

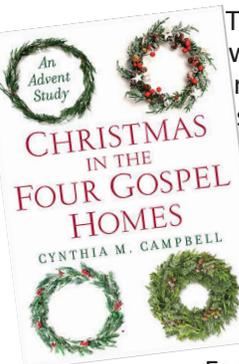
Messenger

Changing the world through Christ by caring for all people.

St Mark's
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Advent has begun! It's not too late to join a study

Before Christmas arrives, Christians through the years have observed the season of Advent. This season is one of waiting, of anticipation. Liturgically, we don't sing Christmas songs, but instead focus on the anticipation of both the Christ Child and the second coming of Christ. Culturally, we have been singing Christmas songs for a month already, so the church seems a bit disconnected from the world. Worship planners wrestle with this each year and come to completely different places based on their own reason and tradition and experience.



This year, we will wait with our Gospel writers by focusing on their Christmas stories (and yes, we will sing our Christmas songs!). As you know, the story of what Jesus did and taught here on Earth is found in the Gospels, the first four books of what we call the New Testament. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John sit in the beginning to tell the stories of Jesus. And believe it or not, the four Gospels are each completely different writings.

Each author had a different reason to tell the story, a different audience listening or reading, and a different lesson that was being taught. They are as different as you and your sibling telling the story of the same vacation you took that time with your family. This adds to the richness of what we know about Jesus and helps us to get a more complete picture of who this man was.

This Advent, join us as we spend some time with each Gospel writer. Discover what each one says about Jesus. More importantly, discover what their Christmas story tells us about Jesus and the work of God in the world.

Just for fun, join us as we ponder what each gospel home would look like, if the gospel were actually a home. Or if the gospel writer had a home.

Our series is based on a book that's available for purchase and will be used as a small group study. There's still time to purchase a book and to participate in a study! See which one fits your schedule best.

Join us this Advent as we explore Christmas through the eyes of Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John.

For a complete listing of Advent study groups and to register, go to <https://tinyurl.com/GospelHomesStudy>.



Christmas Eve Services Friday, Dec. 24

Long ago Jesus was born in a stable in Bethlehem and brought new hope to the world. Christ comes again this Christmas season, filling our hearts and lives with hope, peace, joy, and love. We invite you to join in the celebration!

11 a.m. Lessons and Carols

A service of Scripture and song that tells the Christmas story. Communion will be served.

Blessing of the Children

A family-oriented service with carols and a blessing of the children.

—2 p.m. Dove Mountain CSTEM, 5650 W. Moore Rd.

—4 p.m. Main campus, 1431 W. Magee Rd.

6 p.m. A Modern Worship Service

With contemporary Praise Band and communion

8 p.m.* A Traditional Candlelight Service

With Celebration Singers, concludes with candle lighting. *This service will be livestreamed on YouTube UMC St. Mark's Oro Valley and on umcstmarks.org.

10 p.m. A Traditional Candlelight Service

With Chancel Choir and communion; concludes with candle lighting.

Christmas Offering 2021

This year's Christmas offering will help us share God's love with the children and families of Nash Elementary School and with people awaiting their court date for an immigration hearing through The Inn Project. Help bring Jesus' love to others through our mission giving.



Rainbow Fellowship Meeting, Meet and Greet



You can take pride, St. Mark's, that you hold your Christian LGBTQ+ siblings close and have offered them safe spaces to worship and fellowship. The Rainbow Fellowship group has been a vital place for our church community to support our LGBTQ+ members! The greater United Methodist Church, as you may remember, is weighing

the full inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community next fall. While the resolution of the inclusion issue in the greater church is still months away from culmination, we'd like you to become more familiar with your LGBTQ+ siblings in Christ here at St. Mark's. Along those lines, the Rainbow Fellowship will spend all morning Dec. 19 in the courtyard and in the library, hanging out to visit with you, answer your questions, and just exchange greetings. We've had a number of newcomers to our congregation since the COVID closures. Come bid them welcome to their church home! If you have any questions, please contact Melinda Sims, RF coordinator, rainbow@umc-stmarks.org. Please plan to stop by and visit!

What's Happening at the Dove Mountain Site?

The first Christmas Eve service at the Dove Mountain CSTEM K-8 School, 5650 W. Moore Road, was in 2019. We all know that lots has happened since then. COVID has derailed many things in each of our lives.

In spite of it all, a few good things have come out of the pandemic. We've learned how to use technology as an even more valuable tool. We/I've learned to slow down and appreciate notes and phone calls. I've also learned that we have a wonderful community in the Dove Mountain area.

The school has been very generous with its time and willingness to help us re-ignite relationships in the area. As an example, the parent group paid the rent for the school cafeteria, so St. Mark's families and school families could work together to package more than 13,000 meals with Rise Against Hunger.

We have not abandoned the second site, but we have decided we may be able to reach more people by having a presence in the area where we can work alongside each other on projects such as meal packaging, car shows and book studies.

