

Messenger

Changing the world through Christ by caring for all people.

Volume 61, Number 7

June 2, 2021



'Sharon' the Love: A Tribute to Pastor Sharon



For more than a decade, Sharon has been our teacher, spiritual guide and so much more. We can't help but think about all the things she has taught us about the Bible. It is fitting that our tribute to her would include yet another lesson. We pay homage to Sharon with an acrostic poem. An acrostic is a composition in which the initial letters of each line or paragraph spell something meaningful. Psalm 119 is an example, using successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. This psalm is notable for its length, but even more impressive are its words of direction and wisdom. Most of the scriptural references in our piece for Sharon are from Psalm 119.

Sharon (share in) the love. She has done this unconditionally and relentlessly from her very first day at St. Mark's and now it's our turn to do the same! Sharon has repeatedly asked us "what is the most loving thing I can do or say right now" and she has shown us how to respond in thought, word and deed. Sharon is a **skilled** orator, an accomplished facilitator and a masterful administrator. She is **succinct** in her preaching, **strong** in her convictions and **sympathetic** in her listening. She teaches the importance of **self-love** and tells us we are beloved. She is **steady** and **supporting**. We can always count on Sharon. "Your faithfulness endures to all generations."

Human. We can relate to Sharon. She helps us embrace our collective **humanity**. Sharon seeks **harmony** and teaches us how to find a peace that passes all understanding. Her words, hands and feet are embodied with **healing** qualities. Sharon is **hopeful** in all circumstances. She is always ready to help, never rushed or unwilling to give the time needed to individuals, groups or causes. Sharon remains **humble**, a true servant of the Lord. Her sense of **humor** as evidenced in silly (yet relevant) jokes, anecdotes and stories drive home her lessons in ways we understand and appreciate. We are grateful for the lessons learned through laughter. In short, Sharon is our **hero**. "How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth."

Authentic. Sharon is one-of-a-kind. She has allowed herself to be vulnerable. In doing so we see what we have in common with her and with each other. This vulnerability is the ultimate expression of love for another. Sharon is a gifted **author** who writes each sermon with care and preaches with **authority**. Sharon is **affirming**. Sharon is **adaptable**. Who else could have led us so beautifully through the trials, uncertainties and ups and downs of the last year? No one but Sharon. She is **awesome!** "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

Respected. Not just at St. Mark's. Sharon is a **Rock Star** among United Methodist clergy. She is **responsible** beyond words, **reliable** like the North Star and **relevant** in a world that sometimes feels like it's set on shifting sand. Sharon asks probing questions encouraging us to **reflect** on ourselves and our place in God's creation. Sharon is **radiant** when she speaks of her family. We are grateful for her time with us, but even more grateful she will have more time to spend with her loved ones. "Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them. The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple."

Obedient to God's call. Sharon has excitedly responded, "Here I am Lord!" She is **observant** and has prodded all of us to listen for our individual calls. Sharon has guided us with an **open** mind and **open** hands. She opens doors and beckons each of us to come and sit in stillness with Jesus. Sharon has made his teachings real and accessible. We may fall down, but Sharon is always there to pick us up. She **overflows** with love for her flock. "My lips pour forth praise, for you teach me your statutes. My tongue will sing of your word, for all your commandments are right. Let my soul live and praise you."

Nourishes us. Sharon is the good **neighbor**. She is **nimble** and a **natural** in ministry. Sharon is incredible at **navigating** difficult waters. She brought us safely to the shore after more than a year of dealing with COVID-19 concerns. And as her time draws near for retirement we wish her **Namaste**. It's time for Sharon to enjoy her beloved natural world even more. Our prayer is for beautiful sunrises and sunsets as Sharon draws strength, inspiration and sustenance from her cherished outdoors. There are no

SHARON, continued on page 2



words to adequately express our appreciation and thanks. Sharon, God bless you and your family! "Great peace have those who love your law; nothing can make them stumble."

And to paraphrase a scripture we often hear Sharon recite, "This is a wonderful woman the Lord has created. Let us rejoice and be glad for her!" Shalom to you, Sharon, from all of your friends at St. Mark's. Well done, good and faithful servant, well done! May the Lord continue to abundantly bless you as you have blessed us.

Does your St. Mark's small group/ministry want to Zoom chat with Pastor Sharon before she retires? If your group would like to schedule a Zoom conversation with Pastor Sharon, please contact Shelley Gault at shelley@umcstmarks.org and she will arrange the date, time and Zoom connection. Enjoy!

Pastor Lynn Bartlow is coming!

Most of us have experienced transitions. We've changed jobs, changed schools, moved to new places, found ourselves around new people. "Transition" is the process of change. There's a saying that change is the only consistency you can count on. Soon, our new pastor, Lynn Bartlow, and her family will move from Flagstaff to Tucson. That is quite a change. Usually, about June, most of us desert rats are thinking about cooler climes. Pastor Lynn and her family will experience their first "Sonoran" summer, and that is just the beginning.



The past few months, I've been thinking a lot about the many changes I've experienced in my life. I've been thinking about those things, those people who helped make the change easier and fun, and on the flip side, those who didn't. Those who made me wonder what I had gotten myself into. I've been thinking about what WE might do to make Pastor Lynn's St. Mark's experience worth the journey.

