



LOS TIEMPOS

October 2025

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!



COMMITTMENT TO A FORCE FOR GOOD

I WONDER IF YOU FEEL, AS I DO SO OFTEN THESE DAYS, the weight from the daily barrage of wrongs and sorrows spinning around us. In these moments, I long to be immersed in something good, holy, lovely, hopeful.

We are keenly aware of the preponderance of discouraging news in our society and world, but at the same time, good news is also near at hand. Within our congregational life are many wonderful examples of hope, kindness, generosity, compassion, and dedication. Every day, I witness members of our church helping one another, assisting people in our community, working to make our church property useful for God, resisting injustice, praying for the vulnerable, and giving their time and energies for good.

While we are not a perfect community (there are no such places!), the St. Mark's congregation is deeply committed to being a force for good.

This month, St. Mark's members will again be asked to make their financial commitments to this small part of the Body of Christ. Our financial gifts are an important way we choose to be part of something good. Our gifts are, in many ways, an active form of resistance against the wrongs of the world and a bold step toward God's radical goodness and love.

With thanksgiving for this community, for God's goodness, and for the privilege of participating in God's holy way, we invite our members to prayerfully consider their financial commitments for the upcoming year.

Blessings,

Tracy



Rev. Tracy Daub
Transition Pastor
tracy@stmarksaz.org

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY



Mark & Miriam

Support our Mission Co-Workers Serving with Frontera de Cristo

In 2026, Mark Adams and Miriam Maldonado are entering into a covenantal relationship with Presbytery de Cristo and the Presbytery of Grand Canyon. Due to recent changes in mission co-worker funding by the Presbyterian Church (USA), they are now being called as Mission Co-Workers with Frontera de Cristo and will be supported financially by the two Presbyteries along with individuals and churches from across the country. For almost 40 years Mark and Miriam have been a part of the FdC team that has helped lead to the substantial growth and positive impact of the Frontera de Cristo ministries on both sides of the US-Mexico border.

[Learn more about the ministries here.](#)

St. Mark's has been a strong supporter of Frontera from its beginning. On October 5, we will celebrate World Communion Sunday and receive a special offering to directly support Mark and Miriam as mission co-workers. You may give during worship throughout October or through Venmo, Vanco, or by check — please indicate "Mission Co-workers" on your gifts. Thank you in advance for helping to fund the vital leadership provided by this extraordinarily dedicated and beloved couple.

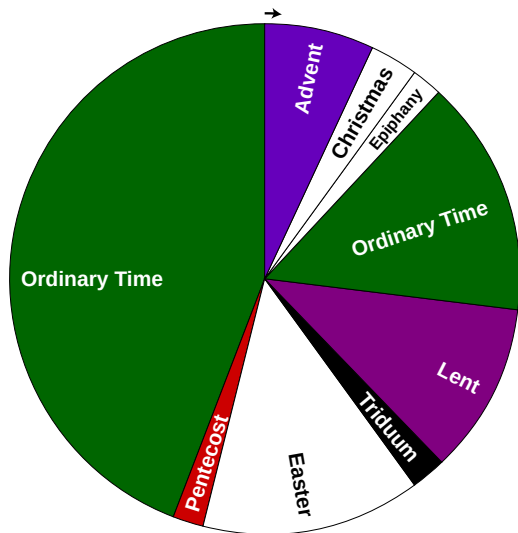
~ Martha Osborne, Community & Global Engagement Team

THIS IS ST. MARK'S

Faith Formation invites you to our fall learning series, **This is St. Mark's!** Join us after worship for fun conversations about who we are as a church from our external public theological witness to our worship to the physical space of our labyrinth. There will be light snacks served.

October 5: The Work of the People: An Exploration of Why We Do What We Do in Worship

*After Worship Service, in Calvin Hall
Leader: Tracy Daub*



Do you ever notice the colorful fabrics hanging at the front of the sanctuary and wonder why they are changed at different times of the year? Did you ever wonder why we have a prayer of confession in worship each week or why we wander about extending the "peace of Christ" to each other? These are not just random actions but are instead guided by our Presbyterian theology. Tracy will lead the second of two classes focusing on the whys and hows of our worship liturgy. Light munchies will be provided.

