

Messenger

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

Volume 63 No. 10

October 2023



If it's October, it's Pumpkin Patch Time!

By Rachel Mosher, Youth and Common Grounds Coordinator

The pumpkins are coming! The pumpkins are coming! Around the middle of September, I always feel a little like Charlie Brown, telling everyone about the Great Pumpkin (Patch). But it's so exciting, I can't help it! The patch has changed a lot since we started it in 1997, but even more HASN'T changed! For one, I'm still out there! We still sell beautiful pumpkins, based on size. We still use the profits to support both our youth group and youth missions. It is still a great way to get to know other members of the congregation and community.



Frequently, when people ask me what church I go to, and I describe our location, they respond with "Oh! The one with the pumpkin patch! We go every year!" It has been wonderful to watch this fundraiser grow and evolve into such a community outreach and an invitation for families to come onto our campus.

SIGN UP HERE TO SELL PUMPKINS!



transformation begin! If you haven't seen the pumpkins be unloaded, you are in for a treat! It's so fun to see the pumpkins handed down long lines of people, with everyone getting to touch the pumpkins. From the youngest of kids to our most senior members, there is a job for everyone!

Youth: Please talk to me about our goals for shifts and hours, and sign up today. Friends are welcome, and I always sign for service hours for any clubs or classes that require them. (For your friends, too!) Plus, I'm a whiz at homework help between serving customers. It's a win-win.

Our youth try to work at the pumpkin patch as much as they can. With their busy schedules and school getting out so late in the day (many of our high schools get out after 4 p.m.), it can be tricky. We need a lot of help, especially during the week. Being a "Pumpkin Professional" may sound daunting but anyone can do it! Your main job is to sell these orange beauties. I will train you before you start selling, so you can be sure it'll be fun and easy! Sign up with a friend, or make a new friend with someone who signs up at the same time as you! Sign up for a shift by scanning the QR code with this article, or go to <https://tinyurl.com/StMarksPumpkins23>.

Finally, the most FUN and EASY way to support this awesome outreach is by visiting the patch, buying pumpkins, and telling all your friends about it! Questions? Contact me in the church office, 520-297-2062.

Keeping Track of Information Will Soon Be a 'Breeze'

When we began our journey with Ministry Architects last year, one of the main weaknesses they identified was our database, Church Windows. With that in mind, we are in the process of upgrading to a quite popular church-management software, called Breeze. Sanctuary Campus has already had this in place for years. It is extremely user-friendly and includes some features we don't have in our current setup. Most of you (mainly on the Magee Campus) will see changes in how you conduct online giving or sign in online when you attend church on Sundays. There will be changes in how we do online forms and send mass emails, and we will likely have a church directory accessible online (with printed versions available on demand). We are excited at the prospect of having so many aspects of church life consolidated in one place and hope you enjoy it, too!

Annual Church Conference is This Month

Join us for our annual Church Conference as we do our work in preparation of 2024. We will elect our leadership, set the salaries of our pastors, hear an update on our financial health, and celebrate a big year for our church. In addition to this usual work, Church Conference will include a report from the Implementation Team along with action steps still to address. We will share the work of the Vision Summit and move to adopt a new mission statement, stated values, and goals that will guide our work for the next three years. We will celebrate with those who are responding to a call to ordained ministry and those who have retired from ordained ministry. District Superintendent Rev. Matt Ashley will lead us in our work for the evening. Please plan to attend, 7 p.m. Oct. 30 at the Magee Campus sanctuary.



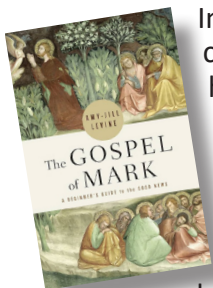
Adult Spiritual Growth

Faith is a journey!

Drop-Ins Always Welcome

ALL REGISTRATION IS ONLINE AT <https://umcstmarks.org> then go to "Classes" and select "Adult Spiritual Growth Opportunities." Or sign up at the Adult Spiritual Growth board on the patio Sunday mornings. Please pre-register and acquire books from your favorite resource. (Bookshop.org, <https://bookshop.org>, supports local bookstores.)

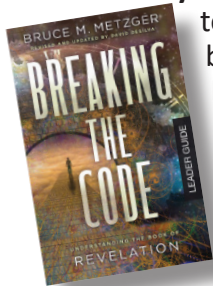
Adult Sunday School - *The Gospel of Mark* by Amy-Jill Levine. 9:30 a.m. Sundays in Room 17/18 and via Zoom.



In the Bible's earliest Gospel, the good news comes alive in this study as the divine and human, powerful and weak, approachable yet mysterious Jesus comes alive. We'll explore select stories (John the Baptizer, the Transfiguration, and notable parables) in their historical context and as a source for the other gospels. Author Amy-Jill Levine

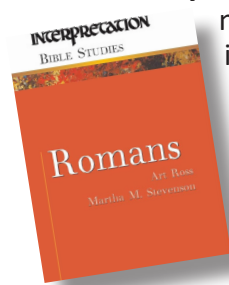
seldom disappoints with her vast knowledge and unique perspective of the New Testament. Please register online or contact a study leader to obtain Zoom connection information. Led by Rick Farnsworth and Carl Harrison.

