



The Oasis

October 2023

Cross in the Desert UMC

Where God's Love Transforms Lives, building a just and joyful community.

NEW ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE PROPOSED BY CHURCH COUNCIL

By: Karen Bulkeley, Council Chair

On September 26 the Church Council voted to seek approval from our District Superintendent, Melissa Rynders, to present the following resolution for organizational change from the current church structure to a simplified, accountable governance structure. (One Board model). A decision on whether or not to adapt this new structure will be made at our Church Conference scheduled for October 22, 2023. The Church Council has been in a period of discernment for most of 2023 to decide if this model will best serve Cross in the Desert into the future. The council members have studied the model, held robust discussions, and facilitated open information sessions to educate and get feedback from the congregation. A Frequently Asked Questions document can be found elsewhere in the Oasis to provide you will more information on how business will look if we adapt this model. I encourage everyone to join us on October 22nd to be part of this historic decision for the life of Cross in the Desert.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION TO CHANGE CONGREGATIONAL ORGANIZATION PLAN TO SIMPLIFIED, ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

WHEREAS, ¶247.2 of the 2016 Book of Discipline for the United Methodist Church allows alternative models of governance; and

WHEREAS, the simplified, accountable leadership structure is utilized as an alternative model throughout the denomination and fulfills the provisions of ¶243 of the 2016 Book of Discipline for the United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council of Cross in the Desert United Methodist Church prayerfully voted on February 28, 2023 to explore the simplified, accountable structure for local church governance; and

WHEREAS, the congregation provided feedback concerning a potential change in governance structure during three separate feedback sessions in May 2023; and

WHEREAS, the congregation was motivated to convert for reasons of efficiency, alignment with our mission, and vision, accountability, and missional focus; and

WHEREAS, the Church Council and the pastor, after months of discernment, have crafted an alternative organizational structure for Cross in the Desert United Methodist Church and offered this proposal to the district superintendent for approval; and

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Pastor's Corner



In a world that often feels increasingly divided, it becomes vital to recognize the importance of giving back to our community. Whether it's through offering our time or contributing our treasure, giving fosters a sense of unity, compassion, and goodwill among us all.

Investing our time is one of the most meaningful ways to give back. Time is a precious resource, and remarkable things happen when we dedicate it to our community. Volunteering not only enriches the lives of others but also fosters personal growth and builds stronger bonds within our neighborhoods.

When we come together to volunteer, we create a support system that uplifts and empowers those around us. Whether organizing fundraising events for local charities, mentoring disadvantaged youth, or helping senior citizens with daily tasks, our time and presence can make a difference. Through acts of kindness, we cultivate a sense of belonging, compassion, and interconnectedness that shapes the fabric of our community.

While time is invaluable, financial contributions, euphemistically referred to as "treasure," play a significant role in empowering and transforming our communities.

Donating funds helps the church and its mission partners to resource the needs for the growth and health of the community. Overhead costs like administration, utilities, and materials must be funded to get the word out and provide services to all.

Acts of giving inspire others, creating a ripple effect that spreads compassion, empathy, and generosity. The values we instill through our actions serve as catalysts for positive change, shaping the mindset of future generations.

Moreover, giving creates a sense of purpose and fulfillment within ourselves. We develop a deeper appreciation for our blessings and become more mindful of the struggles faced by others.

I hope you will join me and others as we work toward a more just, loving, and inclusive Cross in the Desert community that makes an impact even beyond our building walls.

Tell them to go after God, who piles on all the riches we could ever manage—to do good, to be rich in helping others, to be extravagantly generous. If they do that, they'll build a treasury that will last, gaining life that is truly life.

1 Timothy 6:18-19



Happy Anniversary



Jerry Hobbs	October 2
Jen Foster	October 5
Jeannine Diller	October 11
Carol Monsma	October 14
Nadia Lattin	October 15
Casey Joy	October 16
Bill Moyer	October 19
Mary Botts	October 23
Laura Burton	October 27
Jan Wickliffe	October 29

Tim & Jen Foster	October 1
Buck & Bev Ashcraft	October 11
Tom & Rhonda Falknor	October 21
Steve & Karen Cahill	October 23

We apologize if we have missed your special day. It means that the office does not have your information. Please notify the office if we need to update your information.

