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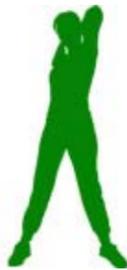
St. Mark's to Begin Exercise Class

St. Mark's is excited to announce a new exercise program entitled, *Graceful Strength and Motion*. Classes will meet twice a week, on Monday and Thursday mornings, from 9:00am to 10:00am, in Wesley Hall, beginning Monday, April 15.

The program is being taught by Emily Deckard. Emily has a Bachelor's degree in Strength and Conditioning/Physical Education and is certified through the American Council of Exercise. Key concepts that Emily is passionate about are Wellness, Balance, Strength, Flexibility, Endurance, Pain

Management, Motivation and Consistency. She is equally passionate about her desire to help people grow in these areas.

You can be any age or in any degree of fitness! The first month will be free to anyone who attends. St. Mark's will be providing initial equipment and mats. Space is limited to approximately 20 individuals. After the first month, cost will be on a donation basis. The class will be able to change the schedule if it is decided a better day/time and the room and instructor are available.



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The Moon Lectures continue to bring dynamic speakers and liberal Christian authors and musicians to the Sacramento community to speak to important ethical issues of our time. This special lecture will start at 7:30pm and will last approximately one hour, with a twenty-minute Q&A to follow. Continue to check the website for the schedule of speakers for this coming fall.

Special Lecture Friday, May 3, 7:30pm Bishop Melvin Talbert

Bishop Melvin Talbert is a powerful prophetic voice within our United Methodist family. On Friday evening, May 3, at 7:30pm, in the Sanctuary, we are honored to have Bishop Melvin Talbert as a Moon Lecturer. Bishop Talbert served as Bishop in the California-Nevada Annual Conference immediately before his retirement in 2008.

Following the General Conference in Tampa, Florida, Bishop Talbert appealed to United Methodist clergy to consider "biblical obedience" when requested to perform marriage or holy union ceremonies for Gays, Lesbians, Bisexuals and Transgendered persons. This biblical obedience would require disobedience to the rules of the United Methodist Church. The Book of Discipline states that the practice of homosexuality is "incompatible with Christian teaching." It also prohibits United Methodist Churches from hosting, and clergy from officiating at, "ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions." The 2012 General Conference rejected efforts to change that language, including a proposal to say the church was "not of one mind" about homosexuality.

Bishop Talbert's outspoken support for gay marriage has drawn strong opposition. Seventy clergy and lay persons have called on the Council of Bishops to censure and take action against Bishop Talbert. It is still unclear what will happen to this complaint.

Bishop Talbert has been a long-time supporter of full inclusion. He is very much aware that his outspoken position may have repercussions. He has long been a voice for inclusion:

"In 1960, I made the commitment to non-violence and chose to disobey the unjust laws of racial segregation and discrimination. That was a serious act which resulted in many of us going to jail. Thus, I know the seriousness of what I am suggesting."

Please invite family, friends and anyone you know to come and hear Bishop Talbert speak, and let him know how much we appreciate his passionate support for full inclusion in the United Methodist Church and beyond.

There is no charge for this lecture. A freewill offering will be collected.



Reflections from Rev. Alan Jones, Pastor



I am delighted that Bishop Melvin Talbert will be coming to give a Moon Lecture at St. Mark's on May 3. Along with all the bishops in our Western Jurisdiction, Bishop Talbert has taken a clear and outspoken stand in support of the full inclusion of people who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT). Our Jurisdictional Conference invited us to move away from discrimination in this area and, instead, embrace "biblical obedience."

It is truly a privilege for me to be the pastor of St. Mark's UMC. I also feel privileged that so many LGBT persons are active participants in this community. This is a community where "all really does mean all." Central to this congregation's DNA is the notion that nobody should be excluded because of who they are. All really does mean all.

For me it is a "no brainer." We are a community founded on grace. Everyone is a recipient of God's grace. As a pastor, I don't decide to share grace with some people and not with others. We are all saints and sinners and we're all struggling to make sense of life and its many complications. I trust everyone I meet to tell me the truth about themselves and I offer support and unconditional love in the name of Jesus Christ.

As a pastor, I pray with people in life transitions and offer loving support in the form of baptisms, marriages and memorial services. If anyone asks me to conduct a service for them, I reserve the right to refuse only if I sense that they are insincere or deliberately avoiding God's grace. I have rarely done so, as I tend to lean towards grace. If anybody comes to me and asks me to offer a service of blessing for their relationship, I assume that I will administer God's grace through the blessing of the church. And so I support the notion of blessing relationships and offering marriage for all who come to me to request it. It is my responsibility and privilege, part of my "priestly" function as a pastor in the church.