Seekers Sunday Bible Study – Book of Revelation. 11:15 a.m. Sundays in Room 17/18 and by Zoom.



In addition to the Bible, the class will use the study book *Breaking the Code* by Bruce Metzger. Please obtain this book from your favorite resource. Please register online or contact a study leader to obtain Zoom connection information. Led by Brenda Hunter and Kelly Deyoe.

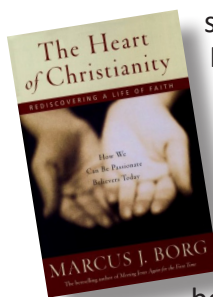
Wednesday Morning Study - *The Book of Romans* by Art Ross and Martha M. Stevenson. 10-11:30 a.m. in Room 17/18 and by Zoom.



The letter to the Romans is the pinnacle of Paul's writing and thinking. Within its pages are profound insights into living faithfully, passionate debates about the fate of the Jews, and cherished messages of comfort and love. Romans is placed first among the letters because of the scope and significance of its topics. Paul instructs his readers, both then and

now, to be transformed from this world into living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, following the example of Jesus Christ. Please pre-register to obtain Zoom connection info if you are new. Books will be available. Led by Marcia Rostad.

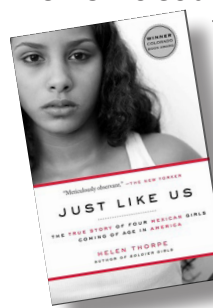
The Heart of Christianity – by Marcus Borg. 1:30-3 p.m. for six Thursdays beginning Oct. 12 in Room 20.



Professor, lecturer, and world-renowned author Marcus J. Borg asked his "unchurched" university students to write a short essay about their impressions of Christianity. They consistently used five adjectives to describe Christian believers: "literalistic, anti-intellectual, self-righteous, judgmental, and bigoted." Borg, a passionate

believer in living the life of faith, wanted to change the students' views and offer them a progressive alternative view of what the Christian life can be. *The Heart of Christianity* was the result of Borg's work. In this book, he argues that the essential ingredients of a Christian life—faith, being born again, the kingdom of God, the gospel of love—are as vitally important today as they have always been, even during this time of conflict and change in the church. Please obtain a book from your favorite resource and read the introduction and chapter 1 before the first class. Led by Linda Walker, former coordinator of adult education at St. Mark's.

Open Minds Book Group This book discussion group meets via Zoom on a Friday in the latter half of each month from 9–10:30 a.m. New members are welcome! Please register online to obtain the Zoom link. Led by Celeste Pardee and Ann Reaban. **Oct. 20: *Just Like Us: The True Story of Four Mexican Girls Coming of Age in America*, by Helen Thorpe** (updated edition, 2011). Thorpe introduces us to four teenagers in Denver, CO, preparing for their senior prom. They are bright, ambitious, excellent students.



All four dream of college and professional careers, but two don't have a green card or Social Security number because their parents brought them across the border illegally. Their two friends are legal—one was born in the U.S., and the other has a green card. Each girl views the others as her equals, yet the world does not treat them that way. This is a story of girlhood, friendship, and identity—what it means to fake or steal an identity, or to inherit an identity from one's parents and country. Thorpe won the Colorado Book Award for this heart-tugging story.

More Study and Fellowship Opportunities

Bible and a Bite Bring a sack lunch and the latest copy of "The Upper Room" to discuss and break bread together just as Jesus and his disciples broke bread in the upper room. 12:30 p.m. Thursdays at Sanctuary Campus. Chris Shafer (call church office).

Roadrunner Book Study 9:30 a.m. Wednesdays at Roadrunner Coffee, Linda Vista and Thornydale. What started as a pastor's Bible study has evolved into a book study that reads a little of everything. Participants enjoy terrific fellowship. Email info@umcstmarks.org for info.

Welcome to the Kitchen, Zach!

We are excited to share that Zachary Rhein has begun work at St. Mark's as our Soul Station Kitchen Manager. Zach will oversee volunteers who prepare dinner for the program or will prepare the dinner when nobody else signs up. He has some culinary background, has worked in several different kitchens, and even has experience with a Rational oven. Zach has been a member of the Sanctuary Campus for some time and has served as the Lay Member to Annual Conference. Be sure and say hi when you see him!

Staff Spotlight: Pastor Kevin

By Shelley Shelton, Communications Coordinator

Growing up in California's Bay Area, Rev. Kevin Lester, 40, knew he wanted to be a musician when he grew up. After high school, he enrolled in California State University, Sacramento, to study music. If the whole "rock band" thing didn't work out, he could teach, he figured. Until he suddenly realized he didn't want to do that anymore.



Feeling called to ministry, he transferred to Azusa Pacific University, where he met his now-wife, Sarah.