October 12: Go Out Into the World in Peace: A Conversation Around St. Mark's Beloved Benediction

*After Worship Service, in Calvin Hall
Leaders: Kevin Hainline & Tracy Daub*

For as long as anyone can remember, St. Mark's worshippers have closed every service with the same charge: "Go out into the world in peace; have courage; hold fast to what is good . . ." Many of you have it fully memorized! Tracy and Kevin will lead a conversation around this beloved closing charge and share what their extensive historical research has uncovered about its origins. Those attending will also be invited to share how the charge enriches your spiritual lives. Light munchies will be provided.

^CHARGE

from 1 Cor. 16:13; 2 Tim. 2:1; Eph. 6:10; 1 Thess. 5:13-22; 1 Peter 2:17

**Go out into the world in peace. Have courage. Hold fast to what is good.
Return no one evil for evil. Strengthen the faint-hearted.
Support the weak. Help the suffering. Honor everyone.
Love and serve Christ, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.**

For more information about the series, see Pastor Tracy or any member of the Faith Formation team.

PNC & CONGREGATIONAL PICTURE DAYS

The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) created this infographic to show the congregation the nominating process. Currently, we are in Phase 4, open to receive applications! The next phase will be Phase 5, interviews with candidates. This graphic will be updated as the PNC continues on through the process.



Congregational Picture Day(s)!

Not sure of everyone's name at church? Not everyone wears a name tag. Lou Prinz has offered to take photos of all St. Mark's members and friends willing to have their photo displayed on a board that we'll have out every Sunday as a reference for "who's who". Lou will take photos on the following Sundays: **Nov 2nd & 9th**, and **Dec 7th & 14th** - before and after church.

Photos will be taken in the Knox Room, accessible through the west side of the sanctuary.

Please reach out to [Lynne Davies](#) if you have any questions.

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday, October 19: Church Security Conversation

After worship service in the Sanctuary

This is an opportunity for concerned individuals to discuss ways to improve St. Mark's campus security. The conversation is open to all, but ushers, greeters, and Session members are strongly encouraged to attend.

October 26: Big Coffee & the St. Mark's Labyrinth

All are invited to a special Big Coffee on the 2nd Street side of the church, In celebration and exploration of our refurbished labyrinth. Joeine Greene and Pat Turnbull will help us explore the meaning behind our labyrinth.

Did you know St. Mark's had a labyrinth? Why do Christians find strength in the spiritual practice of walking the labyrinth? Is this spiritual practice a good fit for me?

On Sunday, October 26th, join us to answer these questions, and learn more about this sacred, contemplative space!



November 2: All Saints Day Ofrenda & Potluck Lunch



Celebrate All Saints Day on November 2, with Sunday morning worship followed by potluck lunch. Before the service begins at 10:30AM, you are invited to place a photo and/or memento of your loved one(s) that you would like to remember on the Ofrenda (offering space) created on the steps at the front of the sanctuary. During the service, there will be an opportunity to take your written prayers to the Ofrenda and light a candle. For the potluck lunch after worship, please bring your loved one's favorite food(s) to share. It's a time for good food, good stories, good company and good memories! We will have places to plug in crockpots, and refrigerators and ovens will be available to keep food warm or cold in the Geneva kitchen.

LABYRINTH RESTORATION

Back in 2009, St. Mark's had a sizable youth group which was looking for a service project. Under the leadership of their adviser, retired high school teacher Joeine Green, they decided to build a labyrinth on the north side of the campus. It was a huge project, but was finally finished in 2011. Over the years since, the numbers of high school students attending St. Mark's diminished to a handful, and St. Mark's Youth Group ceased to exist. As a result, the labyrinth became overgrown with weeds and unusable.



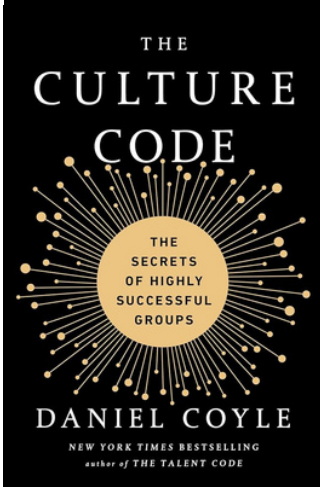
The view from the center of the labyrinth, looking south towards the Iskashitaa Garden

Fast forward to 2025: Thanks to the extensive efforts of the hardworking Garden Brigade under the leadership of Richard Gray, the labyrinth is once again ready to welcome people to walk its path. Those from St. Mark's who assisted Richard in this arduous task include Ann Moynihan, Alice Adamson, Jane Coffey, Susan Gray, Ellen Kuyper, Molly McKasson, Lisa Smith, Pat Williams and Michael Robinson. A few folks from the neighborhood provided some assistance as well. We appreciate all your hard work!