LET'S PRAY – St. Mark's is a praying community. We believe in the power of prayer. Let's surround Pastor Lynn, her husband, Ron, and their children, Kate and Will, in our prayers. Let's pray for a smooth transition. Pray that God will give Lynn a vision and a passion for St. Mark's. Let's ask God to give Pastor Lynn the message that God wants us to hear.

LET'S PUT OURSELVES IN HER SHOES – Imagine how you would feel if you're walking into a brand-new church in a brand-new place with a brand-new group of people whose names you do not know. What would you want people to do for you? You

LET'S PRAY – LET'S PUT OURSELVES IN PASTOR LYNN'S SHOES – LET'S WEAR OUR NAME TAGS!

might appreciate people wearing their **NAME TAGS**. You might enjoy getting welcome cards, some with gift cards to favorite local spots. (In mid-June, SPRC will have a "Welcome Pastor Lynn Mailbox" in the church office for those welcome cards.) In time, without pressure, you'd want to meet all the committees and classes and become familiar with all those special events that make St. Mark's, St. Mark's. And you'd probably really be grateful if people wore their **NAME TAGS!** If you've lost yours over the past year, we'll make you a new one. Think about those practical things that you would want someone to do for you.

LET'S LET PASTOR LYNN USE HER SPIRITUAL GIFTS – From our teaching we know that we all possess special abilities given by the Holy Spirit (Romans 12). We each have at least one, none of us has all. For some reason, we lay people often expect our pastors to have all the gifts. Every pastor should be an inspiring preacher, insightful teacher, visionary leader, organized administrator, compassionate caregiver and wise counselor. Let's let Lynn use her spiritual gifts and allow her to delegate the tasks to us for which we are gifted. Remember WE are the church – the hands and feet of God at St. Mark's.

BE OPEN TO WHAT GOD WANTS TO DO THROUGH PASTOR LYNN – God can do amazing things with people who are open to what God wants to do. We know this from the long history of St. Mark's, from all those who have passed this way before. Let's be intentional in our decision that we'll be open to what God wants us to do through our new Senior Pastor.

LET'S PRAY – LET'S PUT OURSELVES IN PASTOR LYNN'S SHOES – LET'S WEAR OUR NAME TAGS!
– Tom Ellis, Staff-Parish Relations Committee

Ushers Needed!!!



As St. Mark's is returning to in-person worship, we need your welcoming, friendly selves, especially now with the addition of the 8 a.m. Sanctuary service. As you are well aware, things have changed over the past year. Not surprisingly, ushering (or "ushing" as some of us lovingly call it) will have a few different duties, a bit of a new look, as well. What will NOT be different will be the **welcoming, friendly** part, aka, **showing HOSPITALITY**. St. Mark's is well-known for our hospitality. You want to be in church anyway, so step it up a bit! Hear the same great message, music, scriptures, prayers and announcements. Greet and worship with the same great people AND offer a special service. The training is free! Contact Pat Small at ([see directory](#)).

June Worship at St. Mark's

In June, we'll continue with our sermon series, "Jesus and Love in the Ten Commandments," as part of this year's series on "Love Is ..." Pastor Sharon's last Sunday at St. Mark's will be June 20, as she is retiring at the end of June.

Here's info about worship in June at St. Mark's:

Sunday, June 6 – Beginning this day, worship will be held at 8 and 10 a.m. IN THE SANCTUARY.

- No registration is required for 8 a.m., but you must register if you want to attend at 10 a.m.
- Register for 10 a.m. worship by following the link you should have received by email on Tuesday morning or by calling the church office at 520-297-2062.
- Up to 140 people may be in each service.
- For fully vaccinated people, masks are recommended but not required beginning June 6. If you want to sing, though, you will need to wear a mask.
- Seating in the Sanctuary will be at a 3- to 4-foot distance.
- Holy Communion with prepackaged elements will be served at both services.

Recorded worship will continue at 9:45 a.m. at umcstmarks.org/live-worship or YouTube UMC St. Mark's Oro Valley. On our Facebook, St. Mark's UMC Tucson, follow the link that easily takes you to YouTube. This gives you better access to the service. Holy Communion will be served, so have your elements ready (bread or cracker and juice or another beverage) if you are attending the online service.

Sunday, June 13 – Same as for June 6. Worship at 8 and 10 a.m. in the Sanctuary. No registration for 8 a.m.; register for 10 a.m. through an email you will receive on June 7, or by calling the church office at 520-297-2062. Prerecorded worship continues as usual at 9:45 a.m.

- ALSO on this day: The Desert Southwest Annual Con-

United Methodist Women Happenings

The St. Mark's United Methodist Women will meet at 9 a.m. Tuesday, June 8, via Zoom. St. Mark's member Cathy Harris-Herchenroeder will share about the Arizona foster care program as seen through her eyes and heart. All women are invited. You don't have to be a member of St. Mark's UMW, St. Mark's UMC or any church to participate. Zoom link information will be provided to all St. Mark's UMW members with email addresses. All others, contact Alberta Farnsworth (see directory) to request the Zoom link.

The Desert Southwest Conference United Methodist Women have planned several summer online mission studies. Participants should plan to buy and read the study book for each of the studies, which include sessions on Friday evening and Saturday morning.

ference concludes Sunday morning with a service of Commissioning and Ordination at 10 a.m. via the conference livestream. Because Pastor Stuart was technically commissioned in 2020 but there was no service, he and others are being included in this 2021 service. You can view this service through <https://dscumc.org>.

