@umcstmarks.org).

As we get closer to the date of the class, we'll provide you with instructions on how to access the Zoom meeting.

Trustees Update - May 2020

The Trustees had some other projects in progress when the COVID-19 situation hit and most of those have been completed. A few of those are as follows:

- New floors and cove molding in classrooms 16, 17
- New floor, cove molding, and paint in bathroom between classrooms 16, 17
- Upgraded security system in Admin. Building
- Panic buttons installed in Admin. Building and Sanctuary
- Additional security cameras installed and are operational
- Two bathrooms updated: Outside Prayer Room and off Meditation Room (Sanctuary)
- Bathrooms in Buildings 1, 2, 3 will be painted during May (in-house project)

The Trustees are currently deferring the start of any new capital projects in order to keep expenses in line with income during this difficult period. We will address those maintenance issues that present themselves when the warm weather hits (e.g. A/C unit outages) so that our campus is ready when it reopens.

*John Cecilia
Chairperson, Board of Trustees*



Kitchen Remodel Progresses!

The Kitchen Remodel Project continues to progress well! Some of the advances since the last April *Messenger* article are as follows:

- Intermediate plumbing and electrical work should be completed within the next 1-2 weeks
- Mechanical prep work for the new exhaust hood, fire suppression system, and dedicated A/C unit will begin next week
- Cabinetry has been ordered along with floor tile
- Final appliance selections have been made and orders have been placed
- Tie-ins are being run to integrate the new fire suppression system with the 24/7 monitored fire alarm system

Overall, the project continues to be on budget and ahead of schedule. Once all the intermediate utility work is completed the walls will be closed and the floor will be tiled. The contractor continues to actively manage the project and we are in daily communication with the on-site Supervisor. Hopefully, the pictures (below) give you a good sense of the progress and extent of the work being completed to deliver a new kitchen at St. Mark's!



Musical Musings! Season Finale—May 17!

The last concert of the **Musical Musings!** season is a go! Although we missed out on two concerts during the month of April, we will get to enjoy Pete Fine's guitar recital on Sunday, May 17, at 3:00 p.m.

Pete is an internationally known acoustic and electric guitarist who has done concerts around the world! St. Mark's is so blessed to have him as a member of our Praise Team at The Gathering. He will be presenting original works during his concert and a program will be available on our website.



Like our Sunday worship services, this "virtual concert" can be accessed from St. Mark's web page, Facebook, and YouTube. A program for the concert will be posted on our website under the RESOURCES tab, if you would like to access that for the concert.

A special shout-out to Pete for working to put this together—and for the help of our Technology Coordinator, Kevin Conlin. It was no small task. Please tune in on the 17th and enjoy this special concert of original works.

Graduation

Please get a photo and the name of your school to Kim by May 11, so you can be included in the video that will be shown in worship on Graduate Recognition Sunday, May 17. Send info and photos to Kim Ogle (kim@umcstmarks.org). We will celebrate all of our graduates, high school through grad school, in the video. College grads, in addition to your photo and school, please include your degree.



Sometimes, members of our St. Mark's community like to submit information about their grandchildren who are graduating. That's okay, we like to celebrate everyone!



Over the past ten months we have been enjoying St. Mark's carillon tolling at the top of every hour during daylight. This wonderful gift was donated to St. Mark's by Jack Armantrout in loving memory of his wife, Margaret. During these difficult times, the carillon has been providing a hymn of hope Mondays through Saturdays at 6:00 p.m. and Sundays at noon. Next time you're nearby at those times, listen for this beautiful music of encouragement.

Handy Hands Ministry

We understand that there may be repair problems that need attention immediately rather than having to wait through this COVID-19 shutdown. Perhaps your faucet just started dripping, your garbage disposal doesn't work, your sink or toilet is clogged, or something just broke and you'd like Handy Hands Ministry to take a look at it.



Dave Shelton and John Shattuck are still available for Handy Hands projects. During this time, Dave and John will take precautions and wear face masks, use hand sanitizer and would stay at least six feet away from everyone while working at your home.

If you need assistance, please complete a Handy Hands "Request for Repairs" form and we'll contact you as soon as possible. The form is accessible from the website main menu, RESOURCES, FORMS. You may also call the church office (297-2062) and leave your name and phone number, if you do not have access to a computer.

Stories of Good From Our St. Mark's Church Family!

