

# St. Mark's Messenger

3502 CLAIREMONT DRIVE, SAN DIEGO, CA 92117

April 27, 2021

## Keeping In Touch

Vol. 48 Issue 9



**Rev. Darin Arntson**  
Lead Pastor



Join us every  
Sunday at  
9:30 a.m. for worship  
streaming on  
YouTube, Facebook  
and [stmarksumcsd.org](http://stmarksumcsd.org)

  
**St. Mark's**  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
858-273-1480

As many of you perhaps know, there is a pretty magnificent Meyer Lemon tree growing behind my office at the church. It really outdid itself this season, and has been delighting children and grown-ups alike with its prolific showing. (Particularly the grown-ups, in their iced tea.)

I came back to the office one day after a long hiatus working from home and found that the tree had been more than marginally pruned. Stunningly pruned. Large gaping holes now allowed sunlight to pass where dense leaves had previously sheltered the branches below.

Not being an arborist, myself, and generally having the blackest of black thumbs, I trust that someone wiser than me knew what they were doing when they cut back large portions of this fruit-bearing plant. I trust that while, to me, it had appeared healthy and vital, this trimming was necessary for its future thriving and fruitfulness in this place.

Jesus tells us that we, too, need pruning from time to time, if we are to continue to thrive and grow as disciples—as branches of the One Vine. We may feel or appear to be doing just fine, bringing delight and serving our purpose as we are. But, the wisdom of God sees the fruit we might bear if we would allow ourselves to let go and be changed by the masterful and experienced hands of our Creator.

I believe that we are in a resurrection season, not only as individuals but as a congregation, too. And, as we look ahead to new and renewed opportunities to be and serve in ministry together, I pray we might welcome opportunities for God to shape us, as we root into God's love, and seek to bear fruits of the kingdom in this community.

With hope,  
Pastor Darin

**THANK YOU TEACHERS & NURSES FOR  
ALL YOU DO!**

Tuesday, May 4 is National Teacher Appreciation Day  
*and*  
Thursday, May 6 is National Nurses Day

# Ministry News

## A New Way to Stay in Touch - REALM

We have recently switched over to a new church database that will allow us to keep our contacts, financial records, and registrations for events all in one place. (It also helps us keep our information more secure, so say goodbye to scammers!)

Over the next weeks and months, you'll be receiving an invitation to create a password and log-in to your own account. Once logged in, you can update your contact information, choose which information you share with other church members (this will become our new online directory), and view or print your own giving records. Our staff and volunteers can also help set this up for you, or continue to send your giving records as needed.

Thank you for your participation in this effort to streamline our work and stay better connected with you!

## Switching to Livestream!

Sunday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, we will be tearing off the training wheels and streaming our worship service **live** from the St. Mark's Sanctuary! The link to worship will still arrive by email at 9am on Sunday morning, and be posted on our website: [www.stmarksumcsd.org](http://www.stmarksumcsd.org).

Some changes will take effect, however. For those who watch the service together on Facebook, you will need to instead navigate to the streaming page on YouTube. Here, you can continue to share comments, say hello to your friends and other worshipers. The service will no longer be available prior to 9:30am, but will remain accessible to view later in the day or week.

Thank you for your grace and patience with any potential complications or issues that arise, and for supporting all the leaders and volunteers who make these steps toward reopening possible.

## Native American Ministries, Sunday - May 2, 2021

This coming Sunday is Native American Ministries Sunday. With this special offering requested by the General church, we equip and empower the Native Americans in our church community. Native Americans - with many unique languages and cultures - honor Jesus and live as Christians led by a contingent of primarily Native American pastors. It is a joy to celebrate and embolden their congregations on this day by providing funds to nurture mission outreach with Native Americans and to provide scholarships for United Methodist Native American seminarians. Fifty percent of what is received, stays in our own Annual Conference. This allows for Native American Ministry members to participate in regional gatherings, such as the new Western Jurisdiction Native American Ministry gatherings, as well as national gatherings through Native American Comprehensive Plan. It also provides for in Conference events such as two pow wows with Native American UMC of So Cal. In recent years a community pow wow was added to the annual Strawberry Festival; celebrating the gifts of Creator God that sustain and nourish us. The community also asked that a Christmas pow wow be taken on, and so the first Annual Christmas Pow Wow had its start with over 400 in attendance. Your gift will also equip seminary students who will honor and celebrate Native American culture in their ministries. Lastly, you empower congregations that are finding fresh new ways to minister to their communities with the love of Christ. Please consider giving as you are able.



# Ministry News

---

## A Path to Reopening for St. Mark's

This past week, the Reopening Task Force met and approved a proposed general timeline for returning to in-person events on the church campus. While there are still many considerations to navigate, including the many young people and families who are not yet vaccinated, of the rapidly changing recommendations of the County and State, and the growing awareness of viral variants, we are ready to begin taking conservative steps forward in preparation for a safe reopening for small and large gatherings and public worship.

**Immediately:** The pastors and staff will return to working on campus. Most all will have received their second vaccination by late this week. Volunteers may continue to come to campus as currently scheduled for the time being. Also, the task force will be working to update our plan for reopening as required by the Conference and State.

