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“An Attitude of Gratitude”

By Pastor Eun Ko

Dear Beloved Church Family,

As we enter the month of November, the air turns a little cooler, the days a little shorter, and our hearts turn naturally toward gratitude. Thanksgiving invites us to pause — to look around and remember how much we have been given, not because life is perfect, but because God’s grace is unending.



This month, our church is journeying through The Generosity Challenge — a reminder that generosity is not simply about giving things away, but about living with a heart that reflects God’s own nature. We are created in the image of a generous God — a God who gives life, breath, forgiveness, and love without measure.

As Scott McKenzie and Kristine Miller write in The Generosity Challenge, “We are born in the image of a loving and generous God; we are born to be generous.”

Gratitude and generosity are deeply connected. When we live with thankful hearts, we begin to see our lives not as something to grasp tightly, but as something to offer freely. Gratitude opens our eyes to God’s abundance; generosity allows us to share that abundance with others. Together, they shape us into people who reflect the very heart of Christ.

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An Attitude of Gratitude cont.

This season, I invite you to take a few quiet moments each day to ask:

- “What am I thankful for today?”
- “How might I share God’s love and goodness with someone else?”

Whether it’s a kind word, a helping hand, or a simple prayer, every act of gratitude and generosity draws us closer to the Kingdom of God.

May this Thanksgiving be a time of reflection, renewal, and deep joy. May we, as a community, continue to live out our calling — to be a people who give thanks in all things and embody the generous heart of our Lord.

“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

— 1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NRSV)

“범사에 감사하십시오. 이것이 그리스도 예수 안에서 여러분을 향하신 하나님의 뜻입니다.” — 데살로니가전서 5장 18절

With gratitude and grace,

Rev. Eun Young Ko

Senior Pastor

First United Methodist Church of Tucson

WHAT’S HAPPENING AT FIRST CHURCH OF TUCSON!

The **APIDA Foundation Celebration** took place on **October 16 at 5:30 PM** at the *Community Foundation Campus*. We are proud that **Jeannie Lee**, a member of our congregation, serves on the Foundation’s Board. *Left to right:* Jeannie speaking, Christopher & Stephanie Kang with Halla, and Pastor Ko with Steve and Jeannie Lee.

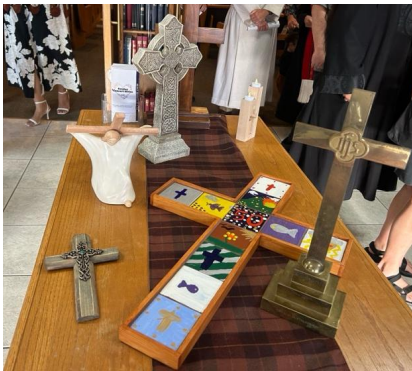


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Left & middle: Food at the APIDA Fund Celebration. Right: V. Carol Smith's birthday party was joyfully held on October 13 at Del Cielo Tamal. Happy Birthday, V. Carol!



The **Installation Service for District Superintendent Rev. Javier Olivares** was held on **October 18 at 3 PM** at St. Mark's UMC. The service featured a beautiful cross decoration, inspiring music from the St. Mark's choir, and a powerful sermon delivered by Rev. Olivares himself. Below left to right: Beautiful cross decorations, the St. Mark's choir singing, and DS Rev. Javier preaching.



Below left and middle: Dottie Poczulp celebrated her birthday on October 19. Her dear friend Margo marked the occasion with a beautiful sunflower sculpture. Happy Birthday, Dottie! Below right: The 2025 Church Conference was held on Oct 29 at 7 PM at First UMC. We celebrated this year and have a dream for next year, 2026, with Pastor Ko.



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Left: Tripp dressed up as a construction worker for Halloween. Middle: Some of the Korean seniors enjoyed an outing to Number 1 Buffet in Avondale, AZ, on October 31, Halloween Day. Right: Some of the November 2nd kitchen crew (left to right): Dylan, Tripp, and Daniel.



