



Messenger

St Mark's
United Methodist

Volume 62, Number 12

November 30, 2022

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

Advent has begun! Prepare for the Christ Child by sharing in these events!

Soul Station every Wednesday – The Wednesday evening service will study “Almost Christmas: A Wesleyan Advent Experience.” Dinner is at 5:30 p.m. Zoom starts at 6 p.m. Study begins at 6:15.

(More information on page 3.)

Dec. 3, 3-5 p.m. – **Music in the Gardens:** Harpist Kathy Narney will play the music of the season in the Meditation Gardens. Nonalcoholic wassail and cookies will be available.

Dec. 17, 3 p.m. – **Christmas Play: “A Groovy Christmas Dream,”** written by former pastor Evy McDonald. Experience the Christmas story told in a new way. No tickets needed. *(See page 3 for more information.)*

Dec. 4, between worship services – United Women in Faith **Craft Fair and Bake Sale.** *(See more UWF activity on page 4.)*

Dec. 18, 6:30 p.m. – **Movie Night and Christmas Cookies** at Sanctuary UMC. Bring your pillow and join us for a familiar holiday movie.

Dec. 5, 6 p.m. – **Mark-a-ritas Christmas Potluck** in the Fellowship Hall. Bring a dish to share and enjoy a fun evening of fellowship and live harp music. *(See page 3 for more information.)*

Dec. 19, 6:30 p.m. – **Longest Night Service:** For those who are grieving or otherwise finding it difficult to feel joy this holiday season.

Dec. 10, 5:30-8 p.m. – **“It’s Almost Christmas” community and family event** on the west patio. Roast marshmallows, have an indoor snowball fight, make Advent crafts, and more! *(Details on page 3.)*

Several Advent studies have begun! Visit our website at <https://umcstmarks.org/> and go to “Announcements” for a link with more information and to sign up. *(See page 2 for full listing of Advent studies.)*

Dec. 11, 3 p.m. – **Christmas Cantata: “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus”** in the Sanctuary. Free and open to the public. Bring friends, neighbors and family members!



Christmas Eve Services Saturday, Dec. 24

11 a.m. Lessons and Carols

Service of scripture and song that tells the Christmas story, with soup lunch afterward. *(See soup potluck sign-up on page 5.)*

4 p.m. Contemporary Service with Blessing of the Children

Children of all ages are welcome in worship!

8 p.m. Traditional Service with Choirs and Candles

This service will also be live-streamed via our website and YouTube channel. Child care will be provided.

10 p.m. Traditional Service with Choirs and Candles



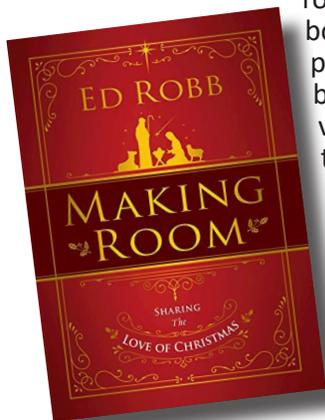
Adult Spiritual Growth

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.

'Making Room: Sharing the Love of Christmas'

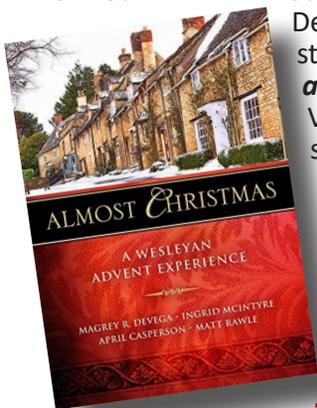
This study, written by Ed Robb, will show us how to make room in our hearts for God and neighbor this Christmas. Often our Advent preparations have an inward focus, but a closer examination of the Advent story shows that the focus of the coming of the newborn king is outward. Jesus made room in God's kingdom for people living on the margins and this season we need to ask ourselves who we can make room for. Perhaps a neighbor, a new immigrant, someone living in a shelter, a nursing home resident. The story of Christ's birth encourages us to widen our borders and increase our sense of community – and make room for others.



Marlyce Wright will lead this four-week Monday evening study from 6:30-7:30 p.m. at the Foothills Mall Barnes & Noble Café beginning Nov. 28. Indulge in a beverage and even a sweet treat from the café as you share the love of Christmas in a casual setting! Please register online and purchase your own study book from your favorite resource.