- We will also livestream the Service of Commissioning and Ordination at 10 a.m. June 13 in our Fellowship Hall. You can come there to watch, or attend the 10 a.m. Sanctuary service and then go to Fellowship Hall to view the remainder of the Ordination Service.

Sunday, June 20 – Same as for June 6 and 13 – worship at 8 and 10 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Watch for more info about this worship. It's **Pastor Sharon's last Sunday at St. Mark's**.

Sunday, June 27 – Same as for the other Sundays in June. Pastors Stuart and Kim will lead worship.

Sunday, July 4 – Worship schedule the same as in June. This will be **Pastor Lynn Bartlow's first Sunday at St. Mark's**. Holy Communion will be served. Watch for more info.

A couple more notes about Sanctuary worship:

- We expect to continue to gradually increase the number of people in the Sanctuary.
- Again, masks are recommended but not required if you are fully vaccinated.



- June 25-26 – "Becoming Peacemakers in a Culture of Violence," led by St. Mark's Youth Coordinator Rachel Mosher, who is also a member of UMW.
- July 23-24 – "Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools," led by Billie Fidlín of the DSC and Khalil Rushdon of the Arizona ACLU.
- Aug. 13-14 – "Bearing Witness in the Kingdom: Living into the Church's Moral Witness Through Radical Discipleship," led by Dior Desormeau, who has served in many leadership capacities and is in the process of becoming a pastor.

Everyone, including non-UMW women, men and youth, is invited to register. Cost is \$20 per study or \$50 for all three. Contact St. Mark's UMW Secretary Kay Hayworth (see directory) for information on how to register and order the study book(s).

From the Worldwide Christian Support Task Force:

Some Background on Myanmar

Recently, the military in Myanmar (previously known as Burma) has overthrown the semi-democratic government, and the army has used lethal force against demonstrators peacefully protesting the coup.



Our task force has shared information about Myanmar before. Sometimes it's good to review what we have already talked about because we have a new audience. It's also important because of the recently announced new sanctions on Myanmar the Biden administration. Over the next few articles, we hope to help you understand what is happening behind the headlines, particularly with respect to the persecution of Christians and other religious minorities.

Myanmar is a country in Southeast Asia to the east of India across the Bay of Bengal. Until 1989, it was known as Burma. It can be confusing, because the country is called Myanmar and the government is called Burma. In fact, Myanmar and Burma mean the same thing in the local language. In a nod to both the country and the government, former President Barack Obama used both terms on a visit in 2012.

Myanmar has gone through chaotic changes in government. Many of those changes came after violent military action. Aung San Suu Kyi was president of the National League for Democracy from 1988. The party won an election in 1990, but the military took over anyway. Aung was under house arrest for 15 years. During this time, she was given the Nobel Peace Prize for pushing democracy. By 2012, the party had won major elections and was in power. Aung was state counselor, which was equal to a prime minister.

This was a confusing time. Aung fought so hard for freedom and democracy. And yet, this was a time of extreme military persecution of the Rohingya Muslim people. In fact, in 2019, she went before the International Court of Justice to defend their genocide. And in recent weeks, the military has overthrown the semi-democratic government and violence has increased. **Through this, persecution of Christians has also grown day by day.**

If you would like more information about persecuted Christians, or to join the St. Mark's Worldwide Christian Support Task Force, email us at christiansupport@umcstmarks.org or drop us a note at the church office on weekday mornings.



Join Virtual 'Shalom to You' Sing-along!

Want to be part of the next virtual church sing-along? We are putting together videos of church members singing "Shalom to You" for upcoming recorded worship services. As you can imagine, collecting and mixing the videos and audio takes some time, so we need YOU to put a spring in your step and record a little earlier!

How does this work? Members of the congregation individually record themselves singing along to Shalom to You using the audio music provided.

Send the recording to cathy@umcstmarks.org (using Google Drive or Dropbox to share) OR 520-360-5474 (text the video or text Cathy to see about a way to do it other than this).

What do you need? To participate at home, you will need earphones/earbuds plugged into your phone/iPad/computer to hear the music. Record yourself singing the song on your phone/iPad in a video format. Send the video to the email address. The video you send will only have you and your voice recorded. (This is perfect!)

What if I don't have that equipment at home but I still want to participate? Cathy Harris will be at church from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday, June 27, and you may come record yourself using her iPad. Slots are available every 15 minutes, with 15 minutes between for sanitizing. If slots fill up, we will add more. To sign up, use this link: <https://tinyurl.com/shalom2u>

What if I want to sing alto, tenor or bass? That is great! Use the recording with Cathy's voice singing the soprano to help you hear the melody line. The United Methodist Hymnal doesn't have parts listed, but many of you sing them every week, so do what you know!

What if I'm nervous about getting the right notes? No problem! Use the recording with Cathy's voice singing the song and feel confident that it will sound fantastic!

Please send all recordings by June 27. Recordings received after then may not make it into the final production.

Questions or problems with the resources – please email Cathy Harris at cathy@umcstmarks.org.

Resources:

Please email Cathy for links to the recordings to use as you record. One is Shalom only and the other features Cathy's voice and a piano accompaniment.

General Guidelines for Recording – <https://tinyurl.com/y6fz694u>



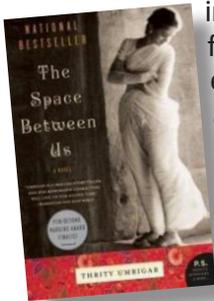
Adult Spiritual Growth

Faith is a journey!

