



## Care Ministry Matters!

At the heart of our congregation lies a deep commitment to unity, empathy, and love for one another and our community. Congregational care is not merely a duty or obligation but a sacred calling that we are all called to honor. Whether it's offering a listening ear to someone in need, extending a helping hand to a struggling neighbor, or simply sharing a smile of encouragement, each act of care and kindness we bestow upon one another strengthens the very fabric of our community.

Congregational care goes beyond mere words and gestures—it is a profound reflection of our faith in action. By reaching out to those who are in distress, lonely, or facing challenges, we embody the selfless love and compassion that is at the core of our beliefs. In times of joy, congregational care allows us to celebrate together and share in each other's triumphs and blessings, deepening our bonds of fellowship and unity.

In a world that can often feel fragmented and disconnected, the practice of congregational care serves as a beacon of hope and light. It reminds us that we are not alone in our struggles and joys, that we are part of a larger family that stands ready to offer support, comfort, and encouragement. Through our collective efforts to care for and uplift one another, we create a sanctuary of love and acceptance where all are welcomed, valued, and cherished.

As we move forward on our shared journey of faith and community, let us recommit ourselves to the sacred art of congregational care. Let us be ever mindful of the needs of those around us by extending grace, compassion, understanding, and practical help to all who cross our paths. In doing so, we embody the spirit of Christ's love and compassion, becoming beacons of light and hope in a world that is often shrouded in darkness.

May the practice of congregational care continue to flourish within our community, nurturing and sustaining us in times of joy and sorrow, abundance and need. Let us walk hand in hand, sharing the burdens and joys of life, as we uplift, support, and care for one another with unwavering love and compassion.

Let's remember the words of Galatians 6:2, "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ." As we extend our hands and hearts in congregational and community care, may we embody the transformative power of love and unity that strengthen our community and bring us closer to the Divine presence that resides within each of us.

***There will be a Care Ministry Meeting on Saturday, April 20, 2024 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Join us to learn how you can make a difference in the CITD community's life and beyond!***

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# Pastor's Corner



## **Embracing the Eternal Dawn: Carrying the Hope of Easter into Our Lives**

Friends!

Easter time imparts a message of renewal, hope, and the promise of new life.

Easter also challenges us to look beyond the bounds of our human limitations and to fix our gaze upon the boundless horizon of possibility that God has unveiled through the resurrection. In the same way that the stone was rolled away to reveal not just an empty tomb but infinite hope, so too are we called to roll away the stones of doubt, fear, and despair from our own lives, revealing the light of Divine potential that lies within each one of us.

God, our enduring source of inspiration, reveals to us through nature's revival the eternal cycle of life, death, and rebirth. God does not dwell in the abstract distance. Still, it pulses in our daily experiences, whispering that every ending is the prelude to a beautiful beginning.

In this spirit, let us remember that hope is not a fleeting sentiment confined to Easter Sunday but rather a steadfast companion that walks with us through every season. We are the bearers of the torch of hope, ignited by the power of the resurrection, and it is our calling to extend that light to the shadowed corners of our world.

Let us practice resurrection not just in words but in action. By nourishing the seeds of love planted within our communities, tending to the needs of our neighbors, and standing alongside those who labor under the weight of oppression, we embody the hope of Easter. The spirit of Easter lives on in our small yet significant acts of kindness and courage, our refusal to accept injustice, and our relentless pursuit of peace.

Each new day provides a canvas for us to paint with the colors of compassion, inclusion, and grace. God invites us to create with them a world that reflects the sacred tapestry of the Divine Image—a tapestry woven with threads of every color, every creed, every expression of humanity's vast and beautiful diversity.

Together, let us renew our commitment to live as people of the resurrection—people who have witnessed the triumph of hope over despair and faith over futility. May we forge ahead, hearts on fire with the passion of those who have caught a glimpse of the Divine dream for humanity—a dream where all are valued, all are loved, and all share in the bounty of God's goodness.

May the joy and hope of Easter live ever in your hearts, permeating every aspect of your lives, and may you always find in God an inexhaustible source of renewal and strength.