Following worship on October 26, Big Coffee will take place under the solar panels on 2nd Street. All are invited to come and hear Joeine's brief presentation about labyrinths in general, and the one at St. Mark's in particular. There will also be handouts describing ways to experience the labyrinth for meditation and prayer.

MORE OPPORTUNITIES!

Book Club - October 2 & 16



The Book Club meets biweekly on Thursdays at 11:00AM in Calvin Hall. September meetings: the 2nd & 16th.

Continuing the new book, **Culture Code** by **Daniel Coyle**.

If you would like to attend, suggest a book, or have any questions, please contact [Pat Williams](#)

"Where does great culture come from? How do you build and sustain it in your group, or strengthen a culture that needs fixing?"

In The Culture Code, Daniel Coyle goes inside some of the world's most successful organizations—including Pixar, the San Antonio Spurs, and U.S. Navy's SEAL Team Six—and reveals what makes them tick. He demystifies the culture-building process by identifying three key skills that generate cohesion and cooperation, and explains how diverse groups learn to function with a single mind.

4th Sunday Supper - October 26th



Our monthly free neighborhood meal will be offered again on October 26th at 5:30PM in the Knox Room!

After feedback from neighbors, we will increase our outreach with flyer sharing. If you would like a few flyers with future dates to hand out to your neighbors, please reach out to Elaina (elaina@stmarksaz.org) or Gianina (gianina@stmarksaz.org).

No Kings Protest - October 18



SIGN MAKING for NO KINGS will take place **BEFORE WORSHIP, Sunday October 12th at 9:00AM**

JOIN US TO BEAR WITNESS FOR HUMAN DIGNITY, DUE PROCESS, FREE SPEECH, PROTECTION OF THE VULNERABLE AND THE POWER OF JUSTICE AND LOVE!

St. Mark's will participate in the nationwide organization *Indivisible*'s local No Kings protest on **Saturday, October 18, 8:30AM**, at the intersection of Speedway and Country Club. We will carpool from the 2nd street parking lot to meet at the northwest corner. We'll have a sign with St. Mark's name so you can find us. You can sign up for the event at this link [NO KINGS Tucson · No Kings](#), or just attend as you are able.

ISKASHITAA UPDATED NEEDS



What is happening?

Due to the urgent food insecurity challenges refugees in Arizona will face as the H.R.1 law takes effect, Iskashitaa would like to shift to collecting all food donations now. We estimate that at least 25,000 refugees who have arrived in the last five years still ineligible for citizenship are at risk of losing access to all SNAP benefits, their primary lifeline for healthy food.

As food prices climb, housing remains unaffordable, and resettlement agency resources are cut, Our programs are already seeing record demand. We are mobilizing local food producers and hunger partners to help us mitigate the harm these changes will likely cause.

How can you help?

Food Pantry Ask:

- Bags of yellow or white onions, potatoes, apples
- Cans of tuna, tomatoes (any), beans
- Cooking oil

Dry Goods:

- Sugar
- Flour (all purpose)
- White corn flour
- Beans
- Lentils
- Pasta

Other ways to help:

Please also consider purchasing gift card from Fry's or Walmart (thinking these store cards would go further at these stores than Albertson or Safeway)

You can also support us every time you shop at Fry's if you link your community rewards to Iskashitaa Refugee Network EP944 to your Fry's VIP card.

Do you frequent Market on the Move or Produce on Wheels helping to slow food loss? Consider purchasing an extra share, then bring it to the Iskashitaa Office on Monday.

Is your family or civic group planning on picking apples at Apple Annies this fall? If so, consider picking an extra basket for a refugee family then bring it to the Iskashitaa Office on Monday.

Iskashitaa Refugee Network is forever grateful for the support you have shown to the Refugee Community. The St. Mark's congregation has donated 1529 pounds of food staples, (325 pounds of shampoo, laundry and dish soap) since our Staple Food drive began 2/23/25.

Your continued support is more important now than ever. Please spread the word!