**Beginning in May:** Our worship will transition from pre-recorded services to livestream. This prepares us to be able to continue to stream worship once we return to in-person services. By the end of May, we hope to have our Reopening Plan approved to welcome back small and large groups to meet outside, and AA groups to gather (as an essential service) in our Social Hall (groups may not bring food or beverages). We will begin recruiting and training volunteers for roles on Sunday mornings.

**Beginning in June:** Worship resumes in-person with the following stipulations: all persons will wear masks and households remain distanced 6'; no congregational singing or chanting; no coffee hour or social gathering following worship; no Sunday School or Children's Time; choral anthems will be led by no more than a quartet of vocalists; when the maximum attendees is reached, overflow seating can be found in the Social Hall. Small groups may return to meeting inside (Library, Social Hall, or Narthex), and lay leadership may return to unscheduled visits to the office for church business.

**August:** Resume beach services at Mission Bay.

**September:** Celebrate a greater return to "normal" at Welcome Back Sunday.

This timeline is subject to delay with updates to state and local recommendations. We thank you for your patience and understanding as we take cautious steps toward these goals.

**We also strongly urge all who are able to get vaccinated.** We have many in our community who are still at great risk for illness and complications should they contract the virus, as well as children who are not yet able to be vaccinated. We each can do our part to protect one another. *Please help us make St. Mark's the place of safety and assurance we have known it to be by getting your shots when available.*

With questions and concerns, please contact Pastor Darin by phone or email.

**St. Mark's Path to Reopening**

# Events and Reminders

## Pastor's Bible School Wed. @1pm

Join Pastor Jeri Wednesdays in April/May at 1 p.m. via Zoom as we explore the Lectionary Passages of the week. A Zoom link will be sent by email Wednesday mornings.

### Wednesday, April 28

Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-31

1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8

### Wednesday, May 5

Acts 10:44-48; Psalm 98

1 John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17

## In Our Prayers

*Please keep all those in prayer who are experiencing grief, chronic illness, addiction, loss of direction and disenfranchisement. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

### Our military personnel:

- ♥ Brook Bossen, Coast Guard
- ♥ Kris Brendal, Army
- ♥ Robert S. Chisholm, Navy
- ♥ Craig Clemans, Marines
- ♥ Paul Clemans, Air Force
- ♥ Blake Cross, Navy
- ♥ Nathan Streeter, Navy
- ♥ Lenny Hezelett, Navy
- ♥ Henry Hoadley, Navy
- ♥ Milo Riegle, Marines
- ♥ Adam Shelar, Navy
- ♥ Robert Tarango, Navy
- ♥ Dylan Weitzman, Army



You are invited to participate in the St. Mark's prayer chain via email. Prayer requests will be sent to you via an email account you provide; you will not be asked to do anything other than offer your private prayers for requests you receive. **To participate, please email Carol Brown at [carol.brown@cst.edu](mailto:carol.brown@cst.edu).**

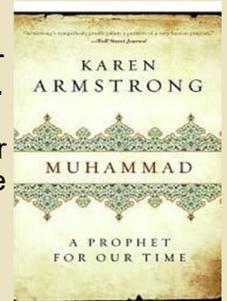
*St. Mark's Messenger (USPS 516-260) is published bi-weekly by St. Mark's United Methodist Church, 3502 Clairemont Drive, San Diego CA 92117. Periodicals Postage paid at San Diego, CA POSTMASTER: Send address changes to St. Mark's Messenger, 3502 Clairemont Dr, S.D., CA 92117*

## What is Pastor Jeri Reading?

In May I will be reading *Muhammad, A Prophet For Our Time* by Karen Armstrong. I chose this book because on April 12, approximately 1.6 billion Muslims worldwide began celebrating the month of Ramadan. They consider it their religious duty to fast from sunrise to sunset. The majority of Muslim's will abstain from all so-called worldly desires such as eating, drinking, smoking, and sexual activities. This time is used by the majority of Muslims to reboot their relationship with God, their lifestyle, and their health. Many will plan to increase their religious worship, pray more regularly, and commit more 'good deeds'.

Many people have questions about Muslims and their faith. In her book, Karen Armstrong chronicles the life and faith of the Prophet Muhammad. The NY Times stated this book offers a "glimpse how the vast majority of the worlds Muslims understand their prophet and their faith."

I hope you will join me as I read this month's book and host the conversation on **Tuesday, May 25 at 6:30 PM.** If you are interested in joining this month's reading and conversation, or you have questions, please email me at [jeri@stmarksumcsd.org](mailto:jeri@stmarksumcsd.org). I look forward to hearing from you.



## St. Marks Calendar

### Wednesday, April 28

1:00 pm Pastor's Bible School

### Sunday, May 2

Native American Ministries Sunday

9:30 am Worship Service - *Livestream*

11:45 am Outdoor Communion

### Monday, May 3

7:00 pm Monday Night Communion/Zoom

### Tuesday, May 4

National Teacher Appreciation Day

### Wednesday, May 5

Cinco De Mayo

1:30 pm Pastor's Bible Study

### Thursday, May 6

National Nurses Day

### Sunday, May 9

9:30 am Worship Service - *Livestream*