I understand that many of my clergy colleagues, both within United Methodism and beyond, understand their role differently. I will always try to persuade them about grace, but I cannot legislate a colleague into believing something they don't believe. Much as I hope they will have a change of mind and heart, I trust them, too.

I believe that the United Methodist Church is in error concerning homosexuality. Our Social Principles says "The United Methodist Church does not condone the practice of homosexuality and considers this practice incompatible with Christian teaching." At the same time, we say that we are committed to supporting the "rights and liberties of all persons, regardless of sexual orientation." We also have said "there shall be no semblance of discrimination" within the United Methodist Church. We still have enormous discrimination against LGBT persons in the very language of our Book of Discipline. LGBT persons are automatically excluded from candidacy for the ordained ministry if they choose to name their sexuality. I thank God for those of my colleagues who have chosen to ignore this discriminatory legislation and persist in responding to God's call in their lives. I grieve that we have lost so many talented and insightful individuals with powerful calls to ministry because of this ruling.

I invite your prayers—for our denomination, for those who seek to exclude, for those whose bitterness leads them to behave in offensive ways. I ask your prayers for St. Mark's, for our leaders and for our LGBT community, as well as for myself as I lead the congregation.

I dare to believe that God's grace is at work. Someday soon we will embrace the fullness of God's grace-filled community, and we will look back at these days with deep sadness, much as we do with racial and gender oppression. God's love is for all...no exceptions, and **all** really does mean **all**.

Report Back from A.C.T.

In the spring of 2012, some 25 St. Mark's members commenced a "Listening" Campaign to determine the congregation's views and concerns. Homelessness, the causes, impacts and potential solutions emerged as the number one concern of the congregation. Since that time, St. Mark's ACT members have conducted over 25 research meetings with community-based organizations, elected and other government officials. The focus of the meetings has been to identify what's working well and what specific steps



could be implemented to address the needs of the homeless and diminish, if not end, homelessness in our community.

We plan to report back to the congregation in some detail a summary of our findings and the specific action steps we want to see implemented as part of our collective effort to end homelessness.

Please join us after the second service on Sunday April 7, at 12:30pm, in Wesley Hall. Light refreshments will be served.



from Sade Williams, Youth & Young Adult Director

The Youth & Young Adults Need YOUR Help

If you feel led to help in any of the following areas, please contact Youth/Young Adults Director, Sade Williams, at 483-0777 or sadewilliams@stmarksumc.com,

Welcome Respondent

Statistics show that if a youth or young adult does not make a significant connection or friendship, he or she likely will never attend a group again. The connection volunteers are very important because they ensure that any youth or young adult that comes to service or walks into a group is greeted, welcomed and that some of their contact information is obtained. Newcomers desire to be known and welcomed, and for us to know their names adds huge value!

Public Relations (PR) Representative

As the ministry continues to grow, so does the need for help, whether updating the ministry bulletin, St. Mark's Youth and Young Adult section, sending out ministry updates, or making Facebook, Twitter, or Blog updates. There is so much to do and so little time that every one of these jobs has huge value.

Outreach Coordinator

The role of an Outreach Coordinator is to meet youth or young adults within our community on their own turf, and meeting them where they are instead of where we are. More importantly, it provides the opportunity for conversations to happen between students about Jesus and their faith. This is front-line Youth Ministry and is going to be an essential part of what the Youth and Young Adult Ministries will be like going forward.

Games Coordinator

Games break the ice and help set the tone, are fun, are different and, for a new student, its another thing to make them feel comfortable in what could be a new and strange place.



Looking for 2013 Graduates

Are you graduating from high school or college this year? Is your child? The church office is compiling a list of all those who are graduating this year. Please submit information, including graduate's name and school, degree (if college), parents' names, future plans (i.e., college or job plans) and awards or honors.

Preschool Corner

from Catherine Arguelles, Church/Preschool Liaison

Thanks to all of you who came out to our Play Day Fundraiser! The day was extremely successful, with the preschool bringing in over \$8,000! We also had a great time and made wonderful connections with our community.