ALL REGISTRATION IS ONLINE AT <https://umcstmarks.org> then go to Classes and then select Adult Spiritual Growth Opportunities. Facilitators will then email you with specific information needed for each opportunity.

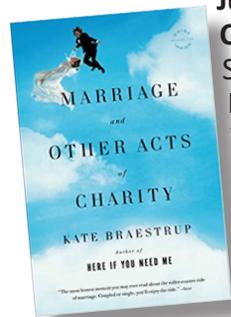
Summer Book Discussions Have Begun! 6:30 to 8 p.m. Mondays

June 14 – The Space Between Us by Thrity Umrigar (2006) – led by Rev. Sharon Ragland (**Pastor Sharon's last class!**) Umrigar vividly captures the social struggles of modern India in a novel of honor, tradition, class, gender and family. It is a portrayal of two women discovering an emotional rapport as they struggle against the confines of a rigid caste system. Set in modern-day India, it tells the story of two compelling and achingly real women: Sera Dubash, an upper-middle-class Parsi housewife whose opulent surroundings hide the shame and disappointment of her abusive marriage, and Bhima, a stoic illiterate hardened by a life of despair and loss, who has worked in the Dubash household for more than 20 years. Available online from \$13; \$10 on Kindle.



July 12 – Marriage and Other Acts of Charity by Kate Braestrup (2010) – led by Sandi Heilman

In her award-winning memoir, "Here If You Need Me," the author (a chaplain with the Maine Game Warden Service) won the hearts of readers across the country with her deeply moving and deftly humorous stories of faith, hope and family. Now, with her inimitable voice and generous spirit, she turns her attention to the subjects of love and commitment in "Marriage and Other Acts of Charity." Part memoir, part observation of modern marriage, and part meditation on the roles of



Adult Sunday School

Family Life/Sharing This class will begin its next study on Sunday, June 20 – "Acts: Catching up with the Spirit," by Matthew L. Skinner. In Acts, the author calls us to a daring life, risking more than the stormy seas and other challenges that faced the apostle Paul, to risk following the Holy Spirit into deep care of our neighbor at both the personal and societal levels. This includes transformative hospitality, expansive inclusion, and in Skinner's words, "generous unity." The class will be based on a video segment, the participant guide, and class discussion.

It is unclear at this time if we will be having a hybrid class

God and love in our everyday lives, this is an unforgettable look into why and how we love each other, and proves yet again why Kate Braestrup's writing is "inspirational in the best sense." Available online for \$16; \$10 on Kindle.

July 26 – The Only Necessary Thing: Living A Prayerful Life by Henri Nouwen (1999) – led by Rev. Dr. Roger Pierce Nouwen, author of more than 40 books, was considered

one of the premier spiritual writers of modern times. From his vast collection of spiritual writing, short excerpts have been gathered and put into this fine book, very readable and helpful thoughts about many aspects of the spiritual life that enrich our understanding of the practice of coming close to God. You will find the book to be inspiring as it flows from the compassionate heart of this remarkable man. Available only in paperback via Amazon, Cokesbury and Barnes & Noble.

Aug. 16 – God on a Harley: A Spiritual Fable by Joan Brady (1995) – led by Susan Putt

At 37, Christine Moore had a world-class case of burnout: a frustrating career, a few dead-end romances, no husband, no children and a less-than-perfect figure. Little did she know that her life was about to change completely. "God on a Harley" guides us on an inspiring odyssey of self-discovery and authentic, powerful love. As we follow this extraordinary fable, we join one woman's triumphant quest for healing and life-changing truths. Every woman who believes in her soul that hopes can be attained, real happiness can be found, and that each of us can be loved for herself will find in these pages the simple, profound secrets to an enlightened and enriched new life. Available online from \$14; \$12 on Kindle.

ASG fall lineup coming soon – watch for details in upcoming Messengers. Contact Judy Boroto (see directory) if there is a topic or study you would particularly like to see this fall.

where one can participate either in person or on Zoom, or if we will continue with the Zoom-only option. The time of the class is also not decided. For more information, please contact the co-leaders of the class, Terry Majewski ([see directory](#)) and Rick Farnsworth ([see directory](#)). If you do not already have this book and would like to join the study, please order one through Amazon, Cokesbury, or a similar site. It is also available as an eBook.

Seekers New discussion beginning June 6: 1 Corinthians. No text necessary – just bring your Bible. A study Bible of any kind is highly recommended. Leaders: Brenda Hunter and Kelly Deyoe (see directory for contact info).

The 'Other' Pandemic

The necessity of focusing attention on the COVID-19 pandemic since late 2019 has diverted both attention and much-needed resources from a much longer, still with us, pandemic—HIV/AIDS. According to Dr. Carlos del Rio, professor of medicine at Emory University in Atlanta, “This is a major derailing . . . There will be damage. The question is how much!”

For the last two decades, strong antiviral drugs seemed to hold this “other” pandemic at bay. Diminishing focus and resources have changed that.

Screening tests, diagnoses, treatment and prescription numbers have all declined across our country, especially in the southeastern states.

How can we at St. Mark’s help? By continuing to support our local groups that work tirelessly to support people living with HIV/AIDS and their families. We can continue to generously support the Tucson HiV/AIDS Network and the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation.

Now that it seems a corner is being turned in our fight against COVID-19, let’s take support for HIV/AIDS off of the “back burner” and move it , once again, onto the front, suggests a recent article in POZ Magazine.