Jack Robinson	April 1
Ray Roop	April 2
Elizabeth Robinson	April 5
Rachelle Skarr	April 5
Bunny Scott	April 11
Phyllis Sadler	April 12
Kathy Salmon	April 13
Millie Tobias	April 13
Larry Albright	April 14
Bob Sanders	April 14
Jacob Keck	April 15
Hank Hendrickson	April 17
Dave Delster	April 19
Katie Nelson	April 19
Daisy Pleake	April 20
Suzanne Hartley	April 21
Phillip Miller	April 21
Ada Thompson	April 21
Becky Gaylor	April 22
Rhonda Falknor	April 23
Kristin O'Shaughnessy	April 27
Joseph Mischik	April 29
Naomi Mills	April 30
Jeff Moore	April 30

Gary & Romi Simons	April 10
Todd & Rhonda Mortenson	April 28

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.



Have you seen me?  
Where am I hiding?



Do you have an appointment for your picture for the new church directory? Help people know who you are!

Contact Arvilla Jungman with any questions

# Holy Week at Cross in the Desert

## Seeking...

Where are you headed? Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Sunday. Cleansing on Thursday leads to asking "Why have you forsaken me?" on Friday.



Who are you looking for?

# He is Risen!

## Canaan in the Desert

Seven members of United Women in Faith visited Canaan in the Desert on March 25. We went through the Bethlehem Grotto and Stations of the Cross. Guest Bryan Crist was our reader for most of the stations.

You can visit year-round and it's particularly meaningful and beautiful at this time of the year!

The gardens are located close to CITD at 9849 N. 40th Street.



## Dinner and Dialogue

Thursday April 18 at 6:00 pm in Fellowship Hall



Join us for dinner and discussion on the very timely issue of fraud schemes. There will be a presentation on the latest scams that are going around. Learn about methods to avoid becoming a victim. Share and compare stories about attempts to scam you, and how you have dealt with them.

## Preschool Update

We are continuing to work with Adam Maynard, the owner of Global Minds Preschool, with the intention of the school opening in August 2024. The necessary zoning variance was approved by the City of Phoenix on March 28th, so we should see a little more activity as the next steps begin to occur—Fire Department Inspection and State Licensing. Thanks to Aaron Francis for his assistance to Adam and the task force members as they were dealing with jumping through the hoops of the city regulations.





# Prayer Corner

## LET'S TALK ABOUT JESUS....

This is the day that the Lord has made, let us be glad and rejoice in it!

We have just celebrated the greatest, most powerful time on the Christian calendar, the blessed season of Easter. This is when we celebrate the joy of God's love for us and the promise of our new life. We are all invited personally to share in this new life by God himself. God himself!

Through the risen Christ, we are granted God's forgiveness and mercy. It is because of God's grace that we are given the gift of light, life and hope. We are called to share God's love with those around us. With the light of Christ in our hearts, let this also be the time when we extend grace, compassion and hope to others.

God, the all-powerful Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has given us a new birth with water and the Holy Spirit and forgiven all our sins. May he also keep us faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ forever and ever. Let us shout with a resounding AMEN!

May the peace and joy of the Risen Lord be with you today and always.

Elizabeth Weir, S.D.

## How does the Prayer Ministry support CITD?

- Provides trained prayer intercessors for Sunday Services, including prayer with the musicians before the service.
- Sponsors prayer seminars for the community.
- Has a table at community events to take prayer requests and to provide Bibles and literature.
- Valentine's Day Hearts with prayer requests are prayed over & displayed in Sanctuary annually.
- A week of prayer for each person attending on a designated Sunday by another member of the congregation.
- Prayers for church staff.
- Prayer walks in the neighborhood.

If you feel called to participate in this ministry, please contact Ray Roop.