"I asked her out and she said no, but I won her over," he said. Now they share a son, Soren, who is 11.

Pastor Kevin says he's been working in churches in some capacity ever since those days at Azusa Pacific, roughly 20 years. In fact, he worked with Pastor Lynn at her previous church, Trinity Heights in Flagstaff, before he was appointed as lead pastor to Sanctuary UMC in 2021.

It was definitely a challenge going from working on church staff to being a pastor responsible for the governing side of running a church, he said.

"Having to quickly get some mastery over a whole ton of stuff was a challenge," Kevin said. "I just wanted to do it right."

Now with the merger of Sanctuary with St. Mark's, Kevin has a new title: Sanctuary Campus pastor.

He's excited for a renewed vision for outreach at both St. Mark's sites, he says.

"Who's missing out by not being here?" he asked. "Who's left out? Who's left behind?" Pastor Kevin wants people to "find a home with us they never knew they wanted."

'Generosity Campaign' Kicks Off Formerly Known as Stewardship on Magee Campus

By Don Brown, Finance Committee chair



"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."
—John 10:10

What is "abundant life"? How does our spiritual life on earth lead us to "abundant life"? How do our church and church family help us to achieve "abundant life"? How does our giving to our church help enhance and multiply our "abundant life"?

Undoubtedly, our spiritual life is important to our well-being, both physically and mentally. In many studies, it has been shown that people of faith live longer and healthier lives. We are less likely to engage in destructive behavior. We show kindness and love to others. This leads us to greater happiness.

Our Christian family at church provides us with friends who help uplift us. They provide a refuge when interactions with others in our community or workplaces can be challenging. They also show us that what we have works. Our gathering together to hear God's word helps to recharge us.

Our church also reaches out to our community to help others less fortunate. Because of our collective giving, it allows us to have a much more significant impact than acting alone.

During this Generosity (Stewardship) Campaign, we request that all members of our congregation estimate what you may be able to give to our church for the next year. This will help set our 2024 budget. We understand that our personal circumstances can change drastically over the course of a year. But if you can provide the best estimate with your current circumstances, it would be helpful. Watch for a letter and card in the mail or pick one up on Sunday. Bring it back to worship on Oct. 29, as we celebrate a generous God who leads us to abundant life.

St. Mark's is grateful for all you have provided in the past and may provide us in the future! Help St. Mark's be there for you to help us provide an "Abundant Life" to you and others in our community!

Thanks again for all your help in service and giving!!



Indigenous Peoples' Day, Monday, Oct. 9

Indigenous Peoples' Day (also called First Peoples' Day or Native American Day) is a holiday that celebrates and honors indigenous American peoples and commemorates their histories and cultures. It is celebrated across the United States on the second Monday in October, in lieu of Columbus Day, and it is an official city and state holiday in various localities.



Church & Society

This year's theme, "Indigenous youth as agents of change for self-determination," reclaims the role that indigenous youth must occupy in decision-making while recognizing their dedicated efforts in climate action, the search for justice for their people, and the creation of an intergenerational connection that keeps their culture, traditions and contributions alive.

Check out this link to read about 11 indigenous youth making a difference in their communities:
<https://tinyurl.com/StMarksIndigenous>

Free Training on Community Issues

What keeps you up at night? What community and social concerns do you have? Pima County Interfaith brings together folks who want to be in conversation about these important matters. But how do you start? How do you talk with those who might think about things differently? Join us at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 19, at St. Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church, 4440 N. Campbell Ave. The training is free; registration is required (a link will be provided via e-blast closer to the date). A light supper will be served. Mark your calendars now. Contact Judy Boroto (see church directory) for more information.

Monthly Gun Violence Update

September 25, Day 268 of 2023

	As of 09/25	As of 08/15
So Far This Year in the U.S.:		
Mass Shooting Incidents (4 or more victims killed/wounded in each)	518	448
Children (0-11) killed by gunfire	223	191
Teens (12-17) killed by gunfire	1067	939
All Youth (0-17) injured by gunfire	3504	3084
Unintentional Shootings	1177	1030

Please visit gunviolencearchive.org to see more statistics and learn more about the organization's background, methodology, and sources of information.

Veterans at Risk

According to the VA, "increasing the time and distance between a person in suicidal crisis and their access to lethal means can reduce suicide risk and save lives. The VA 'Keep It Secure' program promotes awareness about the simple steps you can take to protect yourself and your family." The Department of Veteran Affairs (2021) reported that "nearly 7 out of every 10 veteran deaths by suicide are the result of firearm injuries." See Firearm Suicide Prevention at <https://www.va.gov>.



Rainbow Fellowship will host a picnic at noon Saturday, Oct. 14, at Ramada 1 of Ann Day Park, 7601 N. Mona Lisa Road. Bring a picnic lunch and join us; all are welcome!

This event will replace our usual monthly meeting. The St. Mark's Rainbow Fellowship's monthly meetings are open to LGBTQIA people as well as allies, family, friends and everyone else who would like to join us.