Have you had someone in your family or a friend’s family become HIV-positive? A 2019 statistic says that 35,000 new cases were reported that year in the US—mostly young people of color. If you would like to help us keep a focus on this “old” pandemic, email Pat Small ([see church directory](#)) and join the efforts of the HIV/AIDS Committee.

ICS Food Bank Update

Volunteer Opportunity Here at Church

We have been collecting food for the Interfaith Community Services Food Bank for more than a year now. It has been a very exciting mission project that has helped so many families in need in our community. We are looking for a substitute individual or couple to fill in on occasion collecting food for the food bank from 10-11 a.m. on Tuesday or Saturday mornings. After the collection, you would also be responsible for taking the donated items to ICS. This is a fun opportunity that does not require a lot of time. If you are interested, contact John Yost through the church directory.

Help Needed for THE INN

The Inn hosted 251 guests in April. This was fewer than March, but it received a steady flow of people. It has a few unique needs. If you have skills in these areas and would like to volunteer, please contact Diane at The Inn at 520-272-4341 or email diane.everhart@hotmail.com.



- Bookkeeper
- Grant writer
- Someone to maintain the website.

Needed donations:

- Boxes of Fruit Loops or Corn Flakes (or non-name brand cereal of the same type)
- New reusable water bottles
- New men’s joggers or sweatpants, especially medium and large
- New women’s leggings, all sizes (especially smalls)
- Girls’ shirts: size 3T to 12
- New tennis-type shoes (all sizes)
- Flip-flops: all sizes for men, women and children
- Underwear: women’s (small and medium), girls’ (all sizes), boys’ (all sizes)
- Socks: girls (all sizes)
- Juice boxes, Capri Sun, individual yogurt cups, healthy, kid-friendly, prepackaged snacks

For donations, please call Diane at 520-272-4341 to schedule a time and location to drop off materials. Please note that at this time, The Inn is only accepting NEW clothing. Cash donations are also welcome.

Donations

Great news! So far in 2021, our congregation has donated more than 11,000 pounds of food to the ICS food bank. Thank you so much for your generosity in helping with this wonderful mission project. We are making a difference with hundreds of families in need in our community. You can participate by bringing your non-perishable food items to the north parking lot of our church between 10-11 a.m. any Tuesday or Saturday. A safe, easy collection process is in place. Most-needed food items are:

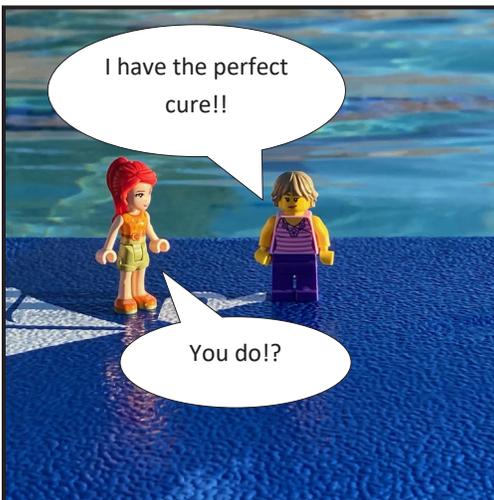
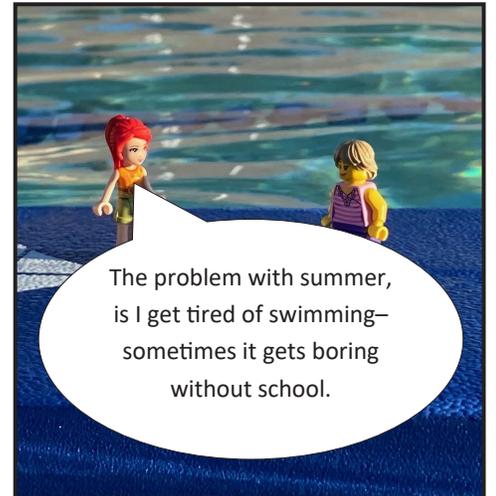
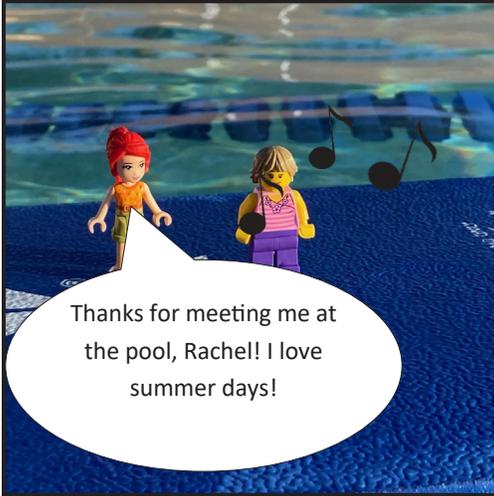
Peanut Butter • Breakfast Cereal • Dry Pasta • Macaroni and Cheese • Spaghetti Sauce • Canned Meat, Tuna, Chicken • Spaghetti O’s, Chili, or Ravioli in Cans • Instant Mashed Potatoes • Rice / Dry Beans • Stuffing Mix

Youth Ministry

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



Adventures of the Youth Directors



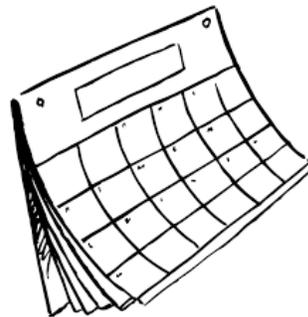
June Birthdays

- June 6 — **Abba Chester**
- June 12 — **Jenasys Turner**
- June 17 — **Gio Sanchez**
- June 20 — **Lake Laos**
- June 29 — **Jacob Doyle**
- June 30 — **John Wyatt Compton**



Important Dates Coming Up!

