

LOS TIEMPOS



December 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!



THE WORD CAME

WORDS HOLD A LOT OF POWER.

Words can be used to inform but also to misinform. They can be used to inspire acts of compassion but also to incite violence. Words can comfort but also can cause fear.

In the scriptures we learn about the power of God's word in bringing about life. Consider the story of creation when God's word called forth life: "Then God said, 'Let there be light;' And there was light."

This Advent, the sermons at St. Mark's will focus on the theme: "The Word Came." Through the voices of Jeremiah, John the Baptist, the Apostle Paul, and Jesus' mother, Mary, we will hear God's powerful words of promise, challenge, joy, and love. On Christmas Eve, John's Gospel will remind us how God's word came to us in the person of Jesus: "The Word became flesh and lived among us."

In a world where words too often harm, divide, and generate fear, this season we gather to listen



REV. TRACY DAUB (SHE/HER)
Transition Pastor
tracy@stmarksaz.org

and give thanks for the coming of God's life-giving, healing, hope-filled Word of Love.

Blessings,
Tracy



COVER PHOTO:
Owl in the columbarium
PHOTO CREDIT: Michael Robinson

OPPORTUNITIES



TAMALES FROM MEXICO

A Christmas Fundraiser
for the Borderlands
YAV Program



DECEMBER 8TH,
8:30 AM - 3 PM | 400 E.
UNIVERSITY BLVD, TUCSON, AZ

Celebrate Christmas with with the best home-made tamales you will eat and support the YAVs. Tamales are to be picked-up at Trinity Presbyterian Church. Buy your tamales by ordering now at

<https://donorbox.org/events/518490>

FOR INFO ON THE YAVS, PLEASE

CONTACT JAMES BY EMAIL AT

TUCSONBORDERLANDSYAV@GMAIL.COM.



2ND SUNDAY SUPPER ON 2ND STREET!

Second Sunday Supper will be in the **Knox Room on THIRD Street** this month, **Dec 8 at 5:00PM!** Grilled cheese & tomato soup will be served. Bring a food to share if you can. All are welcome.



LA PALOMA

A STORY-TELLING EVENT
FOR THE CHURCH IN THE
SONORAN DESERT

SUBMIT A STORY BY DECEMBER 18TH
(SEE PROMPT AND DETAILS FOR MORE)



SAVE THE
DATE

February 8th, 2025
St. Mark's Pres. Church Tucson, Arizona

A Fundraiser For:



Stories Needed

Church: It's time to share your personal insight and experience with church. Is it food for your soul? A home away from home? Something that happens on a Sunday? A mystery to be solved? Why even bother?

Well, jump in and get your feet wet by telling us your 5-minute story that expresses your need, love, dislike or hope for the church. We want to share your stories with others so that our community can benefit from everyone's unique insights and experiences.

Send your stories to...

lapalomastorycollective@gmail.com in a word document, email or a pdf. Then, we will be in contact with you about the selection process for those willing to share their stories in-person during the story-telling event.

SEASONAL GIVING



PC(USA) CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

50% of Christmas Joy Offering are distributed for assistance programs that provide critical financial support to retired & active church workers and their families.

50% supports education at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color and leadership development opportunities for people of color through the Racial Equity and Women's Intercultural Ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

[Donate here](#)

DONATIONS FOR PER CAPITA COSTS

Per Capita costs connect Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations, presbyteries, and synods, with the work of the wider church. It's the primary source of funding for the Office of the General Assembly, it is how Presbyterian mutually and equitably share the cost of moving the church forward. St. Mark's per Capita share in 2025 is \$7,460. **If you would like to contribute to this connection we are asking members and friends to consider an extra gift of \$45.**

ISKASHITAA GIVING TUESDAY (DEC. 3)

On this year's Giving Tuesday, please consider supporting our wonderful campus partner Iskashitaa Refugee Network. Giving Tuesday is a global generosity movement, created in 2012 that has grown into global movement that inspires hundreds of millions of people to give, collaborate, and celebrate generosity and that means you too!



BOOKS!

BOOK CART LIBRARY UPDATED

The church library has some new books just added to the cart which is in the courtyard after services every Sunday. If you want to take a book home to read, please remove and sign the circulation card in the front of the books and place it in the small box on the cart.

The Land is Not Empty: Following Jesus in Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery. Herald Press, 2021. Social Issues

by: Sarah Augustine

Women Who Do: Female Disciples in the Bible. Eerdmans Publishing, 2023. Bible

by: Holly J. Carey

Elusive Grace; Loving Your Enemies While Striving for God's Justice. Westminster John Knox Press, 2022. Social issues

by: Scott Black Johnston

A Faith of Many Rooms; Inhabiting a More Spacious Christianity. Broadleaf Books, 2024. Christianity

by: Debie Thomas

Crossing the Line; Finding America in the Borderlands. She Writes Press, 2024. Border Issues

by: Sarah Towle

What Side Are You On? A Tohono O'odham Life Across Borders. University of North Carolina Press, 2024. Border Issues

by: Michael Steven Wilson

BOOKS!