At the end of September, we participated in a shared table at Tucson Pride with other United Methodist Churches.

If you have questions about Rainbow Fellowship, please email rainbow@umcstmarks.org for more information.



Coffee with the Pastor

Get some "face time" with Lead Pastor Lynn Bartlow from 9:30-11 a.m. Wednesday, Oct. 18, at the Barnes & Noble Café at the former Foothills Mall. Come with questions or issues or just to be social!

Wesley House Update:

The youth van repairs are complete and the van is available for the youth. ServPro is the fire remediation company we will use for the Wesley House. As of this writing, start date is pending a meeting with the insurance company field adjuster the week of Oct. 1. We anticipate three months to complete the project unless a need for additional repairs is discovered.

Sanctuary Campus Highlights

By Rev. Kevin Lester



Greetings from the Sanctuary Campus! It's my joy to share with all of you about the great things we have been up to in the western outpost of St. Marks.

Our worship services re-launched in August, and it has been such a blast to sing, learn and play together. The band gives us fantastic music to praise God together, and we've been enjoying going through the #Be series along with everyone at the Magee Campus. We are especially excited about creating a new Sunday School class for elementary-age kids – we love young people, and it warms our hearts to know they have a place to learn about Jesus that is just for them.

This summer our building space got a lot of work! It's beautiful, and we have some creative spaces for building community: a game and book library, a cafe sitting area, a community bulletin board, and refreshed areas for info about our classes and small groups. When people come to Sanctuary, we will be ready to help them connect with all of our amazing ministries at St. Mark's!

As we go forward, we are encouraging all of us to ask ourselves: Who is missing out on experiencing God's love, and the joy of our community? We will be bringing new ideas for outreach soon, including new ideas for the holidays – be ready to join us in new movements to invite our friends and neighbors to discover a life with God at St. Mark's!

Animal Ministry News: Blessing, Rummage Sale

By Jan Walker, Animal Ministry Committee chair

The Animal Ministry team is excited to bring you the 11th annual St. Mark's Blessing of the Animals at 3 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 8 on the Meditation Gardens labyrinth. As always, this event is open to members of the community, so be sure to invite friends and family!

Those who don't feel their pet is suited to attending are welcome to bring a photo instead. All pets should be on leashes, in carriers, or the equivalent.

A freewill offering will be taken for the Maui Humane Society. The Hawaiian islands are grappling with the catastrophic impact of the Maui and Lahaina fires that have left thousands of humans and animals displaced, creating an urgent need for donations.

In addition, from 7 a.m. to noon Saturday, Oct. 28, Animal Ministry is hosting a "Rummage to the Rescues" rummage sale in our south parking lot for a number of local animal rescues. This provides an opportunity for the rescues to join together for an event that attracts a large number of customers. Please come out and shop!

United Women in Faith News

By Kay Hayworth, St. Mark's UWF secretary



United
Women
in Faith

St. Mark's United Women in Faith will meet at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Oct. 10, in Magee Campus Room 17/18 and by Zoom. Refreshments will

be available at 9:30. St. Mark's Associate Pastor Kim Ogle will share about her faith journey. All women are invited. Questions? Need a ride? Contact President Clara Campbell (see church directory or leave a note in the UWF mailbox in the church office). For Zoom info, contact Secretary Kay Hayworth (see church directory).

REMINDER: UWF's Drive-Through Spaghetti Dinner is 4-7 p.m. Friday, Oct. 6. A complete meal – spaghetti & meatballs, lettuce salad, a cookie, and a roll & butter can be picked up in the south parking lot of the Magee Campus. Drive on in even if you didn't get a chance to pre-order!

Messenger Deadline Changes



With the holiday season fast approaching, the Messenger newsletter deadline will move up a bit to accommodate. The next deadline is normal (Oct. 24, for the Nov. 1 Messenger) and then in November the deadline is Nov. 17 due to Thanksgiving, and in December the deadline is Dec. 19 due to Christmas and New Year's. Those issues will come out Nov. 29 and Jan. 3, respectively.

Then in 2024, we will go to a standard deadline of the 20th of every month. No more having to figure out when the next deadline is! It will be the 20th.

JUST BREATHE YOGA

An illustration of a diverse group of people practicing yoga in various poses. There are people of different ages, ethnicities, and abilities, including one person in a wheelchair. They are all in a yoga studio setting with a purple background.

IS FOR EVERYBODY

9:15 a.m. Fridays

Magee Campus Fellowship Hall

tinyurl.com/JustBreatheRSVP

A Quiet Month for Missions

Ongoing volunteer opportunities exist galore. Market on the Move is restarting soon, probably the first Saturday of the month. Last year, all the months sold out of food before time ran out. Monthly we go to the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona to package emergency food boxes. Nash and Estes Elementary schools receive ongoing collections from our congregation. Last month was mostly limited to check dispersal. The Missions Committee funded Tu Nidito and the Interfaith Community Services food banks, with liaisons delivering the checks to their respective organizations.