While we plan to be in the school cafeteria only for special services (e.g., 2 p.m. Christmas Eve), we will continue to have three services at the original Magee site and a livestreamed service from that site. One of the things we learned from the pandemic is that, through the internet, we have the capability to reach many people who haven't sat in a pew in several years, if ever.

As stated above, we will have a **family service at 2 p.m. Christmas Eve in the school cafeteria**. As always, the service is open to all ages and will include a "Blessing of the Children."

Peace,
Kim Ogle
Christian Formation & Outreach Pastor

Donate Socks for Youth Group Service Project

The Youth Group will be wrapping socks for Primavera Men's Shelter at our Service Sunday on Dec. 12. If you would like to donate men's crew socks, we will collect them between services that day, or drop them by the church office for Rachel during office hours. Thank you!



Relax, Listen to Harpist in St. Mark's Meditation Gardens

Take time out of a usually hectic and bustling time of year to visit the St. Mark's Meditation Gardens. Harpist Kathy Narney will bless us with seasonal selections from 3-5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 19. Although we usually need to slow down to reflect upon the true miracle of this season, this second unusual year brings different issues with it. Chances are that people may be feeling lonesome and/or depressed. Take time on the



19th to simply enjoy, to mediate, to reflect, to reprioritize, if needed. It will, indeed, be time well spent. For everyone's safety, we ask that all participants respect social distance.

A Word from Norah Mosher, Age 9!

Hi my name is Norah and for as long as I remember, me and my grandma have been collecting pop tabs! All the pop tabs go to Ronald McDonald House and help people. For a long time, we could go inside the building and weigh the pop tabs but due to COVID we can't go inside these days but it is still fun and knowing that you are helping people makes me happy. How it works is you give Ronald McDonald House the pop tabs and then they sell them to get money and then help families. Ronald McDonald House is a place where families can stay for a little bit if they live far away from a hospital and someone in their family is in the hospital and they want to be closer by them they can stay at Ronald McDonald House. Whenever I give pop tabs I always get filled up with joy and I always have a smile on my face when I bring pop tabs! If you ever want to help me and my grandma you can also collect them and then put them in Rachel Mosher's staff mailbox in the office!



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." Or you can register at the Adult Spiritual Growth bulletin board in the courtyard on Sundays.

Open Minds Book Group



9-10:30 a.m. Dec. 17 via Zoom: *Becoming*, a memoir by Michelle Obama. "Becoming" is an intimate and inspiring memoir that begins with Michelle's childhood on the South Side of Chicago, where her parents raised her to be outspoken and to pursue her dreams. Experiences that shaped Michelle include her years as a student at Princeton, later as an attorney in a corporate law firm, then as an executive balancing the demands of work, marriage and motherhood, and finally as the First Lady—the first African American in that role. During her years in the White House, she established herself as a powerful advocate for women and girls, finding ways for families to pursue healthier, more active lives. With honesty and wit, she describes her triumphs and disappointments, both public and private, and challenges us with these questions: Who are we? Who might we become? To obtain the Zoom link for this meeting, register on the St. Mark's website (noted at the top of this page), or contact one of the co-leaders, Celeste Pardee and Ann Reaban (see church directory).

Looking Ahead to a New Year in Adult Spiritual Growth

We hope you are deep into one of our Advent study groups. Since they follow Pastor Lynn's sermons, you can really join in any of them at any time and participate in the discussion.

We are busy planning for the first of the new year and are lining up the learning opportunities. These will cover a range of topics as well as levels of learning so all people can find something interesting for them. Be on the lookout for all that Open Minds Book Discussion will offer, studies from the Wednesday Morning Study Group and Family Life/Sharing Sunday School. At long last, Disciple Bible Study-1 will convene in January. A couples' Bible study will begin in January as well, focusing on the book of James, led by Lorraine and Harry Shaw. Kathy Narney will be returning to lead a class. Joylee Gathings will lead a study of a personal memoir by a local author.

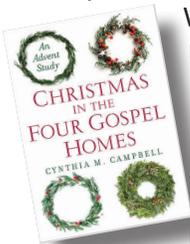
The January newsletter will have a complete listing, so get your calendars ready for an exciting spring. Some classes will be in person; others on Zoom only; and there will be some hybrid opportunities as well.

If you don't hear or see something that is of interest to you, please let Adult Spiritual Growth know what you'd like. Contact Judy Boroto (see church directory) or Pastor Kim Ogle (kim@umcstmarks.org) with suggestions.

Greetings for a holy and blessed Advent and Christmas season from your Adult Spiritual Growth Committee.

Not too late to join an Advent study!