Join Us for “It’s A Wonderful Life” at Don Bluth Front Row Theatre

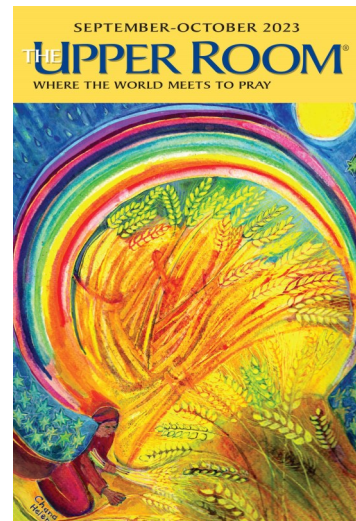
We are sponsoring an all-church outing to attend the play “It’s A Wonderful Life” at the Don Bluth Front Row Theatre, which is a small, in-the-round theatre experience located less than 10 miles from the church. We happen to know the person playing Mary Bailey through our grief group experience. We’ll be going on Thursday, November 16, at 7:00 PM because it has a lot of seats available. We’ll order the tickets and collect the money from you later. Tickets for adults are \$35 and Seniors (60+) are \$32, but if we order at least 6 tickets, then they are \$30. There is also a \$1 per ticket service fee. We want to get orders in on October 16th so let us know by October 15th if you wish to attend. If you let us know later, we’ll still try to get tickets, but as time gets closer, seats may become limited or unavailable.

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Have you been looking for a devotional? Did you know that *The Upper Room* is available in the narthex. Regular and large print versions are available. A small donation is appreciated if you are able, but feel free to take one even if you can’t donate.



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WHEREAS, the district superintendent approved the alternative organizational plan on (date to be determined) and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

On January 1, 2024, the Disciplinary authority and various responsibilities of the Church Council, Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC), Finance Committee, and Board of Trustees, will be combined into a single body called the Leadership Board. The existing elected leadership of all classes of all constituent committees that make up the new Leadership Board will conclude their terms of service on December 31, 2023, as the church transitions to the new organizational plan.

The Committee on Nominations and Leadership Development of Cross in the Desert United Methodist Church is directed to submit a list of officers and members of a simplified, accountable structure known as the Leadership Board and a Committee on Nominations and Leadership Development, divided into appropriate three-year classes, as outlined in the Discipline, for election by the Charge Conference. All members of the Leadership Board and the Charge Conference will be professing members. The Chair of the Board of Trustees will be elected from among the voting Trustee members of the Leadership Board in the first board meeting of each year in accordance with the Discipline, and s/he may be the Leadership Board Chair.

On January 1, 2024, the Charge Conference of Cross in the Desert United Methodist Church, will be composed of the members of the Leadership Board, appointed clergy (ex-officio), together with retired ordained ministers and retired diaconal ministers who elect to hold their memberships in our charge conference, Lay Members of Annual Conference, the Lay Leader, Treasurer and Finance Secretary (if non-staff), and the elected membership of the Committee on Nominations and Leadership Development.

The Lay Member to Annual Conference and Lay Leader may be ex officio members of the Leadership Board, if not already elected into a membership class of the Leadership Board.

All Disciplinary requirements and qualifications for each of the constituent committees (Church Council, SPRC, and Board of Trustees) will continue with the combined Leadership Board, including Trustee age of majority qualifications and SPRC household membership limitations.

All references to the Church Council, Board of Trustees, SPRC, and Finance Committee, in all existing church policies, as of December 31, 2023, shall be understood to refer to the Leadership Board beginning January 1, 2024.

The Board of Trustees is directed immediately to make appropriate amendments to the congregation's bylaws to reflect the new plan for organization and submit an update to the Secretary of State's office in a manner defined by state law for nonprofit corporations.

In service to our common mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, all existing ministry teams will be accountable to the Pastor and Leadership Board in administrative matters and in fulfillment of ¶243.

The Leadership Board will abide with existing financial, child protection, building use, and personnel policies along with the inaugural Guiding Principles. The board will create a Leadership Board Covenant. The Leadership Board is empowered to amend these policies, principles, and covenant. The Leadership Board shall share updated Guiding Principles with the charge conference annually.

Pumpkin Patch

**Our Scout Troop is hosting a
Pumpkin Patch!**

October 16-30

5:00-9:00 pm





CITD Financial Corner

August was not as good as July, but we are still on track to look much better at the end of the year than when we started. Hopefully, as people return from the summer, we will see further improvement. As I am writing this, however, we certainly have hit a little bump in the road with the water main leak. The current estimate for repairs is \$6,000, which was certainly unplanned. Our Designated Funds for Trustee repairs are not in good shape. We tend to use it up about as fast as it builds up. If you can make donations to help offset these repairs, they would be very appreciated. We'll probably have to use money that we had planned to use otherwise. There is also some concern about the impact on giving with the necessary cancellation of services on September 24. Hopefully, everyone will make that up.