BOOK CART LIBRARY UPDATED

For Children:

A Flicker of Hope; A Story of Migration. Viking, 2024

by: Cynthia Harmony

Henry Wondered. Pajarito Chronicles, 2021.

- A story about jealousy, serendipity and flamenco!

by: Hazel Pacheco

Ruby Finds a Worry. Bloomsbury Children's Books, 2019

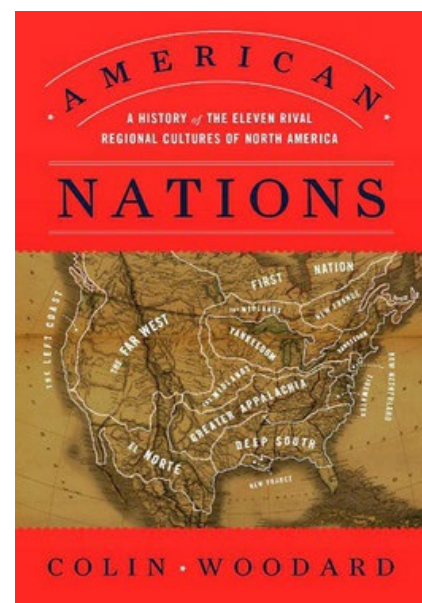
- A story to provide a springboard for talking to children about their hidden concerns.

by: Tom Percival

BOOK CLUB (EVERY OTHER THURSDAY)

Join us for discussion of **American Nations** by **Colin Woodward** about the many cultures within the U.S. which we will begin in November. Our next scheduled meetings are December 12 and 26 at 11:00 in Geneva Hall.

Reading the book is not required, all are welcome to listen and learn.



ABOUT THE MUSIC

ABOUT THE MUSIC:

COMMUNICATING WITHOUT WORDS

On just about any Sunday you will see either David or myself standing in front of our respective ensembles waving our arms around for a few minutes conducting a group of gathered musicians. The conductor is an integral part of any medium- to large-sized musical group, but why? Who is the conductor, why do they move around so much, and what do they really do for the musicians?

Most of the work of the conductor is done behind the scenes away from listeners, the congregation, or an audience. Before even meeting with the musicians, a conductor will sit at the piano and learn the music for which they are going to conduct; with handbells this is relatively easy being that handbell music looks similar to piano music. However, for choral

music, orchestral music, opera, or musical theatre, there is so much more information on the page that the conductor has to work through, learn, and memorize. Prior to each rehearsal, conductors will make a schedule outlining what will need to be done in a particular rehearsal session; some create very precise schedules that break things down minute by minute and others work in a more free-flow state that allows for a more flexible rehearsal session. My rehearsal schedules are just a few points I keep in mind based on observations I've made from the previous week of rehearsal: I take note of troublespots within a piece of music and decide which might need more attention; I plan on what issues will need me to coach the musicians through or which I feel they will have the skill to learn on their own; I then keep in mind where I want the ensemble to be on the day of the



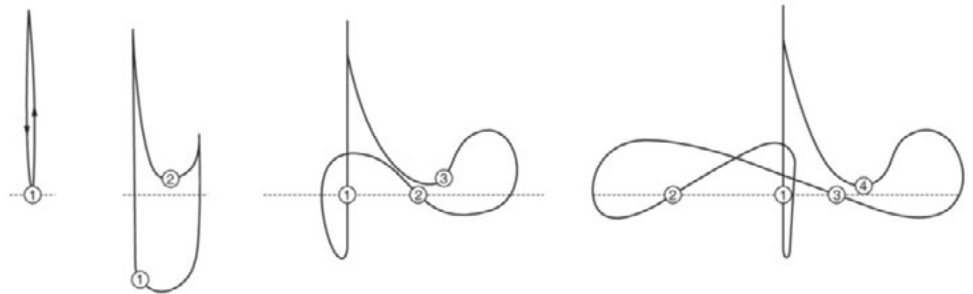
DR. JARED ARAGON (HE/HIM)
Organist/Director of Handbells
jared@stmarksaz.org

performance and judge what I really need to focus on to get us to that point. I see the rehearsal process like working on a puzzle, we have to get small details organized and put into place one at a time before we can see the whole picture.

In order to get everyone to play together and with the proper mood and emotion, the conductor has to start with what is called a preparatory gesture. This prep gives the musicians all the information they need to know within a single motion and there are many decisions I need to make before

ABOUT THE MUSIC

I can even give that preparatory gesture. First, I think about how fast or slow does this piece of music need to move? Then I ask myself what is the mood of the piece of the music we are about to play and how does my body language help convey that mood and prepare the musicians to portray that in their musicmaking. Then I make note of the volume level of the first sound they will need to produce to start the piece of music. All of this dictates where I place my hands in relation to the rest of my body. Then after all of that is settled, I finally give the preparatory gesture. This gesture lasts a single beat and in that motion I am able to tell the musicians everything they need to play the first note: how fast, how loud, how bright, how much weight to put on that first tone, and where we, as an ensemble, will need to move from there. As I give this gesture,



→ Basic conducting patterns for bars of various lengths: 1 beat, 2 beats, 3 beats, and 4 beats.