We are looking forward to a festive spring where we can explore the outdoors in warm weather, as well as our always popular plates and bowls fundraiser. The children make colorful designs, which are then transposed to plastic plates and bowls. The plates and bowls are not only quite useful, but make a special memento of preschool. In fact, some of us parents still have ours from when we were in preschool!



The preschool is also hoping to continue its support of the St. Marks Food Closet with a Spring Cleaning Food Drive. St. Mark's Preschool is taking inquiries and visits from families who might be interested in a supportive, nurturing, play-based preschool next year: 3-year-olds on Tuesday and Thursday mornings and 4-year-olds on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings. Please contact Lily at 485-6509.

Mark Twains

"Go to the Movies" with **Mark Twains** on April 20, at the home of Ann and Gibbe Parsons, 909 Coronado Blvd., Sacramento, 95864. The movie will be a **surprise!**—and **free!** Bring a snack to share and a friend, and come enjoy a fun evening. Please contact Roger and Carol Stoughton, at stoughton@macnexus.org, or 486-9366, if you plan to attend, so appropriate preparations can be made. **Everyone is welcome.**



In Memoriam

We extend our love and sympathy to the family and friends of these who have recently died:

...long-time member, Myrtle Manley, who passed on November 24, 2012.

...long-time member, Rosemarie Hunt, who passed on March 2. Services are not yet planned.

Please keep their loved ones in your prayers.



United Methodist Women

April General Meeting and Announcements

UMW's yearly evening meeting will be on Tuesday, April 9, at 7:00pm. We will meet in MacMurdo Hall for dessert, followed by the program. We are pleased to have as guest speaker, Ginger Rutland, editorial writer for the Sacramento Bee. Ginger will speak on her late mother's book, *When We Were Colored, A Mother's Story*, and will include a slide show. This promises to be an inspiring program about the successful life of Eva Rutland's family during days of racism and segregation. All church women are invited, and men are welcome as well. If you are not able to attend a morning general meeting, this evening gathering is your opportunity to come to UMW. We hope to see newcomers.

Circle leaders are reminded that the *Fellowship of the Least Coin* will be collected from your group. These funds will be passed along to Church Women United. The *Least Coin* collection is distributed by CWU, and benefits women throughout the globe. (There will be no Executive Committee board meeting in April.)

UMW Spring Event Fundraiser

There is still time to buy tickets for the Spring fundraiser, which will begin with a delicious brunch, and be followed with an entertaining program presented by Nancy Elliott MacDonald. Nancy is a well known fiber artist, author, teacher and creator of fabulous quilts, several of which she'll bring for display. This brunch is a perfect event to invite a guest along with you. There will be good food, fellowship and a fine program to enjoy. Event chair, Ruthann Baker, will be displaying quilts around MacMurdo Hall. If you have one you would like to share, old or new, please call Ruthann at #727-1774.

Date/Time: Saturday, April 13, 10:00am

Place: MacMurdo Hall

Price: \$15 for adults, \$10 for children 12 and under.

Tickets can be purchased in the Courtyard on Sunday, April 7, or from the church office. Proceeds benefit UMW Mission Projects.

La Paz Book Review Circle

United Methodist Women's La Paz Book Review Circle will meet at 10:00am on Thursday, April 25, in Room E-5 (Library). John McCormick will review the book, *Gather at the Table: The Healing Journey of a Daughter of Slavery and a Son of the Slave Trade*, by Thomas Norman DeWolf and Sharon Leslie Morgan. An inspiring vision, "Two people—a black woman and a white man—confront the legacy of slavery and racism head on." All are welcome. You do not need to be a member of this circle to attend. Please consider attending.

Changing the World, One Life at a Time Native American Ministries Offering on April 14

The purpose of the *Native American Ministries Sunday Offering* is to provide education about Native American tradition, culture, spirituality and inclusion in our conference. Here is one of the traditions honored by a conference of The United Methodist Church.

The Give Away is one of the oldest and most honored traditions among Native Americans. Historically, Native Americans did not hold the same value on personal ownership or value of personal property. Instead, the focus was on what benefited the tribe and everyone. Native Americans traditionally gave to others what was needed. At times, items of value were set aside for the purpose of the give away. Once given, all connections to the item were broken. To give away brought honor to one's family, clan or tribe. There were no expectations placed on the gift giving. The belief that it is more important to give than receive is part of Native American culture.



Native American Ministries Sunday, one of six church-wide special offering Sundays, recognizes the contributions of Native Americans to the church and society. Native American Ministries Sunday is celebrated on the third Sunday of Easter.