October will be the kickoff for our Stewardship Campaign, "A Future with Hope". I think this is an excellent theme fitting with the fact we have so many positive things happening. November 19th will be our day to submit estimates of giving for 2024. These help us in our planning for 2024.

We are planning to have another Luminarias event this year on November 4th where all the proceeds will go toward Apportionment. Please see the article "Luminarias – In Memoriam" in this issue of the Oasis for more details.

Thanks, again, for your prayers and financial support. If you have any questions or ideas, please feel free to contact me.

In His service,

Eugene O'Bryan, Chairperson
CITD Finance Committee
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Did you know? It takes \$5610.00 per week for CITD to pay all the bills!

Prayer Corner

Dear holy and powerful God, We here at CITD need your comfort and healing as we have people who are sick and have lost a wonderful father and husband. We need help with sustaining our belief in your love and your power. Bless those who are sick with help and the rest of us with your almighty love that will guide us through these times. We know Christ walks with us and holds our hands. We are grateful for our faith in you that moves us through these times. We pray for Dan and Gretchen, Buck and Bev, Arvilla, Carol and the family of Carol's niece. We thank you for Pastor Gina who has been caring for these people.

Thank you, God, for the blessings of Pastor Gina, the new Music Director and the new janitorial company and the plans for the preschool. Bless those who come as visitors and may they feel the Spirit of Christ.

We pray for all the people of Ukraine who are victims of this senseless war. Be with our leaders in making good level-headed decisions for our participation in the world. Be with the homeless and help us share our resources and products in a more equitable manner.

Bless all your precious children. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Prayer written by Rev. Sharon MacVean

PRAYER NOTES

The Bible teaches us at least two important lessons about our internal struggles and the prayers we say.

With Jesus' agonizing prayer in the garden of Gethsemane, we learn that struggle is legitimate and may not be resolved the first time we pray. This is encouraging to those of us who struggle to accept the difficulties of life.

Paul prayed for the removal of the thorn in his flesh many times. These repeated prayers do not indicate lack of faith but are rather signs of faith.

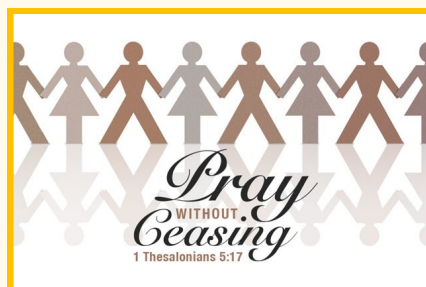
Rev. Sharon A. MacVean

East District Prayer Focus for October

Central UMC, Phoenix
Rev. Brandon Gilmore
Rev. Flor Granillo

Crossroads UMC, Phoenix
Pastor Deontez Wimbley

Desert Foothills UMC, Phoenix
Rev. Kristin Hansen





October Meetings of UWF

October 5	Leadership Team	3:00 pm	Zoom
October 12	Outreach Circle Meeting	11:00 am	Fellowship Hall
October	Mary Martha Circle - Not meeting in October		
October 14	East District Annual Meeting	8:30 am	
October 17	Devotions & Dinner	6:30 pm	Spinato's, 1614 E. Bell Rd
October 19	Bookworms United	10:00 am	Zoom
	Book: <i>The Bookwoman's Daughter</i> by Kim Richardson		
October 25	Palm Lakes Village Circle	2:00 pm	Contact Judy S.
October 28	Conference Annual Meeting	9:00 am	Dayspring UMC 1365 E. Elliot Rd, Tempe

East District Annual Meeting

October 14 Cross in the Desert will host the East District Annual Meeting. Registration starts at 8:30. The theme is *Moving Forward Together*. If you signed up to help verify with your circle when you need to arrive. If you need help with registering, contact Mary Ann Crist.

Conference Annual Meeting

October 28 9:00AM to 4 PM at Dayspring UMC, Tempe, Arizona. The theme is *Excite Inspire Unite*. The cost is \$25.00. Registration deadline is October 16,2023.

It's Baby Layette Time!

Would you like to help with baby layettes? From now until October 23 we are collecting items to put together layettes for the newborns of needy mothers. The layettes will be taken to hospitals, where they will be distributed. Monetary donations are appreciated if you prefer not to shop. See Jeannine Diller with any questions.