First off, a big THANKS to Jane Bartow and Joan Fradenburgh for planting seeds of this project!

Here's a story from Joan!

There is a group in Olathe, KS making headbands with two buttons on each. The headbands are for medical workers who need to wear face masks for long periods of time. The buttons are for hooking the elastic loops of the masks around instead of around their ears, relieving pressure.



During our social distancing, I have stayed connected with friends and our Elizabeth Circle with written communications. Phone calls are awkward for me because of the odd schedules we keep at our house. When I found out that the virus only lives on paper for about three hours, I started making and sending cards through the mail. (I leave my mail in the mailbox or on the porch for three hours before bringing it in the house.)

Many others I stay in touch with through email. I'm very grateful for all that the office staff is doing for all of us to keep us connected and in touch. Every contact helps. Blessings for all you do for all of us, especially the prayer shawls.

Mary Wald

My sister, Becky (Wallace) and I live together and we have next door neighbors who are very dear to us. They are older, the husband has Alzheimer's and we have been getting their grocery lists from them and getting what they need. They have been like a second set of parents for both of us and we care very deeply for them both. It just makes the heart feel good when you can help one another. I see, read, and hear of many good things that are happening all over the world.

I just pray that when this virus has left and the world can get back to "normal routines" that none of us forget the thoughtful deeds, kind words, and dedicated hard work that so many have done for us.

On a personal note, I want to extend an extra thank you to our pastors Sharon, Evy, and Stuart. Also Kim Ogle, the choirs, and the technical team at St. Mark's for the fantastic job of keeping in touch with us! Be it Facebook, the website, or YouTube, all of you will get a HUGE hug and much love from us when we can return to our church! Thanks be to God for each of you!

Diane Damewood

The library is closed! Bookman's is closed! Online reading is okay, but I like the feel of a real book in my hands. So what to do?

We live in a small neighborhood, less than thirty houses. Our neighbor has suggested installing one of those little library boxes (<https://littlefreelibrary.org/start>) so we can all have something new to read. And he has even volunteered to build and manage it! Everyone has books that they have already read and don't know what to do with, so this is a great neighborly idea...wish I had thought of it!

Judy Savage

I can't really remember how this all started. I know we were concerned that medical people, not on the frontline, were left without masks because of the PPE shortage. Three ladies from St. Mark's asked, "What can we do to help?"

In response to the ongoing Craft Circle request for donations, we had cotton, flannel and elastic, exactly what we needed to make masks. We got mask-making instructions from Joann's Fabrics. We had all the supplies, we just needed people who were willing to cut and sew. An email was sent out to the UMW Craft Circle and other ladies of the church and we began sewing masks for healthcare workers. A group of 13 volunteers jumped in to help with this much needed project to help protect health workers during the pandemic. The sewing group has increased and decreased weekly, but we continue. Shortage of elastic has plagued us, and then shortage of flannel, but we persevered. One HOA group donated flannel and elastic. St. Mark's members searched through their sewing supplies and found bits of flannel and elastic. And when there was no more elastic to be found anywhere, one lady made ties to use in place of elastic and we continued making masks.

To date, with the help of these volunteers, we have donated 458 masks to medical staff at hospices, oncology facilities, hospitals, nursing students, shelter staff and home health workers. We currently have 17 masks ready for distribution, 100 masks out being sewn by our volunteers, and 155 masks (in kits of five masks each) waiting to be sewn. And so we continue...

You can help by donating thread, flannel, elastic, and bias tape or by volunteering to help sew. Contact Bonnie Sargent (see directory).

Bonnie Sargent, UMW Craft Circle

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Missions Update

The Missions Committee has made some adjustments during this COVID-19 crisis.

Our meal ministry to the Primavera Men's Shelter continues, with some important changes. For social distancing purposes, Primavera now requests that meal preparers either drop off food in its original packaging at the shelter or send them a check so they can shop and prepare their own meals.

In March, the St. Mark's United Methodist Women (UMW) re-purposed food items that were originally purchased for their canceled spaghetti dinner, to go to Primavera for our church's March supper commitment. If your group is signed up to provide a meal in the upcoming months, please call Eric Cross 520-888-4221 at the shelter to see if there are any changes. If you, or your group, needs a check to cover expenses for food you planned to use, please email me as early as possible (see directory). These men depend on us to feed them. We don't want to let them down.

