

LOS TIEMPOS



July 2024

Our Purpose

Jesus Christ calls us to be a joyful community that celebrates God's love, transforms lives, and is a force for justice in the world.

We Welcome All

St. Mark's is a community of believers and seekers committed to being queer-affirming and anti-racist, reflecting the love and justice of Jesus Christ. We are a place where people of all ages, sexual orientations, gender identities, and abilities are welcomed, celebrated for their gifts, and invited to share in God's embrace.

Office Hours

Monday – Thursday | 9am–12pm

Office closed and staff observe Sabbath on Fridays



Find @StMarksAZ on social media!



SANCTUARY AT ST. MARK'S

CONSIDER the varied meanings of the word *sanctuary*. A *sanctuary* can mean a place of refuge or protection. It can also specifically refer to a nature reserve. And it is the common term used by religious communities to describe their consecrated and holy places of worship.

St. Mark's is a place where all three meanings of the word converge. Throughout St. Mark's history, the church campus has been used as a literal refuge and place of protection for people fleeing various dangers and threats—a place where these individuals have found shelter for one or more nights.

Our campus also serves as something of a haven for various non-human creatures seeking refuge. A feral mamma cat has recently raised a small litter of kittens under one of the buildings near the playground. A magnificent Vermillion Flycatcher and his mate can be regularly spotted swooping to

snatch flying insects near the garden and labyrinth. Colorful hummingbirds visit the feeders along the office windows. And a resident Cooper's Hawk can be found lurking about in the courtyard trees. The mound of feathers sometimes found below the trees bears witness to the meal the hawk has made of an unfortunate dove. So, perhaps not everyone enjoys sanctuary here!

Most of us are familiar with the sanctuary we receive each Sunday when we gather to worship. When we enter that large space we call our sanctuary, we come to a place made holy by the awareness of God's presence. And we find spiritual refuge, protection, restoration, and hope.

In the conversations conducted within the congregation in recent weeks and months, I have heard this community voice a deep commitment to the values of sanctuary. People cherish the way St. Mark's cares about the needs of vulnerable peoples (and creatures) of the world.



REV. TRACY DAUB (SHE/HER)
Transition Pastor
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And members have expressed appreciation for the many ways St. Mark's offers a place of spiritual nurture and healing acceptance for themselves.

In this difficult world, sanctuaries are indeed special, life-giving, even holy places.

In what ways has St. Mark's offered you sanctuary or called upon you to live "sanctuary values" for others?

Shalom,

Tracy

GUEST PREACHERS

JULY GUEST PREACHERS

We are excited to welcome guest preachers, Stephanie Stahl Hamilton and Mark Adams this month! Join us to hear their messages.



July 21: Rev. Stephanie Stahl Hamilton
Parish Associate & State Representative for AZ District 21



July 28: Rev. Mark Adams
US Coordinator of Frontera de Cristo

ABOUT THE MUSIC

ABOUT THE MUSIC:

BARTÓK AND ROBB

In 1904, the Hungarian composer Béla Bartók spent some time at a resort in Gerlicepusztá in Northern Hungary (now Ratkó, Slovakia) to work on composing a Piano Quintet. Bartók insisted on composing in absolute silence, he traveled with thick leather blankets to line the walls of his room to muffle sounds from outside. However, one day of work was interrupted when he heard someone singing in the room next to his; he was captivated by the song and had to find out more. He knocked on the door where the song was coming from and a woman named Lidi Dósa answered the door. Bartók asked her what the song was and Dósa responded she was singing it to her baby and that it was a song passed down to her from her grandmother.



→ Bartók transcribing a recording of folk music, date and location unknown. Image from G. Henle Verlag, music publisher.

As the two conversed, Bartók found out that Dósa was from Transylvania and was shocked that such a song could come from a place that Hungarians considered to be so backward. Bartók's life was changed from that moment. He asked Dósa to sing the song again so he could write it down and decided to devote serious study to folk music. Bartók was soon awarded a grant so he could study the traditional Musics of the Székely people who settled in Hungary in the Middle Ages.