The summer is here and we are starting to meet regularly in person again! I am so excited to see you at 4 p.m. each Sunday. We are still planning to meet for an hour with masks and distancing but good news – we can meet inside as the weather heats up! Mark your calendars now for these special dates:



- June 5** – Middle School Mission
- June 20** – Father's Day (No Youth)
- July 4** – Independence Day (No Youth)
- July 9-10** – High School Mission
- Aug. 8** – Rally Day!

Youth news continued on page 8

Youth Ministry

Latest news for High School, Middle School, and Preteen Students!



Middle School Mission



THIS SATURDAY, June 5, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. is Middle School Mission! There is STILL TIME to sign up. Don't miss it! Sign up today for only \$10 (scholarships are available). You will meet other kids from around our district and have fun serving others. This event is open to students who have finished grades 6-8. Contact Rachel if you have any questions! To sign up, scan this code:

Students who have finished grades 6-8. Contact Rachel if you have any questions! To sign up, scan this code:



High School Mission

High School students (completed grades 8-12) will also have an opportunity for service this summer. The South District is putting together a great one-day mission experience just for you on July 9-10. More details will be available soon, but you definitely want to save those dates to come be in service with other high school students from around the district!

Youth Group

We have had so much fun each week. Some weeks we play



games, some weeks we create cool stuff – every week is different! But every week we get a chance to see each other, be

in community, and have fun! If you have a GREAT idea of something fun to do, let Rachel know, and we will see where we can work it in.



Greetings PreTeens,

It's official – the school year is over and summer has begun; yay! At Preteens on Sunday afternoons we have been spending an hour outdoors on the west patio. We get to start going inside now, too! If you just finished fourth or fifth grade and would like to join us for Fun-Filled Fellowship, games and activities, we meet at 4 p.m. Sundays on the patio. You may send me an email at julie@umcstmarks.org if you have any questions or would like to attend. Students who just completed third grade and will be entering fourth grade in the fall will be able to join Preteen after Rally Day in August.

Blessings,
Julie

'Sharon' the Love Event

THIS Friday (June 4) is Pastor Sharon's fun parade through the parking lot! Come with your families to wave and shower Sharon with love as she heads toward her retirement! Bring your own lawn chairs and water and wear a mask, but also feel free to make a colorful sign, bring a balloon or wear a fun hat to this celebration. Parking opens at 6:15 p.m. and the parade begins at 7 p.m. sharp!



Rachel will be there and hopes to see you, too!

Pastor Kim Passes the Torch

Last month's "Messenger" reported that one of the people on our St. Mark's staff has resigned and I will be taking some of her responsibilities. Most of those have to do with adult education and missions. This shift will give me more time to work on outreach programs for St. Mark's. While I will remain the Christian Formation Team leader, I will hand over all of the youth responsibilities to Rachel Mosher. After 22 years in youth ministry, this will be an unusual transition, but I feel confident that you all will be in good hands. Rachel, as you know, is an amazing leader. I'll still be around and may even teach a youth class or two! See you in worship! *Much love, Pastor Kim*

Finances and Worship

St. Mark's is off to a very good financial start in 2021. The results through April 2021 are shown below:

	Income	Expense	Income (Expense)
Budget	\$405,401	\$332,220	\$ 73,181
Actual	423,790	315,416	108,374
Variance to Budget	(\$18,389)	\$ 16,804	(\$35,193)

The congregation's continued generosity and the committees' continued ability to control expenses have made these financial results possible. The amount by which actual income exceeds actual expense, about \$108,374, has been included in the unrestricted fund. We anticipate these funds, as well as an additional \$120,000 from unrestricted, will be needed to meet expenses later in the year.

Based upon these first quarter results, the Finance Committee has restructured payment of the St. Mark's apportionments in equal increments for the remainder of the year. SPRC, Technology and the Trustees' budgets are also broken down evenly. Other expenses are budgeted at 20%, 30% and 40% for the remaining year. We will continue to review actual results to budget to identify any additional adjustments that may be possible in the future.

Bill Zermuehlen, Finance Chair

Ruth Kester, Administration and Finance Coordinator

A Perspective on Racism Against Asian Americans

At the last meeting of the St. Mark's Racial Equity Task Force, during a discussion about how to raise awareness among the congregation of the difficulties that our Asian American/Pacific Islander brothers and sisters face, we decided it would be a good idea ask Rev. Paul Cho, senior pastor of First United Methodist Church, Tucson, if he would be willing to be interviewed. He graciously agreed to sit with me for an hour on May 16 and talk about his experiences as a Korean immigrant and pastor to an Anglo and Korean-American merged congregation. – Art Ragland

Born in Korea in 1987, Paul moved with his family to the U.S. when he was 6 so his father could serve as pastor of a Korean church in the Phoenix area. He lived in Tempe for nine years, but when he was 15, his father's ministry took him and his family back to Korea, where he finished high school. Early in college, his family chose for him to come back to the U.S., where he graduated from the University of Arizona, went to Clairmont School of Theology and spent 10 years in L.A. serving Los Angeles Korean UMC. He was appointed to First UMC Tucson as pastor of the Korean Fellowship, which merged with First UMC Tucson a few years ago.