Thank you for your generous donations of food to the Interfaith Community Services (ICS) Food Bank in March. We collected over 300 pounds of food in the Welcome Center before the church closed. John Yost, church member and food bank volunteer, was a big help in this effort.

As you may know, the Missions Committee receives 10% of all St. Mark's contributions. We continue to disperse funds to our designated mission partners as we are able. We are prioritizing our payments to these charities according to need and available monies. We are putting some donations on hold until more funds become available. We are working closely with Ruth Kester, our church bookkeeper, to be good stewards of these monies.

Thanks to your generous giving, our April disbursements were \$2,500 to Interfaith Community Services and \$2,000 to StandUp for Kids, a ministry for homeless youth here in Tucson.

Pat Kittrell, Chair

ICS Food Drive

Many of you are wanting to help those who have food insecurity during this pandemic. And the need is great. St. Mark's is going to collect food in the north parking lot twice a week, starting May 5. Food items will be donated to Interfaith Community Service (ICS) food bank. Here are the details:



What: Non-perishable food items

When: Tues., 10-11 a.m. (John Yost)

OR Wed., 6-7 p.m. (Ken Dunlap)

Where: North church parking lot (Magee side).

If you are willing and able, buy a couple of extra items at the grocery store and drop them off (there will be no contact). Even in these difficult times, St. Mark's is still caring for those in our community who need it most.

The INN—In Virulent Times

I imagine you have noticed a lack of regular communication from me in these past months – and for that I apologize. Circumstances at the INN, pre-virus, left us often overstaffed as the border tightened. Then suddenly we would get 20+ persons without warning. However, we adjusted and were able to accomplish some much needed work: the playroom was tiled, area rugs were put down to define different areas, and more comfortable furniture was donated—already it was more welcoming. Overall painting improved the look, making our spaces brighter and the Voyagers RV Club from Texas built sturdier shelves, tile was laid in the playroom and the overnight volunteer room. Bathrooms received cabinets and shower liners making it feel much brighter. If you were a frequent visitor, you had to appreciate the difference. We were “in the groove.”

Then came the virus. The INN had to close and everything changed! Currently, the Board is struggling with what The INN will look like going forward. The Board had a wakeup call as a result of this global pandemic. We agree we need to reevaluate our practices, once The INN reopens:

- Fifty visitors may not be a realistic number to accommodate while maintaining proper distancing,
- Will we need multiple sites, individual rooms?

Youth Ministry

The latest news for High School, Middle School and Pre Teen Students!



Adventures of the Youth Directors



May Birthdays

May 3 — **Kiera Ritchey**

May 14 — **David Titzel**

May 20 — **Don Booth**

(High School Sunday School Teacher)

May 26 — **Carter DaDeppo**



Confirmation News

Congratulations to our Confirmation students for their hard work and dedication. This year's class had some extra challenges as they faced completing the curriculum using technology such as Zoom and Google Classroom! Kim and Rachel are so proud of you!

St. Mark's Got Talent!

Thanks to everyone who helped make our "catch" video! It turned out GREAT! I love that we can still work together and have fun, even when we aren't physically together! This month, we want to showcase how amazingly talented the Youth of St. Mark's are. God has given us all many talents.



Some of you are beautiful singers, graceful dancers, and gifted comedians. Some of you are amazing artists, some of you can code really cool things on your computer. Email a video or picture of you doing something cool, by May 13. We want as many of you in this as possible! It will be St. Mark's Youth Group's first ever virtual talent show! If you have questions, email Rachel (rachel@umcstmarks.org). This is for anyone (and everyone!) in grades 6-12.

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Middle School Mission

The South District Youth Leaders are super bummed that we had to cancel our annual Middle School Mission! But remember—the event being canceled doesn't mean that we can't do missions! Be sure to be on the look-out for the fun mission opportunities we are planning for this fall! You won't want to miss it!

Sierra Service Project

As I'm sure you all have noticed, things seem to change almost daily! Sierra Service Project has let us know that they will make a decision about what this summer will look like by May 4. At the time this newsletter goes to print, we won't yet know what the plans are. BUT by the time you read this, we should have answers for you! Please be sure to check Facebook, your email, and all of our communications for details!

St Mark's PRETEENS

We're still on pause.