Sunday Advent Sermons Will Be a Wesleyan Advent Experience

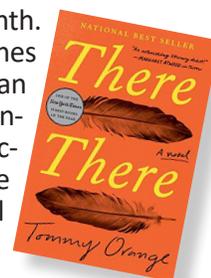
The four Sunday Advent sermons, beginning Dec. 4, will each be based upon the study **Almost Christmas – A Wesleyan Advent Experience** by Magrey de Vega, Ingrid McIntyre, April Casper, and Matt Rawle.



In 1741, John Wesley preached his famous sermon, "The Almost Christian," in which he encouraged people to follow Christ wholeheartedly. We should not be satisfied with being almost Christian but rather

December Open Minds Book Discussion

The St. Mark's book discussion group meets 9 to 10:30 a.m. via Zoom on a Friday in the latter half of each month. Books may be borrowed from the Pima County Public Library or purchased (new or used) from Amazon, Barnes & Noble or <https://bookshop.org/>, which supports local book sellers. Co-leaders: Celeste Pardee and Ann Reaban
Dec. 16: "There There," by Tommy Orange (2020). This fast-paced, powerful novel follows 12 Native Americans, connected to one another in ways they may not realize, as they plan to attend the Oakland Powwow. Among them is Jacquie Red Feather, newly sober and trying to make it back to the family she left behind; Dene Oxendene, pulling his life together and working at the powwow to honor his uncle's memory; and the boy Orvil, coming to perform a traditional dance for the first time. This chorus of voices tells the plight of today's urban Native Americans, with their inheritance of beauty and spirituality —grappling with a complex and painful history, with sacrifice and heroism.



strive toward being altogether a Christian. In the *Almost Christmas* study, the authors explore how we can make the same commitment to Christ during Advent, connecting our Wesleyan heritage with the traditional Advent themes of Love, Hope, Joy, and Peace.

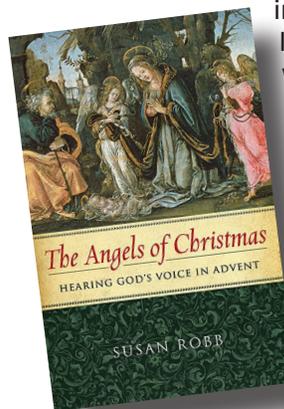
The following study groups will participate. *These regularly meeting groups are always open to new participants and drop-ins, especially this Advent season.*

- **Wednesday Morning Study Group:** 10-11:30 a.m. Nov. 30 and Dec. 7, 14, and 21 in Room 17/18 or via Zoom. Marcia Rostad, class leader.
- **Adult Sunday School:** 9:30-11 a.m. Nov. 27 and Dec. 4, 11, and 18 in Room 17/18 or via Zoom. Please register to receive Zoom connection information. Terry Majewski and Rick Farnsworth, class leaders.
- **Soul Station every Wednesday:** Dinner starts at 5:30 p.m. Zoom gathers at 6 p.m. Study begins at 6:15.

You may order the study book from your favorite resource.

The Angels of Christmas Advent Study

The traditional Christmas story is incomplete without including the appearances of angels. It would be like an Advent wreath without candles or cocoa without marshmallows! Be part of a group that shares in the stories of the angels which brought glorious news about Jesus Christ. Beginning on Monday, Nov. 28, the study **The Angels of Christmas – Hearing God's Voice in Advent** by Susan Robb will begin at the Mountain View Retirement Village. This study explores the angelic visits surrounding the birth of Jesus with Zechariah, Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds. The message of the angels holds meaning for listeners both then and now.



This study group meets 10:30-11:30 a.m. Mondays in the second-floor conference room. All interested people are welcomed as attendance is not limited to the village residents! Class leader is Marge Sogn.



Mark-a-ritas Tea and Potluck

The Mark-a-ritas will hold their annual Christmas Tea/Potluck at 6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 5, in the Fellowship Hall. Bring a dish to share (table service provided) and enjoy an evening of fun and fellowship. This year's added bonus will be live music, generously provided by Kathy Narney and her harp! Please wear your church nametag to help us all get better acquainted.