More Than Treats: A Pastoral Letter on the Ending of SNAP Benefits

by Bishop Carlo A. Rapanut | Oct 28, 2025 |

<https://dscumc.org/blog/2025/10/28/more-than-treats-a-pastoral-letter-on-the-ending-of-snap-benefits/>

*This is the kind of fast day I'm after:
to break the chains of injustice,
get rid of exploitation in the workplace,
free the oppressed, cancel debts.
What I'm interested in seeing you do is:
sharing your food with the hungry,
inviting the homeless poor into your homes,
putting clothes on the shivering ill-clad,
being available to your own families.*

Isaiah 58:6-8 The Message

Beloved Desert Southwest and New Mexico Conference United Methodists,

Greetings in the name of Jesus, the Bread of Life.

This coming weekend on November 1st, 42 million Americans who rely on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) will not receive their benefits because of the ongoing government shutdown. This is according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) website that says that “the well has run dry.”

SNAP is a federal program often called “food stamps” that provides low-income families with monthly benefits in order to afford healthy food. This will yet be another dire effect of the shutdown which is already in its fourth week. November 1st will mark one month in this impasse that has already resulted in the furlough of about 900,000 federal employees with another 2 million working without pay. Families of these workers are gravely affected while the essential government services of transportation, health and safety are put in jeopardy which in turn affects our personal and community lives.

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More Than Treats: A Pastoral Letter on the Ending of SNAP Benefits cont.

In Matthew 14 we find the disciples going to Jesus with the need to feed a hungry multitude in the midst of their own hunger. Their proposition was to send the crowd away to find food for themselves to which he responds, “They need not go away; you give them something to eat.” (Matthew 14:16, NRSVUE) and from the little food that they could find, the multitude was fed.

Beloved, this is our call to action at this time. **Give them something to eat.** I know that resources may feel inadequate and the need is great. And, we have our own needs. But I am wondering if this shutdown cannot be another Matthew 15 moment where the few who had little were able to feed the multitude.

October 31st is traditionally celebrated as Halloween with an exorbitant amount spent on costumes worn and candies to be given away.

- What would it look like if rather than spending on candies and costumes, we would donate money instead to local food pantries, many of which are ran from our churches?
- If you can't forego giving out candies and dressing up because of tradition, which I respect, what about matching the amount you spend on them and donating that to food pantries?
- What about instead of giving out candy, you would give basic, healthy grocery supplies to children and families who come to your door? Or perhaps a gift card to buy groceries or gas? Maybe do that on top of giving out candy if you are able.
- If there are families affected by the shutdown in your own congregations and communities, ask them what they need and see how you and the church can come alongside them.

In the Desert Southwest Conference, we are convening and strategizing with food pantries and ministries throughout the Conference about how to meet this need. Here's how you can take part: learn more and register to join the zoom at www.dscumc.org/blog/2025/10/27/supporting-dsc-food-ministries-an-invitation-to-gather/.

In the New Mexico Conference, we are connecting with food pantries that serve communities throughout the Conference to see how we can best respond as needs evolve. We'll provide more guidance once we know more. For now, the most efficient way that you can help is to donate financially to the food distributors for many of our UMC food pantries. The links are – Road Runner Food Bank in NM: rrfb.org or El Pasoans Fighting Hunger in TX: elpasoansfightinghunger.org

Beloved, I pray that we would be the answer to the very words we regularly pray: “Give us this day our daily bread.” May we the church be to our hungry siblings the embodiment of Jesus, the bread of life who promised that whoever comes to him will never be hungry and whoever believes will never be thirsty (John 6:35). May it be so.

Sincerely,

Bishop Carlo A. Rapanut

COB Pastoral Letter on US Government Shutdown

www.unitedmethodistbishops.org/newsdetail/cob-pastoral-letter-on-us-government-shutdown-19409408

October 23, 2025

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

As a people called United Methodists, who proclaim God's justice, peace, and care for all people, we lament the ongoing government shutdown in the United States and the harm it is causing to countless families, workers, and communities. Many individuals are without income, vital social services are being disrupted, and many who are already living in vulnerable situations are being placed in greater distress. This moment calls for our collective compassion, advocacy, and prayerful action.

This government shutdown is not only affecting families and communities in the United States but also impacting people and partners across the world who depend on the stability and aid of the United States.