In 1905, Bartók met another Hungarian composer, Zoltán Kodály who was also interested in



DR. JARED ARAGON (HE/HIM)

Organist/Director of Handbells

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folk music. The two composers began to compare notes and recordings with each other, eventually the two traveled across Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Turkey, Algeria, and Egypt collecting and recording traditional music from anyone willing to sing or play for them. Bartók and Kodály created the field of ethnomusicology through their studies and travels. Ethnomusicology is the study of music in its social and cultural contexts.

Switching continents now: American Composer John Donal

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Robb was born in Minnesota in 1892. As a child, Robb attended a concert by the Minnesota Orchestra and there he decided he wanted to become a musician. His parents put him in cello lessons and organ lessons however Robb decided to pursue a career in law and attended the University of Minnesota Law School as well as Harvard Law School. Robb moved to New York City in 1923 where he was a successful lawyer.

Still serious about music, in 1935, Robb decided to take a year off from his law practice so he could go to France and study under the composer Nadia Boulanger. Boulanger was the most prolific music teacher of the 20th-Century, she taught at the French School for Americans in Fontainebleau and musicians from all over the world came to study with her. She expected nothing but

the best from her students and ran a rigorous music program that expected a high level of proficiency in all areas of musical study: counterpoint, form, analysis, sight reading, dictation, conducting, orchestration, music history, and composition.

Robb returned to New York City in 1936, however decided to quit practicing law in 1941 and moved to New Mexico to focus solely on music. He was hired to teach music composition at the University of New Mexico and founded the University Symphony Orchestra, which still performs today. On the weekends, Robb and his wife Harriett would pack up their car and drive wherever they could just to listen to folk music. The Robbs traveled across the American Southwest, as well as to Central and South America



→ John Donald Robb playing the cello. Location and Date Unknown.

to listen to traditional musics. On these trips, they would make time to visit with and learn from the musicians they heard. With their permission, the Robbs would record what they could and transcribe the recordings into written notation. They collected over 3,000 folk songs from across New Mexico and published them into a single massive book called *Hispanic Folk Music of New Mexico and the Southwest: A Self-Portrait of a People*. This book is still available to purchase and is an invaluable collection for the traditional musics of New Mexican Hispanos.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

For the service music on Sunday, June 23rd, I played John Donald Robb's *Pictures of New Mexico*, a collection of five miniatures for solo piano. None of the musical materials contained in this suite were directly inspired by traditional music of New Mexico, but are character-pieces meant to evoke imagery, characters, or moods. In the opening movement *Church Bells*, Robb uses a small musical cell that is reminiscent of a hymn. The second movement, *Horseback over the Sagebrush Plain* features a rhythmically lopsided bass line to imitate the sound of a horse lazily trotting. The fourth movement titled *Siesta* makes use of hazy harmonies and a downward moving melody to express the mood of a nap. The final movement *In the Cottonwood Grove* is a fun little waltz with some musical borrowings from Schubert that paint a picture

of cotton gently falling from a bunch of cottonwood trees.

Sunday, June 30th, I played 5 movements from Bartók's *Six Romanian Folk Dances*. I find that these piano pieces are similar to Robb's *Pictures of New Mexico*, and I am nearly certain Robb modeled the structure of his composition after Bartók. Unlike Robb, Bartók uses traditional Romanian folk melodies in these dance pieces, however just like Robb, each movement is very short and most of the dances last under a minute. The first dance in Bartók's suite is a *Jocul cu bâță*, a dance typically performed by elderly men standing in a circle holding sticks. The sticks are struck against the ground to provide rhythmic punctuations at certain points within the dance. The second dance in the collection is a *Brâul*, in which the dancers stand in two lines and hold onto the belts of their neighbors.

Then there is a *Pe loc*, a dance for a single dancer who stays in one spot. The fourth dance in the collection comes from Bucium, Albania, but I could not find a description of the dance or how it was performed. The final dance I'll play from this collection is a *Poarca*, a dancing game for children that involves quickly shifting dance patterns in two beats and three beats.