This seems like it's taking WAY TOO LONG. Ms. Julie and your leaders miss you a lot. That's why the Christian Formation Team is working on some fun ways to contact you, from a safe distance. There may be some surprises in the near future. In the meantime, we continue to hold you in prayer and are staying positive that we will be together, in person soon.

Stories of Good continued from page 5

My son-in-law, Tim, works at a Trader Joe's and when he was issued an ordinary mask my daughter, Bonney, objected.



Trader Joe's stores are Hawaiian themed and workers wear Hawaiian shirts so Bonney decided Tim needed a Hawaiian mask. She created one using an old Trader Joe's shirt and when Tim wore it to work it was an instant hit. Bonney was inundated with mask requests and so the Haugen Cottage Industry of Trader Joe's Masks was born.

She makes 10 to 12 a day from shirts the workers have sent her, has made well over 50, and has provided each worker on each shift with two masks at no cost to them. Below is an assortment of masks; some Trader Joe's workers in their masks; Bonney at her machine; and the original mask that started the project.

Sandra Rush

A few weeks ago the Marksmen did an in-group fundraiser for the waitress (Anita) at Coco's that normally serves the Marksmen breakfast. A total of \$430 was raised. \$330 were received from individual Marksmen and \$100.00 was a donation from the Marksmen fund.

The original plan was to give \$100 to Coco's for them to help with their expenses during this difficult time. Pat and Linda Alcivar proposed to give money to Anita instead since we confirmed she had been furloughed. They organized the fundraiser so cash could be raised quickly and then they took the envelope with the money and card to Coco's and gave it to the Manager who will give it to Anita.

Lots of caring Marksmen to raise \$330 so quickly. Stay safe, be careful, God bless! Yours in Christ,

Paul Boettcher



It's been such a time of uncertainty and concern for us. But despite it all, our St. Mark's family continues to find ways to do good things in the middle of this COVID-19 pandemic.

Please continue to send your stories to Charlotte Bowers (see directory) and we'll share them with our church family!

*Continued from page 6...
The INN—In Virulent Times*

- Sanitation will need to be even more stringent. Will we have staff and instruction to maintain that?
- If the numbers continue to fluctuate, we will need to evaluate staffing by two-week blocks,
- What other space in Tucson might look promising?
- If we cannot reopen, how can we support our brothers and sisters in our border towns who are bearing massive burdens of asylum seekers for the United States (one of our last guests waited for almost four months)?

Assisting organizations have been feeding the masses, sheltering a few, keeping track of who is going to be called for processing and being sure the family was brought forward together.

As you can see, The INN is suspended in this pause, knowing we cannot return to business as usual. All we have now are questions, but we are on it. As we define who and where we are, I promise to keep you informed. And, yes, even now, we still have overhead expenses as we faithfully trust you will keep helping us as you always have. Truthfully, I “wear” St. Mark’s like a badge of honor, ever thanking God for your joy, your gifts and presence. The joy of representing you as we help these seekers to a better life for THEIR families is a joyous, yet humbling experience.

Yours in Christ, Kathie Barrett

Persecuted Christians, Persevere in the Face of COVID-19

Already facing difficult circumstances from persecution by government authorities and hostile social groups, Christian churches in many countries have been severely impacted by the spread of COVID-19. Nonetheless, they are stepping up to assist Christians in need.

The following are reports from Open Doors USA:

In Syria, many Christians in the north have been displaced by ISIS and the Turkish invasion. In the northeastern town of Oamishli near the Turkish border which is under lockdown, Pastor George’s church stays connected through a created WhatsApp group that they use for devotions, praise and worship. Pastor George reports, “Everyone prays and shares their thoughts and feelings, and we share our prayer requests. Many are encouraged that the church cares for them and keeps in touch with them.” The church has also assisted members who are short on food. Pastor George reported “We gave people food and washing detergent coupons. Our church saw that now was a time to stand by the people, support them and show Jesus’ love in difficult times.”



In Wuhan China at the center of the outbreak, Pastor Huang Lei was one of the few church leaders who stayed in Wuhan. He reported, “We have more groups and almost all the groups are meeting via the internet, praying, studying the Bible, witnessing, praising, and worshipping. As to the group leaders and deacons, we hold online meetings about twice a week. I think it’s especially bringing us closer more than ever. The virus can’t stop us.”

In Iran, one unnamed church leader says, “We are doing all we can to provide food packages for the elderly and vulnerable who are unable to go out these days, or for those who have lost their job in these difficult circumstances. Throughout the year, we shared the good news of Christ with our neighbors and community; now we have a chance to be the good news.”