Mary Beth Barone, Missions Committee Chair

Food Bank Needs Remain Great

Did you know that according to the latest statistics, more than 112,000 people in Pima County experience "food insecurity," meaning they are uncertain where their next meal will come from? And 32,000 of them are children. Many of these individuals rely on assistance from area food banks for help. The Bible is filled with stories of Jesus helping and feeding those in need and we at St. Mark's have been helping our local northwest food bank at Interfaith Community Services every week for the last 3 1/2 years. We have donated more than 72,000 lbs. of food! That is tens of thousands additional meals that food bank clients would not have received without the generous support of our congregation. Thank you so much! But, as the statistics tell us, the need remains great. Please consider making a donation, big or small, whenever you are able. You can bring your donations of macaroni and cheese or other nonperishable food items between 10-11 a.m. Tuesdays and Saturdays to the Magee Campus north parking lot, or drop them off in the church office during its business hours.



We collected and donated almost 400 lbs. of food for the ICS Food Bank on Tuesday, Sept. 26!



Sign Up to Cook for Primavera Men's Shelter

Volunteers serve up dinner the second Saturday of the month for the 60+ men at Primavera Men's Shelter who appreciate our efforts. If you are interested in getting a group together to help, Holly Celmer has a book of recipes and directions to get your group started. Call Holly at 520-730-4191.



PRIMAVERA

Thank You for School Supply Donations

The Nash Neighbors and Sanctuary Campus Missions committees thank the congregation for your generous donations of school supplies for Nash and Estes elementary schools. Your donations included, but were not limited to:

- ✓31 containers of Clorox wipes
- ✓462 Expo markers
- ✓392 glue sticks
- ✓20 hand sanitizers
- ✓106 boxes of tissue
- ✓2,008 pencils
- ✓202 scissors
- ✓60 reams of copy paper

We delivered the supplies in time for the start of the school year. Teachers and administrators expressed gratitude for our partnerships. Thank you for your generosity!



ST. MARK'S ANIMAL MINISTRY

Blessing of the Animals

**SUNDAY, OCT 8
3 P.M.**

Bring your well-behaved pet to be blessed in a short service honoring our animal families. You can bring a photo of your pet if you prefer. Pets should be on a leash or in a crate or cage.

Outdoor chapel / labyrinth
St. Mark's United Methodist Church
Magee Campus, 1431 W Magee Rd



Youth Ministry

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



Youth Group Calendar



Oct-Nov

Oct 8



Oct 15

Oct 22

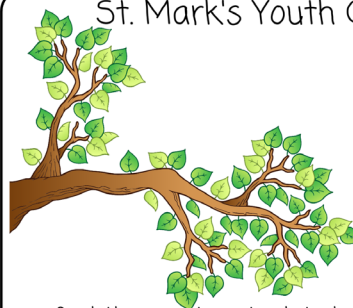


Oct 29

Oct 29
Leaving from
Magee Campus
at 11:05!



St. Mark's Youth Group LinkTree



find the most up to date links for all things youth!

St. Mark's Youth has so many fun things going on, we started using a LinkTree to organize all of the most up-to-date links! Check this out for event signups, online payments, and social media pages!



Pumpkins!

Unloading a semi-truck full of pumpkins sounds really, really hard. Luckily, with our amazing community, it is actually really, really fun! It's amazing to see the transformation of our little desert space into a fun and festive pumpkin patch. It takes as much help as we can get, and the more of us who are there, the more

fun we have! Remember, the proceeds from the pumpkin patch all go to the youth program (split between youth group and youth missions). We all benefit from this awesome outreach. Bring your water, your friends, your gloves, and a smile! I'll see you there.



Save the Date! 11:30-1:30 Nov. 19, Fellowship Hall

In August, our new program for 4th-7th grade students, United, kicked off and was so much fun! Our next program is Nov. 19, our Friendsgiving. Your church family is your family, and we are thankful for YOU! Come celebrate each other and our awesome church in the Fellowship Hall, and bring your FAVORITE side dish to share. Spencer and Rachel will provide the turkey, you provide your No.1, absolute most-favorite side dish. If Rachel got to bring her favorite, she would bring frog eye salad and Spencer would bring sweet potatoes. What will you bring!?

Youth Ministry

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



WHAT'S COMING UP

Peer Ministry Leadership Training in Sunday School

10-11 a.m. October and November, Magee Campus

This fall in Sunday School, youth will participate in Peer Ministry Leadership Training. Come learn how you can be a Christian leader every day, not just Sunday! Our study is an adaptation of Peer Ministry's Everyday Samaritan. Can't wait to see you there.

Fall Break/No Youth Group

Oct. 8

Rest is important. Rest is good. Fall Break for youth group is Oct. 8 this year. Rest up and get ready to help unload all of those beautiful pumpkins!

Say Cheese!!

4-6 p.m. Oct. 22 Magee Campus

Remember back in August when we were SUPPOSED to have a photo scavenger hunt, but then we got completely side-tracked by a fire in the Wesley House!? Well, now it's time to SAY CHEESE! We got a new little photo printer, and we are ready to...scavenge!