Continuing another holiday tradition, we'll be collecting children's books to donate to Interfaith Community Services, where books are provided for the entertainment of children during their parents' appointments – and they're allowed to take a book home to keep. Books can be new, or gently used if you have children's books your children or grandchildren have outgrown. Contributing one or more books is optional, however. You're welcome to attend, even if you don't bring a book to donate!

In the past, we haven't asked for RSVPs for this event, but this year, it would be quite helpful for setup purposes if we know how many to expect. Please email or text Sandi Heilman to indicate your plans to attend (see church directory).

The Mark-a-ritas is an informal social group for the women of St. Mark's. There is no agenda, dues, or slate of officers. It is open to all who are interested in fellowship with other women from the church.



'It's Almost Christmas' Event

This year's church and community Advent event, "It's Almost Christmas," will take place from 5:30-8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 10 on the west patio, and it will have something for everyone! In addition to roasting marshmallows for s'mores by the fire (safety precautions are in place), we will have hot cocoa and apple cider. Other exciting activities include an indoor snowball fight, Christmas carolers, storytellers, and Advent crafts. The Children's and Family Ministries Committee is still accepting donations of graham crackers, chocolate bars, marshmallows, hot cocoa and apple cider packets. We are also looking for one more charcoal or propane fire pit to borrow and a few more volunteers to supervise the fire pits/s'mores stations. Small groups of Christmas carolers are also needed. Bring your family and friends! For more information or to donate or volunteer please contact Julie Eblen at julie@umcstmarks.org.



Christmas Cantata

We hope you will join us for the St. Mark's United Methodist Church Choirs performing the Christmas cantata, **Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus**, written by J. Edmund Hughes and Mary Ellen Loose. The concert will take place beginning at 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 11, in the Sanctuary. **It is free and open to the public.** Members of St. Mark's are encouraged to bring friends, neighbors, and family members! A freewill offering will be collected following the concert.

Dr. J. Edmund Hughes was an adjunct professor at the University of Puget Sound (WA), where he directed the Chorale. He retired in 2021 after a 50-year teaching career. His prior position was at Chandler-Gilbert Community College (AZ). While at CGCC, he taught choir, music theory, aural perception, and conducting, and he organized two on-campus choral festivals per year. From 1990 - 2011, he was director of music at Velda Rose UMC in Mesa. Earlier teaching positions were at Phoenix College, Tucson Unified School District and California State University-Fresno. His hobbies are jogging, weightlifting, biking and in 2010 he completed his sixth half-marathon.

Mary Ellen Loose is a composer, arranger and professional accompanist who studied piano performance at Brigham Young University. She has studied piano with Dr. Leo Podolsky and Judith Sandoval-Ferg. A member of ASCAP, she has had numerous choral and piano works published and recorded. As an accompanist, she has played for countless festivals, concerts and programs throughout the western United States. She is currently on the music faculties of Chandler-Gilbert Community College (Chandler, AZ) and Heritage Academy (Mesa, AZ) where she accompanies, teaches private piano students and music theory. She has maintained a private piano studio for more than 30 years and is a member of the Music Teachers National Association. Mary Ellen resides in Mesa, AZ with her four children and three grandchildren. She enjoys running, weightlifting and spending time with her grandchildren.

'A Groovy Christmas Dream'

Join in a fun way to celebrate the meaning of Christmas. This



new and original play will put a new twist on the Christmas story while maintaining its true message. The play was written by Evy McDonald, a former pastor of St. Mark's, now retired. It is being co-directed by Evy and Allison Talavera. The cast is entirely from our congregation, so let's support all the actors, laugh, and experience the Christmas spirit. Mark your calendar: 3 p.m. Dec.

17. After the show enjoy some cookies (yes, there will be some gluten free ones) and hot cocoa in the Fellowship Hall. No tickets required; just bring your family and friends.

Donations of Christmas cookies for this event can be left in the church kitchen on Dec. 16 or the morning of Dec. 17. Please label sugar-free and gluten-free cookies. *No peanut butter cookies please.*

Curious About St. Mark's Rainbow Fellowship?