Newborn and 3 month sizes only

Sleepers with feet

Onesies (both short and long sleeved)

Flannel Baby Blankets

Diapers (#1 up to 14 lbs. or newborn)



SIMPLIFIED, ACCOUNTABLE STRUCTURE



1. What is the Simplified, Accountable Structure?

Simplified, Accountable Structure (SAS), is a model used by many United Methodist Churches around the country to streamline their organizational structure to be more accountable, efficient, and effective than the current model.

2. Is SAS the same as a “One Board Model”?

Sort of. SAS is a model developed to support the implementation of a single board that emphasizes accountability by the entire church to focus on the church mission to: “Make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World”.

3. Does adopting SAS mean all the committees of the church go away?

No. Only the Church Council, Board of Trustees, Staff Parish Relations, and Finance committees combine into a single Leadership Board.

4. How do all the other committees such as Missions, Prayer Team, or Worship function?

This model allows for more agility for committees, teams, and task forces to do their work without the “red tape” and bureaucracy of the current structure. These teams are accountable to the pastor and the congregation for completing their work consistent with the mission and vision of CITD. Only if a team is wanting to plan a large congregation or community event and/or would like to spend substantial money from the general fund would they need to work with the Leadership Board.

5. Won't this model concentrate a lot of power into the hands of a few people?

The Leadership Board will consist of 9-12 individual leaders of the church. Staff and family members of staff or each other cannot serve on the board. Currently, the four committees that would combine to form the Leadership Board have many vacancies and do not have more than a total of 12 non-redundant members. So, right now the same decisions that will be made by the Leadership Board are being made by as few as 3 to 4 people on some individual committees.

6. How will the Leadership Board Function?

The Board should meet monthly for the primary purpose of assessing progress toward the goals identified in the annual Strategic Plan. The Board should not be spending their time hearing reports or making minor decisions. The Board should empower staff members and task forces to research, plan and implement projects, events, and programs. The Board and congregation

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should stay informed on the progress of these activities through regular written communication. Task forces and/or staff that are facing challenges with achieving their identified goals will be held accountable through support and problem-solving from the board so that the church continues to move forward toward its identified goals.

7. How will I know what the Leadership Board is doing?

Just like Church Council meetings, Leadership Board meetings will be open meetings, except when they must go into executive session to address SPRC issues (SPRC committee meetings have always been closed meetings.) It is incredibly important for the Leadership Board to establish a culture of open communication which will be included in the Guiding Principles that the board will be creating as one of their first tasks.

8. Will I still have the opportunity to get involved?

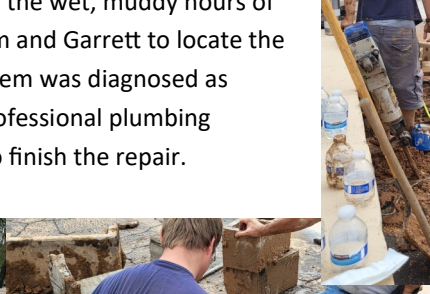
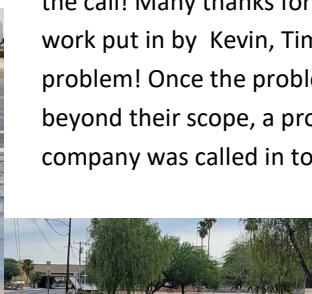
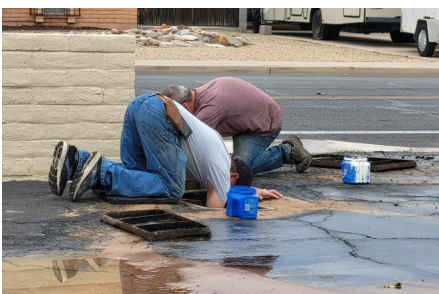
YES!!! As a matter of fact, EVERYONE must get involved to make this successful. The Leadership Board will be looking for individuals to help bring plans into reality through short-term task forces or ongoing, focused work teams. (e.g. capital campaign; community event planning; facility maintenance; children's ministry; community outreach; communications/IT support; etc. etc.)

9. So what's the bottom line?

The vision is that a church that pivots to this model frees members from the endless meetings and hoops that are necessary to receive approval to complete a project that are inherent in a committee-heavy structure. More individuals can spend their time focused on serving the community and the church in ways that are meaningful to them. More time can be spent serving our brothers and sisters, fulfilling the Great Commission to spread the good word of Jesus Christ to our community and the world!

Broken Water Line!