Fifth Sunday Family Worship

10 a.m. Oct. 29 Magee Campus

On fifth Sundays, our Sunday School class joins our families for family worship in the Magee Campus sanctuary. We have a whole row saved for just us youth, right behind the Kid Zone. Wouldn't it be fun to fill the row this time!? Join us Oct. 29 for family worship, and then we will pile in the van and go carve pumpkins in Gilbert! (RSVP to Rachel so we know if we have enough seats!)

Pumpkin Carving at First UMC Gilbert

11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Oct. 29

First UMC Gilbert invited us to join them and other Phoenix-area churches for a fun pumpkin carving contest! We will take some fantastic St. Mark's pumpkins up with us to carve and hopefully win some epic prizes! Pizza will be provided. It's so fun to meet with other youth from around our conference. We hope you'll join us.

October Youth Birthdays

Oct. 4—**Declan Kogovsek**

Oct. 6—**Zack Windsor**

Oct. 17—**Olive Kirkley**

Oct. 11—**Zachary Martin**

Happy
Birthday



SPECIAL EVENTS

PUMPKIN PATCH SIGNUP

Fall in the youth department is so fun and exciting. Not only do we unload all those pumpkins, we need to sell them too! I

SIGN UP HERE TO SELL PUMPKINS



ask that each youth sign up for at least two shifts. Shifts are super fun. You get to hang out with me and friends (you can bring friends, too!), and sometimes we create some epic social media content! I also sign for service hours for this.

The adults in our congregation are AMAZING and cover the patch while you are in school, but we really need help after school and on weekends. If your school gets out too late to make it here by 4, that is totally fine. Sign up for 4-6, and let us know approximately when you think you can make it.

SignUps are available at the QR code here or at <https://tinyurl.com/StMarksPumpkins23>. Notice there is a sign-up for Friday, Oct. 13 (looking at all of you friends on Fall Break) to help set up our fence. It's most likely going to be much faster than the two hours allotted, but it is heavy work, and Rachel REALLY needs your help!

SIERRA SERVICE PROJECT 2024

Summer 2024, Location TBD

Sierra Service Project is a wonderful program that we have a tradition of participating in.



Sites have just been announced, but priority registration for us to request our top choices is still a few weeks out. Watch your email for a survey about weeks and locations we would like to put in for later this month. Sierra Service Project is open to students completing 8th-12th grades

this year. Don't worry, middle school! You will have a chance to serve through Middle School Mission too.

SOUTH DISTRICT YOUTH

2023-2024 Connections

This year, our district theme is "Connections" and we are focusing on Micah 6:8 - Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly. We have so many events planned! These events are great times to invite your friends and see how much we can grow our amazing group. We are looking forward to a GooseChase, Winter Camp, the second Wesley Cup, and a big Earth Day mission. Whew. That's a lot! Don't miss it.



Make Time for Financial Planning Seminar

By Renee Carrasco, Endowment Committee chair

The Endowment Committee will host another financial planning seminar this month for those who couldn't come Oct. 1. Paul Willman, a local attorney and longtime member of St. Mark's, is our presenter at 11:15 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 29, at the Sanctuary Campus. This event will provide information on health and financial decision-making when you cannot do it. When you plan ahead, what documents do you need? When you or your loved one does not plan ahead, what process should you take? Additionally, essential estate planning on wills and trusts will be discussed. The session is about one hour, including time for questions and answers. Most of all, the event is FREE. How often is information from an attorney free??

You do *not* want to miss out on receiving this valuable information!!

Thank You...

Thanks to the St. Mark's Quilters for their labor of love in supplying 25 quilts that were recently donated to Tucson Refugee Ministry. Some have already been distributed at a recent baby shower for expecting refugee mothers.

—John Yost, Tucson Refugee Ministry missions liaison

Fall and Winter Family Events Coming Soon

By Julie Eblen, Children's and Family Ministries

The St. Mark's Children's and Family Ministries committee is excited to announce upcoming fall and winter events on both the Magee and Sanctuary campuses. Save the dates and be on the lookout for more information as these events get closer. Information and sign up links will be sent via email, the weekly e-blast and social media. To be added to the email list or to sign up to volunteer at any of these events contact Julie at julie@umcstmarks.org.

6-8:30 p.m. Oct. 27, Magee Campus

Join us for a **Fun Fall Event** featuring the movie, "Casper the Friendly Ghost," which will be shown in the south parking lot on an inflatable screen. Sign-ups for parking spaces will be available soon. Bring folding chairs and enjoy dinner and a movie. St. Mark's will provide hot dogs, chips, cookies, popcorn and treat bags. (Or you may bring your own dinner or sides!) This event will also feature a costume parade before the movie, an intermission glow stick dance party and a fabulous raffle.