Rainbow Fellowship meetings are no longer ONLY open to those who identify as LGBTQIA: All who would like to join in conversation are welcome to stop in and visit. Feel free to pop in during our next meeting at 9 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 18 in the church library. If you have any questions (and to RSVP) please contact Melinda Sims, rainbow@umcstmarks.org.



Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!!!

St. Mark's---You are indeed a **generous** and **kind-hearted** congregation!!! You exceeded our goals for collecting supplies for CarePackages for the November TIHAN POZ CAFÉ!! We will have extra TP, facial tissues, dish detergent and hand soap for those who couldn't make it to the "Grab and Go" Thanksgiving lunch in November. There are so many people living with HIV who will be very grateful. These are ongoing needs, so any time an extra package of any of these and other personal care items jump into your grocery or Costco cart, just bring them into the church on a Sunday or during the week. We will see that they get to the TIHAN office. You also provided seven Bingo prizes, including a pillow, books, flatware and more! As I (Pat Small) make check-in calls from the TIHAN office, I recognize people I know from pre-pandemic times and also new names---the needs continue as does your commitment to sharing God's love. *Blessings from the HIV/AIDS Committee.*

Attention Contemporary Worshipers

Interested in a contemporary worship service? We would like to keep contemporary worshipers together sharing joys, concerns, and fellowship with each other until contemporary worship at St. Mark's begins again. Watch for news about a monthly potluck coming soon. We don't want to leave anyone out!! Contact Diane Hiratsuka (see church directory) if interested.

Special Interest Groups Now Forming

Looking for fun and a chance to get to know others in the St. Mark's community better? The Renovation Team is looking for people interested in being part of supper clubs or special interest groups. Meet fellow hikers, theater lovers, pickleball players, scrapbookers, Chicagoans or Ohioans. Have an idea for a group? Interested in helping launch a group or interested in participating? Contact Diane Hiratsuka (see church directory) with ideas or to indicate interest.

Beware of Email Scams

Please be aware that there are many scams out there that seem legitimate. One of the most popular that seems to affect churches is an URGENT email or text asking you to quickly go purchase gift cards so the pastor can help someone in need or surprise the staff or something else. Please remember that no pastor or staff member will ever ask you to purchase a gift card other than our usual collections. If you receive one of these emails, please delete it immediately and don't respond. Always, if the wording seems strange or seems out of character for the person it says it's from, check the email address; often it's not from a St. Mark's email but from another account. Thanks for being diligent!



UWF Christmas Potluck

United Women in Faith invites all women of the church are invited to its annual Christmas party beginning at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 13, in the Fellowship Hall. It is in-person only -- we won't try to connect via Zoom. You don't have to be a member of United Women in Faith, or St. Mark's, or any church to come. The party includes Installation of officers and mission coordinators a potluck meal, and musical entertainment provided by the Flute Loops. You may bring your own brown bag lunch, if you prefer. It's also OK not to bring a food dish for the potluck meal, and still eat with us. There is always plenty of food! WE REALLY HOPE YOU WILL COME! If you have questions or need a ride, contact UWF President Clara Campbell (see church directory or leave a message in the UWF mailbox in the church office).



United
Women
in Faith

Live Music of the Season

Kathy Narney will set up her harp and play Christmas music from 3-5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 3, in the meditation gardens. We will offer non-alcoholic wassail and cookies to those who come to listen.



And join us at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 13 in the Sanctuary as the Sonoran Bells present their "Sleigh Ride" concert.

Sign Up for Christmas Camp

Christmas Camp for third- through eighth-grade students is Dec. 9-11. Join in on ALL the Christmas fun and hopefully see some snow! St. Mark's will provide transportation for registered campers from St. Mark's. Contact Rachel Mosher at 520-297-2062 or rachel@umcstmarks.org for more information or the registration link.





CHRISTMAS EVE POTLUCK LUNCHEON
12 noon Saturday, Dec. 24

Join us after the Lessons & Carols service for our annual Christmas Eve potluck soup luncheon at noon in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone attending has the opportunity to bring a crockpot of their favorite soup, or rolls or crackers. Drinks will be provided.

YES! Please include me/my family for the Christmas Eve soup luncheon.