### **East District Prayer Focus** **for April**

**The Bridge UMC—Phoenix**  
Rev. Michael Patzloff

**The Fountains, A UMC —Fountain Hills**  
Rev. David Felten

**White Mountain UMC—Show Low**  
Pastor Andrew Devereaux





United Women in Faith

### April Meetings of UWFaith

April 4	Leadership Team	3:00 pm	Fellowship Hall
April 11	Mary Martha Circle	4:00 pm	
April 14	Spring Tea & Style Show	3:00 pm	Fellowship Hall
April 16	Devotions and Dinner	6:30 pm	
April 18	Bookworms United	10:00 am	Zoom
	Book: <i>The Nickel Boys</i> by Colton Whitehead		
April 25	UWFaith Outreach	11:30 am	Fellowship Hall

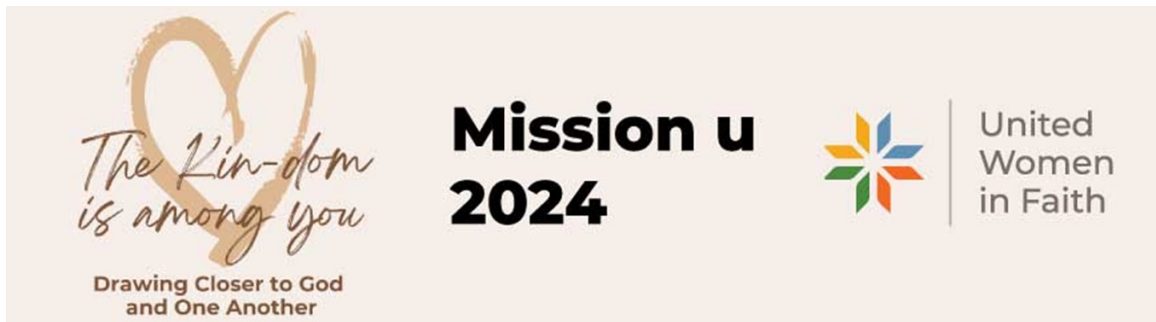
### Book feature of the month:

*The Nickel Boys* by Colton Whitehead

This novel is based on the historic Dozier School, a reform school in Florida that operated for 111 years and was revealed to be a highly abusive setting for young boys. The book follows the path of young Elwood, who was sent to the Nickel School for being in the wrong place, at the wrong time.

The Nickel Boys won the 2020 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, and was called "a spare and devastating exploration of abuse at a reform school in Jim Crow-era Florida that is ultimately a powerful tale of human perseverance, dignity and redemption. Colton Whitehead is only the fourth writer in history to have won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction twice.

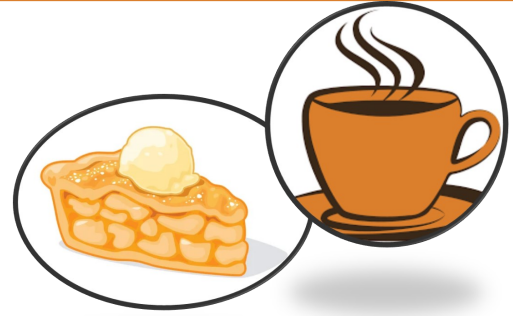
Join UWFaith Bookworms for a discussion of this powerful book on April 18 - 10 am on ZOOM.



The in-person Adult and Youth studies will be at Payson UMC, 414 N Easy St #4414, Payson, AZ 85541.

Friday, June 21, 9:30 AM check-in and Saturday, June 22, 8:30 AM light breakfast. The Adult Virtual Mission u opens on Friday, July 19, at 3:00 PM and Saturday, July 20, at 10:00 AM on Zoom.

**COMMUNITY COFFEE PM**  
**APRIL 11, 7:00 PM**  
**VILLAGE INN, 4040 E. BELL RD**



**UWFAITH**  
**SPRING TEA**  
**APRIL 14, 2024**  
**3:00 P.M.**



**Pastor Carrie Bradley**, Director of **Identifreed Attic and Trafficking Outreach Center**, will be sharing her story with us.

There will be a style show featuring clothing from **Identifreed Attic**, at 13637 N. 32nd St.

**Fabulous Door Prizes!**

**Tickets are \$15.00**

Proceeds from ticket sales support the mission work of United Women in Faith at Cross in the Desert UMC.