8:30 and 10 a.m. Oct. 29, Magee Campus

Bring the family and worship together during either Magee Campus church service. This **Fifth Sunday Family Worship** is Bible Sunday. Everyone is encouraged to bring their favorite Bible to worship. Third grade students will be presented with their own Bibles at the 10 a.m. service. Kids and Youth Zones will be open for any child interested in sitting with their friends, and of course there will be fidget gadgets and worship pages for coloring or note-taking. If you know a third-grader who does not attend Sunday school or a student who has not yet received their Bible, please let the church office know.

5:30-8:30 p.m. Dec. 1, Magee Campus

Be on the lookout for sign-ups for the St. Mark's **Kids' Night Out - Drop and Shop**. Spots will be limited so sign up early. Drop the kids off in their pajamas to enjoy a "Polar Express"-themed night out with games, Advent and Polar express crafts, cookies to decorate and pizza.

4-6 p.m. Dec. 9, Sanctuary Campus

Join your friends at the Sanctuary Campus for a **"Winter Advent and Photos with Santa" event**. There will be cookies to decorate, snacks, crafts, selfie photo booths and fun for everyone!

Spreading Warm Hugs

By Ann Dyer, St. Mark's Quilters

Every Thursday morning in Room 17/18 you can find a group of ladies busy making lap-sized quilts. These quilts



Tucson area to be given to someone who needs a warm hug from a quilt. The groups include AVIVA, Healthy Families, DaVita, The Haven, San Fernando Elementary School, Nash Elementary School, and others. We also make Angel Quilts that are donated to grieving parents of babies born too soon. Before the quilts leave here, all are been blessed by one of our pastors.

As of this writing we have donated 575 quilts and project donating 715 by the end of this year. Thank you for helping us to make these quilts with all the fabrics, materials and money you have donated to us. If you would like to sew with us or visit and see how we make these quilts, please stop by between 9 and 11:30 a.m. Thursdays. For more information you can also contact Gail Blevins (see church directory). Donations of cotton fabric, batting, and monetary gifts are always greatly appreciated.



Join the Mark-a-ritas for Fall Fun

By Susan Putt, Mark-a-ritas coordinator

The Mark-a-ritas (open to all St. Mark's ladies and friends) are managing to stay busy. In September we gathered to



assemble no-sew fleece blankets for children who are removed from difficult home situations. Many times these children are removed with little or nothing of their own. It is our hope that these blankets provide a little security.

This month, the group is gathering for a Wine Tasting Adventure! From 2-4 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 14, we will visit a local winery. Cost is \$15 per person. For questions and to make reservations contact Mary Helen Pelton, (see church directory).

Our regular bimonthly Bunco games will return from a short hiatus at 2 p.m. Friday, Oct. 20 in Room 17/18 on Magee Campus. All are welcome, whether you have played before or not. We ask that you bring \$5 for "the pot" and your own beverage. For Bunco, it is important to know how many plan on participating, so please RSVP to Susan Putt, (see church directory), no later than Wednesday, Oct. 18.

We're kicking off the Christmas season with a trip to the Gaslight Theater (the theater in midtown, not the music hall in Oro Valley) on Sunday, Nov. 26, to see the holiday melodrama, "A Small Town Christmas." The show is at 6:30 p.m., and the doors open at 5:30, as dinner and/or dessert is available. Cost is \$27.18 per person. This is a wonderful opportunity to include friends, neighbors, and family members to give them a social introduction to St. Mark's. Reservations are due to Kathie Barrett, (see church directory), no later than Nov. 12.

Mark your calendar now for the Mark-a-ritas' traditional Christmas Tea (aka: potluck) hosted by Sandi Heilman and Carol Fouch on Monday, Dec. 11. Once again, Kathy Nar-ney will bless us with her beautiful harp music as we en-joy fellowship. Be on the lookout now for new and gently used children's books to bring with you (thrift stores are great places to check!) so we may share them with needy children.

Hope to see you at some or all of our activities!



Doug Wright and Francis Hydock attended the POW/MIA recognition Day at the VA Hospital on Sept. 15.

The **St. Mark's Veterans Committee** meets at 8:30 a.m. the fourth Friday of the month at Coco's at Oracle and Ina to eat breakfast with other people from St. Mark's who have served or are serving in the armed forces.

Scotland Trip with Rev. Sharon and Art Ragland

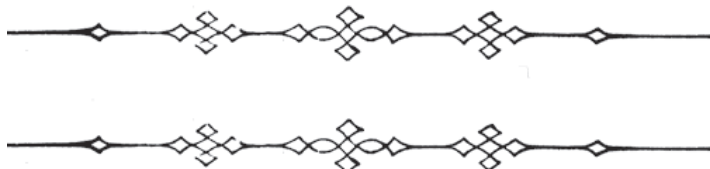
By Rev. Sharon Ragland, former St. Mark's senior pastor

Have you ever wanted to visit places in Scotland such as Iona, Lismore, Glasgow and Edinburgh? Scotland is full of Christian history and beautiful sites. Pastor Sharon and Art Ragland will be leading a tour to Scotland called "Celtic Christianity in Scotland," leaving Sept. 11, 2024.

An information meeting about this tour will take place at 11 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 8, in the Magee Campus Fellowship Hall. Come find out more!