Join one of our groups to study *Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes* by Cynthia M. Campbell. This is a church-wide study that accompanies Pastor Lynn's Advent sermons. We know Matthew and Luke have birth narratives of Jesus. We also know the prologue to the Gospel of John has been used as such with: "... and the Word was made flesh" But what about Mark? Come and see what this study has to say about this. You have several choices of groups. Register online at www.umcstmarks.org --> "Classes" --> "Adult Spiritual Growth Opportunities." You can order the book at a 35% discount through the publisher at <https://tinyurl.com/GospelHomesBook>.



DAY	TIME	PLACE	FACILITATOR
SUN	8:30 a.m. 9:30 11:30 2 p.m.	Room 23 Hybrid* Room 8/9 Dove Mt Brewery	Linda Walker Sharing/Fam Life Judy Boroto Kim Ogle
MON	10 a.m. 6:30 p.m. 6:30 p.m.	Mountain View Barnes & Noble Saddlebrooke	Marge Sogn Marlyce Wright Marge Sogn
WED	10 a.m.	Hybrid*	Marcia Rostad
THUR	2 p.m.	Room 20	Linda Walker

*Hybrid classes take place in room 17/18 and via Zoom.

Music, Stories, Children's Time, Art and Advent Lessons

There is so much happening in Sunday School for children in preschool through fifth grade. Each week the Sunday School teachers at St. Mark's work to provide all students a wide range of experiences that not only bring the Bible to life but also make it relatable for the different age groups. Sunday School meets from 10-11 a.m. on the first four Sundays in each month. The children attend Children's Time with their Sunday school classes on the second and fourth Sundays in the Sanctuary, and during the modern service in the Fellowship Hall on the third Sunday. There is no Children's Time on Communion Sunday (first Sunday of the month). Months with a fifth Sunday are designated as Family Worship, and children attend regular worship with their families. This is a special time for families to worship together and for children to learn about and participate in a worship service. By doing this, they grow in confidence knowing they are welcome members of the St. Mark's family. St. Mark's currently has two Sunday School classes. Children in preschool – second grade meet in rooms 2 and 3, and students in third – fifth grades meet in rooms 8 and 9. See you in Sunday School!



each month. The children attend Children's Time with their Sunday school classes on the second and fourth Sundays in the Sanctuary, and during the modern service in the Fellowship Hall on the third Sunday. There is no Children's Time on Communion Sunday (first Sunday of the month). Months with a fifth Sunday are designated as Family Worship, and children attend regular worship with their families. This is a special time for families to worship together and for children to learn about and participate in a worship service. By doing this, they grow in confidence knowing they are welcome members of the St. Mark's family. St. Mark's currently has two Sunday School classes. Children in preschool – second grade meet in rooms 2 and 3, and students in third – fifth grades meet in rooms 8 and 9. See you in Sunday School!

FAMILY ADVENT CELEBRATION



a desert

Snowball Fight!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2021

11:00- 1:00

ST. MARK'S UMC

PRESENTED BY ST. MARK'S FAMILY MINISTRIES
AND CHILDREN'S EDUCATION COMMITTEE

What? Yes, you read that correctly. The St. Mark's Children's Education and Family Ministries committees are hosting a special snowball fight/Advent event from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 12 (right after worship and Sunday School). This event is for the whole family and will feature an indoor snowball fight, a food truck (Taco'Queta), cookies and hot chocolate, photo ops, kid-friendly crafts and a special DIY family keepsake representing the four Gospel homes of our Advent study. **Please plan to join your St. Mark's family for this fun event!**

Full Charge Bookkeeper Job Opening!

We are hiring!

We are sad to lose our part-time full charge bookkeeper, and we need to fill this position. If you or someone you know is seeking a part-time position in finance and administration, please check out our website. Please also pray for a qualified person to apply who will be an asset to the team and to the church.



A complete job description is available on our website at <https://umcstmarks.org/about-us/job-opportunities/>. To apply for this position, please submit a cover letter and your resume to info@umcstmarks.org. If you have questions, contact the church office at 520-297-2062.

Spend the 'Longest Night' with St. Mark's



As you are most likely aware, there is a lot less sunlight right now than at other points in our year. In fact, just a few days before Christmas is the winter solstice, the day with the least amount of sunlight in the northern hemisphere. We were designed to thrive on light, so this time of year can be very difficult for many people. This is also the time when we, as a society, have many communal celebrations. These celebrations can be very difficult as well, especially if we have been having a difficult year or the holidays come with painful anniversaries from years past. To help with all these factors, St. Mark's will host a Longest Night service at 7 p.m. Monday, Dec. 20 in our Fellowship Hall. In this quiet, more meditative service, we will acknowledge the difficulties that can come with this time of the year and collectively welcome the light back into our lives and our world. Although all are welcome, if you think you could benefit from this service, or you know someone who could, please come. This service will be an in-person event only, so there will be no live-streaming options for connecting to the service.



Christmas Poinsettias: Last Chance to Order!

Celebrating a St. Mark's tradition, we will decorate the Sanctuary with red and white poinsettias from Sunday, Dec. 19 – Sunday, Dec. 26.