Please PRINT clearly.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Number of people attending: _____

I plan to bring:

_____ Crockpot of soup (serves 15-18)

_____ Crockpot of gluten-free soup

_____ Rolls

_____ Crackers

_____ I will help with cleanup after lunch

Special dietary needs: _____ Gluten-free _____ Dairy-free _____ Vegetarian

PLEASE RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO THE CHURCH OFFICE BY DEC. 19.

Missions Committee Update

In November, the Missions Committee has authorized the following disbursements:

\$1,500 to The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) - the humanitarian relief and developmental arm of the United Methodist Church. It assists UMCs in becoming involved in direct ministry to people in need in the United States and around the world. 100% of all donations to UMCOR goes directly to serving others with no administrative fees withheld. Earlier this year, the Missions Committee sent \$12,000 to UMCOR designated to helping the people in Ukraine and surrounding areas. Individual members from our St. Mark's community have donated an additional \$21,000 to UMCOR this year through our church. Awesome! One of our staff members has often said: "UMCOR is the reason that I am a United Methodist." We can all take pride in the great work it does every day.

\$3,000 to the Primavera Foundation - Primavera is a longtime key mission partner of St. Mark's. Primavera offers immediate aid to those trying to avoid homelessness and perhaps more importantly, it offers long-term solutions for pathways out of poverty including safe, affordable housing, meals, youth projects, and workforce development. Various groups and individuals from St. Mark's have been preparing meals for the Primavera Men's Shelter the second and fifth Saturday evenings of each month for several years.

John Yost, Missions Committee Chair

What a fun day Nov. 18 working at the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona, with wonderful people! We worked together to assemble 3,060 bags and fill 34 bins! Our next trip is Dec. 2. Let's pack the van! Meet in the church parking lot at 7:45 a.m. Thank you all for your time and energy to help support those in need. Volunteers include: Molly Butler, Holly Celmer, Mark Conley, Jim Howard, KJ Naae, Teresa Powell, Dave Shelton, Monique Thibault, and Jan Walker. Contact KJ Naae (see church directory) for more information.



Agua Prieta Connection Continues

We joined Vista de la Montaña UMC on Oct. 29 for a one-day mission to the Fuente de Vida school in Agua Prieta, Mexico. When we arrived we were entertained by dancers. Then 24 kids with good grades were recognized. They each received a certificate and \$15. Their mothers also got a gift bag in recognition of their support. After lunch we played outdoor games, and the winners got to choose prizes. It was a beautiful day and great fun to celebrate their achievements. Almost all of the cardboard homes near Fuente de Vida have been replaced by cement block homes.

Vista de la Montaña UMC has been supporting this mission for 20 years. They had more than 30 people on the mission, and many were meeting the children that they sponsored. We were grateful to be included. Also a great thanks to Pastor Kim who came to send us off at 6:30 a.m. Her prayers were so appreciated.

Holiday Donations Needed for ICS Food Bank

Most of us enjoy spending time with family and friends during the Holiday season with meals together an important part of that time. Food banks are busier than normal during this season as their clients also cherish this time with their families but need the extra support that food banks provide to help with these meals and normal daily nourishment. The food donations that our St. Mark's family make every week are very helpful and greatly appreciated by



both the food bank and its clients. **Our featured donation items for the remainder of this year are boxed stuffing mix and potatoes, both holiday staples.** You can bring your donations between 10 and 11 a.m. any Tuesday or Saturday to the church's north parking lot or if it is more convenient, you can drop them off at the church office during its business hours. Thanks again!

John Yost, Missions Committee Chair



Youth Ministry

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



Youth Group Calendar grades 6-12



Dec 4

Dec. 11



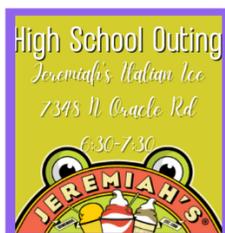
Dec. 18

Dec. 25



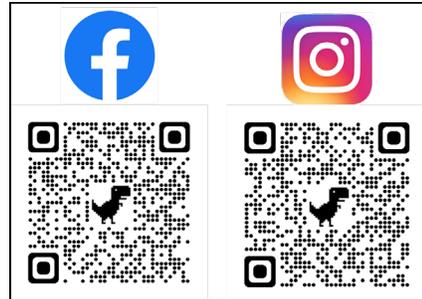
Jan. 1

Jan. 8



Want to know up-to-date youth info?