Rev. Paul can speak, write and think in both Korean and English because he was born in Korea but has his groundings here. He finds it a blessing now, but that hasn't always been the case, because **he has never felt like he fit in.**

"Even though I sound and speak like everyone else, I don't fit in because of the way that I look. If I go back to Korea, I don't fit in because my Korean has an 'American accent.'"

Growing up, he struggled with a sense of belonging and identity. That feeling of not fitting in ultimately drove him to the Christian faith. "In heaven, I can belong there, and no one can say otherwise."

His first encounter with racism was in first grade, where "they would

pull their eyes apart and call me 'chink.' I didn't know that I was being treated poorly until later on when older kids helped me understand that no, that's wrong and bad."

As a pastor he sees this happening to his Korean and Asian congregants, where harm comes their way through outright racist remarks or even micro aggressions. Sometimes, they don't even know it, and even if they sense it, they feel powerless to do anything about it. It's heartbreaking and he doesn't know how to dismantle that.

"My two young children were in worship one day and were eating Korean snacks. An elderly woman looked at them with disgust and yelled at my wife, 'What are they eating?' It was heartbreaking. My wife had to absorb that. I told them, 'You don't have to show up for English worship ever again.' Sundays should be about acceptance, beauty, wonderment, and amazing grace. And that was not it. For about six months, they only worshiped in the Korean service. ...



"Some of the recent heartbreaking crimes against Asian Americans were perpetrated by other people of color! It might be tempting to vilify Anglo Americans as the only racists. They're not. It's everywhere! Racism is learned behavior, and so while our future and hope are in the hands of the children, they will ultimately learn what we adults show them."

What can we do as Christians? There are lots of things. Start by taking the time to learn how to actually say people's names correctly. Asian names are difficult for English speakers to pronounce. Doing so will indicate to the person that you really want to make it relational, making them feel at home. If you make that relationship genuine, they themselves will draw more people in, because they will have found this to be a home.

Read the full, unedited interview here:

<https://tinyurl.com/RevPaulinterview>

June prayer requests

The St. Mark's Prayer Ministry Team provides information so you can pray for people and activities happening in and around church during the month. The monthly Prayer Cards are located on the church website under the MINISTRIES tab, then CONGREGATIONAL CARE. If you are reading this online, visit this link:

https://umcstmarks.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/monthlyprayerlist_web0621.pdf

✚ Give thanks for two in-person worship services in the Sanctuary, at 8 and 10 a.m. every Sunday in June. Attendance numbers will still be limited.

✚ Pray God's blessings for the "Sharon" the Love Celebration Parade with Pastor Sharon at 7 p.m. Friday, June 4 in the church parking lot. Give thanks for this opportunity to see, talk with and bring farewell notes/cards/love offerings/special gifts for Pastor Sharon as she retires from active ministry at the end of June.

✚ Give thanks for our church's ongoing collection of non-perishable food items from 10-11 a.m. every Tuesday and Saturday in the north parking lot. Pray God's blessing of all donations and the food assistance provided by the Interfaith Community Services Food Bank.

✚ Pray God's blessings for the continuing pre-recorded worship services each week, and for all the people who want and like this recorded option. Give thanks for our Worship Committee, pastors and staff, musicians, technical staff and volunteers who provide this each week.

✚ Pray for the "Jesus and Love in the Ten Commandments" sermon series on Sunday mornings continuing through June 27. May our pastors and the messages they share be blessed and inspired, and may we hear and connect the life and love of Jesus with the Ten Commandments.

✚ Give thanks for COVID-19 restrictions that are changing, and for large numbers of people who are fully vaccinated in Tucson/Pima County. Pray God's blessing of the protocols and the people needed for the church's small groups that are starting to meet at church.

✚ Pray God's blessings for all graduating seniors and others receiving various graduate, medical and technical school degrees. Give thanks for all their efforts and for the support and love of their families and friends.

✚ Pray for all those who plan to read and attend the Zoom discussion of the book, "The Space Between Us," the evening of Monday, June 14.

✚ Pray for Pastor Sharon and Art Ragland as they plan and prepare for Sharon's retirement from active ministry at the end of June. Ask God's blessings for a smooth transition for them and their family.

✚ Ask God's guidance and help for the St. Mark's staff and church leaders to accomplish a smooth transition to Pastor Lynn Bartlow's ministry and new leadership. Pray that our staff, leaders and the entire congregation will humbly consider and accept changes and new ways to be and do – and always show love.

✚ Pray God's blessings of the St. Mark's efforts to interview and hire a new technology coordinator and a new children and family life coordinator in the weeks and months to come.

✚ Pray for the St. Mark's Racial Equity Task Force, that it will find meaningful ways to introduce our congregation to issues pertaining to racial justice and how we may advocate for racial equity. Pray that our brothers and sisters of color will be safe and well as they navigate the oppression and violence that has long plagued our country and world. Pray for an end to hate, remembering how Jesus called us to love one another.

✚ Pray God's healing power will surround all those with COVID-19 and other illnesses and health concerns. Pray for St. Mark's members, families and friends who have had recent surgeries and stays in the hospital or who are waiting for surgeries/treatments to be scheduled. Pray also for those who are recovering at home or in rehab or care facilities.