Contributions toward the Christmas poinsettias can be made *in honor or memory of someone* by completing the form below and mailing it with your check to the church office. Deadline is Dec. 13. The form and check (with flowers noted on the memo line) can be folded together to drop in the Sanctuary offering boxes or dropped off at the church office.

Additionally, you can fill out the form electronically and make your donation on the St. Mark's website. Go to the "Giving" tab, select "Donations" and then select "Holiday Flowers."

Mailing address: St. Marks UMC, 1431 W. Magee Rd., Tucson, AZ 85704.

Website: <https://umcstmarks.org>

The suggested donation of \$15 will help purchase the poinsettias; any money over and above the cost of the flowers will go into the Worship Committee's Flower Fund. Traditionally, the Flower Fund has been used to purchase actual items for various Tucson charities. In the past the Flower Fund purchased a washer and dryer for The Inn shelter located at First UMC.

On Sunday, Dec. 19, the poinsettia commemorative list will accompany the online bulletin and will be downloadable if you wish to print one out. After the last Christmas Eve service (10 p.m.) the poinsettias can be picked up from the Sanctuary, or they will be available for pickup through the office on Monday, Dec. 28. After Dec. 30, the remaining poinsettias can be picked up and given to the homebound or given to anyone needing some holiday cheer.

Please PRINT clearly.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Address: _____

I am contributing \$ _____ toward the purchase of poinsettias for the Sanctuary.

In honor of: _____

In memory of: _____



Missions Committee Update

I am very happy to report that, as a result of your generosity and the ongoing, unwavering commitment to helping others in need, St. Mark's has donated more than \$100,000 in financial contributions, food, and other gifts to our mission partners locally and around the world in 2021. In addition, our congregation members have donated thousands of personal volunteer hours serving in our community this year. While others have pulled back their support for missions projects during the pandemic, St. Mark's has remained fully committed. This is truly amazing! Thank you so much for your generosity, and know that your financial gifts to St. Mark's are doing great work.

We have fed the hungry, helped the homeless, provided housing assistance to those in need, helped those suffering from abuse, supported youth in need, helped with disaster relief throughout our nation, supported Nash School in many different ways, helped to provide job training and assistance, supported families of our military, completed home maintenance and repairs, helped those suffering from HIV/AIDS, helped immigrants in Southern Arizona legally seeking asylum to transition into our country, supported LBGTQ+ rights and activities, supported the on-campus United Methodist ministries at the University of Arizona, helped the youth at the Fuente de Vida church in Agua Prieta, Sonora, Mexico, and helped children and adults suffering with illnesses and loss through the grieving process.

We can all be proud to be part of our wonderful St. Mark's community and the work that we do. But we are not done! We look forward to continuing this work in 2022 as well as exploring even more opportunities to serve. Praise God!

Peace.
John Yost, Missions Committee Chair

Thank you from Tu Nidito



Tu Nidito extends a heartfelt thank-you for the amazing efforts of St. Mark's Missions Committee member Judy Kelso for leading efforts to promote Tu Nidito's Ride for a Child program, which raised more than \$19,000 to support Southern Arizona's grieving youth! A special thank-you to Missions Committee members

Lorri Jordan and Holly Celmer for spending a Saturday morning at Tu Nidito helping to put on this event!

From the HIV/AIDS Committee to our Members and Friends at St. Mark's:

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! For helping make TIHAN'S November POZ Café a whopping success for all of its CarePartners who participated—a complete Thanksgiving meal including pumpkin pie, a full and decorated CarePackage with cleaning & personal care items, gifts for the online Bingo afterward and volunteers to help make it all happen. AND THEN! You didn't stop there. You bought 30 gifts and additional gift cards to help make the holidays special for children whose parents/guardians are living with HIV!! Your generosity is a blessing to many.

Did we say THANK YOU?
Pat, Sally, Linda, Mary Lu, and Marcia



Volunteer to Serve Primavera Meals

In January, we will resume serving meals at Primavera on the second and fifth Saturday of each month. This was our normal rotation for years prior to the pandemic, and many of our St. Mark's groups and committees have participated in this great mission opportunity. If you or your group are interested in serving or want additional information, please email missions@umcstmarks.org with the date you are signing up for and the name(s) of the participants, or with the information



you are requesting. Or sign up online at <https://tinyurl.com/PrimaveraSpring2022>. Available dates are Feb. 12, March 12, and April 9 and 30. (January is already booked!) We have a recipe book available that has been used in the past to help with shopping and meal preparation.

PRIMAVERA Thank you for your service!

More Gratitude from our Partners

- We recently received a thank-you note from Our Family Services for the check they received from St. Mark's as a mission partner. Our contribution of more than \$6,000 helped Our Family Services to serve 4,900 people this year as well as average 470 homeless people housed each night. Thanks be to God!
- On Friday, Oct. 29, at a Homeless Event for Stand Up for Kids, organizers distributed hygiene bags for girls that St. Mark's had previously donated. These are very important items and cherished by the recipients.