On Saturday September 23 the trustees got an urgent call that we had water gushing out into the street. The emergency response team answered the call! Many thanks for the wet, muddy hours of work put in by Kevin, Tim and Garrett to locate the problem! Once the problem was diagnosed as beyond their scope, a professional plumbing company was called in to finish the repair.



COMING EVENTS

November 4th

Grief Workshop

Noon—4:00 p.m.

The holidays can be a challenging time to get through. Knowing that you are not alone and creating a plan to help you navigate the feelings can help.

This half-day workshop can help you:

- ⇒ UNDERSTAND WHAT GRIEF IS
- ⇒ UNDERSTAND HOW THE FOUR DIMENSIONS OF BEREAVEMENT ARE EXPERIENCED DURING SPECIAL EVENTS AND HOLIDAYS
- ⇒ CREATE A PLAN FOR HANDLING THE HOLIDAYS IN A WAY THAT HONORS YOU AND YOUR EMOTIONAL PLACE

Pastor Gina is the facilitator. Registration information will be available soon.

Luminarias – In Memoriam

This year in honor of All Saints Day we will again be having memorial luminarias to remember those who have gone on before us. The event will be from 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM on Saturday, November 4, around the courtyard.

If you wish to remember someone who has passed before (not limited to just this past year), we are asking that you submit names that we will place on a luminaria. Please submit only one name per luminaria. We are asking for a minimum donation of \$10 per name. All money collected will go toward our Apportionment for the year. If you can give more, it will be greatly appreciated. Please mail or drop off an envelope to the church or in the offering with the names you wish to submit and your donation check. Please also write LUMINARIA on the outside of the envelope and on your check. The deadline for submission is October 30th for the names to be in the office so we can be properly prepared.

If you have any questions or if you're willing to help us, please let one of us know.

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November 18

Friendsgiving Potluck in Fellowship Hall

5:00-7:00 p.m.



An opportunity to share a Thanksgiving meal with friends and church family. And you don't have to cook the entire meal! Sample lots of special treats. And most of all, share the fellowship.

Desert Southwest Conference News

Dear Beloved Members of The United Methodist Church in the West,

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ.

Today, a [jurisdictional trial concluded](#) that involved our colleague, Bishop Minerva Carcaño, as respondent. Under the oversight of presiding officer Bishop Alfred Gwinn, the trial resulted in a dismissal of all four charges against Bishop Carcaño as the jury found her actions to be within the bounds of her episcopal authority.

Although the judicial process is complete, we recognize that pain and anguish are present in this moment. We especially extend our care to those who gave voice to their convictions with courage through the complaint process and the trial. We don't minimize the hurt we all carry, and at the same time, we begin the work of healing. No verdict – innocent or guilty – will do the hard work of restoring and building the necessary trust for healthy relationships. This will require diligence, mercy, reconciliation, and restoration by all parties.

With the trial now over, the Western Jurisdiction's College of Bishops will welcome Bishop Carcaño back into our shared collaborative work. As we build new and restore old relationships, we will walk alongside her as fellow servant leaders, even as we continue to hold each other accountable in love.

We are thankful for all who contributed their time and gifts to this trial, ensuring a fair hearing of the facts and the faithful deliberations of the jury. The court's officers, presiding officer Bishop Gwinn and secretary Rev. R. Preston Price, capably facilitated while coordinating details for the relocated trial with leadership in the North Central Jurisdiction and our building host, Wespath. We also give thanks for the leaders within the Western Jurisdiction who navigated this complaint process with diligence and care, balancing the requirements of *The Discipline* with a desire to do no harm. In particular, we offer our gratitude to Rev. Janet Forbes and Richard Marsh, who dutifully represented the Church as counsel in this trial.

As your College of Bishops, we remain committed to guiding our jurisdiction through this season with integrity, compassion, and a listening spirit. We invite you to join us in prayer, seeking God's wisdom and grace as we navigate the path ahead.

Grace y Paz,

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank

President, Western Jurisdiction College of Bishops

Resident Bishop of the Los Angeles Area



Conference Contacts

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Conference Lay Leader

Alberta Farnsworth

East District Superintendent

Melissa Rynders

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East District Lay Leader

Trinity Donovan

Director of Communications

(Assistance with technology)

Christina Dillabough

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Lay Leader—vacant

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Thomas Hartwell

Coordinator of Children's Ministries

Vacant

Youth and Technology Coordinator

Kevin Joy

Building and Grounds Concerns

Please contact the office by phone or email so the Trustees may be notified

Administrative Assistant

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