If you want to look up info on this tour you can do so on the Educational Opportunities website: <https://www.eo.travelwithus.com>. Select "Find a Tour," then enter "Celtic Christianity in Scotland" in the search bar.

If you have questions contact Pastor Sharon at revsragland@gmail.com.



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 at <https://umcstmarks.org/prayer-request>.

Alice Brown
Chuck and Kathy Shaul
Maryann Nuckolls
Miriam Engel

Ruth Machtley
Lee and Mavis Kuld
Marva Brittle
Tom Storey

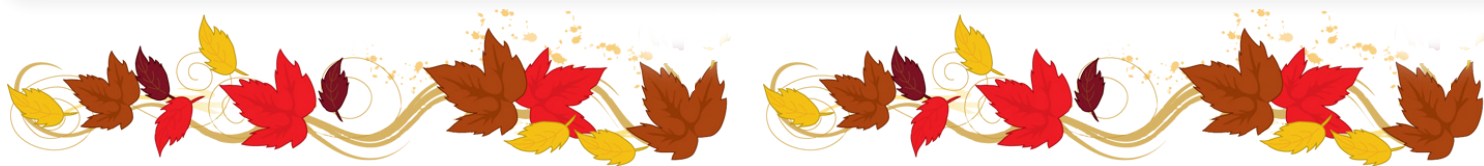
Tom and Dalene Peters
Becky Strain
Diane and John Hiratsuka
Helen Swanson

CONDOLENCES

We extend our heartfelt sympathy and prayers to ...

... the friends and family of **Doyle Young**, who died Friday, Sept. 8 at the age of 97. Doyle and his wife began attending St. Mark's when it was a new church, "way out" on Magee and La Cañada. They raised their two children here.

... the friends and family of **Mark Wagner**, who died Sept. 2. Mark was the brother of Diane Hiratsuka, husband of Wanda. A Celebration of Life was held at St. Mark's on Sept. 22.



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Magee Campus
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Tucson, AZ 85704
(520) 297-2062

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

Lead Pastor:
Rev. Lynn Bartlow

Sanctuary Campus Pastor:
Rev. Kevin Lester

Associate Pastor:
Kim Ogle

Sunday Worship
Magee Campus
8:30 a.m. and 10 a.m.
Sanctuary Campus
10 a.m.

Livestreamed
10 a.m.
umcstmarks.org/live-worship
YouTube:
UMC St. Mark's AZ

St. Mark's UMC Concert Series Continues Oct. 22

By Jordan Shomper,
Music Ministries Coordinator

The St. Mark's UMC 2023-2024 Concert Series has kicked off, and we are so excited to have the All Nations Chamber Ensemble coming up Oct. 22!

This ensemble is a passionate community of musical collaborators who share the common vision of preserving the legacy and works of underrepresented and marginalized composers and musicians.

It is made up of a truly diverse group of vocalists and instrumentalists with a wide array of cultural backgrounds and shared training in classical Western European music. Their goal is to bridge the gap between this traditional classical Western European repertoire and its audiences, and tastefully introduce the silenced, marginalized, and underrepresented musicians and their musical contributions across history.

This endeavor will assist in establishing and restoring the legacies of musical artists such as Joseph Bologna, Chevalier de Saint-Georges and modern arrangers of Negro spirituals such as Hall Johnson and Jacqueline Hairston.



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

Reflections

October at St. Mark's is filled with pumpkins, friends returning from their summer travels to cooler places, and our Stewardship Campaign. This year, we are adopting the language that Sanctuary UMC used, of a Generosity Campaign.

Stewardship is the task of taking care of something. How do you take care of your time, the earth, your skills, your money? Honestly, it's an "insider" word that the church uses, and we rarely hear it outside the church anymore. Inside the church, it's most often used to talk about supporting the church financially.

On the other hand, the word generosity is an aspect of our character. Generosity is a quality that I admire in other people, a quality I hope to teach my children, and a quality I aspire to. We find generosity in many places in the Bible, and it's even considered a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). We see generosity all around us; stewardship is something we have to define for people.

With this before us, we are launching our Generosity Campaign this month. We are celebrating the generosity

of the church in the past and in the present. We are celebrating the generosity of spirit and the generosity of soul of St. Mark's. We are celebrating those who are generous with their time, their teaching, and their love. We are celebrating the generosity of the church that has led St. Mark's to be people of community, of compassion, and of justice and love.

It's all rooted in the generous love that God lavishes upon us. Our God is a generous God, offering love and grace and mercy lavishly for the world. God's generosity, mission, and invitation are offered to all, that all people might live a truly abundant life.

How can you celebrate the generosity of God and of this church? How is God calling you to be generous with your own time, talents, gifts, service, and witness?

Join us this month as we celebrate a generous God who invites us into abundant life!

*See you soon,
Pastor Lynn*

**GIVING, NOT GETTING, IS THE WAY.
GENEROSITY BEGETS GENEROSITY.**

Luke 6:38, The Message
UMCSTMARKS.ORG