"We urge those elected or appointed to public posts or holding other positions in government to act as responsible leaders and stewards of the authority and resources entrusted to them. We call on all government officials to aspire to the highest standards of professionalism, honesty, and integrity. Furthermore, we urge all governments to adopt policies and practices that guarantee accountability and transparency in fostering and maintaining the trust of the public." (UMC Social Principles ¶163, The Political Community).

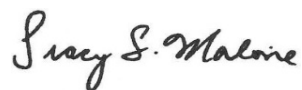
We call on members of the United States Congress and all elected leaders to set aside partisanship, seek common ground, work together toward a just resolution and act responsibly for the sake of the welfare of all people who they have been elected to serve.

We call on the people of The United Methodist Church to join together in prayer—for our elected leaders to act with wisdom and courage, for individuals and families whose livelihoods are at risk, and for justice and compassion to prevail.

Finally we reclaim our call to be attentive to the needs of people within our communities. May we respond with tangible acts of compassion and kindness to those experiencing hardship during this time.

Scripture reminds us: "Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others" (Philippians 2:4). May this be our ongoing collective witness as a people of faith and hope—trusting that God is able to bring unity out of division, justice out of oppression and peace out of chaos.

Yours in the name of Jesus the risen Christ,



Bishop Tracy S. Malone
President – Council of Bishops
The United Methodist Church

THIS WEEK'S
ANNOUNCEMENTS & GATHERINGS

10AM SUNDAY SERVICE

Join us in person for our English-language service! Or you can watch it live online at <https://www.youtube.com/c/TucsonFirstUMC>.

한국어 사역

주일 오전 11시 30분에 한국어 예배가
현장예배와 온라인예배로 진행됩니다.
기도와 참여 부탁드립니다.

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS



November 27 at 12 PM - Thanksgiving Day Feast

We invite all to join us! We will provide the turkey, gravy, & rolls, and you can bring a side or dessert to share. If you plan to attend (whether you'll bring food or not), please RSVP to the office so we know how many people we should expect.



November 29 at 10 AM - Hanging of the Greens

Please help us decorate our beautiful church for the Advent season with Christmas trees, wreaths, and garland.



December 14 at 10 AM - Joint Service with Christmas Cantata

We will hear our choir sing wonderful music which they have been preparing since August. Don't miss it!

WEEKDAY GATHERINGS

Wanderers on a Spiritual Quest (WSQ)

-WSQ meets on Mondays at 4:30PM in the library.

Narcotics Anonymous (Underground)

-NA meets at 7:30PM on Monday evenings in the Arizona room.

-On the last Monday of the month, there is Medallion Night in the Social Hall.

Chancel Choir

-The choir is taking a well-deserved break during June & July. They will resume in August.

Progressive Book Study (PBS)

-The current book is "The Fourth Gospel: Tales of a Jewish Mystic" by John Shelby Spong.

Questions? Call Rev. Gaston at (520) 323-1611.

[Zoom ID: 980 1573 8087](https://www.zoom.us/j/98015738087) Passcode: 6226481

GIVING TO FIRST CHURCH TUCSON



When you attend Sunday services in person, the offering box is in the narthex for your generous giving. Head to our website www.firstchurchtucson.org/give to give online. As always, you can mail in checks to the church office at the address printed on the front page. Alternatively, have your IRA advisor automatically make payments from your IRA.

When we give to God from our hearts, it is always enough. We see you, and we thank you for your commitment to making a difference in our community.

* * *

PRAYERS FOR OUR COMMUNITY

We offer our prayers for those in our community who are suffering, who are physically, mentally, & emotionally unwell, and for those caring for them.



We offer our prayers for these sister faith communities:

UMC of the Good Shepherd, Kearny
UMC of Green Valley, Green Valley
Willcox UMC, Willcox

If you have a prayer request you would like to share in the Digest, please contact the church office at office@firstchurchtucson.org or (520) 622-6481.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Carol Nelson (Nov 1)
Marilyn Hall (Nov 6)
Kyoung Hee Kim (Nov 6)

Nancy Tomlinson (Nov 7)
Laryssa Shipley (Nov 18)

Joonkil Ahn (Nov 29)
Patricia Murphy (Nov 29)
Hae Sook Hong (Nov 30)

(If we have missed your birthday or anniversary, please let us know so we can update our records!)