RECOMMENDED LISTENING

Bartók: [Allegro barbaro for solo piano](#)

Bartók: [String Quartet No. 4 \(specifically the Fifth Movement: Allegro molto\)](#)

Robb: [Piano Concerto](#)

All pieces can be found on YouTube

THE DRAMA OF WORSHIP

We live in a society where spectatorship and entertainment have pervaded our view and value of how we spend our lives. Whether we attend a sports event, a musical performance, or even observe a political debate, we are resolved to be a passive viewer and more often than naught, limit our involvement to intellectual and/or emotional judgement. As a school teacher, I constantly observe how adolescent and older students base their willingness to learn on how well I can entertain and maintain their attention during a lesson. As a music minister, I also sense that spectatorship and entertainment have become a perceived measurement of how effective a local church ministry is regarded, especially in the main arena of a worship

service. If we are honest with ourselves, we may have to admit that our Sunday morning thoughts are on what the pastor will preach on and how entertaining his/her stories and anecdotes will be, or, will we like the music and will it be appropriately dignified for the service. As in all other aspects of our lives, we bring our spectator/entertainment consumerism mentality into the worship setting.

Consider the view of 19th century Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard, on worship. He likened worship to that of a dramatic presentation. But instead of the attenders being the audience watching worship being performed by the upfront leadership, Kierkegaard designated the congregation as being the performers



DAVID BRACEROS-HAMM (HE/HIM)
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of worship, the upfront leadership as prompters, and God as the “audience”. Can you picture it? The real drama of worship is not what happens upfront in the chancel area but what happens out in the congregation as God’s people respond to the prompting of worship by the leadership. In scriptural worship, God is the audience and spectator.

John 4:23 says, “but the hour is coming, and now is when

THE DRAMA OF WORSHIP

the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him.” What does it mean to be a true worshiper of God? I would qualify the word “true” synonymous to “authentic”. The dictionary defines authentic as “not false or copied; genuine; real”. Another expanded definition regards authentic as “living your life according to your own values and goals, rather than those of other people.” Are we able to say that our personal worship of God is authentic? Is worshipping God a significant part of our own values, purpose and goals? Only the individual can make that honest assessment of himself/herself/ themselves and no one else can make that judgement of another



person. (I will address this issue more in-depth in another article concerning worship and evangelism).

What does it mean to worship God in “spirit and in “truth”. I don’t claim to be an expert at original Biblical language and meaning, but if we compare scripture, the following verse in the same scriptural passage boldly states that “God is spirit,” which I simply understand to mean that God’s being and essence exists in the spiritual realm and is intangible. Therefore, our worship

and relationship to our Creator is based and exercised through our spiritual connection with God, as spirit, and in that essence of spirit-to-spirit, we are able to effectually commune with God. Similarly, worshipping God in truth suggests that there is a standard of truth or revelation in regard to God’s existence and knowability. It is important to base our knowledge and comprehension of God on the undeniable truth of revelation and not our own interpretation or re-creation of making God

THE DRAMA OF WORSHIP

in our own image. J.I. Packer, who was an English-born Canadian theologian and writer within the Calvinist tradition, in his well-known book “Knowing God”, expressed the idea that one can identify a man’s knowledge of God by how he prays. I would apply that same idea to worship in that one can identify someone’s spiritual connection and knowledge of God by how that person worships.

Finally, the John gospel passage concludes with the idea that “such the Father seeks to worship him.” If I’m not mistaken, this is the only reference in Scripture in which God is regarded as the seeker in the relationship with people. In other scriptural passages, God declares that only the active seeker will be rewarded with a revelatory and compassionate response to the seeking. Does this mean that

God is selfishly craving and dependent on our worship? I would say not. God has already established an existing relationship as our Creator and Parent, and like all earthly parents, desires to maintain an ongoing loving relationship with all conceived (and adopted) children. But because of the schism of original sin and free-will, our heavenly Parent is waiting, even seeking, for every individual child to choose to respond to God’s initiation of love and care. It is that free-will choosing that makes our response of worship true and authentic.

So next time, when someone asks you how the worship the worship service was, be able to say, “it was a great performance!”