Missions continues page 9

Youth Ministry

The latest news for High School, Middle School and PreTeen Students!



St. Mark's youth group

2021-2022

Upcoming Events (Full descriptions on page 8)

Service Sunday



Love your neighbor as yourself
with '21-'22 Confirmation class

Christmas Celebration



No Youth Group during
Christmas! Family Time!



Epiphany
Party



January 15-17, 2021



Mingus Mountain Camp
South District Winter Retreat

Pretzel
Prayers



Service Sunday
Dec. 12

Christmas Celebration
Dec. 19

No Youth
Dec. 26, Jan. 2

Epiphany Party
Jan. 9

Winter Camp
Jan. 16

Pretzel Prayers
Jan. 23

High Ropes Course Recap

South District youth had an amazing time at the Veterans' Day event, "Stand Up." We met so many challenges at the University of Arizona/4H ropes course, and everyone took one step further than they knew they could! We talked about standing up to challenges with love. It was a fun day of challenges, fun, and seeing our friends from around the South District.



St. Mark's PRE-TEENS



ADVENT ACTIVITIES

DEC 3: HOPE & LOVE - CHRISTMAS CARDS

DEC 12: JOY - GINGERBREAD VILLAGE

DEC 19: PEACE - MOVIES & MUSIC

DEC 26 & JAN 2: NO MEETINGS! ENJOY YOUR WINTER BREAK



PRE-TEENS!
FOURTH AND FIFTH GRADERS, COME JOIN US FROM 4-6 P.M. SUNDAYS FOR GAMES, CRAFTS, AND A BIBLE LESSON

MERRY CHRISTMAS



Youth Ministry

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



Continued from page 7

UPCOMING EVENTS

Service Sunday Dec. 12

St. Mark's has supported Primavera Men's Shelter for many years! Our youth group has been involved every step of the way! Every year in December, our Confirmation class makes dinner for the men at Primavera. We serve dinner and give the men socks for Christmas. This year, we aren't able to go down to the shelter, but we can still serve! Join us on Dec. 12 for Service Sunday! We will wrap socks for the men and make cookies to be delivered to them. You can get service hours at this Service Sunday!

Christmas Celebration Dec. 19

We wish you a Merry Christmas, we wish you a Merry Christmas, we WISH you a Merry Christmas – could you hear Rachel singing that!? Sorry if you could! Come celebrate Christmas with all of your Youth Group friends. Bring a friend! Who doesn't love a party!?

No Youth Dec. 26 or Jan. 2

Did you know that the 12 Days of Christmas actually START on Dec. 25, and go until Epiphany (Jan. 6)? We will not be meeting during the 12 Days of Christmas. Spend some time with your family! See you after the new year!

SSP UPDATE



Great News! We got Week 2 (July 10-16) in Sunny San Diego, Calif. We will leave St. Mark's on July 8, have some fun bonding time in San Diego and be ready to work by the 10th. SSP does have new COVID policies for this year. If you have questions regarding those, please let Rachel know. Registration

is open now, but hurry! We only have a few spots left! Register at <https://forms.gle/3bbmaAUM1sayLFyJ9>.



December Birthdays

- Dec. 11—*Lisa DaDeppo*
(youth Sunday School teacher)
- Dec. 19—*Landon Tate*



Epiphany Party Jan. 9

Come celebrate Kings' Day in style! We will have crowns, games, and hopefully a Kings' Cake! (Last year, Rachel couldn't find one – let's hope she can find one this year!) Join us for some fun as we talk about these awesome people who traveled to see the baby.

Winter Camp Jan. 16

This year, we will join with the other South District youth for a great Winter Retreat, "Rest in God" at Mingus Mountain. This fun weekend is only \$75, and scholarships are always available! We will leave from the Wesley House on Saturday, Jan. 15 and return on Monday, Jan. 17. Sign up with Rachel while there is still space available!

Pretzel Prayers Jan. 23

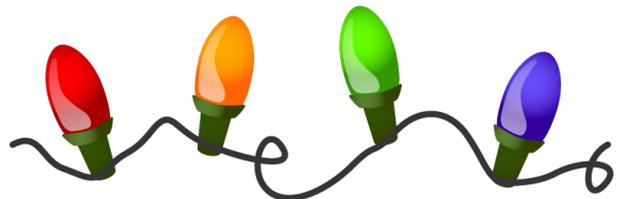
Have you ever noticed that a pretzel is shaped like someone praying? That makes the delicious treat even more cool, doesn't it?? Come make some pretzels to take home, and have fun at the same time! We will talk about how prayer can happen any and everywhere – even in the kitchen.