Check out our social media!



Rachel is posting amazing videos all week long. You DON'T want to miss them!

Caption That!

If there is one thing you all are super good at, it's scavenger hunts! On Nov. 20, you guys found some great pictures to go along with the captions Rachel provided. You guys came up with the perfect pictures for our captions! Thanks for bringing the laughter!



SUNDAY AFTERNOONS - 4PM TO 6PM
ROOM 9 - FRIENDS ALWAYS WELCOME!



Youth Ministry

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



CHRISTMAS EVE

Dec. 24, 5 p.m.- midnight

There is something special about candle lights on Christmas Eve! Join with Rachel and your fellow youth to help make the campus come alive with beautiful luminarias. Starting at 6 p.m., we will place the luminarias around campus and then keep them lit throughout the evening. Snacks and hot drinks will totally be provided! Sign up with friends for a time slot at the QR code.

Christmas Luminarias



WINTER RETREAT

MLK Weekend, only \$75!

Join with youth from around the conference for a super fun winter retreat at Mingus Mountain for winter camp! There will be tons of fun winter and camp activities. Hopefully there will be snow, and I'm pretty sure you'll know one of the speakers. Registration will be coming out soon, so keep your eyes peeled!

SIERRA SERVICE PROJECT



SSP registration

Who's ready for a GREAT year at SSP!? I know I am! I have officially reserved our spot for week 2, at the Navajo Nation site! We will plan for the travel dates of Friday, June 23- Saturday, July 1. We will have an amazing fun trip before our week of service with SSP. If you are interested in signing up, we have space! Use this QR code to sign up today!

SOUTH DISTRICT HAPPENINGS

Go And Do Likewise

This year, the South District Youth are talking about the theme "Go and do likewise," like we read about in Luke 10:37. We read about people doing good things. We learn about how to live like Jesus. But what do we DO with it? Join us at district events where we learn how to "go, and do likewise."



YOUTH MISSIONS

Do you need hours for a program you are in? NHS? Link Crew? NJHS? Any program that needs them? Did you know that Rachel can sign for those hours!? It's true! Any Service Sunday program will get you 2 service hours! Our next Service Sunday is Dec. 4 and we have three planned for the spring semester. Questions? Ask Rachel!

WEEKLY YOUTH GROUP

Service Sunday December 4, 4:00-6:00

I love being in service with you all! On December 4, let's take our Service Sunday out into the world! Come ready for a park clean-up (and probably some time to hang out and play in that park, as well!). Remember- I'll sign for your hours!

High School Outing December 4, 6:30-7:30

Fruit Shack Smoothies, Yogurt, Juice Bar
10785 N. Oracle Rd, Ste 143

Students in 9th-12th grades are invited to join Rachel at Fruit Shack right after youth group on December 4. This is a time for high school students to be in fellowship and conversation together. You bring the conversation, I'll provide the treats.

Confirmation Serves Dinner! December 10

Primavera Men's Shelter

This year's Confirmation class will make a delicious dinner and serve it to the men at Primavera Men's Shelter. They will also wrap socks to deliver to the men on December 10.

Board Game Potluck December 11, 4:00-6:00

Usually, potlucks involve food. Everyone brings their favorite dish to share (yum- jello!!) but this potluck will be slightly less delicious, and possibly more fun!! Bring a board or card game (no electronics at this one!) to share with your friends. Heading into finals, we will have a relaxed afternoon with board games, snacks, and friends! Bring your friends!

Chopped! Gingerbread Edition December 18, 4:00-6:00

It's a Chopped all star tournament event! All of the chefs will call on their stellar culinary skills as they face off against one another to prepare a spectacular Gingerbread House. The catch? Rachel will have some surprise items that must be used in the creation. The only real difference between this and the TV show is, here, you don't have to be a professional chef. And Rachel probably won't be able to pick a favorite. And you will get to eat your creation.

Merry Christmas December 25, 10:00

No Sunday School on Christmas morning. But you and your family are invited to join in worship at 10 a.m. to celebrate the birth of Christ with your church family!

Happy New Year January 1

Start the New Year with new habits! There won't be Sunday School on New Year's Day, but there WILL be two services to choose from! You are welcome at either 8:30 or 10:00 for your first worship of 2023!