✚ South District Superintendent Rev. Matt Ashley asks us to pray for other church pastors and their ministries each month. The prayer request for June is for Bishop Hoshibata and the Desert Southwest Conference staff and the staff and all churches of the East District, North District and West District.

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.

Jared Bowman and family
Deb Cushman
Jim Deyoe
Judy Drescher

April DuBoce
Marge Frazer
Keith and Mary Ann Glazier
Mary Sanders

Ana Luisa Terrazas
Carol Underwood
Jackie Vickers

CONDOLENCES

Our heartfelt sympathy and prayers go out to:

Alberta and David Farnsworth and their family on the passing of Alberta's mother, Lois, in Colorado, on Friday, May 28. Their family includes sons, Jeff and Rick, and daughters, Rachel Mosher (husband, Hayden, children, Eli and Norah) and Peggy James (husband, Russ, and three daughters).

Dear Church Family...

Thank you for your many expressions of love and caring during this difficult period of loss. Special thanks go to pastors Sharon and Stuart for a beautiful service and to Sondra Franks and Paul Simpson for going above and beyond the call of duty to provide the music I requested and create a permanent memory with the livestream program. Thank you to the Prayer Quilt group for your beautiful quilt. May God continue to bless St. Mark's and its ministries.

Mary Wald



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 Pastor:
Rev. Stuart Salvatierra
Christian Formation
and Outreach Pastor:
Kim Ogle

Sunday Worship
Limited in-person attendance
8 a.m. and 10 a.m.

Livestreamed
9:45 a.m.

umcstmarks.org/live-worship

YouTube:
UMC St. Mark's Oro Valley
or access the YouTube link
via Facebook
St. Mark's UMC Tucson

My heartfelt thanks for the many cards, calls, emails and meals we received following my hip fracture and surgery. Your prayers and caring thoughts have helped in my healing and recovery. My heart is filled with gratitude to be a part of this loving, caring church family.

Pat Adams

Thank you so much to Pastor Sharon and Pastor Stuart for guiding me through the baptism process. Also, thanks to the St. Mark's congregation for the cross, prayer shawl and welcoming support. It means so much. I am forever grateful.

Bill Dishong

My heart is so full from the cards, gifts, well wishes and hugs I received from you all as I left my time at St. Mark's. I have so many beautiful memories of learning in classes, working on committees, playing in Faith on Stage, having fun at VBS and Sunday School and so much more. All of you have blessed me, and your faith has strengthened mine. Thank you for the gift of your love, which I take with me.

I am beloved; you are beloved.

Margaret Synhorst

(Pastor Sharon, continued from back page)

ing people into the love of Jesus, engaging in worship and serving in countless ways. One of the great tributes to an outgoing pastor is for the work of the church to continue and to grow into even greater ministries of love and service. With God's Spirit I know you will do that.

My last Sunday in worship will be June 20. I will be in the office that next week and wrap up my work on June 25. It has been my great joy to serve God with and among you. Thank you for letting me do that.

*Blessings,
Sharon*

Address Service Requested

Reflections

"Change"

As we celebrated Pentecost on May 23, I thought about how change came when the Holy Spirit swept through the room where the disciples were waiting on that day long ago. That change gave the disciples strength and courage to go out into the world to let others know about Jesus and his saving love.

The Holy Spirit is active in our lives today, too, and often brings that same kind of life-altering change that strengthens and inspires us. Over my time at St. Mark's I can give you countless examples of the small and large movements of the Spirit that led to life-giving changes – mission work, education for all ages, Spirit-filled worship services, music, the work of the staff and leaders, great care for our campus, generous giving and so much more.

The last 15 months have brought many changes for all of us. While there have been many challenges, I have watched God's Spirit move among us, inspiring us to take on the challenges of closing and reopening our campus, engaging in mission work and classes, and guiding our leaders in making wise decisions.

An important theme in Scripture is the presence and work of God's Spirit moving around, in and through God's people. From the beginning of creation to God's presence in Jesus, the Spirit has brought hope and healing to people – from miraculous delivery from slavery in Egypt, to Jesus healing those in pain, to

Jesus' resurrection, God's Spirit moves among us.

St. Mark's will now experience a change as I move into retirement at the end of June and Rev. Lynn Bartlow becomes the Lead Pastor. My feelings are mixed as I go, after 11 Spirit-filled years with you. I know I will miss you greatly and miss serving with you. We have been through much together. Yet I long to spend time with Art and our family, rest for a while, and travel.

Some of you have asked about our daughter, Julie, who lives here in Tucson with her husband and son. She was diagnosed with breast cancer in fall 2019 and experienced a recurrence in fall 2020, which led to intensive chemotherapy, double mastectomy, radiation treatment and more chemo (which she will be on every three weeks until the end of 2021). She is doing pretty well and has an excellent prognosis, but the treatment is long. So I'm glad that I'll be able to spend time with her as she moves through this. Our son, David, and his wife, Michelle, have two small children (Helios, 4 ½ and Harrison, 3 months), so I'm glad to be able to spend time with them, too.

The reason Scripture is so enduring is that its stories are still our stories today. As God strengthened and healed long ago, so God's Spirit continues to move among us. As I go and you welcome Pastor Lynn, God is with us, we are never alone. Thanks be to our loving God. I trust that with Pastor Lynn you will continue to do the great ministries that St. Mark's does of welcom-

Continued on p. 11