OPPORTUNITIES



Sala de Libros

(living room of books)



Salas de Libros bring children, youth, and adults together to explore our cultural identities and communities through reading, sharing, and creating.

They are social, cultural, intellectual gatherings.

Personal development and social transformation evolve through learning about others and ourselves and how we coexist in the world around us.

Salas awaken within the groups the desire to inquire into specific themes and to make creations inspired by the readings.

Join us on first Saturdays!

June 1st / July 6th / Sept. 7th /

10:00~11:30

@ Iskashitaa Refugee Network
3736 E. 2nd St.



RAIN BARREL NOTICE

Iskashitaa has been refurbishing the 15 year rain barrel in the church garden. Pipes have been replaced, the first filter barrel is being replaced and the boards for the platform have been replaced with new wood.

These updates are expected to serve for about 12 years!

There will be NO Second Sunday Supper in July due to the heat. See you in August!

CASA ALITAS SNACK PACKS

Join us after worship on Sunday, July 7 in the Knox Room to make Snack Packs for migrants supported by Casa Alitas!

- We will make approximately 550 bags
- All supplies provided, all ages and abilities welcome
- Many hands make light work!

ISKASHITAA MASON JAR DONATIONS

Mason Jars: Iskashitaa is always looking for donations of Ball or Kerr canning jars, in 4 or 6 oz sizes to use in our Food Preservation Workshops. Drop off at the Iskashitaa office on the 2nd street side of the church.



OPPORTUNITIES

BADASS WOMEN OF THE BIBLE- ZOOM SERIES

How many biblical women can you name?

Are they mostly revered as “good” women?

What about the women who were “bad”?

Wouldn't you like to learn a little bit about those bad women?

Well, the Faith Formation committee of session has got a summer study for you!

Zoom class led by Sylvia Thorson-Smith

Four 1-hour sessions at 7:00 PM

Wednesdays, July 17, 24, 31, and August 7

Session 1: Advocates and activists

Session 2: Privilege and platform

Session 3: Binaries and dualisms

Session 4: Voice and verse

No book to buy. Study written for the Presbyterian Outlook by Rev. Katrina Pekich-Bundy, a pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Alma, Michigan, and the associate Protestant chaplain at Alma College.

Sign up on Sundays — July 7 or 14 — at the Opportunities Table, OR email Sylvia (sylviats@cox.net), OR phone her (520-820-1544).

You will be told the biblical texts to read.

Have some fun this summer with a group of “badass” women!

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

JUNE 2024 SESSION HIGHLIGHTS KERSTIN MILLER, CLERK OF SESSION

Session met on **June 18, 2024** for its monthly stated meeting.

Clerk's Report and the Wider Church:

- Session remembered Sharon Kha, a member of St. Mark's since 2004, who passed away on June 15, 2024 at the age of 80. The congregation enjoyed especially Sharon's raps over the years. A private family ceremony will be held in July.
- St. Mark's membership currently stands at 164; beyond that there are 64 friends.
- Session elected Rachael Eggebeen and Irvin Richards as St. Mark's commissioners for the next called Presbytery meeting at Mission del Sol Presbyterian Church in Tempe on August 24, 2024.

Pastor's Report:

- In addition to sharing a written report with her monthly meetings and activities, Tracy also noted the acquisition of a new moveable white board.
- Tracy will be on vacation for three weeks in July/August. The worship ministry team will line up preachers, and Tracy will coordinate pastor care coverage from July 10 to August 4.

Follow up on congregational visioning events:

- A total of 86 people attended the four different events. Elders lifted up the positive energy and enthusiasm shown for the future of St. Mark's. Elders also remarked it was affirming the Session and the congregation are in sync in their thinking about next steps.