**Don't miss the Spring Tea! Tickets will be on sale on April 7 and 14 in Fellowship Hall, or you can call the office to reserve your spot.**



**FOOD WITH FRIENDS POTLUCK**  
**SATURDAY, APRIL 20 AT 5:00 PM**

It's PROM Night, so come on to the party! (Formal attire is not required). Bring a dish to share and your own table service. No child care provided.

Any questions? Contact Rhonda Mortenson



# MISSIONS

## April 14 is Gift Card Sunday

The Missions Committee continues to sell gift cards during fellowship time on the second Sunday of every month. Don't forget to bring cash or your checkbook to stock up on gifts for friends and family, as well as gift cards for places where you normally shop or eat. The profit from these sales goes to mission projects.



Compassionate • Human • Innovative

Please join the Missions Committee as we volunteer our services at The Foster Alliance on Monday, April 29, from 1-3 pm. We will be preparing birthday gift bags for foster children. Karen Mischik will have a sign-up sheet at the Missions table or you can call her at 480-980-0286.

### Coming Events—Mark your calendar

Have you ever thought about the following?

- I want to see my grandchildren grow up.
- I want to continue living independently.
- I don't want to be a burden on my family.



**Saturday May 4**

Preventive screenings can help and we have partnered with Life Line Screening to provide these valuable screenings at CITD on Saturday, May 4.

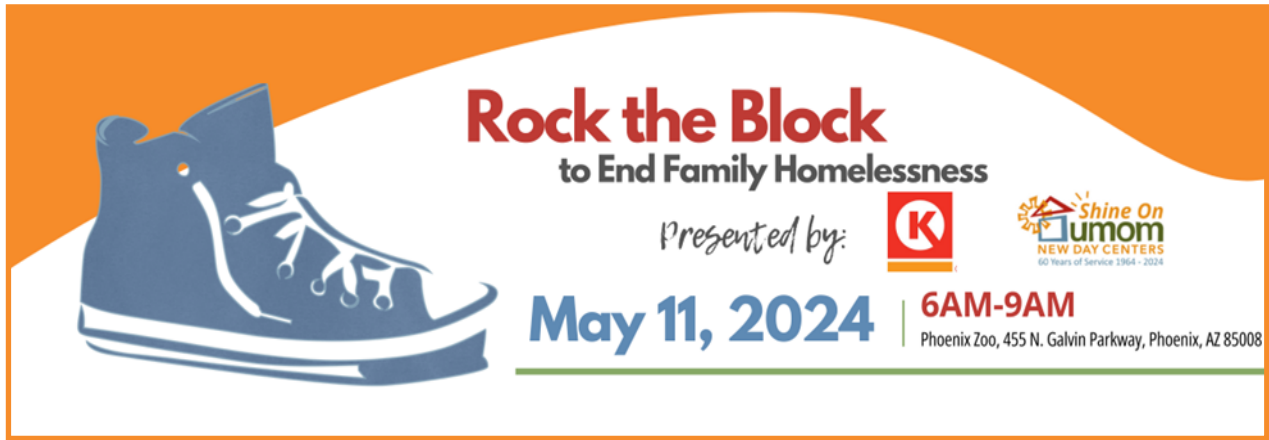
The mission of Life Line Screening is to provide advance, yet affordable and convenient health screenings that supplement your traditional healthcare.

They can help make you aware of a previously silent, unrecognized problem that can now get treated at an early stage, or confirm that you are on the right path and should continue your healthy habits.

Don't let heart disease and stroke get in your way of the life you love. These 4 vital screenings take 60-90 minutes to complete. Register by calling toll free 1-844-591-7160, text the word "circle" to 216-279-1607 or online at <https://lisa.social/HC>.



The Vitalant Bloodmobile will be in the CITD parking lot on Sunday, May 5, from 8 am until noon. Drop-ins are welcome, or you may schedule an appointment by calling Karen Mischik at 480-980-0286. You can be a true hero by giving the gift of life to someone in need.