If you would like more information about persecuted Christians, or to join St. Mark’s Christian Persecution Task Force, email us (christianpersecution@umcstmarks.org).



**Saturday, Nov. 7th
9a.m. - 3p.m.**

*Masterpiece
Festival*

12th Annual Arts & Craft Show

Sponsored by St. Mark’s Fine Arts & Crafts Guild

Call for Artists and Artisans

The Fine Arts and Craft Guild of St. Mark’s will host its annual Masterpiece Festival on Nov. 7, 2020, and is currently accepting Vendor applications for the show.

If you, or someone you know, is interested in selling handmade art or crafts contact Clay Thompson (cadesign2019@gmail.com) for information about indoor, covered patio, open patio, and parking lot space availability.

Vendor application forms are available at the St. Mark’s website under the RESOURCES tab. We look forward to hearing from you and having another very successful show.

Pastor Sharon's Reflections continued from page 12...

We can be patient, too. Wanting everyone to stay well, we have our eyes on the long-term health and strength of our congregation and community. Our decisions are being guided by the directives of Bishop Hoshibata, as well as the advice of state and local officials.

We will reopen for in-person worship and gatherings when the time is right. We expect that the first gradual opening will be for pastors to record in the sanctuary rather than at home and then for small musical groups to join them in the sanctuary for recording, with physical distancing. The office may gradually reopen for limited hours. We will eventually be back together for in-person worship, but the process will be gradual and well-planned.

You have continued to give generously. Thank you very much for doing this. The end-of-April financial statement is not quite finished, but we expect that our income and expenses will be about equal, which is great news. As you continue to give you ensure the health and strength of our ministries for the future.

You have continued to support mission projects. Now you can support the food bank at Interfaith Community Services by coming by our north parking lot with your food donations on Tuesdays from 10-11 a.m. or Wednesdays from 6-7 p.m. People will be there to receive your donations.

We can stay home for the benefit of everyone. I miss seeing you, holding children, and talking face-to-face. We can do this, though, so that the effects of this illness can be reduced and this time of crisis and uncertainty can be shortened. I think about those who do not have homes, who were ill before this crisis, or living in poverty, and think how much more difficult it must be for people who were already struggling. My prayer is that we will continue to care for one another through this remembering that we are not alone. God is with us. Thanks be to God.

Blessings, Sharon

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. You may also, visit our Prayer Room and leave a prayer on our prayer wall.

Kathie Barrett

Peter Booth

Jared Bowman and family

Donald Chester

Deb Cushman

Judy Drescher

April DuBoce

Marge and Darrel Frazer

Keith and Mary Ann Glazier

Keith Johnson

Jim and Mary Sanders

Carol Underwood

Jackie Vickers

Judy Wickham

Lindsay Williams

CONDOLENCES

We extend our sympathy and prayers to:

- the family and friends of Joan Pepe. Joan passed away on Saturday, April 4 after suffering a massive stroke a week earlier. Services are pending.
- Florence Rennels on the passing of her daughter, Yolanda, on Sunday, April 5, after a three-year battle with cancer. Florence and her family are very grateful for the prayers offered by the congregation for Yolanda during the time of her illness and feel like the prayers gave Yolanda some very good times during these last three years.

News from the Desert Southwest Conference

This year's Annual Conference Mission Project is to receive donations that will be put toward providing water where it is needed on the reservation. While we understand that many of us have experienced furloughs or job lay-offs, we also understand the mission heart of the Desert Southwest Conference. Your donation can be made electronically or by post mail. Please remember to indicate that this is for Mission Project 2020: Water!

To learn more about how to support this mission project go to the Desert Southwest Conference website at: <https://dscumc.org/blog/2020/04/30/water-for-the-reservation/>.



May Prayer Requests

St. Mark's Prayer Ministry Team provides information so you can pray for people and activities happening in and around church during the month. NOTE: The monthly Prayer Requests are posted on the church website located under the MINISTRIES tab, then CONGREGATIONAL CARE.

✝ Give thanks for St. Mark's Telecare phone calls between members and friends during the COVID-19 shutdown. May God bless the weekly contacts/conversations and help each one to feel connected and cared for.