Fifty-percent of the Native American Ministries Sunday offering goes to develop and strengthen local Native American ministries. The remainder of the offering goes to the General Council on Finance and Administration for distribution to the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry for scholarships, and to the Native American Urban Initiative of the General Board of Global Ministries. Everyone is encouraged to give generously to the Native American Ministries Sunday offering on April 14.

Graceful Strength and Motion – What Does This Have to Do with You?

by Pam Taylor, R.N., Faith Community Nurse



Over the past months, I have written numerous articles providing health tips for how to live a better, safer life. One theme has been safety, and the suggestion of participating in some form of exercise. Fall prevention has been another topic. Last year, St. Mark's hosted *A Matter of Balance* program taught by Eskaton and designed to provide tools and training for fall prevention. At the conclusion of this program, the participants requested an on-going opportunity to do group exercise to maintain and practice what they had learned.

Guess what? We are so excited to share with you a new St. Marks program entitled *Graceful Strength and Motion*. The program will be held twice a week on Monday and Thursday mornings from 9:00-10:00am, in Wesley Hall, beginning Monday, April 15. The program is being taught by Emily Deckard. Emily has a Bachelor's degree in Strength and Conditioning/Physical Education and is certified through the American Council of Exercise. She has been teaching for 10 years in a variety of settings and age groups. Most recently she has been at Del Norte Health Club. Key concepts that Emily is passionate about are Wellness, Balance, Strength, Flexibility, Endurance, Pain Management, Motivation and Consistency. She is equally passionate about her desire to help people grow in these areas.

Emily comes recommended by Ruth Reynolds. Ruth has taken classes from Emily, so feel free to ask Ruth about her experience. In meeting with Emily to plan for this program, I found her to be fun, positive, and committed to her profession of assisting others achieve their potential. She is able to adjust her teaching to fit the individual in a group setting. So, you can be any age or in any degree of fitness! The first month will be free to anyone who attends. St. Mark's will be providing initial equipment and mats.

Space is limited to approximately 20 individuals. After the first month, cost will be on a donation basis. The class will be able to change the schedule if they decide a better day/time and the room and instructor are available. I hope you will show up and experience firsthand how this venue can be helpful to you in your quest to be healthy.

In January, there was an article in the Sacramento Bee entitled, *Deadly Falls on the Rise among Seniors*. The Center for Disease Control data shows that one-third of Americans 65 and older suffer falls each year. For older adults, falls are the leading cause of death. The article said from 2000 to 2010 the number of Californians age 85 or older killed related to falls rose about 50%. The reason for this increase is still being evaluated, but some factors are increased longevity, the prevalence of chronic conditions, and the influence of certain medications. With 76 million baby boomers reaching their senior years, the incidence of falls can only be expected to climb.

One preventive tip is to keep moving! If you get off your feet because you are afraid of falling, your risk of falling goes up. Professor David Mandeville has done research and developed a prototype device to monitor body position. He hopes this will be available someday to alert medical professionals when seniors are in danger of falling.

Regular, moderate physical activity can help manage stress and improve mental outlook. Regular activity may help reduce feelings of depression. Studies also suggest that exercise can improve or maintain some aspects of cognitive function, such as your ability to shift quickly between tasks, plan an activity, and ignore irrelevant information.

If you attend this class, you will experience all the benefits of physical activity that was written about in a former St. Mark's article—endurance, strength, balance and flexibility. I hope you will come and experience all that this class can offer to you.

Prayer Requests

Robyn Addington	Doris Menuetz	Keith Stallcop
Peggy Blankenship	Mary Parks	Ken Walela
Luen Chiu	Dorothy Pattison	Oscar Winje
Marge Haggett	Bob Quevedo	Ellen Wood
Jane Krisch	Daylon and the Rothstein Family	

Pastor Jimmy & Allen Guinn
Greg Klein, John & Carol Klein's son
Rowena Lewis, John Field's friend
Rod Purdy, the Fenimore-Brown's friend
James Tanis, Pat Rush's nephew
Will Tomlin and Family
Anthony, Bob Jacobs' 18 month great-grand-nephew



All are invited to the Super Seniors' potluck and the "Tasty Trip to Italy," presented by Don Fado, with the assistance of fellow travelers. Come on Thursday, April 11, at 12:30pm, to MacMurdo Hall. Bring a dish to share and your own table service and join this delightful journey to the "new home" of the new Pope Francis I.