WORSHIP AND OUTREACH

Worship and Outreach Part 1- The “Bad” News

Recent [Gallup polls](#) indicated that three in ten Americans attend religious services every week (21%) or almost every week (9%). 11% report attending about once a month. 25% “seldom” and 31% “never” attend. Two decades ago, an average of 42% of U.S. adults attended religious services every week or nearly every week. A decade ago, the figure fell to 38%, and it is currently at 30%. This decline is largely driven by the increase in the percentage of Americans with no religious affiliation -- 9% in 2000-2003 versus 21% in 2021-2023 -- almost all of whom do not attend services regularly. Jim Palmer, a former mega-church pastor and present progressive theologian, reflected that:

“Christianity, the largest religion in the United States, experienced a 20th century high of 91% of the total population in 1976. This declined to 73.7% by 2016 and 64% in 2024. Religious “Nones” (the religiously unaffiliated) are now the largest single group in the U.S. at 28% of the population. Generation Z (born between 1999 and 2015) is the nation’s least religious generation. They are far more likely to identify as atheist or agnostic.”

Palmer presents various reasons why people leave religion:

- People’s ideological progressivism is increasing faster than faith communities’ approaches to faith are.
- Some people leave because of trauma, abuse, intellectual reasons, or outgrowing their faith. A recent study indicates that 1 in 3 Americans suffer religious trauma, which occurs when a person’s religious experiences are emotionally, psychologically or spiritually harmful or abusive. People cannot endorse the values of their previous religious organization, including their views on LGBTQ+ individuals, stances on gender or sexuality, or pervasive sexism and racism.
- Some people no longer identify as religious because they find labels problematic. Take the term, “Christian”: are we talking about a far-right, fundamentalist Christian Nationalist “Christian”, or a progressive, social justice, DEI “Christian”?

There does, however, seem to be a common underlying feature in why people leave religion: **cognitive dissonance**. Cognitive dissonance theory posits that individuals seek to maintain consistency among multiple cognitions (e.g., thoughts, behaviors, attitudes, values, or beliefs). Inconsistent or antithetical cognitions produce inner distress that motivates individuals to change one or more cognitions to achieve consonance. For many people, leaving religion and changing their beliefs is an effort to alleviate cognitive dissonance, and achieve consonance (a state of harmony and alignment between one’s beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and actions).

The Church in the US has been facing a decline of interest and relevancy due to negative responses to actions taken in the name of their faith, disillusionment, negative advertisement, generational values change, and a failure to address cognitive dissonance in theology and practice.

It would be easy to shrug our shoulders and raise our hands and throw in the ministry towel, so to speak. But we can be encouraged by the fact that St. Mark’s is aware of these changes, and does not ignore social justice issues as separate from spiritual practice. We are more in line with creating cognitive consonance. In Part 2 of this article, I will attempt to make clearer how our worship affects our outreach.



David Braceross-Hamm
Music Director
david@stmarksaz.org

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

September 2025 Session Highlights Margaret Wilkie, Clerk of Session

Session met on **September 16, 2025** for its monthly stated meeting.

PASTOR'S REPORT - *Tracy Daub*

- Pastor Tracy reported that our Facilities Coordinator, Michael recently discovered two dead raptors on the St. Mark's campus. These deaths were reported to TEP as they appeared to be the result of contact with electrical wires. TEP was quick to respond, and they will be installing bird guards on their electrical equipment at St Mark's that will reduce injuries and fatalities to raptors and other birds.

PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE - *Jan Prinz*

- The Committee has completed all the discernment necessary to proceed to the next steps in this complicated process. They are working to make sure the congregation is apprised of their progress using a variety of communication methods including visuals, Minutes for Mission during upcoming services, our website, and weekly updates in the Esta Semana (This Week) email.

ORGAN UPDATE

- We rejoiced at the news that the work on the organ has been completed and it was recently tuned and is ready to go so stay tuned!

MINISTRY TEAM UPDATES:

Administration – *Charles Ambrose*

- The 2026 Stewardship Campaign will be launched on October 19 with a Minute for Mission.

Community & Global Engagement – *Martha Osborne & Jan Prinz*

- This team is working on building stronger relationships with TIHAN and Iskashitaa. There has been a substantial increase in customers for our Food Pantry. Many thanks to the congregation for their continuing support of this service.

Faith Formation – *Rachael Eggebeen*

- Pastor Tracy will lead a 2-week adult education series titled "The Work of the People: An Exploration of Why We Do What We Do in Worship" on September 29 and October 6. On October 12 Pastor Tracy and Kevin Hainline will lead a discussion titled: "Go Out into the World in Peace: A Conversation Around St. Mark's Beloved Benediction."