I and the musicians all inhale together, this connects us all so that we can all move and perform in sync.

The next aspect of conducting is twofold: the ictus and the tactus. The ictus is the point of the conducting gesture where the motion changes direction, this change in direction shows the musicians where the beat is. The tactus is the motion in between each ictus, this tells the musicians how each beat is subdivided. Is the beat being subdivided into duplets (1-an, 2-an, 3-an) or triplets (1-an-da, 2-an-da, 3-an-da) or a mixture of the two? The shape of the ictus and tactus tells the musicians how to play the music: is it bright and snappy, slow and

mournful, moderate and graceful, turbulent and disconnected?

One very personal tool in conducting is the baton. Not all conductors use a baton, it is mostly a tool only used in instrumental conducting or when voices and instruments are performing together; but not every instrumental conductor will use one, it is all a choice of personal preference. We are taught that the baton is an extension of the arm, and is a visual tool to focus our gesture into a single point in space. When musicians are a distance from the conductor, the baton is an easy object to catch sight of and read what the conductor is communicating. I have many batons in my

ABOUT THE MUSIC



→ A selection of some of the batons in my collection.

collection, and they are all different lengths, made from a variety of materials, and come in different weights for various reasons. If I am conducting in a space with lots of color, then I will use a baton that is white to contrast against the rest of the room. Inversely, I will use an unpainted wooden baton if I am conducting in a space with light or bright white walls.

All of this boils down to one overarching idea: communication! As conductors we have to learn how to effectively communicate musical needs to the musicians primarily by using body language and gesture. Likewise, we also need to take the time to listen when musicians in our ensembles

have issues that they need help with. Is a particular rhythm really difficult to play accurately? How can our gesture help give the musicians the support they need? In the beginning stages of rehearsal, I often talk while I'm conducting trying to give the musicians ideas of what to expect next in the music. If it's something that needs more dedicated time than a passing comment, I will stop the rehearsal to give instructions that I think will be helpful to interpret the music. As the weeks go by, I rely less on my voice and more on my body language to lead the ensemble. I also try in each rehearsal to give time to individual musicians so they can ask to go over specific sections where they are having difficulty.

I am beyond blessed and extremely grateful to have the chance to work with

our handbell choir each week in rehearsal and once a month to play the anthem during the service. These musicians are outrageously hard working, they are so dedicated to their craft, and they sure do know how to keep the rehearsal process fun and educational!

I want to thank Cathy Lurvey and Gale Griffin for their ideas and contributions to my writing of this article. They gave me many pointers to keep in mind while writing these thoughts out.

RECOMMENDED LISTENING

[Alondra de la Parra](#)

conducting José Pablo Moncayo's *Huapango*

[Yannick Nézet-Séguin](#)

conducting an excerpt from Johannes Brahms' *Third Symphony*.

[Thomas Adès](#) conducting

his composition *In Seven Days* for piano, film, and orchestra.

UPCOMING EVENTS



OFFICE CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAYS

The church office will be closed December 25- January 5

DEC 1| DURING WORSHIP

Children's Church. All children are invited to join Cathy Lurvey at the back of the Sanctuary during the first hymn for a Bible lesson and craft.

DEC 3| 1:00PM- 3:00PM

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

DEC 4| 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.

DEC 4| 6:45PM-7:45PM

**Breathe Deeply:
Restorative Yoga.**

DEC 7| 10:00AM-11:30AM

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

DEC 8| AFTER WORSHIP

Lunch & Advent Activities for all ages in Geneva Hall with Faith Formation.

DEC 8| 5:00PM-6:00PM

Second Sunday Supper. Join our Miramonte Neighborhood community in the Knox Room for a dinner of grilled cheese & tomato soup. Bring a side dish if you wish.

DEC 10| 1:00PM-3:00PM

Bridge Group.

DEC 11| 8:30AM-9:30AM

Midweek Manna.

DEC 11| 6:45PM-7:45PM

**Breathe Deeply:
Restorative Yoga.**

DEC 12| 11:00AM-12:30PM

Join the **Book Club!** a gathering for prayer Currently reading *One Native Life* by Richard Wagamese.

DEC 15| DURING WORSHIP

Children's Church.

DEC 17| 1:00PM-3:00PM

Bridge Group.

DEC 18| 8:30AM- 9:30AM

Midweek Manna.

DEC 18| 6:45PM-7:45PM

**Breathe Deeply:
Restorative Yoga.**

DEC 24| 7:00PM-8:00PM

Christmas Eve Service.

DEC 29| AFTER WORSHIP

Big Coffee.

CONTACT INFO

MINISTRY TEAMS

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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