SOUTH DISTRICT NEWS

Our South District youth have lots of fun events planned for this year! If you missed our Fall Kickoff or Veterans' Day High Ropes, don't worry! There is still a ton of fun stuff to come! You do not want to miss our Winter Retreat over Martin Luther King weekend. The South District is taking over Mingus! Come for a relaxing and fun weekend in the (hopefully!!) snow.

CONFIRMATION

Our Confirmation class is having a great time meeting on Sunday mornings. In December, we will have a chance to serve together! Meet with the youth group from 4-6 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 12 to bake cookies and wrap socks for Primavera Men's Shelter. This is a requirement for the class and will definitely be fun! You can earn service hours for other programs you may be in, too!





Missions Ministry

ICS Food Bank Donation Update

Great news! Our wonderful St. Mark's family has donated more than 21,000 lb. of food this year to the food bank at Interfaith Community Services. That is life-changing for the hundreds of individuals receiving the additional food we are providing to those in need in Pima County. Thank you!

Everyone is experiencing the higher food prices and lower availability on grocery store shelves. This is also affecting food banks nationwide, as donations have declined as a result. Unfortunately, the number of individuals going to food banks for assistance is increasing, meaning our continued help is very much needed during this holiday season. Please help if you are able. All donations big or small are greatly appreciated. You can bring your non-perishable donations between 10-11 a.m. every Tuesday and Saturday to the north parking lot of the church. If that is not convenient, you can drop off donations at the church office during normal business hours.

Christmas Eve Volunteers Needed!

The Church Growth & Hospitality Committee needs volunteers on Christmas Eve to:

1. Heat and serve apple cider
2. Assist with serving hot cocoa (dry powder mix)
3. Help with cleanup

We are planning to serve hot cider and hot cocoa after the 4 p.m. Blessing of the Children and after the 6 p.m. Modern Service. This is an opportunity for you to greet and welcome people with a warm smile and wish them a MERRY CHRISTMAS. Please contact Marge Sogn at (see church directory) if you would like to participate in sharing St. Mark's hospitality with others.

Check Out Just Breathe Yoga

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

We have the Fellowship Hall reserved for 10:30 a.m. Tuesdays and Fridays. We will also offer this via Zoom both days; the Zoom "room" will open at 10:15 a.m.

The suggested donation is \$5 per class. This cost covers instructor pay, purchase of materials, Holy Yoga™ scholarships and charitable donations to other ministries. There is also a one-time waiver to sign before joining.

If you are interested in trying a gentle, Scripture-based yoga practice, please email tricia@umcstmarks.org for the Zoom link, waiver or more information.



The Inn Project Seeks a Most Personal Gift

The holidays are closing in on us, and the requests for donations abound everywhere you turn. But it is a rare opportunity to work face to face to help our asylum seekers at The Inn Project. I come home overjoyed, truly filled with Christ's teachings in action, and yes, maybe a little tired. Volunteers cook off-site, delivering frozen meals to us for distribution, and the hotel insists upon cleaning and sterilizing after each departure. We used to do it all.

I go to the site (Grant and I-10) nearly every Monday. I put together breakfast, and at 8:30 a.m., I make the rounds to the motel rooms, providing each person sustenance. I get to chat with them (I'm gradually learning Portuguese, ha!), smile, make them welcome. The hard stuff is handed to Gustavo, who is working with us at least through March thanks to a Global Ministries Grant. Gustavo is from Mexico City and has a degree in international relations.

Problem is, we need more shift workers like me: 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., 1-5 p.m., 5-9 p.m., and 9 – 11:55 p.m. Weekends are especially devoid of volunteers.

Another area of service needed is drivers to transport our folks from the hotel to either the bus station or to the airport. Car seats are provided (for return) for the young passengers. Now, rather than go down and sit around, if you were to volunteer to drive, you would keep that day on your calendar clear and yourself accessible by phone. If you were needed, you would receive a call. Most often, these arrangements are made a day or so beforehand.

Other needs might be to help sort clothing donations at First UMC, or help with the cooking over at St. Francis. You see, there is something for almost everyone, and many have no language barrier.

I ask you to prayerfully consider volunteering your service in some fashion. Most of our shifts are empty of volunteers, putting a considerable load on Gustavo and Gretchen (another new baby girl). This asks of YOU, not your monetary gifts. The gift of yourself is so very precious and personal, great for THEM, even better for YOU! Considering?? Please speak with Gretchen Lopez about your interest, 520-312-1451.

Blessings to each of you this season, as we reflect on Mary, Joseph, and Jesus, as THEY fled persecution.

Kathie Barrett, The Inn Project Liaison

Chronic Pain and Illness Group



The St. Mark's UMC **Chronic Illness and Pain Support Group** meets from 10:30 a.m. to noon the second and fourth Wednesday of each month in the church library and via Zoom. We offer a time of prayer during each meeting and time to share personal

joys and concerns, as you are comfortable. We want to help each other whenever we can. At each meeting, we remind ourselves that we are meeting in a safe space as we listen and share, and everyone's confidentiality is respected and held. For more info or for the Zoom link contact April DuBoce at chronicillness@umcstmarks.org or call the church office at 520-297-2062. You do not have to be a member of St. Mark's to participate.