Worship – *Kevin Hainline, Gwyn Roske, & Robin Staples*

- There will be a Liturgist Training for returning and new Liturgists on September 21 after the service. Pride Month begins on October 5.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct 1| 8:00-11:00AM

Iskashitaa's monthly **Refugee Garden Arts Program (RGAP)** meets in garden on the 2nd street side of the church.. All are welcome!

Oct 1| 8:30-9:30AM

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.

Oct 1| 6:45-7:45PM

Restorative Yoga. All are welcome to stretch and connect with your body every Wednesday in Room F (2nd Street side).

Oct 2| 11AM-12:30PM

Book Club. Calvin Hall. Currently Reading: The Culture Code.

Oct 5| After Worship

World Communion Sunday

Oct 5| After Worship

The Work of the People. Calvin Hall.

Oct 6| 1:00-2:00PM

Personnel Committee. Zoom. All are welcome to attend.

Oct 7| 1:00-3:00PM

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

Oct 7| 4:00-5:00PM

Community & Global Engagement Committee. Office Conference Room. All are welcome to attend.

Oct 8| 8:00-11:00AM

RGAP.

Oct 8| 8:30-9:30AM

Midweek Manna.

Oct 8| 4:30-5:30PM

Worship Committee. Office Conference Room. All are welcome to attend.

Oct 8| 6:45-7:45PM

Restorative Yoga.

Oct 12| During Worship

Children's Church. Children In K-6 are welcome to join for a Bible story and craft!

Oct 12| After Worship

Origin of St. Mark's Charge. Calvin Hall.

Oct 12| OFFICE CLOSED

Indigenous Peoples' Day.

Oct 14| 1:00-3:00PM

Bridge group.

Oct 15| 8:00-11:00AM

RGAP.

Oct 15| 8:30-9:30AM

Midweek Manna.

Oct 15| 6:45-7:45PM

Restorative Yoga.

Oct 16| 10:00-11:00AM

Administration Committee. Office Conference Room. All are welcome to attend.

Oct 16| 11AM-12:30PM

Book Club. Calvin Hall.

Oct 16| 5:00-6:00PM

Faith Formation Committee. Office Conference Room. All are welcome to attend.

Oct 18| 8:30AM

No Kings Protest. Speedway & Country Club.

Oct 19| After Worship

Church Security Training. Sanctuary.

Oct 21| 1:00-3:00PM

Bridge group.

Oct 21| 7:00-9:00PM

St. Mark's Session September Meeting. Office Conference Room.

Oct 22| 8:00-11:00AM

RGAP.

Oct 22| 8:30-9:30AM

Midweek Manna.

Oct 22| 6:45-7:45PM

Restorative Yoga.

Oct 26| During Worship

Children's Church.

Oct 26| After Worship

Big Coffee. Gather In the labyrinth after worship for coffee, snacks, and conversation!

Oct 26| 5:00-6:00PM

4th Sunday Supper All are welcome In the Knox Room/3rd Street side of the church for a neighborhood potluck.

Oct 28| 2:00-3:00PM

Congregational Care Committee. Office Conference Room. All are welcome to attend.

Nov 2| During Worship
All Saints Day.

CONTACT INFO

Ministry Teams

Administration

Charles Ambrose – fragglrock2@msn.com

Congregational Care

Jim Cullum – jcullum@jcams.com

Lynne Davies – LCSQRD@cox.net

Faith Formation

Rachael Eggebeen – edsrachael@gmail.com

Community & Global Engagement

Martha Osborne – martha.r.osborne@gmail.com

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Worship

Gwyn Roske – groske1@gmail.com

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Robin Staples – robin.staples@cox.net

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Beth Carroll

Becky Cook

Clerk of Session

Margaret Wilkie – wilkie.m.l.tuc@gmail.com

Staff

Transition Pastor

Tracy Daub – tracy@stmarksaz.org

Organist/Pianist, Director of Handbells

Jared Aragón – jared@stmarksaz.org

Director of Music

David Bracerros-Hamm – david@stmarksaz.org

Church Administrator

Gianina Scavone – gianina@stmarksaz.org

Director of Communications

Elaina Richards – elaina@stmarksaz.org

Facilities Coordinator

Michael Robinson – michael@stmarksaz.org





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We Welcome All

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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