Dec. 19—*Landon Tate*

YOUTH 2023

July 23-28, 2023, 6th-12th grade
Orlando and Daytona Beach, Florida

Every four years, the United Methodist Church puts on an amazing youth event for youth from around the country. With workshops, live worship, and amazing musical talent, this is an event you do NOT want to miss. We have signed up

and are ready to start that fundraising. If you have not yet made your first deposit, or you need financial assistance for this amazing opportunity- see Rachel!



Order Christmas Poinsettias

Celebrating a St. Mark's tradition, we will decorate the Sanctuary with red and white poinsettias on Sunday, Dec. 18 and Saturday, Dec. 24.

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. 11. The form and check (with flowers noted on the memo line) can be folded together to drop in the weekly offering trays 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. Mark's 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. This year, the money will be used to purchase bicycles for refugees through Tucson Refugee Ministry.

On Sunday, Dec. 18, 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 Tuesday, Dec. 27. (The church office will be closed on Dec. 26.) 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: _____

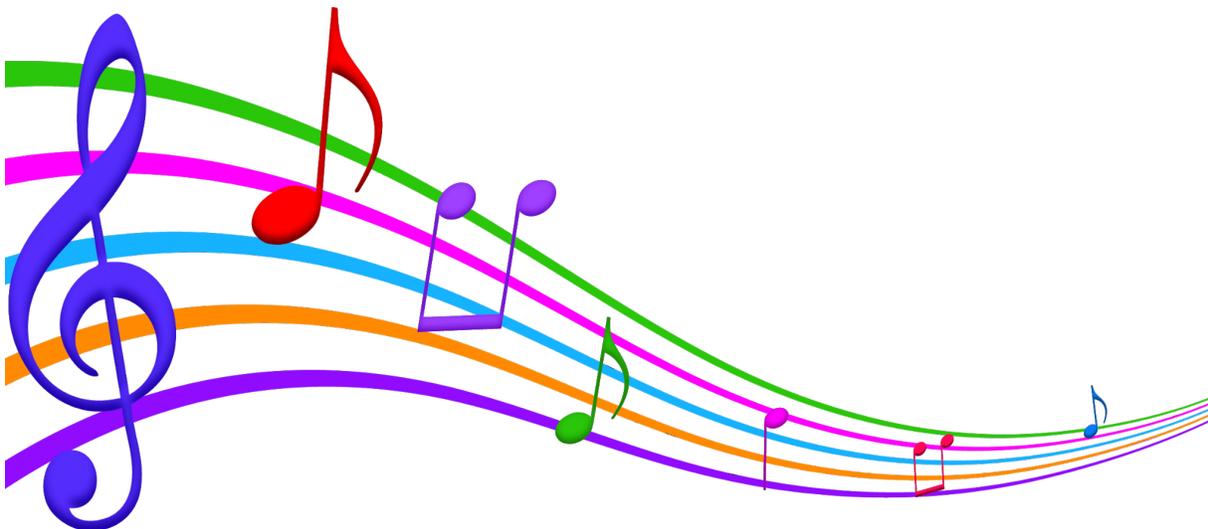


Mark Your Calendar for Upcoming Concerts

Our new Music Ministries Coordinator, Jordan Shomper, has already scheduled a series of concerts to take place at St. Mark's this spring!

Watch your church communications for a concert in January. In February, we'll welcome the University of Arizona Symphonic Choir at 3 p.m. Feb. 19 in the Sanctuary, led by our former Chancel Choir director, Elizabeth Schauer.

At 3 p.m. March 26 in the Sanctuary, we'll host the Tucson Boys Chorus.



Just Breathe Yoga Resumes in January!

Sometimes life just makes you doggone tired. All you want to do is lie down and take a break. And often, a break or even a nap is just what we need. Or the reminder to take a deep breath. Well, have I got some good news for you! Our Just Breathe yoga class – inspired by Holy Yoga™ – returns in January!

Just Breathe provides an opportunity for fellowship while stretching, practicing controlled breathing techniques, reflecting on scriptures, building flexibility and strength, and once in a while, breaking a sweat! Come as you are, we have mats, straps, and blocks available. You can also choose to sit in a chair.