PRAYER CORNER

We are a praying community at St. Mark's. You may submit prayer requests by email to prayerchain@umcstmarks.org or on our website under "Resources" then "Prayer Request."

Don Beene
Jared Bowman and family
Deb Cushman
Judy Drescher

April DuBoce
Marge Frazer
Keith and Mary Ann Glazier
Mary Sanders

Ana Luisa Terrazas
Carol Underwood
Jackie Vickers

CONDOLENCES

We extend our heartfelt sympathy and prayers to:

- Karen Allison and the rest of the Allison family on the passing of her husband, Jim Allison, Nov. 9. Jim died peacefully with Karen at his side. A celebration of life took place Dec. 4 at St. Mark's.
- Jessie Deyoe and the rest of the Deyoe family on the passing of Jessie's son, Jim Deyoe, Nov. 19. Jim died early in the morning with his family at his side. A memorial service will be held Saturday, Dec. 11 at St. Mark's.



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. Lynn Bartlow
Associate Pastor:
Rev. Stuart Salvatierra
**Christian Formation
and Outreach Pastor:**
Kim Ogle

Sunday Worship
In person
8:30 a.m. and 10 a.m.

Livestreamed
10 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

Dear Church Family...

My sister, Rebecca Wallace, and I arrived safely in Colorado to our new residence. We will be living for a while with my nephew, Josh, in his big house with his two sons, LJ (Little Josh) and Bubba (Julian).

This was an emotional move for us both, selling our parents' home that we lived in since their deaths in 2010 and 2011. I have been a member of St. Mark's UMC since 2001. I will miss seeing my many friends, yet I know we will see one another again. St. Mark's brought me back and closer to GOD and I am forever grateful. The memories I hold within are precious and I will treasure them always.

Our heartfelt love and gratitude to many of you who came to our home to help set up, prepare, sell and clean up after our big estate sale on Oct. 16. A very special "thank you and we love you" must be given to Donna Reed, Linda Hill, Sandi Heilman, Cathy Simpson, Linda Connolly (who joined St. Mark's the same day I did and we instantly became friends, having you there meant so very much), Sally Mettler and Marlyce Wright. I know there were others and I apologize for those I've left out.

From the bottom of our hearts, we send Christian love and thanks. I will watch each Sunday for the church service and will look forward to the MESSENGER as I always do.

Blessed be the ties that bind, we miss and love you all.

*From rocky mountain high Colorado (but always Arizona Wildcats fans!)
Diane Damewood and Rebecca Damewood Wallace*

THANK YOU, St. Mark's, for hosting the first public showing in Tucson of "Pilgrimage to Magdalena"! Personally, Donna and I loved seeing so many of you and being back in your beautiful Sanctuary. As I mentioned, the documentary will be shown again on Sunday, Jan. 30 at The Loft Cinema on Speedway, if you know of others who might be interested. And if any of you want to know more about what Border Community Alliance does, visit our website <https://bordercommunityalliance.org> or call our office in Tubac at 520-398-3229.

Jerry Haas (a somewhat retired former pastor at St. Mark's)

LOVED ONES IN THE MILITARY

Please keep these people in your prayers. Email additions or updates to messenger@umcstmarks.org.

Hank Bautzmann, son of Nancy Bautzmann
Alex Boettcher, grandson of Carla & Paul Boettcher
Jacob W. Boettcher, grandson of Carla & Paul Boettcher
Christian Bowers, grandson of Doug & Charlotte Bowers
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
Matthew Hughey, son of Juliee & Billy Morrison and grandson of Joyce Flick
Rachel Kester, daughter of Don Kester & Ruth Kester
Don Lauver, Son-in-law of Linda Connolly
Sam and Nathan Lennarson, grandsons of John & Sherri Lennarson

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
Clint Staschke, son-in-law of Cliff & June Young
Jacob Szczygiel, grandson of Joyce Flick
Michael and Karisa Szczygiel, son-in-law and daughter of Joyce Flick
Brianna Walker, granddaughter of Barbara Fradenburgh; niece of Joan Fradenburgh



December prayer requests

The St. Mark's Prayer Ministry Team provides monthly prayer requests that include various church activities and services, mission opportunities, and people we can pray for during the month. The monthly Prayer Requests are located on the church website, <https://umcstmarks.org/> under the "Ministries" tab, then "Congregational Care." Scroll down to "Prayer Ministry Team" and print out the monthly prayer card.

† Celebrate God's love that sent His son, Jesus, into the world – in our hearts and in our homes at Christmas.