## How to Participate

Help UMOM celebrate 60 years by making this the most successful walk to end homelessness! CITD has a long history of supporting UMOM, so let's make another big impact this year. Here's how you can help:

### Walk the Walk

1. Register at [UMOM.org/walk](https://UMOM.org/walk) and join the Cross in the Desert team
2. Gather donations from family and friends (donations can be made on the website or you can collect cash or checks)
3. Show up on May 11<sup>th</sup> and walk the zoo. All registered walk participants get to spend the day at the zoo at no extra cost!

### Donate

1. Provide a cash or check donation during church at the Missions Table.
2. Go online to [UMOM.org/walk](https://UMOM.org/walk), find the Cross in the Desert team and make your donation. (You can also search by team captain, Karen Bulkeley.)
3. Provide a cash or check donation directly to a member of the CITD team.

Questions? See Karen Bulkeley for more information.



# Desert Southwest Conference News



## General Conference (2020—finally)

April 23—May 3, 2024

Charlotte, North Carolina

The Three Major Legislative Proposals are:

1. [Worldwide Regionalization](#), a plan submitted by the Standing Committee on Central Conference Matters, that aims to put the different regions of the denomination on equal footing. The majority of the standing committee’s membership comes from the central conferences — seven church regions in Africa, Europe and the Philippines. The proposal would create eight distinct regional governing bodies in what are currently the seven central conferences in Africa, Europe, the Philippines as well as in the United States. Each region would have the same authority to adapt portions of the Book of Discipline, the denomination’s policy book, to their missional context. Worldwide regionalization requires amending the denomination’s constitution. For ratification, an amendment must receive at least a two-thirds vote at General Conference and at least a two-thirds total vote at annual conferences, bodies consisting of lay and clergy voters from multiple congregations. Most other legislation requires a simple majority. “We support this legislation because we are committed to greater self-determination and self-governance,” the delegates’ statement said. “We also believe that expanding regional decision-making will allow annual conferences within each region to thrive.
2. [Revised Social Principles](#), multiple petitions submitted by the United Methodist Board of Church and Society, that revise the denomination’s social witness. The proposals are the result of an eight-year revision process prompted by the 2012 General Conference to make the denomination’s social teachings more “more globally relevant, theologically founded and succinct.” More than 4,000 United Methodists from around the globe have contributed to the revisions. As proposed, the revision would no longer make reference to homosexuality at all. Since 1972, the Social Principles have stated that “the practice of homosexuality... is incompatible with Christian teaching.” Taylor-Storm emphasized that the Social Principles have always dealt with far more than human sexuality. The revisions, she said, aim to address international concerns around topics as varied as agriculture and polygamy. “This isn’t just about the U.S., and this isn’t U.S.-based legislation,” Taylor-Storm said.
3. Removal of exclusionary policies against LGBTQ people. Since General Conference added the Social Principle on homosexuality in 1972, [subsequent gatherings have added bans](#) on “self-avowed practicing” gay clergy and the officiation of same-sex weddings. Also since 1972, every General Conference has been marked by rancorous debate over the place of LGBTQ people in church life. The clashes culminated in the special 2019 General Conference, which passed the Traditional Plan that aimed to strengthen enforcement of the bans and opened the door for the church disaffiliations seen over the past four years. “This would return the Book of Discipline to where it was from 1784 to 1972, and remove the cause of so much of our friction and division for the last 50 years,” said the Rev. Adam Hamilton, one of the delegate signers from the Great Plains Conference.

## Conference Contacts

### Bishop

Carlo A. Rapanut

### Bishop’s Assistant:

Julie O’Neal [joneal@dscumc.org](mailto:joneal@dscumc.org)

### Conference Lay Leader

Alberta Farnsworth

### East District Superintendent

Melissa Rynders

Assistant: Jeannine Marinoni

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### East District Lay Leader

Trinity Donovan

### Director of Communications

(Assistance with technology)

Christina Dillabough

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## Cross in the Desert UMC Staff

### Pastor

Pastor Gina Pollard

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### Financial Secretary

Alice Easter

[finance@crossinthedesert.org](mailto:finance@crossinthedesert.org)

Lay Leader—vacant

### Music Director

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

Julie Wagner

[citd@crossinthedesert.org](mailto:citd@crossinthedesert.org)