Watch for more information as we get closer to the new

year. Until then, remember to just breathe and maybe take a nap. You know, even Jesus took naps (Mark 4:38).



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

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

Rachel Turner, daughter of Don Kester & Ruth Kester

Brianna Walker, granddaughter of Barbara Fradenburgh; niece of Joan Fradenburgh



PRAYER CORNER

We are a praying community at St. Mark's. Besides Sunday worship, you may submit prayer requests by email to prayerchain@umcstmarks.org. You may also submit via our online form at <https://umcstmarks.org/prayer-request>

Those who will be apart from their loved ones this holiday season

*Jared Bowman and family
Deb Cushman
Judy Drescher
April DuBoce*

*Barb Osar
Mary Sanders
Carol Underwood
Jackie Vickers*

We extend our heartfelt prayers and condolences to:

- The friends and family of Joann Perkins, who died Nov. 10 at her home near the church. A Celebration of Life will take place Jan. 23 at St. Mark's. We ask that you pray for Joann's husband, Phillip, their children, Lori and Matthew, and the rest of their family.

Christmas Day Service

Worship at 10 a.m. This will be an informal service full of singing and stories. Pajamas welcome! (No child care or Sunday School.)

New Year's Day Services

A service of covenant renewal in the Wesley tradition. Begin your year renewing your commitment to Christ! Worship at 8:30 a.m. and 10 a.m.

No Creative Connections This Month

Due to the holidays, Creative Connections will not meet in December. Please plan to join us from 3-5 p.m. Jan. 22 in Room 17/18. Bring your coloring book, art supplies or simple paper crafts and join us for creative fellowship. Please contact Julie Eblen, julie@umcstmarks.org, if you would like more information.



St. Mark's UMC
1431 W. Magee Road
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(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

Fun at Primavera

'Tis the season of Thanksgiving. Sixty-two men at the Primavera Men's Shelter were profoundly grateful as our St. Mark's Kitchen Angel Team winged its way serving a delicious and satisfying hot meal on Saturday, Nov. 12.

Three of the meal team you will recognize: Karen Berry, Jan Walker, and Monique Thibault. They enjoyed the Primavera experience so much, they came back for seconds! Newbies Karen Holesworth, Kaye Baumgartner, and Team Captain Kathy Howard are also ready to sign up for another helping.

Give joy. Receive wow. There's nothing like being on a meal team and serving at the Primavera Men's Shelter. Come and see. Please book your group on Sign-Up Genius today, taking reservations through July 2023. Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/PrimaveraMeals> Not in a group? No worries. Sign up and you will be contacted in assembling a team and recruiting. Everything you always wanted to know will be provided. It's as easy as pecan pie! Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas to all!



Address Service Requested

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

Reflections

In his sermon titled “The Almost Christian,” John Wesley described a person who, on the surface, had all the outward appearances of godliness. They did all the right things: practiced decency to others, went to church, abstained from bad behavior, tried to do their best. Wesley argued that this person was commendable, and everyone should strive to be good. However, he argues that this person was simply almost Christian.

Wesley instead invited his followers to an altogether life, a life that fully loves God, fully loves others, and has a full trust and confidence in God. An altogether Christian would be one whose heart fully embraces Christ with every part of their life. In the rest of his sermon, Wesley gave a series of questions to ask that would explore parts of the Christian life, from belief to practice to our relationship with others.

What would it take for you to move from an almost Christian to an altogether Christian? This Advent season, we are preparing for the Christ child by pondering this question. How can we

move from an almost life to an altogether life? Move from anger to peace. Move from despair to hope. Move into a love that fully knows. Move to a joy that listens and lingers.

I invite you this season to spend this time recalibrating your life to be a gift to God this Advent. You can do that by taking part in one of our studies, drawing you closer into the scripture and themes of the season. You can do that through experiencing our several performance arts options—a cantata of soul-stirring music or an original play that sets the birth narrative a little closer to home. You can do that through experiencing the joy of a younger generation in a movie night or an evening of fun. Or, you can do that in your comfy chair at home, pondering the season and its meanings.

However you prepare, I invite you to make room for Christ, the babe born in the manger.

*See you soon,
Pastor Lynn*