Advent Study - Dec. 2, 8, 15, & 22 at 2 PM
Pastor Ko will lead this MBTI-based series on faith and relationships, titled, "Living in Harmony: Discovering God's Design in Our Differences."

November Meet'n'Eat

The next Meet'n'Eat is on Friday the 14th at 11:30 AM at the Olive Garden on the northeast corner of Oracle/Wetmore (300 W Wetmore Rd, Tucson, AZ 85705). Everyone is invited! If you're interested in coming, please notify the church office or Shirley Murray at (520) 297-4796 by Wednesday the 12th so enough seating can be reserved at the restaurant.

Animal & Environmental Holidays for November 2025

By Diane & Victoria Russell



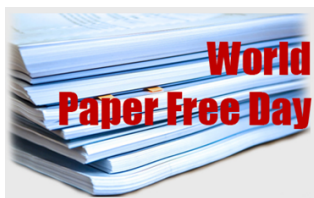
November – National Pet Cancer Awareness Month

Pets like people can suffer from a cancer diagnosis. Cancer is a disease where the body's cells grow uncontrollably and spread to other areas. A trip to the vet is advised for common cancer symptoms including: Difficulty breathing, lumps, dry cough, lameness, bleeding, and weight loss.



November – National Adopt a Senior Pet

The month of November is dedicated to helping senior pets find loving and permanent homes. Sadly, senior pets are often the last ones to be adopted from the shelter. If you are thinking of adopting, a senior pet can fit into your lifestyle and adapt well to a loving new home.



November 6th – World Paper Free Day

To raise awareness about paper consumption, this initiative by the Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM) encourages people and businesses to reduce their use of paper for at least one day. This day highlights the environmental impact of deforestation and the benefits of digital documents.



November 8th – International Human-Animal Bond Awareness Day

Created in 2022 to celebrate and promote the bond between humans and animals, the goal of the day is to raise awareness and to encourage others to appreciate how valuable animals are and to respect the importance of the human-animal bond.



November 13th – World Kindness Day

Happy World Kindness Day! Today is a day to show kindness to everything that lives — fellow humans, animals, plants, and our entire planet. Everyday should be World Kindness day.



November 17th – National Take a Hike Day

Celebrate this day by getting outdoors and enjoying nature's beauty and wonder. Some of the ways to enjoy this day include taking a hike on the many local trails or a casual stroll through the zoo or your local park, and of course, driving through our local Saguaro National Park.



November 20th – Use Less Stuff Day

“Use Less Stuff” was established as a campaign to encourage people to use mostly essential items that you need. Buying and using more stuff often results in more environmental pollution when too much stuff gets thrown into the trash.



November 27th - Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is a day about food, family and being thankful. Thanksgiving is a time to reflect on the things that are important in our lives and to be grateful and thankful for what we have. Wishing everyone a safe and Happy Thanksgiving – enjoy.



November 28th – Buy Nothing Day

Founded by Canadian artist Ted Dave in 1992 to encourage people to slow down and not just buy, buy, buy during the Thanksgiving/Christmas holiday rush. It is day to think about important matters such as being grateful for what you have and spending time with family and friends instead of consumerism



November 30th – Remembrance Day for Lost Species

Created in 2011 by a coalition of UK- based artists to raise awareness about the many species, cultures and habitats driven to extinction by human activity, this is a day of remembrance and reflection for the species lost and the need to protect species and ecosystems that are still at risk for extinction.



First Church Tucson is an inclusive multi-ethnic faith community and a reconciling congregation of the United Methodist Church. Established in 1879 as the first Protestant church in our city, First Church Tucson continues to pave the way in creating a faith community that embraces all peoples into the grace of God.

As a courageous family of faith, we celebrate the diversity of all God’s children, welcome everyone to share in God’s love and grace, and offer a sanctuary of hope.

We seek to be in ministry with all God’s people, regardless of gender, race, age, class, ethnicity, culture, country of origin, ability/disability, gender identity, and sexual orientation. We continue to work towards building a loving and faithful community in Tucson, and welcome all of you to be part of it.