Ministry Teams Highlights/Action Items

Administration (Jeff Parrish and Charles Ambrose):

- Session unanimously approved the following two motions:
 1. Approve the hiring of Jani King, a professional commercial cleaning service, for maintenance work of the St. Mark's campus.
 2. Approve spending \$7,600 of the Erickson Estate gift for roof repairs above the organ chambers.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Congregational Care (Becky Cook, Jim Cullum, Beth Carroll):

- The Congregational Care Ministry Team will now be comprised of three sub teams:
 - Pastoral care – Session lead: Jim Cullum
 - Membership/outreach – Session lead: Becky Cook
 - Hospitality/fellowship– Session lead: Beth Carroll

If you have questions and/or are interested in volunteering in any of those sub ministry teams, please contact the corresponding Session lead.

Worship (Gwyn Roske & Kevin Hainline):

- No action items this month..

Faith Formation (Sylvia Thorson-Smith & Rachael Eggebeen):

- The visioning events with the congregation revealed a desire for more small groups. Faith Formation will be assembling a small team to organize such small groups.
- Several adult education events have been planned for the coming months. These events will now happen after worship as Lunch and Learn events so that they do not interfere with choir rehearsal.
- Faith Formation is also looking into offering events in the evening so that working families can also participate.

Community & Global Engagement (Martha Osborne & Dexter Mitchell):

- No action items this month.
- Of the \$1,582 collected for the Pentecost Offering, 25% (\$633) will be donated Sister José Center. Thank you for your generosity!
- On July 7, St. Mark's will have the opportunity again to fill snack bags for migrants.
- The CGE ministry team is planning on partnering with Frontera de Cristo on migrant asylum needs.

Personnel (Beth Carroll/Session):

- No actions items this month.

UPCOMING EVENTS



JULY 2 | 1:00PM- 3:00PM

The weekly **Bridge group** meets in Calvin for games and conversation. All are welcome, beginners or experienced players.

JULY 3 | 8:30AM-9:30AM

Join us for **Midweek Manna**, a gathering for prayer and Bible study on the upcoming Sunday's preaching text, held in the office conference room (2nd Street side). All are welcome.

JULY 6 | 10:00AM-11:30AM

Sala de Libros. Join Iskashitaa Refugee Network at their office on 2nd Street to join in community building with books!

JULY 7 | AFTER WORSHIP

Casa Alitas Snack Pack Making in the Knox Room. Join us

to help put together bags of snacks for migrants supported by Casa Alitas.

JULY 9 | 1:00PM-3:00PM

Bridge Group.

JULY 10 | 8:30AM-9:30AM

Midweek Manna

JULY 16 | 1:00PM-3:00PM

Bridge Group.

JULY 17 | 8:30AM- 9:30AM

Midweek Manna

JULY 17 | 7:00PM

Badass Women of the Bible Session 1: Advocates and activists.

JULY 23 | 1:00PM-3:00PM

Bridge Group.

JULY 24 | 8:30AM-9:30AM

Midweek Manna.

JULY 24 | 7:00PM

Badass Women of the Bible Session 2: Privilege and platform.

JULY 28 | AFTER WORSHIP

Join us for **Big Coffee** in the courtyard after worship for snacks, socialization, and of course, coffee!

JULY 30 | 5:00AM- 9:00PM

Voting in Knox Room, don't forget to make a plan to vote!

JULY 30 | 1:00PM-3:00PM

Bridge Group.

JULY 31 | 8:30AM-9:30AM

Midweek Manna.

JULY 31 | 7:00PM

Badass Women of the Bible Session 3: Binaries and dualisms.

CONTACT INFO

MINISTRY TEAMS

ADMINISTRATION

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WE WELCOME ALL

St. Mark's is a community of believers and seekers committed to being queer-affirming and anti-racist, reflecting the love and justice of Jesus Christ. We are a place where people of all ages, sexual orientations, gender identities, and abilities are welcomed, celebrated for their gifts, and invited to share in God's embrace.

OUR PURPOSE

Jesus Christ calls us to be a joyful community that celebrates God's love, transforms lives, and is a force for justice in the world.

Sunday Schedule

In-Person Worship: 10:30am

Livestream: www.YouTube.com/StMarksAZ

Find Us Online!

www.stmarksaz.org

Facebook.com/StMarksAZ

Instagram.com/StMarksAZ

Twitter.com/StMarksAZ