✝ Pray for all St. Mark's young people who are graduating from high school, and everyone who is graduating from college, grad school, or other technical and professional schools at this time. Give thanks for parents, teachers, and others who have helped each student. Ask God's blessings for each person's future plans to work/get a job, go to college, etc.

✝ May God bless our celebration of Mother's Day, Sunday, May 10. Give thanks for all mothers, and for everyone who has been like a mother to us, e.g., loved us, cared for us, taught us, and helped us understand—and more.

✝ Pray for Pastor Sharon, Pastor Stuart, and Pastor Evy as they continue to provide ministry, leadership and care for our St. Mark's congregation during the COVID-19 shutdown. May they feel God's presence, and know His love for them each day. Pray for their safety and well-being in all situations.

✝ Give thanks for St. Mark's livestream of our Sunday Worship Service. May the time and effort of our pastors, musicians, and technical team be blessed each week. Pray God's help for anyone having problems connecting to live worship on Sunday morning.

✝ Give thanks for various blog, email, and Facebook sharing/connections to share devotions and spiritual thoughts. Give thanks for Zoom classes and meetings that are happening in the congregation while we are on pause.

✝ Ask God's blessing for the church kitchen remodeling work that is happening, and for the money pledged and needed to be given online or mailed to church.

✝ Pray for everyone suffering from Coronavirus, their families and friends, and for the medical community: all nurses, doctors, and other healthcare personnel. Pray that test kits, medicines, treatment, medical equipment, and supplies are received as needed.

✝ Pray for wisdom, good decisions and leadership from our government leaders, health professionals, scientists, and others in the days and weeks ahead. Pray for God's guidance as our leaders identify the "how's and what's" that will be necessary for businesses to open for travel, shopping, and gatherings to be okay and safe again.

✝ Ask God to help you feel His presence and love in your heart each day. Thank God for people, places, and good things, e.g., time to pray, read the Bible, enjoy a morning walk—things that are happening in your life. Reach out to neighbors, friends and family, and people you don't know, as we safely share God's love one person at a time.

✝ Pray for everyone living in, and working in care facilities, and retirement homes. May the residents be well cared for and may the workers and facilities have everything they need to provide good care.

✝ Pray for children and young people that are not in school, and for all those who are not working, or are working fewer hours. May God provide resources, activities, including some new ways to be together, to learn, and to have fun.



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

Email:
info@umcstmarks.org
Website:
www.umcstmarks.org

Lead Pastor:
Rev. Sharon Ragland
Associate Pastors:
Stuart Salvatierra
Rev. Dr. Evy McDonald

Sunday Worship
Livestreamed
9:45 a.m.
umcstmarks.org
Facebook
YouTube

Address Service Requested

Reflections

Things I've Learned in the Last Two Months

Doesn't it seem like months and months have passed since the COVID-19 pandemic began in our area and we've been practicing isolation? It's actually only been two-three months. We held our last in-person worship service on March 15, 2020, although we'd been avoiding physical contact—hand shaking and hugs—for weeks before that. A lot has happened in a short period of time. I've learned a lot during this time and want to share a few thoughts with you. Here's some of my learnings:

We've learned to offer worship in new ways. Although we'd been livestreaming for over a year, in these last weeks we've learned to record the pieces of worship and put them together to be played on Sunday mornings at 9:45 a.m. Thanks to the expertise of many people, we've grown better and better at this each week.

God gives us the people we need to do God's work. Thanks to the volunteer efforts of Drew and Carolyn Yaussy and Paul Simpson, as well as our Technology Coordinator, Kevin Conlin, we're able to bring a beautiful offering of worship to God each week.

People want to worship! Over these last weeks, thousands of people from around the country have joined us for worship on Sunday mornings. People have sent comments, prayer requests, offerings, and have told others about our worship. We've reached new people and connected with those of you who are already part of St. Mark's. This helps us look toward the future—what different ways will we offer worship when this current crisis is past?

Faithful, committed leaders are guiding us through this time. Your lay leadership, along with your pastors, are meeting regularly to receive updates, share information, look to the future, and make plans for a gradual reopening of our church when the time is right.

We can be flexible! Our Desert Southwest Conference Bishop, Bob Hoshibata, has directed all United Methodist Churches in our Conference to remain closed for in-person worship and gatherings until further notice. So we've found other ways to gather—through zoom calls, classes and meetings, recorded worship, phone classes, and Telecare, which is reaching out to our congregation.