† Give thanks for the new Sunday morning worship times and formats, 8:30 and 10 a.m. traditional service with organ music and choirs in the Sanctuary; and a 10 a.m. modern service with contemporary music and our Praise Team in Fellowship Hall. Give thanks also for the weekly livestream of the 10 a.m. traditional service, which can be viewed via the church website or YouTube.

† Pray God's blessings for the online Soul Station mid-week service at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesdays. There is a program and learning/sharing time and a time to share prayer concerns and joys, and Communion is celebrated each week. If you are new to Soul Station, contact the church office at 520-297-2062 or email info@umcstmarks.org to request the Zoom link.

† Give thanks for all those who provided children's toys for TIHAN (Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network) and gift cards for Nash Elementary School families. Ask God's blessings as each gift is delivered.

† Pray God's blessings for the Sunday morning Advent worship series titled, "Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes," and for all those participating in the churchwide study of the book with the same title.

† Pray for good attendance and God's blessings for the St. Mark's Advent screening of the Christmas movie "The Star" at Dove Mountain CSTEM K-8 School on Friday evening, Dec. 10.

† Pray for good attendance and God's blessings for all who attend the St. Mark's Advent event, Harp Music in the Meditation Gardens on Sunday afternoon, Dec. 19.

† Pray for God's blessings for all who attend the St. Mark's "Longest Night" Service on Monday evening, Dec. 20, in Fellowship Hall. This service is designed for those who are struggling, grieving, and/or depressed at this time of year.

† Ask God's blessings of the St. Mark's Christmas Eve Services on Friday, Dec. 24: 11 a.m. Lessons and Carols in the Sanctuary; 2 p.m. Family worship and blessing of the children at Dove Mountain CSTEM K-8 school; 4 p.m. Family worship in the Sanctuary; 6 p.m. Modern worship; 8 p.m. Traditional candlelight service with the Celebration Singers in the Sanctuary; 10 p.m. Traditional candlelight service with the Chancel Choir in the Sanctuary.

† Pray for safety, good weather, and God's travel mercies for everyone on the roads/in the air to celebrate the Christmas holidays with family and friends.

† Give thanks and ask God's blessing of all the personal pledges, commitments to serve, and financial support of the ministries, staff, and operation of St. Mark's United Methodist Church in 2022.

† Pray God's healing for St. Mark's members, our families and friends who have had recent surgeries, or are receiving medical treatments, and/or have been in the hospital. Pray also for those who are sick, or are homebound, and/or are recovering at home or in rehab facilities.

† May God give us hearts that love all humanity, eyes to see injustice, and a will to be change-makers.

† Pray that God will bring peace and justice for all people.

† Pray God's healing power will surround all those with COVID-19 and its variants. Pray for the health, safety and protection of all nurses, doctors, and other health-care workers and first responders. Ask God's blessings of the COVID booster vaccines, including the new vaccines for children ages 5 - 11.

† South District Superintendent, Rev. Matt Ashley, asks that we pray for our district chaplains and counselors, everyone involved with The Inn Project, Tucson, and Tucson Metropolitan Ministries.

Address Service Requested

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

Christmas is Coming!

We are moving through Advent by looking into the four gospels to hear each writer's unique way of telling the story of Christ and the beginning of the story. This will lead us to the night itself. Christmas Eve.

What were your traditions around Christmas Eve? I don't remember attending services as a kid, although I should ask my parents if I'm remembering correctly. My first memory of a Lessons and Carols service was in college, when the Religion Department put on a fabulous, music-filled observance in early December. My own church's choir usually did a cantata some December afternoon and we always, always went Christmas caroling somewhere. But Christmas Eve? I don't remember doing much of anything until I was in seminary and participated in the celebrations of the churches where I served. I can remember one certain year in Illinois when I walked through the swirling snow down the middle of the street, wearing my snow suit and boots over my dress, just to get to church to lead worship.

Here at St. Mark's, we have had a long tradition of a busy Christmas Eve. We seek to offer something for everyone, whether you are part of this church or part of the wider community that looks to us for its Christmas Eve celebrations. We offer quality music, a welcome for children and families,



and the comfort of the traditional candlelight and carols.

This year, our Christmas Eve will return to the schedule that we had in 2019. We will offer six different opportunities to worship together in person, and at least one of our services will be available online (I'm hoping two will be). Some would say we are offering too many options. We don't have enough people to fill each of these services. I admit that they are right. We will not fill the pews for every service. If the last six months are an indication, we will not be "standing room only."

But that's okay.

We are choosing to return to our traditional schedule for Christmas Eve this year knowing that many of you are still uncomfortable with large groups. Offering this many options means that we will have space to welcome visitors. We will be able to observe the traditions of the day with joy and wonder, not worrying about the people sitting so close to us. We will celebrate the newborn King the best we can with the many talented and gifted members of our community. So come join us. There's room for all at the manger this Christmas Eve.

*See you soon,
Pastor Lynn*